

ALLEGED DISCREPANCIES
OF THE BIBLE.

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Foreword.

During, and since, the publication of "Notes From A Pastor's Study," on "Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible," in the WATCHWORD AND TRUTH, the expressions of satisfaction derived from them have been multitudinous; and now the numerous requests, from widespread sources, for their republication in book form, seem to leave no alternative but to comply.

The opportunity has been improved to revise the articles, or chapters, and to make some additions which, it is believed, will add to their value.

The book is sent out with the hope, and with the prayer, that it may serve, in some measure, to confute unbelief, and to confirm faith in God's Infallible Word.

St. Louis, Mo.

W. H. B.

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ALLEGED DISCREPANCIES OF THE BIBLE.

CHAPTER I.

"Hello!"

"Good evening to you!"

Such was the breezy salutation of two young men as they suddenly encountered each other at a right-angled street corner.

"Whither?" said one. "To the Dominie's," was the reply. "Ditto," said the first. Locking arms they cordially walked on together.

The first speaker, Fred Leges, was a young lawyer, active, shrewd, sharp, inquisitive. His mind was constructed on the principle of interrogation points. He wanted to see over, under, through, around, every subject he studied. The other, George Argent, was a quiet, candid, thoughtful, studious bank teller, and if less demonstrative than his companion, he nevertheless quite as surely accomplished his purpose. Both had had a thorough, vitalizing Christian experience, making them "O and O," *i. e.* out and out, Christians. Accordingly, they were both earnest workers in Christian Endeavor, Sunday School and Church; and not only so, but in private, personal ways they sought to serve their deeply loved Master.

One result of their pronounced, every-day Christian character, was to bring them now and then, such were their surroundings, into contact, not to say collision, with skeptics and infidels, fair, false, and virulent. Dif-

difficulties and questions were sometimes thrust upon them that they did not know how to answer. But they proposed to learn how.

"The Dominie," their pastor, was a mature man, in many senses, who, happily, had never forgotten that he was once young; and so he was in close sympathy with his young people as well as with the older ones. "Did you ever read that chapter in Kingsley's *Hypatia*, 'The Bottom of the Abyss?'" said he to a friend one day. "Well, I have been there. I got out, and I know how I got out." Here was the secret of his patient tenderness toward doubters and those troubled with skeptical difficulties, which fitted him to help persons of that class, and those who were seeking the solution of hard questions. Hence this visit to "the Dominie."

They received a hearty welcome to his study. They found there Miss Rysen, for years the successful teacher of the young men's Bible class, from which they had gone forth well equipped as teachers. She had come, it seems, on the same errand as themselves.

After the usual exchange of the current small coin of conversation concerning the weather, etc., the pastor, with a look that swept the little group, said "Well?"

The young lawyer responded, "The President of the Agnostic Club was in our office yesterday, and he fired at me the two stories of David's buying the threshing floor of Araunah, or Ornan, and asked which one told the truth. Really, he had me; for I confess I do not know what to do with the apparent contradiction." He read:

2 Sam. 24: 24, "*So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*"

1 Chron. 21 : 25, "So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight."

Said Argent, "A friend recently put into my hands Prof. Henry Preserved Smith's 'Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration,' in which he accuses the Chronicler of *raising the figures*,—a procedure contrary to all sound banking principles, earthly or heavenly. He says, p. 103, 'In case of David's purchase of the field of Ornan, he [the Chronicler] finds the price a niggardly one for a prince to pay. He therefore does not hesitate (supposing that a mistake had been made) to put in a larger sum.' And I did not find any help in the solution of the difficulty; for Dr. Alexander, in Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, article 'Araunah,' says that the Chronicler's statement makes 'a discrepancy which there are no means of reconciling.' "

Said Miss Rysen, "Only last Sunday a young man in my Bible class brought up the same difficulty;" and she continued humorously, "'Now therefore are we all here present,' as Cornelius said to St. Peter."

The pastor, with a smile that did not indicate anything of perplexity, gave a turn to his revolving book-case that brought his critical apparatus to hand, and passed around some books, saying, as he did so, "Let us ascertain just what were the objects of sale in these two transactions; for evidently these are not two accounts of one bargain, but accounts of two bargains."

He continued: "In 2 Sam. 24 : 24, the things bought were 'the threshing floor,' Hebrew *goren*, and 'the oxen,' for which the price was fifty shekels of silver, ["\$25.09," interposed the bank teller]; while in 1 Chron. 21 : 25, David bought 'the place,' *maqom*, for six hundred shekels of gold." "\$4818.00," added Argent.

"Now what about *goren* and *maqom*?" asked the pas-

tor, turning to Fred Leges, who was busy with the Englishman's Hebrew Concordance which the pastor had handed him.

"I find," said Fred, "that *goren* is used thirty-five times, and is translated *barn, barn floor, corn, corn floor, floor, threshing floor, threshing place, and void place.*"

Said George Argent, who had the Septuagint and a Greek lexicon before him, "*Goren* is here *alona*, and the lexicon defines it *threshing floor, a coiled snake, a bird's nest, and the pupil of the eye.* A small affair, evidently."

"*Maqom*," continued Fred, is used over four hundred times, and is translated *country, home, open, place, room, space, and whithersoever.* Somewhat more extensive, I reckon, than the pupil of the eye, a bird's nest, a coiled snake, or a threshing floor."

Miss Rysen, who had Fish's Bible Lands Illustrated in hand, was waiting to get in a word. She read from p. 466, that "The threshing floors are circles of smooth ground (generally elevated to catch the wind), some fifty or sixty feet in diameter." And she went on to say, "It is well known that this land which David bought of Ornan was the site of Solomon's temple, which was the summit of Mt. Moriah where Abraham is supposed to have offered up Isaac. I recall, now, that in our Normal class we learned that the *Chel*, or Sacred Inclosure, which contained the sacred buildings, embraced over four acres, while the Court of the Gentiles embraces over twenty-two acres. I notice that Dr. Fish, in this book which I hold, says, p. 196, that the whole temple area occupies thirty-five acres." Then she read from Prof. Murphy's Hand Book, or Commentary, on Chronicles, which the pastor handed her, "The value of *the place* is here given. That of the threshing floor and oxen is given in Samuel" (p. 72).

A look of astonishment overspread the faces of the young men, and the lawyer exclaimed, "Yes, I see it! David bought the few feet of threshing floor and the oxen for \$25. Then, wanting "the place," the thirty-five acres which contained the little plot, 'my lord the king' buys it at 'the full price,' \$4818. Not much of a 'discrepancy' there! Why didn't I see that before, Mr. President of the Agnostic Club?"

All joined in the hearty laugh that followed, and the pastor quietly added, "With all due respect to Prof. Smith and the Scotch Alexander, I think this reconciliation of the difficulty is perfect; and, in my judgment, other alleged discrepancies can be disposed of quite as satisfactorily."

"Yes," said George, "we have had several thrown up at us, but we shall need you to help us out. May we come again?"

Of course permission was gladly given. They arose to depart, and as they all stood in a little circle, the pastor offered a brief prayer for them; and as he prayed, resolving light seemed to descend from above, flooding their minds and hearts, and making that study seem a very vestibule to heaven!

CHAPTER II.

Just a week from the time the young lawyer, Fred Leges, the bank teller, George Argent, and Miss Rysen, were at the pastor's study, they met there again for further consideration of Bible difficulties.

The lawyer was in fine feather, for he had had another encounter with the president of the Agnostic Club, and he did not come off second best this time. The infidel introduced again the story of David's buying the threshing floor of Ornan. Fred told him that he had received some light on that subject since their former conversation, and proceeded to show him that in the first account, 2 Sam. 24 : 24, the objects of purchase were the oxen, and a threshing floor, a little plot of ground only about 75 feet in diameter, at a price of 50 shekels of silver, or about \$25 ; while in the second, 1 Chron. 21 : 25, it was "the place," some 35 acres, for which the larger sum, 600 shekels of gold, or \$4,818, was paid.

The skeptic was nonplussed, but he quickly rallied and said, "No, no, my son ; that won't go down with me, for the cattle must have been worth \$25. I insist that 'the threshing floor' and 'the place' were identical."

The lawyer's wit rose to the occasion, and he responded : "Well, Mr. President, thanks for your fine appreciation of live stock, even though you seem unable (or shall I say unwilling?) to discriminate between these other things that differ. Of course a broad-minded man like you won't stick at the location of so small a thing as a comma. We are told that the old manuscripts were written without punctuation marks, and that these are

supplied as the sense requires." At this juncture Fred passed over to him a slip on which he had been writing, "So David bought the threshing floor, and the oxen for \$25.00."

The skeptic was thoroughly beaten on his own ground. At this turn his eyes seemed plentifully punctuated with exclamation points, and, being unable to find a word to say in reply, he ejaculated, as he shot out of the office, "Young man, your smartness will be the death of you some day!"

Argent and Miss Rysen were greatly amused at Fred's narration. At its conclusion he turned to the pastor with an inquiring look, as much as to say, "What do you think of it?"

The pastor responded, "Good enough, as against a caviller. And good enough anyway, some may think, for this view is not new." As he said this he took from the revolving case Schaff's Bible Dictionary, opened it at p. 63, and read, "David therefore bought the oxen for 50 shekels of silver, 2 Sam. 24 : 24, and the whole place for 600 shekels of gold, 1 Chron. 21 : 25." The pastor continued, "'The threshing floor,' *goren*, and 'the place,' *maqom*, are certainly not identical, except as the less is included in the greater; and as our explanation last week fairly and fully meets the case, without any attempt at shrewdness or special pleading, I greatly prefer that." So thought the others; but still they felt that the skeptic had been well answered.

Then Miss Rysen said, "I have two passages on which I need help. The first is, Matt. 27 : 9, 10, '*Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy, the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord*

appointed me.' No such passage is found in Jeremiah, but the quotation seems to be from Zech. 11 : 12, 13."

Said the pastor, "There are different ways of dealing with this difficulty. The first is, frankly to admit that Matthew made a mistake! Says Dean Alford, 'The citation is probably quoted from memory and inaccurately.' Says Prof. Briggs, *Biblical Study*, p. 191, 'It is now generally conceded that the evangelist made a mistake.' But this method, if summary, is not satisfactory."

"The second," he continued, "is to credit the alleged error to a transcriber, since the names Jeremiah and Zechariah, if written in the crude Hebrew, would have only a single letter of difference between them, and a scribe could easily mistake one letter for the other; or, if written in Greek, Jeremiah, instead of being written in full, might stand *Iriou* and Zechariah *Zriou*." And he added, "The Presbyterian General Assembly of 1893, at Washington, made this deliverance: 'That the Bible, as we now have it, in its various translations and versions, when freed from all errors and mistakes of translators, copyists and printers, is the very Word of God, and consequently without error' (Minutes, p. 169). This seems to me to show the sacred Scriptures a courtesy that, to say the least, is no more than becoming; besides, it is fair, safe and wise. Accordingly, this alleged error should be credited to a copyist rather than to Matthew, who certainly could have written Zechariah as easily as Jeremiah, and who, it may be assumed, knew quite as well as we, what he ought to say."

"A third method," said he, "is that of Lightfoot, one of the greatest Hebrew scholars in history. It was the custom of the Jews to divide the Old Testament into three parts: the first, beginning with Genesis, was called the Law; the second, embracing the poetical books, was

called the Psalms; the third was the Prophets, at the head of which stood Jeremiah, and consequently the writings of Zechariah and of the other prophets, being included in that division which began with Jeremiah, and all quotations from it, would go under that prophet's name. So Dr. Lightfoot, quoting Jewish authorities to sustain him, insists that the word Jeremiah is perfectly correct, as standing at the head of that division from which the evangelist quoted, and which gave its denomination to the rest."

"A fourth method is that of Daniel Whitby," said the pastor. "He quotes from Jerome, who was born about A. D. 340, to the effect that in his day there was extant an apocryphal book of Jeremiah, in which the words quoted by St. Matthew were exactly found. Traditional words of Enoch were quoted by Jude, vs. 14, 15, and through this apostle received the sanction of divine inspiration. So, claims Whitby, Matthew in like manner quoted the traditional words of Jeremiah."

Miss Rysen gave a look of relief, and the young men expressed themselves in terms of decided satisfaction.

"But," the pastor went on to say, "there is something still more satisfactory to me. You will observe that the passage in Matthew is *not* a quotation from Zechariah, as is alleged, but is no more than an allusion to, or adaptation of it, such as is common to speakers and writers, even to inspired prophets. Compare Isa. 2 : 1-4 with Micah 4 : 1-5, and Isa. 62 : 11 with Zech. 9 : 9, for examples. [These were read.] There was a saying among the Jews anciently that 'the spirit of Jeremiah rested on Zechariah;' and it appears, from Zech. 7 : 12, that he was familiar with 'the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in His Spirit by the former prophets.' I think you will see, as I read them, that Jer. 18 : 1-4,

and 19: 1-3, are the original and fundamental passages about the potter, which Zechariah apparently adopts and adapts to suit his own purpose. Lange adds Jer. 32: 6-8, 14. The passage to which Matthew alludes in Zechariah is, then, a reproduction of what Jeremiah had previously spoken. Farrar, in his *Life of Christ*, chap. LIX, says, 'St. Matthew, ever alive to Old Testament analogies, connects this circumstance with passages (apparently) of Jeremiah (xviii, 1, 2; xxxii, 6-12), and Zechariah (xi, 12, 13);' but Lange says 'the allusion here to Zech. 11: 13, is very slight.' So, then, it is clear that Matthew was entirely correct in naming the earlier prophet rather than the later one, Jeremiah rather than Zechariah. He therefore made no 'mistake,' but has told the truth."

If the young people were satisfied before, they were delighted now.

Said George Argent: "This brings to mind a difficulty I have had in connection with Matthew's quotation, chapter ii, verse 15, 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son,' from Hosea xi: 1. In Hosea the reference is plainly to 'Israel,' the Jewish people; and now to make it refer to Christ's return from Egypt involves a subtle principle of application that I do not understand."

Said the pastor: "If you will turn to Gibson's 'The Mosaic Era,' chapter i, 'Israel in Egypt,' you will find the difficulty finely met (pp. 7-9). His idea is, that God's promise of a 'son' to Abraham covers in its fulfillment, three eras: the patriarchal, national, and gospel. In the patriarchal era, in the first generation Isaac was the son of promise to the exclusion of Ishmael; in the second generation, Jacob to the exclusion of Esau; in the third generation Joseph had 'the birthright' (1 Chron. 5: 1, 2). A change of dispensation brings in

the next, or national era, when the 'son' is no longer an individual, but the nation as a whole: 'Israel is my son, even my firstborn' (Ex. 4: 22); also 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt' (Hos. 11: 1). Thus you see that Israel was the fourth 'son' in the succession, and his history covers the whole period of the national era. Now when another change of dispensation brings in the gospel era, or perhaps I would better say, when the coming of the gospel era brings in a change of dispensation, where can you find the 'son of promise' except in 'Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham' (Matt. 1: 1)? So, as Dr. Gibson well says, this passage, 'Out of Egypt have I called my son,' which manifestly refers to the nation of Israel, has, as used by Matthew, been often cited as a misapplication of prophecy; and some commentators have tried to defend it on the ground of its being a mere accommodation; whereas it is most natural, most appropriate, and most striking when we only keep in mind the link of connection between the son of the earlier and the son of the later era, and the closely typical relation between them."

Said George meditatively: "I see, I s-e-e." Then brightening up, he added: "Why won't this method of application, or interpretation, relieve the difficulty in regard to the 'Servant of Jehovah' of whom Isaiah speaks?"

Said the pastor: "That is just what Dr. Gibson goes on to do. After his disposition of Matt. 2: 15 and Hos. 11: 1, which I have shown you, he adds: 'Or take those passages where the Servant of Jehovah is spoken of in Isaiah; and how erroneous it is at once seen to be, to conclude that because some of these passages seem to refer to the nation of Israel, therefore they do not refer

to the Holy One of Israel, of whom the holy nation was an imperfect type.' "

Said George warmly : " This is refreshing and satisfying." And he added : " Please excuse this interruption of mine : Miss Rysen has still another passage to present." But the evening was so far spent, the consideration of it was deferred until the next meeting.

CHAPTER III.

At the third meeting of the young people with the pastor to seek the solution of Scripture difficulties, Miss Rysen was first called upon for the deferred passage, on which she desired help.

Said she : " I find so much satisfaction in the Word of God just as it is, that it never occurs to me to look for discrepancies. Really, I had never noticed this one until it was recently brought up in my class. The passage is Mark 16 : 14, 'Afterward he appeared unto *the eleven.*' Judas was dead (Matt. 27 : 5), and Thomas was absent (Jno. 20 : 24); consequently only *ten* of the apostles were present."

Said the pastor, " St. Luke uses the same form of expression : ' And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found *the eleven* gathered together ' (24 : 33). It is hardly to be supposed that both Mark and Luke were ignorant of the death of Judas and the absence of Thomas, or were incapable of making a proper mathematical computation. This difficulty seems to me to be very easily and satisfactorily disposed of when we understand that ' the eleven ' was a technical term used to denote the body of the apostolate collectively, and not as distinguishing them numerically. Accordingly, Alexander, in his commentary on Mark, page 441, says, ' *The eleven* has reference to the whole body, as then constituted, not to the number actually present upon any one occasion.' "

The pastor continued : " When Matthew says (28 : 16), ' Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee,' he speaks numerically, and eleven disciples were there ;

but if he had said 'the eleven,' or 'the disciples,' he would have spoken of a body without definitely stating their number. John speaks (21 : 1) of 'the disciples,' and our first impression might be that the whole apostolate was intended; but he goes on to enumerate seven only as present. St. Paul must have known of the death of Judas, but he still speaks of the diminished apostolate as 'the twelve' (1 Cor. 15 : 5),—'a name, not of number, but of office,' as Lange puts it."

"It is, I may add," he went on to say, "in accordance with common rhetorical usage for numerals, when used of a body collectively, to lose their strict numerical character. For instance, the population of Rome was divided into three parts, which were called 'tribes,' from the Latin *tribus*, *three*; but afterwards when the divisions were increased to thirty-five, they were still called 'tribes.' *Centumviri* means 'a hundred men.' Three judges were chosen from each of the thirty-five tribes, making one hundred and five in all, but they were called 'centumviri' nevertheless. This was their technical, official designation, which continued the same when, in the time of the emperors, the number was increased to one hundred and eighty. So *decemviri* means 'ten men'; and though the first decemvirate, 451 B. C., consisted of ten men, the second had only six. There was a decemvirate of priests which had, at different stages, two, ten, fifteen, and sixty members; but according to the mathematical meaning of the word, there should have been always and only ten. Mathematical exactness is hardly expected when speaking of the so called 'Four Hundred' of New York society."

"By which," interrogated the lawyer, who had been paying keen attention to this disquisition, "we are to understand that numerals in such cases, when used mathe-

matically, are used with exactness ; but when used rhetorically, to denote a body collectively, or to express a technical official designation, they are used with inexactness, and may mean less or more, according to circumstances ?”

“Precisely so,” said the pastor. “Therefore, when we regard, as manifestly we ought to, Mark, Luke, and Paul as speaking of the apostolate as a collective whole, and not as numerically distinguished, the discrepancy, so called, instantly disappears.”

The look of satisfaction that overspread the faces of the little group was delightful to behold. But George Argent, the bank teller, eagerly interposed, “It’s my turn now. In my work, accounts have to balance ; but here is an account that I can’t make balance. Last evening I read 1 Cor. 10 : 8, ‘*And fell in one day three and twenty thousand.*’ My Bagster referred me back to the historical scene, Numbers 15 : 9, ‘*And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.*’ Here seems to be a discrepancy of a thousand according to my system of bookkeeping.”

The pastor smiled and said, “Even if these two texts refer to the same thing in all respects, there is no contradiction, for St. Paul does not make ‘a slip of the pen,’ as Ewald charges him with doing, and say that no more than twenty-three thousand fell. If twenty-four thousand died, surely twenty-three thousand died, for the less is included in the greater. But attention to the language will show that there is not the shadow of a discrepancy. St. Paul speaks of the number that fell in ‘one day,’ while the larger number expresses the deaths in the entire visitation of judgment, ‘the plague,’ which in the nature of things could hardly have been confined to the period of one day. Let me give you, by the way, this

hint : Often strict attention to the precise language will resolve many an apparent difficulty, as in the case of the much bruited story with which you first came to me, that of David and*the threshing-floor of Ornan, or Aramah, 2 Sam. 24 : 24, and 1 Chron. 21 : 25."

" Hurrah !" said Fred Leges enthusiastically : " this case is just what a member of the Agnostic Club brought up in my office this week ; and if I had had the wit to look carefully at the language, I could have answered him. I am learning something, thanks to you, my dear pastor, and I'll do better next time."

Then he went on to say, " George's difficulty with this number seems to be quite along the line of his profession : his books must balance. Now don't laugh at a poor fellow of the legal persuasion when I say that the other day, after a bit of sharp experience, I studied the subject of *temptation*. Thank the Lord, I found what I needed. But here are a couple of passages I don't know what to do with :

Gen. 22 : 1, '*It came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham.*'

James 1 : 13, '*God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.*' "

A sympathetic look came into the pastor's eyes and a sympathetic tone into his voice—for he had also " suffered, being tempted"—as he responded : " The word 'tempt' (Greek *πειραζω*) has three distinct and well-marked stages of meaning : 1 To attempt, assay, as in Acts 16 : 7, 'They *assayed* to go into Bithynia,' or Acts 24 : 6, when it is translated *gone about*; 2. To try, to put to test, to prove, as in Jno. 6 : 6, 'This he said *to prove* him ;' and 3. To solicit to evil, as in Matt. 4 : 1, '*Tempted* of the devil.' It is the same Greek word in all these places. God did 'tempt,' *i. e.*, try, test, prove, Abraham,

but did not solicit him with evil, or to do evil. Thus the word 'tempt' has a good and a bad sense. The first, the good sense, may be predicated of God, but not the second. Understanding the difference of meanings in the word, the 'discrepancy' disappears."

CHAPTER IV.

Soon after the third meeting in the pastor's study, George Argent, the bank-teller, went up to the office of the young lawyer, Fred Leges, to spend the evening. The completeness with which "the Dominie" had solved the alleged discrepancies of the Bible which they had taken to him, and the ease with which he brushed away difficulties, inspired these two ardent young Christian workers with a sort of military enthusiasm to rout the Agnostic Club, horse, foot, and dragoons.

As Argent comfortably seated himself, Leges turned, "I say, George, the hint the Dominie gave us at our last meeting, I believe has lots of sense in it: 'Often strict attention to the precise language will resolve many an apparent difficulty.' The president of the Agnostic Club has fought shy of me since our last encounter on the David-Ornan threshing-floor difficulty; but to-day he was up here, and he slipped a paper before me with three texts of scripture written on it, saying, 'There, young man, try your molars on that.' They were these:

Gen. 46 : 26, "*All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's son's wives, all the souls were three score and six*" (66).

Gen. 46 : 27, "*And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were three score and ten*" (70).

Acts 7 : 14, "*Then sent Joseph and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred three score and fifteen (75) souls.*"

Said Leges, "These varying numbers, 66, 70 and 75,

look rather formidable ; but I see they are set in variant conditions, and I shouldn't wonder if the Dominie's hint will enable us to solve the problem. Let's go down to Miss Rysen's and work it out if we can."

Miss Rysen was always "at home" to her young men. Her Bible class was almost *the* institution of the town. Hardly a young man could come to reside in the place without being invited, either by herself or some of her workers, to join it. And all were brought face to face with their personal relations to the Lord Jesus Christ. Many a young man will rise up and call her blessed, for to her he owes his introduction to the Saviour. This suggestion to go to Miss Rysen's was like an invitation to go "next door to heaven," as one of her class once characterized her parlor.

Sitting under the chandelier, with Bibles in hand, they went to work. "Strict attention to the precise language, now," said Fred. Miss Rysen's quick discernment led her to speak first: "Why! each verse has its own problem, and each different from the others. 1. Gen. 46:26, 'which came out of his loins,' *i. e.*, his descendants, who 'came *with* Jacob into Egypt.' Joseph was already there; 2. Gen. 46:27, 'the house of Jacob,' *i. e.*, the aforesaid descendants plus Joseph and his sons, for all these 'came into Egypt;' 3. Acts 7:14, 'all his kindred.'" Leges, in astonishment, gave Argent a resounding whack on the back, exclaiming, "George, we've got it! we've got it! now, you see!"

Perhaps two hours were spent in this study, working at the genealogical table in the forty-sixth chapter of Genesis, and hunting up the marginal references. The discovery of the death of the wives of Simeon and Judah resolved the last difficulty, and the "books balanced," as Argent put it. Their researches gave the following results:

I. JACOB'S DESCENDANTS.

Jacob's eleven sons and one daughter	12
Reuben's sons,	4
Simeon's "	6
Levi's "	3
Judah's "	3
Issachar's "	4
Zebulon's "	3
Gad's "	7
Asher's " and one daughter	5
Dan's "	1
Naphtali's "	4
Benjamin's "	10
Judah's grandsons	2
Asher's "	2
	<hr/>
	66

II. "THE HOUSE OF JACOB."

All the above,	66
Joseph and two sons,	3
Jacob himself,	1
	<hr/>
	70

III. "ALL HIS KINDRED."

Descendants,	66
Living wives of Jacob's sons (the wives of Simeon and Judah being dead),	9
	<hr/>
	75

As George Argent passed over a sheet with the above written upon it in his best banking hand, this trio of Bible students took genuine satisfaction, as well they might, in the results of their work. "Now," said

George, "I have a little nut to crack. I have again been looking into Professors Evans' and Smith's 'Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration.' On page 102 Professor Smith presents several apparent discrepancies, besides the threshing-floor one, which our pastor disposed of so annihilatingly; and his contention is that these apparent discrepancies are real ones, indeed down-right errors. Here it is:"

1 Chron. 21 : 5, *There were of all Israel, 1,100,000 that drew sword, and Judah was 470,000 that drew sword.*

2 Sam. 24 : 9, *There were in Israel 800,000 valiant men who drew sword, and the men of Judah were 500,000.*

"Strict attention, remember, to the precise language," said Miss Rysen, smiling at Leges. He looked carefully at the texts, and exclaimed: "Pshaw! Ask me something harder, please!" And he went on, "The larger number 1,100,000 in the northern kingdom, Israel, is of those 'that drew sword,' *i. e.* the whole military array, of whom the smaller number, 800,000 were 'valiant men.' The differentiating word, 'valiant,' amply accounts for the difference in numbers." Said Miss Rysen: "The male population of the southern kingdom, Judah, was 500,000, and of that number 470,000 did military duty, 'drew sword.' Where is the discrepancy, pray tell?" "Somewhat like my class in college," said Argent; "there were fifty men in the class, forty-seven of whom took military drill. The other three were disabled and therefore exempt."

A pained expression came over Argent's face, and he said sadly, "The authors of 'Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration' were professors in a Presbyterian theological seminary, and set for the defense of the Bible, but it seems to me their effort was to discredit the Bible; at least this is the effect. I fear I would have been swept

off my feet some time ago, had it not been for our beloved pastor. But I am safe now. I read in a Chicago secular paper to-day, 'Preachers who set themselves to overthrow the landmarks which their spiritual fathers have planted, have done more to undermine faith than all the professed opponents of Christianity.' And recently I read this from the distinguished Dutch theological professor, Van Oosterzee: 'No church summons ministers to contest her beliefs, and no one can demand of her an act of suicide in the name of progress and toleration.' So I don't wonder that the grand old Presbyterian church bounces its Briggses and its Smiths."

On their way home, the young men saw a light in the pastor's study, and went in. They reported the whole evening in detail, much to his delight. He fully endorsed their findings. As they were about to leave, he put a hand affectionately on the shoulder of each one as they stood together, and caressingly said, "Good boys! good boys! Go on, in this good way. 'Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,' as Jude bids, and 'speak the truth in love.'" His voice glided naturally into prayer, and to his earnest petitions that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth, and enable them to exemplify its practicalities in their lives before and with men in their daily affairs, and so give it its most effective commendation, they each responded with a fervent "Amen."

CHAPTER V.

The trio of Bible students, Miss Rysen, Fred Leges and George Argent came to the pastor's study for a fifth meeting, to get explanation of still further alleged Bible "discrepancies."

Argent was the first to broach the subject. Said he, "I have been reading 'Beginnings of Christianity,' by Rev. Dr. George P. Fisher, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Yale College. On page 406, speaking of the different accounts of Peter's second denial of Christ, he says, 'It is a case where a narrator might not wish to be held responsible for a strictly accurate statement.'"

Said the pastor, "I noticed the same thing in the Professor's book, and, after a little investigation, I found the difficulty very easily solved, when once I had the clue."

Miss Rysen expressed astonishment that a man of that Professor's orthodox standing, should insinuate inaccuracy in Bible statements, and more yet that he himself did not solve a difficulty which a pastor found easy of solution—a pastor, too, whose time for scholarly research, unlike the time of a college professor, is greatly abridged by constantly encroaching pastoral cares. George Argent clapped his hands in applause, in which Fred joined, as Miss Rysen with a look toward her pastor of mingled admiration and triumph, concluded, "What is easy for our pastor ought not to be impossible to a distinguished college professor." Blushing as she saw the warmth of expression into which she had been led by her loyalty to the Word, she meekly added, "I think I had better subside."

The pastor seemed somewhat annoyed by the comparison, and looking as though he did not altogether relish this applauded reflection upon a renowned incumbent of a celebrated historical chair, the justice and pertinency of which, however, he must have admitted, he hastened to call for the passages in question. They were :

Mk. 14 : 69, "*And a maid saw him and began to say.*"

Matt. 26 : 71, "*Another [maid] saw him and said.*"

Lk. 22 : 58, "*Another [man] saw him and said.*"

Said the pastor, "Much has been made of the difference of persons in these passages,—a difference emphasized by the properly supplied words in the brackets. Peter's first denial of Christ was in the open court as he was warming himself by the fire (Lk. 22 : 55). Afterward he went out into the porch, and these three texts have reference to the challenges that there occasioned his second denial. Happily, John 18 : 25 furnishes the clew, which many have overlooked, that entirely solves the difficulty. There was, doubtless, in company with Peter in the porch, a more or less numerous, excited throng. Quite confident of his identity, they fling at him, either simultaneously or in quick succession, their angry charges of alliance with Jesus; for John's '*They* said therefore unto him' conclusively proves the *plurality* of the charges. John's '*they*' will therefore include Mark's '*maid*,' Matthew's '*another maid*,' Luke's '*another man*,' and we know not how many more. Thus these texts are perfectly harmonious."

The completeness of this vindication of the accuracy of the scripture accounts, which have so long been questioned, of Peter's denial, came as a fresh surprise to the little group. They thanked the pastor heartily for the confirmation he was giving to their confidence in the Word of God, when so many teachers in high places are,

even though undesignedly, weakening faith in it; and Argent, who is quite an extensive and discriminating reader, said, "It may yet be here, as it now seems coming to be in Germany, the defenders of 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' will be the pastors as against the theological professors." The pastor, with some emphasis, expressed the hope and conviction that George was taking too gloomy a view of the theological faculties. And headed, "What we need is a genuine Holy Ghost revival, and when that comes, 'the Spirit of Truth' will lead these misguided and misguiding brethren into the truth: mist will be cleared out of mystified brains."

Said Fred Leges, "I have to lead the meeting of our Endeavor Society next Sunday evening, and the subject is 'Burdens.' My dear pastor, will you kindly show me what to do with the apparent contradiction in these two texts?

Gal. 6 : 2, '*Bear ye one another's burdens;*' and Gal. 6 : 5, '*Every man shall bear his own burden.*'"

Said the pastor, "The English word 'burden' here translates two different Greek words. The first is *baros*, weight, which enters into the word barometer, an instrument for measuring the weight or pressure-force of the atmosphere. It is used in Matt. 20 : 12, 'Which have borne the *burden* and heat of the day,' where the idea is that of a load, labor, toil, which another may share. The second is *phortion*, another word altogether, and is used in Lk. 11 : 46, 'Ye lade men with *burdens* grievous to be borne,' where the idea seems to be that of imposition of obligations, non-fulfilling which, guilt is incurred. *Baros* belongs to the realm of social sympathy and help: *phortion* to that of individual responsibility. The first may be shared: the second must be borne alone. The apparent contradiction vanishes when we understand that

the two texts are speaking, not of the same, but of different things. But," said the pastor, turning to Fred, "you will have to use this explanation in your own way at the Endeavor meeting."

Miss Rysen said she would like help on a couple of verses a member of her class brought to her for reconciliation. She read them :

Gen. 2 : 2, "*On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested the seventh day from all his work which he had made.*"

John 5 : 17, "*Jesus answered them, My father worketh hitherto [Rev. even until now] and I work.*"

Said the pastor, "The contradiction between God ceasing from work and his continuing in work is only apparent, and not real, for the simple reason that, as in the case of the texts Mr. Leges just submitted, different things are spoken of. The work spoken of in Genesis is the work of creation recounted in the preceding chapter : from that God did cease. The work spoken of in John is providential and redemptive work : that has continued 'even until now,' and goes on unceasingly. The work being not identical, but different, there can be no contradiction between the statements."

The visitors expressed their satisfaction in, and thankfulness for, the explanations given, and after planning for another meeting in the near future, went their homeward way.

CHAPTER VI.

In accordance with the plan formed at the last meeting, the trio soon found themselves again in the pastor's study for a sixth meeting.

Said the young lawyer, Fred Leges, "I have been studying Farrar's *Life of Christ*, and I must say I like it and I don't like it. I like it for the clear elucidation and bright illumination it gives of gospel narratives and scenes; but I don't like his tendency to make such ready concessions to the criticisms and objections of those who do not seem over friendly to the Word of God. Indeed, he seems to me sometimes to make, if you will allow me, a 'dead give away' to infidelity. To-day I read chapter XLVIII, 'Jericho and Bethany,' and in treating of Christ's healing the blind men at Jericho, as recorded in Matt. 20 : 29-34, Mk. 10 : 46-52, and Lk. 18 : 35-43, he says, 'Those who have a narrow, timid, superstitious, and unscriptural view of inspiration, may well be troubled by the obvious discrepancies between the evangelists in this narrative.' I wonder if he means by the word 'obvious' what the dictionary says—'perfectly manifest, easily and plainly to be perceived, palpably true.' That there is a difficulty in this narrative I am aware; but before admitting that there is a 'palpably true' discrepancy, I would like to hear from our pastor."

The pastor thus appealed to responded: "The tendency to which you refer I noticed, and I was pained by it; but his *Life of Christ*, written more than twenty-five years ago, is hardly a circumstance, in this respect, to his late work on the *Book of Daniel*. I think he has

incurred a very serious responsibility, to be settled with the Author of the Bible."

Continued the pastor: "As to the alleged, but by no means 'obvious,' discrepancy which Fred has brought to our attention, I have given it careful consideration, and to me it presents not only no 'discrepancy,' but hardly a difficulty worth considering. The passages begin:

Matt. 20:29, '*And as they departed from Jericho, . . . behold two blind men,*' etc.

Mk. 10:46, '*And as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, . . . blind Bartimeus,*' etc.

Lk. 18:35, '*And it came to pass that as he was come nigh unto Jericho a certain blind man,*' etc.

"Let me call your attention to a statement of Lee (Inspiration of Scripture, p. 353), who, following Augustine, says, 'Any solution which affords a *possible* mode of harmonizing those statements of the sacred writers which present a semblance of opposition, is to be admitted before we can allow the existence of a contradiction.' You readily see that the trouble is made simply by insisting that the three evangelists must refer to the same event. It is possible, not only, but to me it is more than probable, that they refer to two different events. The healing which Matthew and Mark record occurred as Christ and his disciples *departed* from Jericho, while that recorded by Luke occurred as they *entered*. Allow that these narratives simply tell the truth, as do Augustine, and such modern scholars as Greswell, Lightfoot, Ebrard, and others, and the difficulty instantly disappears."

"Perhaps it ought to be added," said the pastor, "as a relief to what Fred began with, that Farrar says in the same foot-note from which he quoted, 'I believe that if

we knew the exact circumstances, the discrepancy would vanish.' Still, his unfortunate 'tendency' could hardly keep him from going on to say, 'But even if, in the course of time, any trivial inaccuracy had found its way into the early documents on which St. Luke based his gospel, I should see nothing distressing or derogatory in such a supposition'—an admission which, as it seems to me, can only accord with a low and unworthy view of divine inspiration; for how can an inspiration that cannot guarantee against a 'trivial' inaccuracy, guarantee against a vital one?"

"But," interposed George Argent, "Matthew speaks of two healings, and Mark of but one. Do these refer to the same event?"

"Yes, I think so," answered the pastor. "Trench, speaking of these three accounts says, 'They can at once be reduced to two, by the rule, which in all reconciliation of parallel histories must be held fast, namely, that the silence of one narrator is not to be assumed as the contradiction of the statement of another.' Thus, and also on the principle that the greater includes the less, Matthew's two would include Mark's one. Moreover, since Mark is the only one who gives the name of the man who was healed, it may be that there was some special circumstance of prominence, or some other sufficient consideration, which led him to specifically single out Bartimeus, and bring him alone to the fore. Though he mentions but one, that is no reason there were not the two of whom Matthew speaks. Therefore I think Matthew and Mark refer to the same event while Luke refers to still another."

Miss Rysen added, "I have noticed that those who hold that these three narratives refer to the same event do so because of the marked similarity of the accounts;

Trench, for example, among other points of agreement, instancing that 'our Lord was besought in almost the same words by blind beggars on the wayside, for mercy.' Though their cries are not in all respects identical, each one uses the language, 'Thou son of David, have mercy on me,' or 'us.'"

Said the pastor, "That seems to have been with the afflicted, a sort of common formula of appeal to Christ. The two blind men who were cured perhaps a year and a half earlier, used the same language (Matt. 9 : 27). The Syrophenician woman's cry was, 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David.' Geike tells us that while in northern Europe there is only one blind person in a thousand, in some parts of the east there is one in every hundred. A modern traveller calculates that there are twenty blind persons in every hundred in Cairo. The frequency with which blindness appears among the ailments mentioned in the gospels would surprise one who has not considered the matter. The good news of the Healer must have rapidly spread over the whole country, and the method of approach must have become well known ; accordingly the appeal, 'Thou son of David, have mercy on me,' may well have become a common formula. The similarity of these accounts can perfectly consist with their narrating different events."

After hearty expressions of satisfaction with this explanation, Fred said, "I have another nut to crack. Yesterday the president of the Agnostic Club was up in our office again, and he read me three passages of Scripture, which, upon my word, I do not see what to do with. Said I, I am very busy to-day, but I will see you later ; which meant, of course, after our visit to ' the Dominie ' ! Here they are, with some brackets I have supplied."

1 Sam. 31 : 4-5, "Therefore Saul took a sword and fell upon it; and when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword and died with him."

2 Sam. 21 : 12, "The Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa."

2 Sam. 1 : 10, "So I [the Amalekite] stood upon him [Saul] and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen."

Said the pastor, "The same passages were sent to me a little while ago, and I have had time to consider them. Much has been made of this seeming 'discrepancy.' But a candid and fair dealing with these passages, *in connection with their context*, will, I think, effect a satisfactory reconciliation."

Continued the pastor, "There are three steps in this sad tragedy. The *first* was the death-wounding of Saul by the Philistine archers: 'the archers hit him and he was sore wounded of the archers' (1 Sam. 31 : 3). The *second* was his own suicidal act; for, keenly smarting under the humiliation and shame of disaster and defeat, the Philistine arrows were not speedy enough in their fatal work, and so he fell upon his own sword. His armor-bearer, supposing his master therefore dead, took his own life. But this second and self-wounding seems not to have been immediately fatal. The *third* was when the ill-fated monarch, having regained a feeble and flickering consciousness for a moment, solicits and receives the finishing stroke, too long delayed, at the hands of the Amalekite."*

* A singularly able and shrewd lawyer and an ex-Senator, who as a layman, is perhaps not surpassed by any layman as a Bible scholar and theologian, takes a different view of this case, and in a summary and interesting way removes one element of the difficulty. He kindly writes the author: "As to Saul's death,

“Such,” the pastor went on, “are the three steps. Either act—that of the Philistine archer, the suicidal hand, or the vagrant Amalekite—would have effected the catastrophe, and death may fairly be said to have been caused by either, but the three combined simply brought the end quicker and nearer.”

Said Fred, enthusiastically, “I’ll see him,” and then, with a plan for another meeting, and the usual leave-takings, the little company separated.

I differ with you. Your explanation does not, it seems to me, meet the records. The record of the case shows : 1. That he was sore wounded by the archers ; 2. That he asked his armor-bearer to kill him, who refused ; 3 That he fell on his own sword ; 4 That when his armor-bearer saw that he *was dead*, (no supposing about it,) he fell on his own sword and died with him. Now this is the whole record of the case. Some days afterwards a wild Amalekite comes to David and tells him a story that is *a lie upon the face of it*, as any lawyer would know the moment he heard it in court. The Bible simply gives what the man said, but does not vouch for the truthfulness of his story, no more than it does for the *truth* of what the Devil said to the woman in the garden of Eden.”

CHAPTER VII.

At the seventh meeting Miss Rysen was the first to present a Bible difficulty. Said she, "One of the members of my Bible class handed me a couple of passages of Scripture last Sunday, the disagreement between which is, of course, only on the surface. Our experiences here assure me that our pastor can easily make the underlying harmony to appear. The passages are :"

Ex. 25 : 8, "*And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.*"

Acts 7 : 48, "*Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.*"

Said the pastor, "The statements here are not of contradictory, but of contrasted, facts. The first has reference to God's localized manifestation in grace : in that sense he does dwell in every true sanctuary. The second refers to his illimitable and omnipresent being : in that sense he cannot be comprehended by a temple, for 'the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him' (1 K. 8 : 27). The two texts contrast his ineffable condescension with his infinite majesty ; his gracious presence with his people on earth, and his absolute dwelling place in glory. This true view point makes them perfectly harmonious."

Said Fred Leges, "I would be glad to know the solution of the difficulty in the following two passages to which my attention was called by a member of the Agnostic Club :"

2 Sam. 6 : 23, "*Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child unto the day of her death.*"

2 Sam. 21 : 8, "*The king took . . . the five sons of*

Michal, the daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel, the son of Barzillai, the Meholathite."

Said the pastor, "These texts are said to present a 'plain contradiction;' but I think an acquaintance with the preceding history will entirely solve the difficulty. If you will follow in your Bibles, as I call your attention to the passages, and regard the chronology that is given at the top of the reference columns, the matter will, I trust, be made plain."

The trio eagerly followed the passages, as the pastor gave them out and showed their setting. Said he, "You will see in 1 Sam. 18, that David's prowess won for him a wife,—not king Saul's eldest daughter, Merab, vs. 17, 19, as he expected, but Michal, the younger, instead (19 : 11). This was B. C. 1063. It was probably the next year, B. C. 1062, that Saul, for some reason, took Michal away from David, and gave her 'to Phalti the son of Laish,' 1 Sam. 25 : 44. In B. C. 1048, David, by his brother-in-law, Ishbosheth, recovered his wife Michal, from Phalti, 2 Sam. 3 : 15. She thus lived with Phalti 14 years. Six years later, B. C. 1042, David having meanwhile become king, his unseemly exhibition of himself in dancing before the restored Ark of the Lord, 2 Sam. 6 : 14, 20, brought upon him the contempt of his wife ; for the unwifely expression of which, there came, as is implied in the word 'therefore,' this judgment : 'Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children unto the day of her death.' Her non-child bearing must, accordingly, be reckoned from the time of David's saltatory performance in B. C. 1042. Of course Michal may have had children before this, and it is quite supposable that the five sons in question were the children of Phalti, born during the 14 years of his life with her. While, therefore, the alleged contradiction thus instantly disap-

pears, our supposition is made almost certain when we consider that in David's rendering up seven sons of the house of Saul for immolation, because of that king's crime against the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. 21 : 1-6, he would hardly have given his own sons, but he could fulfil the conditions by surrendering the five sons of Michal with the two sons of Rizpah, Saul's concubine, 2 Sam. 21 : 8. Thus, not only is there no contradiction, but the childlessness in the one case, and the five sons in the other, are fully accounted for."

Continued the pastor, "While this explanation seems to me to fully meet the allegation of contradiction, there is still another solution. It is also quite possible that 'the five sons of Michal, daughter of Saul, whom she brought up for Adriel,' were simply her foster-sons left to her for rearing, by her sister Merab, the wife of Adriel, 1 Sam. 18 : 19. It is significant that some of the manuscripts which the Hebraist, Dr. Kennicott, had for his great work, *Vetus Testamentum cum Varris Lectionibus*, 2 vols., as well as the Chaldee version, say : 'The five sons of Merab,' instead of Michal. You will recall that the deliverance of the Presbyterian General Assembly of 1893, at Washington, which we had before us at our second meeting, holds that 'errors and mistakes of translators, copyists and printers,' do not invalidate the inspiration of 'the very Word of God.' 'Michal' may possibly be a transcriber's mistake for 'Merab.' But whether so or not, I think the explanation given above completely removes the difficulty.'"

Said George Argent, "Now that we are on the history of Saul and David, I recall that Prof. Henry Preserved Smith, in his *Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration*, p. 99, makes a difficulty—indeed he calls it a 'serious discrepancy'—in 1 Samuel; chapters 16 and 17. He

says, 'In one chapter he [David] is already a warrior when invited to the court to play before Saul. . . . In the other he is a stripling who comes providentially into camp in time to meet the giant, and appears to be wholly unknown to Saul.' "

Said the pastor, "Dean Milman exploited this difficulty in his *History of the Jews*. But it seems to me that both he and Prof. Smith entirely miss the point. True, in chapter xvi., David had been Saul's harpist, and was able by his music to soothe to calmness the king's mental distresses; he won the monarch's love and was made his armor-bearer (v. 21). 'But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem,' 1 Sam. 17: 15. The Philistines invade the land. Goliath issues his challenge, staking all on individual combat with him. Among the things Saul promises to him who shall kill the giant, is to 'make his father's house free in Israel,' 1 Sam. 17: 25. David appears upon the scene, and performs the deed. Though at the outset Saul had heard who David's father was, it is likely that in his fits of madness he had forgotten; but, at any rate, in fulfilling his promise of freedom, the king must be certified as to who the young victor's father is. To say, as Prof. Smith does, that David now 'appears to be wholly unknown to Saul,' is entirely gratuitous. Saul's inquiry is, simply, 'Whose son is this youth?' and he commissions his lieutenant, Abner, to find out. Seeing that this is the point on which the inquiry turns, viz., who David's father is, the 'discrepancy' disappears."

Said George Argent again, "This history of Saul reminds me of still another thing. You remember that recently our prayer-meeting topic was 'The Rewards of Obedience to God,' Lk. 12: 41-48. Studying up the subject beforehand, I read 1 Samuel, chapter xv., which

tells of Saul's disobedience, and I found what is to me a grave difficulty. Here are the verses :''

1 Sam. 15 : 29, "*The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he should repent.*"

1 Sam. 15 : 35, "*And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.*"

Said the pastor, "As you all know, this is one of the 'tough nuts' of exegesis; but may be we can find a view-point which will relieve the difficulty. The Bible says that God does repent, in such passages as these: Gen. 6 : 6, 7 (on which Prof. Tayler Lewis, in *Lange's Genesis*, p. 288, has an extended dissertation); Ex. 32 : 14; Judges 2 : 18; 1 Sam. 15 : 11; Ps. 106 : 45; Heb. 7 : 21, etc. Moses prays, 'Return, O Jehovah, how long!—and let it repent thee concerning thy servants' (Ps. 90 : 13). Again, the Bible says that God does not repent, as in Numb. 23 : 19; Ps. 110 : 4; Jer. 4 : 28; Ezek. 24 : 14, etc. Now, both of these sets of passages are true if you allow, which is the fact, that the word 'repentance' covers different spaces of meaning. Among its significations are these : 1. A change of mind or purpose; 2. Regret or sorrow for wrong done or sin committed, involving a rectification of the wrong or forsaking the sin. In this second sense, man repents, but not God; for he is not a man, a sinner, that he should repent. In the first sense, both God and men repent, *i. e.*, change their minds, and change their conduct, too. But you ask, 'Is not God unchangeable?' Yes, and it is just because he is unchangeable that he 'repents'! The real change, however, is not in God, but in man. As Dr. Joseph Parker so well puts it in his discourse, in *The City Temple*, on 'Saul Rejected,' 'All the government of God is founded upon a moral basis: when moral conditions have been impaired or disturbed, God's rela-

tion to the matter in question is of necessity changed ; and this change, justified by such reasons, could not be more conveniently or indeed more accurately expressed than by the word repentance.' ”

George's face brightened, and he said with considerable enthusiasm, “ I see it : for me the nut is cracked. This is simply ‘ differential calculus ’ applied to morals. I remember that in that branch of mathematics in college, quantities were divided into two kinds, ‘ variables ’ and ‘ constants,’ and, in their relations to each other, one might be the ‘ function ’ of the other. Here, man's sin is the variable, and God's righteousness the constant ; and the functional relation requires that as sinful man varies in moral conditions, the unchanging God must necessarily follow with the constant principle of righteousness, and meet the changed conditions. That is to say, the unchangeable, righteous God must change, not himself, but simply his course of conduct, *i. e.*, ‘ repent,’ so as righteously to fit the changed moral conditions effected by man. It was in fitting the conditions caused by Saul's change that God's repentance consisted.”

“ Precisely so,” said the pastor, “ and we will thank Dr. Parker for solving the difficulty for us so well, and George for illuminating it so lustroously.”

CHAPTER VIII.

At the eighth meeting of the trio in the pastor's study, there seemed to be a bit of constraint at the outset, when George Argent said to the minister, "I don't know but we ought to apologize for bringing so many of the alleged contradictions of the Bible to you for reconciliation. You may think from this apparent trend of our minds that we are becoming skeptics. But I assure you we are not."

The pastor smiled and answered, "You remember the passage between a tiger-hunter returned from India and a returned missionary, at a banquet in London. The hunter had shot many tigers, but had not seen a single convert, and therefore concluded that the alleged success of Christian missions was entirely fictitious: there were no converts in India. The missionary, thus challenged, replied that he had been in India many years and had seen a great many converts, but had never seen a single tiger; whence, adopting his friend's style of reasoning, he ought to conclude that the tiger stories are fictions: no tigers are there!"

"I have found," continued the pastor, "that people see just about what they have eyes to see; they find what they are looking for. You, having begun with alleged 'discrepancies' and familiarized your minds with the subject, would naturally be much more apt to see them than you otherwise would, especially as you have the assiduous assistance of the Agnostic Club. Oh, no; I think you are too well 'rooted and grounded' to be switched off on skeptical lines. But you are most cordially welcome to bring whatever difficulties you may

find. My thought has been that you young people have pursued these studies somewhat for your own sakes, but more yet that, in your Christian work, you might become able to help others."

"Correct, correct you are!" ejaculated Fred Leges. "But, would you deem me impertinent if I were to ask how it is that you are able to do what you are doing for us? Difficulties that we have brought—some of them pronounced insuperable by even theological professors—you have met completely."

The pastor, disclaiming any superiority whatever, to any of his brethren in this matter, said, "You know the old saying, 'There are tricks in all trades but mine.' But there is no trick about this. When I was a student in the theological seminary, some infidel publishing house got hold of the seminary catalog, as I suppose, and sent to all of us students a pamphlet in which were professedly brought together all the so-called self-contradictions in the Bible. Of course I was troubled. For my own sake, and I am now beginning to think, as was said of Queen Esther's coming to the throne, 'for such a time as this,' I 'sat up' with that pamphlet. But let us proceed."

Miss Rysen presented a difficulty to which her attention had been called by a member of her Bible class:

Gen. 6:19, "*And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark.*"

Gen. 7:2, "*Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens.*"

Said the pastor, "The first command, to take 'two of every sort,' (Heb. 'by twos,') *i. e.*, by pairs (you observe nothing is said here as to how many pairs), was given when the command to build the ark was made; then, after one hundred and twenty years, 'while the ark was

a preparing' (1 Pet. 3:20), the further command was given to take of *clean* beasts 'by sevens,' *i. e.*, as Bush puts it, 'Three couples for breed and the odd seventh for sacrifice, chap. 8:20.' Says Lange, 'This [second] appointment is a special carrying out of the more universal one, chap. 6:19, and is therefore wholly in correspondence with the advancing prophecy, and not in contradiction of it.' The difficulty has been manufactured by assuming that, in the first command, one pair only is intended; whereas, as you see, the number of pairs is left indefinite. The second command simply makes definite what in the first was left indefinite. The two are therefore in entire harmony.'

Said Fred Leges, "I have heard some rather hilarious and skeptical comments made on such a structure as the ark having room for so many animals." The pastor handed him Professor Howard Osgood's article on President Harper's lectures on Genesis, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1895, and he read, p. 333, "Whether the ark could not have contained all the animals for want of space, any one can decide for himself, by calculating the average size of all animals of the land, the space required for them, and the size of one deck of the ark. The ocean steamers of the first rank could carry on one deck two of all land animals, birds, reptiles, insects, and seven each of the ten clean animals, and have plenty of space to spare for the crew to work the ship. Only two-thirds of one deck of the ark would have sufficed, by actual measurement of animals, for two of all land animals ever known on earth."

"Speaking of animals reminds me," said Fred, "that at dinner yesterday our landlady said if I would kindly stop at the market, on my way back to the office, and order a half-dozen of quail sent up, we would have quail

on toast for supper. As I was ordering them, the butcher, who is a member of the Agnostic Club, said, 'Leges, don't you think quail must have been pretty cheap back in the Jew-times in the wilderness, when [Numb. 11 : 31] 'there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth!' I tell you what, young man, quails lying for miles around this town three and a half feet deep on the ground would knock my business all out.'"

During the laugh that followed, the pastor handed to George Argent, who was sitting next to him, the Latin Vulgate, and to Miss Rysen our Revised Version. George read: "*Volabantque in aere duobus cubitis altitudine super terram, i. e., 'and they flew in the air two cubits in height above the earth;'*" and Miss Rysen read, "And about two cubits *above* the face of the earth."

Said the pastor, "You see that a correct translation at once removes the difficulty. Josephus accordingly explains the passage by saying it merely means that the quails flew within reach of the people about two cubits from the ground. The birds could easily be knocked down with sticks."

Said George Argent, "In recent readings in the Acts of the Apostles I have come across something on which I desire help."

Acts 9 : 7, "*And the men who journeyed with him [Paul] stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*"

Acts 22 : 9, "*And they that were with me [Paul] saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.*"

Said the pastor, "Recent criticism has not failed to

take advantage of this apparent discrepancy, and it has even been declared to be a 'plain contradiction.' There are two ways of relieving the difficulty; one is by a proper understanding of the noun *φωνή*, rendered 'voice,' and the other by a proper understanding of the verb *ἀκούω*, rendered 'hear.'

"You will remember," continued the pastor, "that when we considered the word 'tempt,' at our third meeting, we saw that a word may cover different spaces of meaning. Looking in the Greek lexicon, you will see that *phone* means 1. A sound; 2. A voice, *i. e.*, a sound made in a particular way; 3. Articulated speech, words, *i. e.*, that which is uttered by the voice. Thus, in the first case, the amazed and dazed men heard 'a voice,' *i. e.*, a sound, a noise; and in the second case, 'they heard not the voice,' *i. e.*, they heard not the articulated speech, the words, which fell so distinctly and intelligibly on Paul's quickened ear. This, you see, completely fits the situation. This explanation is confirmed by Jno. 12: 28-30, when 'came there a voice from heaven' whose utterance Jesus understood, but 'the people, therefore, that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered.' "

"Now for the second method," said the pastor. "Look in the lexicon, and you will see that *akouo* means 1. To hear, simply; and then, among other derived or developed significations, 2. To understand, comprehend, that which is heard. Accordingly, in the first case the men simply heard the voice, sound, noise; and in the second case, while they 'heard' it as a sound, they did not 'understand' what it articulated. In one sense they heard it, and yet in another sense they did not hear it. How often in large audiences the complaint is made that a speaker is not heard, *i. e.*, his words are not understood though his voice is audible, easily so, for its loudness.

Among the half-dozen or more renderings of *akouo* in the New Testament, it is translated 'understand' in 1 Cor. 14 : 2, 'For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God, for no man *understandeth* him.' Therefore put the word 'understood' in the place of 'heard' in Acts 22 : 9, and all is easy. Dr. J. A. Alexander says, 'There is a distinction between hearing a voice speak, and hearing what it says. . . . It might be said with equal truth, that Paul's companions heard the voice, *i. e.*, knew that it was speaking, and that they did not hear it, *i. e.*, did not know what it said.' Either one of our solutions seems to me to completely resolve the difficulty."

"So say we all," interposed Fred Leges with some enthusiasm, and evidently speaking for the others as well as himself. And he went on, "This case of hearing and yet not hearing, is akin to the difficulty in Ex. xxxiii., of seeing and yet not seeing God, where 'the Lord spake unto Moses face to face' (v. 11), and yet in v. 20 'He said, thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live.' That has troubled me."

Said the pastor, "The consideration of this alleged 'discrepancy' will take so much time, we would better defer it till our next meeting."

After prayer to him who inspired the Word and caused it to be written, that he would illumine their minds in the knowledge of it, and enable them to resolve its difficulties so far as it is for them to do, and still more to give them visions of God himself, the little company separated.

CHAPTER IX.

The ninth meeting had been looked forward to with eager interest by the young people, for the deferred difficulty seemed to grow upon them as they thought of it. They judged that no more mutually contradictory scripture terms could be found than those, for instance, in Ex. 24 : 11, "They saw God," and 1 Tim. 6 : 16, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see." Said Fred Leges, as they were on their way to the Manse, "I am afraid the Dominie will have his hands full this time." Miss Rysen quickly responded, "But we have all confidence in the bridge that has always carried us safely over."

When they were assembled and ready for work, the pastor said, "The difficulty Mr. Leges presented, which was put over to be treated now, is an old acquaintance of mine. Indeed it was the very first I met, of the kind we have been considering, for it was flared forth in staring red ink on the cover of the infidel pamphlet to which I referred at our last meeting. These were the two texts :"

Gen. 32 : 30, "*For I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.*"

Ex. 33 : 20, "*And he said, Thou canst not see my face ; for there shall no man see me, and live.*"

Said the pastor, with some solemnity, "I feel like approaching this subject with unsandalled feet, as Moses approached the burning bush (Ex. 3 : 5). These two texts are only part of a number which speak of God, on the one hand, as not to be seen (Deut. 4 : 15 ; Jno. 1 : 18 ; 5 : 37 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 17, etc.) ; and, on the other,

as seen (Ex. 24 : 10 ; 33 : 11 ; Judges 13 : 22 ; Isa. 6 : 1 ; Rev. 22 : 4, etc.).”

He went on: “To the question, ‘*Can* God be seen?’ I would answer, Let us, first of all, see just what the question is, or what is in it, that we may know what it is we are trying to answer. To illustrate: If you were to ask ‘Did Christ die for all men?’ I would reply, which question do you want me to answer first? for you have really asked two questions. How so? Because the little word ‘for’ is ambiguous, and has a two-fold significance. If you mean, ‘Did Christ die *for* all men in the sense of making an atonement sufficient for all men?’ I would answer, Yes (1 Jno. 2 : 2). But if you mean, ‘Did Christ die *for* all men in the sense of intending thereby to save all?’ I would as readily answer, No, for some will be lost (Acts 1 : 25 ; Rom. 1 : 8, 9 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 9). So, to the question, ‘Can God be seen?’ I would reply, What God, or rather which form of God, do you mean? Proper discernment just here may not only enable us to answer the question, but also to find the complete reconciliation of these apparently contradictory Scripture expressions.”

The pastor continued: “A Rabbinical writer says, ‘Of that divine glory mentioned in the Scriptures, there are degrees which the eyes of the prophets were able to explore, and which all the Israelites saw, in the pillar of cloud and of fire; but there is another so bright and dazzling that no mortal is able to comprehend it, and should any one venture to look upon it his whole frame would be dissolved.’ This second form of God is He who ‘dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto’ (1 Tim. 6 : 16); whom ‘no man hath seen at any time’ (Jno. 1 : 18), ‘nor can see’ (1 Tim. 6 : 16); who ‘is a Spirit’ (Jno. 4 : 24), ‘invisible’ (1 Tim. 1 : 17); what

Murphy calls 'the divine essence,' His 'direct, immediate, intrinsic Self; who 'is a consuming fire' (Deut. 4 : 24; Heb. 12 : 29). To this form of God, or to this mode of the Divine Being, must be referred all those Scriptures which speak of Him as not to be seen. From this standpoint the answer to the question must be, and correctly, No; God cannot be seen.'

The young people had become intensely interested. The pastor went on: "But this is not all. The unseen and unseeable God has veiled himself, has clothed himself with form attempered to mortal eyes. 'Thou hast covered Thyself with a cloud' (Lam. 3 : 44). It was from the 'pillar of cloud' that God spake to Moses and others 'face to face.' The Shekinah (*i. e.* residence) became the place of God's meeting his people. Still more: from the early church, down, with increasing acceptance, it has been held that the Old Testament appearances of Deity, the 'Angel' visitants to patriarchs, judges, prophets, and others—theophanies they are called—were pre-incarnate manifestations of the Second Person of the adorable and ever blessed Trinity. Says Kurtz: 'The 'Angel of the Lord' is God who manifests himself, for he identifies himself with God, ascribes divine power, honor, and names, to himself, accepts of worship and sacrifices, and is usually regarded and acknowledged as God by those to whom he appears. The 'Angel of the Lord,' appearing temporarily in a merely human form, is a prefiguration of the permanent and essential incarnation of God in Christ' (Sacred History, § 26, 2). Says Murphy, commenting on Ex. 23 : 20, 'Behold, I send an Angel before thee:' 'We conclude that the Angel here is God manifest in angelic offices to his people.' Says Bush, Commentary on Exodus, vol. I. p. 166; 'It is clear that the 'Lord,' and

the 'Angel of the covenant' are identical, and no one doubts that this is a prediction of the coming of Christ heralded by John the Baptist. Consequently, Christ of the New Testament, and the 'Angel' or 'Jehovah' of the Old, are one and the same."

"Then," continued the pastor, "we have the New Testament incarnation. Says the old hymn,

'Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find.'

Milton gives beautiful expression of the incarnation, in the beginning of Book III., *Paradise Lost*.

'God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in Thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.'

'God was manifest in the flesh' (1 Tim. 3:6), 'and we beheld his glory' (Jno. 1:14). It is God in this form 'which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled' (1 Jno. 1:1). To this mode of the Divine Being, and as presented in the Old Testament theophanies, to the first form of the divine glory of which the Rabbinical writer speaks, must we refer all those passages which speak of God as seen. From this standpoint the answer to the question must surely be, and correctly, Yes; God *can* be seen."

Fred Leges, who was almost quiveringly alert, could not restrain himself, and he fervently said: "I see it, I see it. God in his essence, God who, as the Westminster Confession of Faith says, 'is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible' [Chap. II. 1], cannot be seen; but God in manifestation, after both the Old and the New Testa-

ment manner, can be seen ; in a word, God in his 'being' is invisible, but in his 'becoming' (to use a bit of college philosophical parlance) is visible ; and these two classes of Scripture passages, apparently so opposed to each other, are not contradictory, but perfectly harmonious, because they refer to two different, but harmonious, modes of the divine subsistence."

"Well, well ! Fred," said the pastor, smiling approvingly, "I thank you for this succinct summing up of all I have said. You have stated the precise conclusion to which I intended my disquisition should come."

After a few minutes' general conversation the pastor said to the young people, "Turn about is fair play : you have been listening to me, now let me listen to you. I have copied out three so called 'self-contradictions' from the pamphlet referred to, and I would like to see what you will do with them." He handed to each a slip of paper, and after a few moments Miss Rysen began :

Ex. 20 : 4, "*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth.*"

Ex. 25 : 18, 20, "*Thou shalt make two cherubims of gold. . . . And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another.*"

Said she, "I remember that when our Sunday-school lesson was on the Ten Commandments, it was made very plain that the prohibition in the first text forbade the making of 'any graven image,' or 'likeness,' representing Deity, *for the purpose of worship*. Says the next verse, 'Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, etc. This is its limitation. Such being the case, there can be no contradiction between this commandment and the

command to make the cherubims, which were not for worship, but simply to constitute a part of the covering of the ark, or mercy seat, where the Shekinah rested."

George Argent's turn came next, and from his slip he read :

Gal. 2 : 16, "*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.*"

Jas. 2 : 24, "*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*"

Said he, "Our pastor's prayer-meeting talk on justification, the other evening, which I trust I never shall forget, made this apparent contradiction very plain. Paul's view-point is of that which precedes, leads up to, and secures justification,—'the faith of Jesus Christ;' while James' point of view is of what follows justification,—'works.' Believe in order to be saved, work because you are saved. Faith the means or instrument of justification, works the evidence and fruit of it. I remember so well the sentence, 'Saved by faith alone, but not by a faith which is alone.' The difference in view-point shows there is no contradiction, but completest harmony instead."

Fred Leges said, "This is right in my line." He read:

Jno. 19 : 7, "*The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.*"

Jno. 18 : 31, "*The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*"

He continued, "The first text states a fact of Jewish jurisprudence, which they were urging upon Pilate to induce him to put Jesus to death. The Jews were no longer a state, but a conquered Roman province, and the Romans had taken from them the power of inflicting capital punishment. To have inflicted the death penalty upon Jesus for the crime of blasphemy, as alleged, would

have been lawful according to Jewish statute (Lev. 24 : 16), but unlawful according to Roman law which was now in force. No contradiction here, surely."

A look of satisfaction spread over their faces, and Fred said gleefully, "Oh, this is fun! If it were not time to go home, I would ask our pastor to fetch on some more."

CHAPTER X.

At the tenth meeting, passages of Scriptures were presented by Miss Rysen, George Argent, and Fred Leges respectively, in order as follows :

Josh. 10 : 42, "*And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the Lord God of Israel fought for them.*"

Josh. 11 : 18, "*Joshua made war a long time with all those kings.*"

Said the pastor, "A glance at the contexts will at once dissipate the apparent contradiction. 'All these kings and their land,' refer to the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, Libnah, and Debir, and their principalities, mentioned in the tenth chapter. If you will look at a map you will see that they all belong to the *southern part* of the country. This is Joshua's conquest of lower Palestine, a swift, devastating campaign that lasted about a year."

"The second text," said the pastor, "refers to the *northern* campaign, which lasted some five or six years. Understanding that the reference is to two different sections of the country and to two different campaigns, the 'discrepancy' at once disappears.

The next difficulty, presented by George Argent, was from his old friend (?) Professor Henry Preserved Smith, and found in *Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration*, p. 104.

2 Chron. 14 : 2-5, "*And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God; . . . also he took away . . . the high places.*"

1 Kings 15 : 14, "*But the high places were not removed; nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days.*"

Said the pastor, "This is a 'discrepancy' for which Professor Smith accounts by crediting it to the 'personal equation' of the historian. To say, as he does, that these texts 'certainly look on their face like direct contradictions,' and then attempt to show that the 'look' is the expression of a corresponding reality, must be due, it seems to me, to the personal equation of the Professor himself; for he ought to know that there are high places and high places."

The pastor handed George, Barrows' Sacred Geography and Antiquities, from which he read as follows: "This idolatrous worship on the high places must be carefully distinguished from the sacrifices to the true God which were offered on the high places by an irregularity tolerated by even the prophets, and sometimes commanded by God himself. 1 Sam 9 : 12 ; 16 : 2-5 ; 1 Kings 18 : 31, seq. ; etc." (p. 651). Fred Leges read from the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia, II. p. 989, "Both Asa (1 Kings 15 : 14) and Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22 : 43) allowed some of the high places to remain (presumably those on which sacrifice was offered to Jehovah), but destroyed the idolatrous shrines (2 Chron. 15 : 17, comp. 14 : 5 ; 20 : 33, comp. 17 : 6)."

"Understanding," said the pastor, "that Asa took away the high places where idolatrous worship was offered, and left those where Jehovah was worshipped, there is no difficulty."

Fred, as the outcome of an exchange of ideas with the President of the Agnostic Club, presented these passages :

Matt. 10 : 9, 10, "*Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass for your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves ; for the workman is worthy of his meat.*"

Mark 6 : 8, 9, " *And he commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only ; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse ; but be shod with sandals, and not put on two coats.*"

Lk. 9 : 3, " *And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money ; neither have two coats apiece.*"

Said the pastor, " There are accounted to be two ' discrepancies ' here ; one in regard to the foot-gear, and the other in regard to the walking-stick. While Mark bids to go ' shod with sandals,' Matthew forbids ' shoes ;' and while Mark allows a ' staff,' Matthew and Luke are thought to deny the use of any."

" This," he continued, " looks rather formidable at first glance ; but a more searching inspection may see it to be quite innocent. Here is a fine case for the application of the principle I gave you at our third meeting : Often strict attention to the precise language will resolve many an apparent difficulty ; a principle which you applied so successfully to the difference of numbers in Jacob's family in Egypt."

" Note," said he, " the difference between the words ' sandal ' and ' shoe.' Mark's *sandalion*, according to Robinson's New Testament Lexicon, is a ' sole of wood or hide, covering the bottom of the foot, and bound on with thongs, Mk. 6 : 9 ; Acts 12 : 8'" — (the only places, by the way, where this word occurs in the New Testament). Matthew's *upodema* ' In later usage is put for the Roman *calceus* or *shoe* which covered the whole foot,' says Robinson, and he cites Matt. 10 : 10, as an instance. Accordingly, Horne says, ' Our Saviour ordered them to make no provision for their present journey, particularly not to take shoes on their feet, but to be shod with sandals' [Introduction, II., p. 124]. And Farrar says,

'They were to take . . . no traveling shoes in place of their ordinary palm-bark sandals' [Life of Christ, I., p. 363]. Thus, you see that Mark was speaking of one article of foot-wear and Matthew of altogether another; hence there is no 'discrepancy.' "

"As to the walking-stick," said the pastor, "Mark allows a 'staff,' while Matthew's and Luke's inhibition is of 'staves,' a plurality; *i. e.*, they forbid more than one. Where is the disagreement, pray tell? Accordingly, Horne says [*ibid*], 'So necessary in these countries was a staff or walking-stick on a journey, that it was a usual thing for persons when they undertook long journeys to take a spare staff with them, for fear one should fail. When Christ, therefore, sent his apostles on the embassy above mentioned, he ordered them not to take staves (Lk. 9:3; Mk. 6:8), that is, only one staff or walking stick, without making provision of a spare one, as was common in long journeys.' "

Fred Leges' legal eye had a cross-examination twinkle in it as he held up the Revised Version and said, "I notice that in Luke 9:3 the Revisers have changed the plural to the singular, and read 'staff' instead of 'staves.' "

"Yes," said the pastor, "I know they have made this change; and they have made the same in Matt. 10:10. But if you will turn to Godet's Commentary on Luke, where he sifts this critical question, you will see that the reasons for this change are by no means decisive; and I therefore hold to the Authorized Version."

"But," he continued, "even adopting the new reading, the difficulty is not insurmountable. Farrar, accepting it, puts the emphasis strongly on Matthew's 'provide neither,' and says, 'They were not even to procure a staff for the journey if they did not happen already to

possess one :’ ‘do not procure for the purposes of this journey’ [*ibid*]. Haley remarks, ‘When we observe that Matthew uses the term ‘provide,’ it is clear that his meaning is: Do not procure any in addition to what you now have. Go just as you are.’ And Barnes, from the standpoint of the new reading says, ‘They were to go just as they were, to trust to Providence, and not to spend any time in making preparation for the journey. Some of them, probably, when he addressed them had staves, and some had not. To those who had, he did not say that they should throw them away, as the instruction he was giving might seem to require, but suffered them to take them (Mark). To those who had not, he said they should not spend time in procuring them (Matthew), but all go just as they were.’ And to this, by putting the emphasis on the first word, the Revision quite agrees: ‘*Get* you no gold, nor silver, . . . nor staff.’”

“Insurmountable!” ejaculated Fred. “I should say not! The heaven-high, unscalable mountain of the President of the Agnostic Club is not even a respectable molehill. I will see that gentleman later!”

CHAPTER XI.

At this meeting the first difficulty was presented by Miss Rysen, one that had been brought up in her Bible class.

Phil. 2 : 6, "*Who [Christ Jesus] being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.*"

Jno. 14 : 28, "*My Father is greater than I.*"

Said the pastor: "The apparent incompatibility between these texts will be completely reconciled when you consider the differences in the condition and time to which they refer. The first refers back to the condition and time of Christ's absolute and essential equality in the Godhead, in the pre-historic period, before there was any manifestation, so far as we know, of the personalities of the adorable Trinity; the second refers to the condition and time of Christ's earthly mission as Messiah,—to his Kenosis, as the theologians term it, *i. e.*, his self-emptying and self-limitation in becoming incarnate, the word being derived from the verb in the phrase translated 'made himself of no reputation' (Phil. 2 : 7), and which the Revisers translated 'emptied himself.' In his office as Messiah he voluntarily assumed a subordinate position, which I suppose he will hold all through the Messianic period, until 'cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father' (1 Cor. 15 : 24). In the first state he is 'equal with God;' in the second and different state, the Father is officially 'greater' than the son. The difficulty thus disappears."

"That which removes this difficulty," continued the pastor, "removes also the difficulty connected with all

those passages which seem to imply Christ's inferiority to the Father, such as Mark 13 : 32, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father ;' Matt. 20 : 23, etc. This inferiority is simply official, and belongs to this time of his humiliation (Phil. 2 : 8 ; Acts 8 : 33)."

"Regarding the difference in time," the pastor went on, "will also remove the seeming inconsistency that has been pointed out between Gen. 1 : 31 and Rom. 8 : 22. The texts are :

"Gen. 1 : 31, '*And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*'

"Rom. 8 : 22, '*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*'

"The first refers to creation in its purity, before sin had entered in : the second, to the time after the blight and curse of sin had fallen upon it."

George Argent and Fred Leges each handed the pastor two slips of paper with texts written on them, which were considered as follows :

Luke 2 : 14, "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.*"

Matt. 10 : 34, "*Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace but a sword.*"

Said the pastor : "If both these passages expressed an intent, or both expressed an effect, there would be a real discrepancy between them ; but they do not. The difference between intent and effect is just the difference between them, and a recognition of this difference solves the difficulty."

He continued : "An intent may be good and legitimately be productive of only good ; but, because of the intervening of untoward conditions in the realm in which it works itself out, ill may be the result, the fault

being not in the intent but in the untoward conditions. The divine intent of Christ's coming to earth was peace, and, having free course to work itself out, it produces only peace, the 'peace of them that make peace' (Jas. 3 : 18) ; but instead of having that effect always and everywhere, the wickedness of men make it a 'sword.' What Christ intended for good, men have wickedly turned to evil effect, even as they have 'changed the truth of God into a lie' (Rom. 1 : 25)."

Matt. 23 : 9, "*Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven.*"

Luke 15 : 18, "*I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father,'*" etc.

Said the pastor: "The difference in view-point will show the consistency of these texts. The first is from the view-point of the spirit; the second, from the view-point of the flesh. In the realm of grace, spiritually, only God can be our father, and therefore in that high sense no one else should be called our father; but 'we had fathers of our flesh' (Heb. 12 : 9), and in this lower realm the relation does not conflict with that in the higher."

Prov. 8 : 17. "*I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.*"

Prov. 1 : 28, "*Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*"

"These texts," said the pastor, "undoubtedly refer to two different classes of persons. The first class is of those who have ears attentive to wisdom's cry, and hearts receptive of wisdom's proffers. If they seek the God of wisdom early,—early in life's years, early when opportunities present themselves, early in the efforts for life's acquisitions, they shall find him. The other

class is of those who turn away from wisdom's voice, who set counsel at nought, despise reproof, hate knowledge, and persistently, utterly, disregard God. Judgment comes upon them,—desolation, distress, anguish, destruction (Prov. 1 : 27). They have 'sinned away the day of grace,' as the phrase is. In retribution's dire hour, 'then,' they shall seek and shall not find: it is too late. When they could, they wouldn't; when they would, they couldn't. The difference between the classes thus relieves these texts of all conflict."

Luke 14 : 26, "*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*"

Eph. 5 : 25, 28, 29, "*Husbands, love your wives. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; no man ever yet hated his own flesh.*"

Said the pastor: "It is easy to see that words expressive of the affections have different degrees of meaning. As there are different degrees of hatred, so there are different degrees of love; and these different degrees of love may need to be expressed by terms that shall differentiate them. If a high degree be called 'love,' some lower degree might, in comparison or contrast, be spoken of as 'hate.' Thus, Bush, commenting on Gen. 29 : 31, 'Leah was hated,' says, 'That is, *loved less*. The expression is not absolute, but comparative.' Professor Moses Stuart says, 'When the Hebrews compared a stronger affection with a weaker one, they called the first *love*, and the other *hatred*.'"

There were lying on the pastor's study table three New Testament Greek lexicons. Fred Leges picked up one of them, and, turning to the verb *miseo* which Christ uses in Luke 14 : 26 and which is translated *hate*, read these

definitions : *to regard with less affection, love less, esteem less.* The pastor said that the other lexicons also give the definition, *love less.*

The pastor went on to say : "The fact that Christ speaks of one hating his own life, clearly indicates that the word is to be taken in its comparative or relative sense. He that loves father, mother, son, daughter, more than Christ is not worthy of him (Matt 10 : 37) ; nor is one who loves his own life more than Christ worthy of him. So if any man come to him and do not put his father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, yea, and his own life, below Christ in his heart, *love them less,* he cannot be Christ's disciple. The Son of God must have the very supremest place in the affections. With this correct understanding of the divinely imposed conditions of discipleship, the difficulty vanishes."

CHAPTER XII.

At this meeting Miss Rysen presented the first subject for consideration. Said she : " One of my Bible class scholars brought up the question of there being light before the sun. According to Gen. 1 : 3-5, light was spoken into visibility on the first creative day, while the sun did not appear until the fourth (Gen. 1 : 14-19). There is, therefore, a discrepancy between the fact that light appeared on the first creative day, and the common conception of the sun as the source of light, which did not appear until the fourth creative day."

Said the pastor : " Perhaps you are speaking better than you are fully aware when you say that the discrepancy is between the ' fact ' and ' the common conception. ' The difficulty lies in the assumption that there could not have been light without the sun. According to the theory of Pythagoras and Newton, light was a distinct element, an attenuated, imponderable substance, which, by its emission from the sun, produced the phenomenon, and by its impact upon the eye produced the sensation, of what we call light. This is known as the emission or corpuscular theory. Then came the nebular hypothesis of creation of LaPlace, and the undulatory theory of light, according to which light is believed to be simply a mode or condition of something, being produced by vibrations or waves in what is called ' ether. ' "

At this point George Argent interposed : " Oh, yes, I recall that in your sermon last Sunday on ' The Light of the World, ' you showed us that these waves, in one mode, produced heat ; in another mode, light, and if of different degrees of rapidity, the different colors resulted.

And I remember with what force your lesson came to me, that as physical light is due to activity in the subtle, ethereal entity, so our spiritual light-shining is effected by our activity, our good works, seen by men, as Christ taught in Matt. 5 : 16."

The pastor continued : " There is no need for us to enter into a consideration of the difference between the verbs *bara*, create, in v. 1, and *asah*, made, in vs. 7 and 16 ; nor the light words, *or*, in vs. 3, 4, 5 and *maor*, in vs. 14, 15, 16. Science has come to the vindication of the Genesis-record as against the ' common conception.' The fact is, light, so far from being derived solely from the sun or stars, exists in, and can be educed from, almost any known substance. The surface of our earth may early have been a source of light even as it now is near the poles, flashing its aurora borealis and aurora australis, which, according to an Annual of Scientific Discovery, are claimed to be a telluric phenomenon."

The pastor handed to George Argent, L. F. March Phillips' lectures on the " Cumulative Evidences of Divine Revelation," and directing him to the last paragraph of the fifth lecture, he read as follows : " It was always a difficulty in this account of the Creation, that it represented light as being created before the sun and the stars, which are to us our only sources of light. Now Science tells us it is not the sun that brought light and heat, but the energy of which light and heat are modes formed the sun. In short, had the writer of the first chapter of Genesis placed the sun first, as any man writing the history out of his own experience and judgment almost certainly would have done, he would have been contradicted by that Modern Science which now, in this particular at least, confirms his account."

" Ah," said Fred Leges, " how came Moses to antici-

pate the findings of modern science? He knew nothing of the nebular hypothesis, or the undulatory theory; or the difference between cosmical light and solar light. If Genesis were simply the human production that so many of the critics make it out to be, its record would be in accord with the 'common conception,' as Miss Rysen terms it. But, instead, it anticipates and teaches the scientists of this latest century. Indeed a Divine Inspiration must be in it. 'The 'discrepancy' is not in Genesis, but is of ignorant human generation.'

Said George Argent: "Now that we have 'light' on this subject, I wish our pastor would make as luminous the dark problem of God's hardening Pharaoh's heart."

Said the pastor, thus appealed to: "Perhaps I can't. Nevertheless, I am willing to try to give you the relief that I myself have found, which is to the extent that I have no more trouble with the problem."

With this encouragement, George's face brightened. As with one impulse they all opened their Bibles.

Said the pastor: "Will you please read in turn, as I announce them, the passages where the 'hardening' is spoken of?" So the trio read, alternately, Ex. 4:21; 7:2, 3; 7:13; 7:14; 7:22; 8:15; 8:19; 8:32; 9:7; 9:11, 12; 9:34; 9:35; 10:1; 10:20; 10:27; 11:10; 14:4; 14:8 and 14:17.

"Hold on," said Fred Leges, "I have been keeping tab on this thing. Out of these nineteen instances, eleven times God is said to have done the hardening; three times Pharaoh is said to have done it; and five times it is simply announced as having been done."

"That is good," said the pastor, "and it will help us. Now, please observe, after God begins his personal dealings with Pharaoh in sending the plagues, not once is it said that God hardened his heart, until after the sixth

plague (9 : 11, 12). Up to this point the king is said to have hardened his own heart. It is plain, therefore, that there was no irresistible omnipotence, no inscrutable divine decree, no implacable purpose, bearing down upon him to make him go against his will, but unconstrainedly and freely he resisted the command of God to let his people go. After this, in seven out of the eight final instances, it is stated that God did the hardening. *How was it done ?* ”

“ It is interesting to note,” he went on, “ that the word ‘ harden ’ translates three different Hebrew verbs. They are *kashah*, *hazak* and *kabad* ; and in these nineteen passages, the first is used once, the second thirteen times, and the third five times. We have all three in Ex. VII. *Kashah* (7 : 3) means to make hard in the sense of difficult, intractable, stiff ; and, when applied to the heart, means obdurate, steeled against every tender or unselfish feeling. *Hazak* (7 : 13) means to strengthen, confirm, embolden ; and, applied to the heart, signifies determined, obstinate, inflexible in its own selfish purpose. *Kabad* (7 : 14) means to make heavy ; and in its heart application, stupid and insensible to reason and the real state of things. In v. 3 the verb is used of God,—‘ I will harden Pharaoh’s heart ; ’ but according to Young’s Concordance this verb is in the fifth Hebrew conjugation and means ‘ to cause to harden.’ By what instrumentality or method, subsequent events must show. In v. 13, according to the Revision, the verb is used indeterminately,—‘ Pharaoh’s heart was hardened.’ In v. 14 we have the result,—‘ Pharaoh’s heart is stubborn’ (Rev.). ’ ”

The young people, with Bible in hand, had been following this disquisition intently, and fresh interest was awakened, like adding fuel to a flame, when the pastor

said, "Now we are ready for the question, How was Pharaoh's heart hardened?"

He went on to say: "Did God by some personal impact on Pharaoh's mind, by some subjugating control of his faculties, harden him? No, no; that is not the way God deals with men. Speaking of God hardening Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh hardening his own heart, Gibson, in his 'The Mosaic Era,' admirably says:

'The two things are really identical; and the explanation, we believe, is to be found in this, that Pharaoh, by his conduct, put himself under the operation of the invariable law, according to which a man's heart becomes harder, the longer he resists Divine mercy and grace. Inasmuch as Pharaoh himself resisted, he hardened his own heart. Inasmuch as the law, under which he brought himself, was God's law, God hardened his heart. It is the same process viewed from its two sides. It is a great mistake to suppose that God singled out Pharaoh, or that he ever singles out anyone, and says, 'I will harden his heart,' and then proceeds to do it. The supposition is monstrous. But the solemn truth is this, that by the operation of that well-known law, according to which the soul becomes less and less susceptible to impressions which have been resisted, God hardens the heart of every man and woman that does not yield to Him' (p. 44).

And Murphy finely says: 'The very patience and moderation which were calculated to subdue a will amenable to reason, only aroused the resistance of Pharaoh. Every succeeding step in the procedure of God is dictated by a like consideration and forbearance. Though it be true, therefore, that God did harden Pharaoh's heart, yet it was by measures that would have disarmed the opposition and commanded the acquiescence of an upright mind' " (Com. on Ex. p. 74).

Fred was on the *qui vive*, but George got in his word ahead of him : " I don't know how it is with you others, but I have got the illumination on the dark problem that I wanted. The freedom and the responsibility, and consequently the hardening, were Pharaoh's own ; and the hardening came in accordance with the general, beneficent, psychological law of God by which a man's heart naturally softens or hardens towards God according to its attitude towards Him : softens if it be that of loving acquiescence, hardens if it be that of hating resistance. The law is ' holy, just and good,' and the wrong only and entirely with man. Pharaoh's wicked perverseness at length indurated his heart beyond the capability of recognizing or profiting by God's patient forbearance, and so it was but fitting and just that judgment should fall upon him as it did. ' Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?' "

A sort of solemn hush seemed to fall on the little group as George slowly uttered his last sentence ; but the irrepressible Fred quickly rallied and said, " It is my turn now." With rising gleefulness he went on : " Yesterday the president of the Agnostic Club came up into the office, and I saw he was ' loaded' for something. Said he : ' My festive and pious young scion of human and divine law, do you like Belgian hare meat?' I couldn't imagine what was coming, but I replied : " We had some up at our boarding-house to day, and I thought it fine. ' Well do you know,' said he, ' that according to the Mosaic dietetic laws in Lev. 11 : 6, a hare is unclean and so not fit to eat ? It reads : "*And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof, he is unclean unto you.*" But then, as Moses made a mistake in regard to the hare chewing the cud, maybe the rest doesn't count.' "

Fred continued : " I bridled up with, How do you know Moses made a mistake? 'Well, well, sonny, I see I must take your 'edication' still further in hand,' he said exasperatingly. 'I've tried to bring you up right. Attention. It is a first-class physiological or anatomical fact that ruminant animals, cud chewers, have four stomachs. The first, the rumen or paunch, receives the coarse food, where it undergoes a softening process; then it passes into the second stomach, the reticulum, the honeycomb-like arrangement of whose mucous membrane rolls it up into balls, which, by a spasmodic action, are regurgitated, one by one, into the mouth for complete mastication. That is, 'chewing the cud.' The food masticated, it is swallowed into the third stomach, the manyplies or omasum, from which, after some trituration, it filters into the fourth stomach, the abomasum, for perfect digestion. See? Now, it is another first-class fact that the hare hasn't any such quadri-stomachic aggregation, and therefore cannot chew the cud. That Moses made a mistake—*quod demonstrationib*—what d'ye call it? "

Fred went on : " I said hotly, why, I have seen hares chew the cud many a time. Cowper, the poet, tells of his favorite hare, Puss, which he often carried into the garden where 'she hid herself, generally under the leaves of a cucumber vine, sleeping or chewing the cud till evening,' and when the little fellow died he wrote an 'Epitaph on a Hare,' of eleven stanzas. 'All I've got to say is,' replied the Agnostic, 'that you and that other heavenly minded chap are simply mistaken. Hares are rodents, gnawers, and the appearance of chewing the cud is only their grinding their teeth together, after the manner of rodents, to wear down their rapid growth, so naturalists say.' "

The little company was convulsed with laughter over Fred's somewhat dramatic recital. The trio turned their eyes to the pastor.

He straightened out his face and said, "Oh, that difficulty is an old acquaintance of mine. Several years ago a publisher sent a work to me for review, in which a theological professor took very much this position of the Agnostic, but of course not in the Agnostic's coarse style. I said to myself, If the Bible tells lies about hares, how can we know that it tells the truth about heaven? A boy over on the far side of the town kept a rabbitry. I visited the place and said to him: Do rabbits chew the cud? He said 'yes.' Are you sure? He was very positive. I offered him fifty cents if he would prove it to me. We went to the pen, and there the little fellows, after a hearty meal of clover, were chewing away as for dear life. My offered half-dollar did not procure just the evidence I wanted. Said I to the lad: You catch a rabbit by the throat, squeeze it so tight he cannot swallow, get the cud out of his mouth, and I will give you five dollars for it. He did not win the money. Some subsequent dissections did not confirm the boy's or Cowper's assertions."

"What!" exclaimed Miss Rysen, "is it so, that hares do not chew the cud?"

"I am afraid not," said the pastor, "I am afraid not."

"Well," said Leges and Argent together, "how did you come out?"

"I used my common sense," said the pastor. "It is well known that modern scientific knowledge of ancient natural history is in a very unsatisfactory state. For instance, take the animal whose skins were used in making a covering for the tabernacle, Ex. 26:14,—'badgers' skin.' Says Murphy, 'The *tachash* is variously con-

jectured to be the badger, the seal, the dolphin, and the tacasse, a species of antelope found in Africa.' So high an authority as Dr. Edward Robinson would render it *dugong*, a swimming animal known in the waters of Arabia. Take again, for instance, the word *yemin*, in Gen. 36 : 24, used but this once : 'Anah found the *mules* in the wilderness.' But the Revisers translate it, 'Anah found the *hot springs* in the wilderness ! Quite a difference between mules and hot springs ! The old translators did the best they knew when they translated it 'mules ;' but they didn't know. So the *arnebeth* in Lev. 11 : 6, and in the parallel passage, Deut. 14 : 7, rendered 'hare.' There is practically but one occurrence of it,— a small foundation to build on. The translators, in their little knowledge, or lack of knowledge, said 'hare' which is an animal that does not chew the cud. But Moses said the *arnebeth* did chew the cud. Shall we set up the ignorance of elapsed centuries against the knowledge of one then present on the ground ? The easy and commonsense solution of the difficulty is simply this : the *arnebeth* was an animal known in Moses' time to chew the cud, but which we in our ignorance, have not been able to correctly identify, and have no means of identifying. I can hardly assent to Moses' knowledge being overthrown by modern ignorance. The mistake must be in modern men and not in the ancient Moses. That is the conclusion that I came out with, which satisfies me.'

"So it does us," the trio agreed, and with the added knowledge of the evening they went their homeward way.

CHAPTER XIII.

At this meeting chronological and other difficulties were considered.

Gen. 15 : 13, "*And he said unto Abram, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them ; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.*"

Ex. 12 : 40, "*Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.*"

Gal. 3 : 17, "*And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God and Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.*"

Said the pastor: "The difficult questions of chronology, on which so many good and able men differ, may well be approached by us with modesty."

He then went on to say : "Isaac was born in the 25th year of Abraham's sojourn in Canaan (Gen. 12 : 4; 21 : 5); Jacob was born in Isaac's 60th year (Gen. 25 : 26), and was 130 years old when he descended into Egypt (Gen. 47 : 9). Adding these three numbers, 25, 60, and 130 together we have 215 years."

"Now," he asked, "what shall we do with them?"

He answered: "Evidently they do not belong to the in-Egypt period. If we regard the 430 years of Gal. 3 : 17 as beginning with the call of Abraham, then we shall need to subtract them from 430, which would leave but 215 years for the residence in Egypt ; and this is what many do,—as Ussher, Hales, Poole in Smith's Bible Dictionary, Brown in his *Ordo Saeculorum*, Ben-

gel, Baumgarten, Wordsworth, Murphy, Bush, Jacobus, etc., etc. If, however, we assume (which is the point in question) that the residence in Egypt was 430 years, we shall need to add the 215 years, which would make 645 years from the call of Abraham to the Exodus; and this is what many do,—as Kurtz, Delitzsch, Ewald, Keil, Morehead, etc., etc. You will remember that in our Normal class, following the chronology in the margin of our Bibles, as well as in the text-book we used, we found the call of Abraham to have been B. C. 1921, and the Exodus B. C. 1491, the difference between which two dates is 430 years, and not 645. We, therefore, to be consistent, must side with those who subtract, and thus make the Egyptian residence 215 years.’

Said George Argent, who held in his hand the Revised version, “The rendering here is against us.”

“Yes,” said the pastor, “if we adopt the Revised version’s rendering of Ex. 12 : 40, ‘The sojourning of the children of Israel *which* they sojourned in Egypt was 430 years,’ we must give up our view, for it settles the question against us; but if, on the other hand, we accept the rendering of the authorized version, ‘The sojourning of the children of Israel, *who* dwelt in Egypt, was 430 years,’ our view may stand, and the ‘sojourning’ would cover the whole period, as manifestly it may, from the call of Abraham to the Exodus, *i. e.*, from B. C. 1921 to B. C. 1491, or 430 years, 215 of which were spent in Egypt. ‘Who’ or ‘which’ is the question.”

“I plainly see the difference,” said George, “but which relative pronoun shall we adopt?”

In reply the pastor read from Murphy’s Commentary on Exodus, p. 114, (Andover edition,) that author’s five reasons in favor of the ‘who’ rendering of the authorized version, which seem conclusive as against the ‘which’ rendering of the Revised version.

Fred Leges had quietly taken the Septuagint, and, having turned to Ex. 12 : 40 said, "The Greek relative pronoun here is 'which' and not 'who!'"

The faces of the others brightened as the combat seemed to deepen. At the pastor's suggestion that he read on, a queer look came into his eyes as he ejaculated, "Whew! here's a go!" and he read, "'The sojourning of the sons of Israel, which they sojourned in the land of Egypt *and in the land of Canaan* was 430 years.'—That's a clincher!" he meekly added.

A hearty laugh followed, and Miss Rysen added, "I think the old version is good enough for us."

"But," said George Argent, "we have another number to deal with, Gen. 15 : 13, where Abram's 'seed' were to be strangers in a land, and afflicted, 400 years."

Said the pastor: "Note the word 'seed.' This period of course could not begin until a 'seed' was born to Abram. The beginning of his covenant posterity was the birth of Isaac, which as we have seen took place in the 25th year of Abram's sojourn in Canaan. Now, when did the affliction of the 'seed' begin? The first fact of this nature to which we can point is the mocking of Isaac by Ishmael (Gen. 21 : 9), which was sufficiently grievous to disrupt Abraham's household. This occurred at the feast made in honor of Isaac's weaning. As is well known, the period of nursing was much longer in the East than obtains with us. When Samuel was weaned, he was old enough to be left with Eli for the service of the tabernacle (1 Sam. 1 : 22-25). From Lev. 27 : 6, the age would appear to be 5 years. Accepting this age for Isaac, then adding 5 years to the 25 which intervene between his birth and the call of his father Abraham, we would have 30 years, which subtracted from the whole sojourning of 430 years, would leave 400, precisely the time stated."

Said George Argent in surprise, "How these things fit!" And he added, "It looks to me as though evidence for verbal inspiration is piling up fast. But how about the 'affliction' for 400 years?"

Said the pastor: "The land of Canaan was promised to the 'seed' for a possession, Gen. 17 : 8 ; Ps. 105 : 9-12. You remember that Joseph though at the very summit of worldly honor, prosperity and comfort, in Egypt, nevertheless designated it as 'the land of my affliction' (Gen. 41 : 52). If that were such to him, how much more was it an affliction to the children of Israel that they were kept out of their possession 400 years, 'sojourning in the land of promise as in a strange land' (Heb. 11 : 6)."

Then, said George Argent, "There is another difficulty connected with the history of Abraham which is raised in Stephen's Speech in Acts vii. I would like to have this solved."

Acts 7 : 16, "*The sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem.*"

Josh. 24 : 32, "*The parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.*"

Said the pastor : "This purchase is ascribed to Jacob also in Gen. 33 : 18, 19."

"The difficulty is quickly met by allowing, as Meyer and others do, that Stephen made a mistake ! And it is surprising how many 'up-to-date' exegetes hasten to charge upon him an historical error."

"But J. A. Alexander well says : ' While it is easy to cut the knot by assuming a mistake on Stephen's part, it is not so easy to account for its being made by such a man, addressing such an audience, and then perpetuated in such a history, without correction or exposure, for a course of ages.' "

“ And quite as pertinent are the words of Dr. Ormiston, editor of the American edition of Meyer on Acts : ‘ Surely in any view of the case it is rash to assume that men of average culture and information, not to say such men of education and intelligence as Stephen and Luke unquestionably were, would be ignorant of the facts recorded in the sacred books which had been their constant study. Nor need we suppose a speaker or writer likely to make erroneous statements, which a reference to the book of Genesis would at once have corrected, or to which even the audience addressed would have at once objected ’ ” (p. 161).

The pastor continued : “ It may be that there are missing links which, if supplied, would make all plain. Let us see :

“ Philo Judaeus was born 20 B. C., and Josephus 37 B. C. Both were cotemporaries of Stephen. In the International Revision Commentary, edited by Dr. Philip Schaff, it is pointed out that in several instances these cotemporary writers, ‘ when relating the same event, make the same apparent mistake as Stephen, clearly showing that at that time there was a popular account, written or unwritten, of the history of Israel, differing apparently in a few unimportant details from the Old Testament story ’ ” (p. 79).

He went on : “ With this hint in mind, the solution of the difficulty is not far to seek :

“ This plot of ground is memorable for other reasons than because, according to Acts 7 : 16 and Josh. 24 : 32, it was a burial place. It was there that Jacob ‘ erected an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel ’ (Gen. 33 : 20). Before, however, he performed his religious service, he found it necessary to obtain title to the land, and he therefore bought it for ‘ an hundred pieces of money ’

(Gen. 33 : 19). But 185 years prior to that time, Abraham performed the same service upon the very same spot (Gen. 12 : 6, 7); and here was the first altar he erected in the promised land. Can we suppose that Abraham performed such a service, celebrating so important an event as taking possession of his promised inheritance, without purchasing the ground on which his altar stood? Although in subsequent years, because of migrations and shifting residence, the title may have been alienated, or the land have passed by purchase to Emmor or Hamor, (likely the Shechem Prince), of whose family Jacob, perhaps for ancestral reasons, bought it back again. And may it not be that Stephen, along with Philo and Josephus, referred to a history, of which we now know nothing but which they knew well, that told of Abraham's purchase, and not Jacob's, which took place eighteen and a half decades later? Surely, this is much more reasonable and sensible than to suppose that Stephen made a mistake which any ordinarily well-informed Jewish child could have corrected. Accordingly, Acts 7 : 16 refers to one transaction and Joshua 24 : 32 to another 185 years apart. Allowing this, the difficulty at once vanishes."

Said Fred Leges, "I have a difficulty. I have been reading Farrar's *Life of Christ*, Vol. II, Chap. LX., Jesus before Pilate, where he says, p. 385, 'As to the hour, there is a well-known discrepancy between Jno. 19 : 14, *And it was . . . about the SIXTH hour ; and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King ;* and Mark 15 : 25, *And it was the THIRD hour and they crucified him.*' "

Said the pastor : "The hour of Christ's passion, says Augustine, is 'a question which, above all others, is wont to stir up the shamelessness of the contentious, and to disturb the unskillfulness of the weak.' I know

many commentators and harmonists have labored with this supposed difficulty. It may be because I am very stupid, but, really, I cannot see any discrepancy here. Mark says, 'It was the *third* hour, and they crucified him ;' but John refers to something altogether different : 'Pilate therefore brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, and it was the preparation of the passover, and about the *sixth* hour ; and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King !' The two accounts are of different things : Mark dates the hour of the crucifixion, John a point in the 'preparation.' "

Said Miss Rysen, "I remember that when our Sunday-school lesson was on 'Christ before Pilate,' the Westminster Teacher and Peloubet's Notes were very positive in making John's sixth hour, after the Roman method of computing time, to be 6 A. M., and Mark's third hour, after the Jewish mode of reckoning, to be 9 A. M."

"Just so," said the pastor, "and during the three hours between six and nine A. M. occurred, according to Robinson's harmony, the Jew's final rejection of Jesus as king, Pilate's delivering him to them, their mocking him and the march to Calvary. And then came the crucifixion. Seeing the difference between the hours mentioned, and the intervening events, I can find no difficulty at all."

Said George Argent, "This matter of the crucifixion calls to my mind a discrepancy, or at least an inconsistency, I have felt in the account of some occurrences just after Christ's resurrection. In Jno. 20 : 17 he forbids Mary to touch him because he had not yet ascended to the Father, and yet in Matt. 28 : 9, very soon after, certain women 'held him by the feet, and worshiped him.' Yes, and within a week he invited Thomas (Jno.

20 : 27) to a tactual exploration of his wounds, in order to bring that doubting disciple to faith."

Jno. 20 : 17, "*Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father ; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*"

Matt. 28 : 9, "*And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him.*"

Said the pastor : " As to the inhibition in Jno. 20 : 17, Ryle says : ' This saying of our Lord is undeniably a very ' deep thing,' and the real meaning of it is a point which has greatly perplexed commentators.' Some would give to the word rendered ' touch ' an enlarged signification, such as ' fasten oneself to, cling to, hang on by, lay hold of, or grasp,'—definitions abundantly sanctioned by classical Greek lexicons. Accordingly, Sherlock in his ' Trial of the Witnesses,' says : ' The natural sense of this place is this : Mary Magdalene, upon seeing Jesus, fell at his feet and laid hold on them, and held them as if she never meant to let them go. Then Christ said to her : Touch me not, or hang about me now. You will have other opportunities of seeing me, for I go not yet to my Father. Lose no time then, but go quickly with my message to my brethren.' And West, on the Resurrection, says : ' I take Christ's forbidding Mary to touch him, to have been meant as a signification of his intention to see her and the disciples again ; just as in ordinary life, when one friend says to another, ' Do not take leave for I am not going yet,' he means to let him know that he proposes to see him again before he sets out on his journey.' But Paulus, the vagarious German theologian, goes farther and maintains the ridiculous idea that Christ meant, ' Do not lay a finger on me, because my wounds still smart ! ' "

The pastor went on: "Having examined the comments of about two dozen writers, from the time of Chrysostom down to the present, it would become me to be very modest in offering anything contradictory to what they have written. But they all save one—Dr. Joel Jones—seem to me to get into the depths because they seek to evade or avoid the meaning that lies plainly on the surface. Christ forbade the touch of Mary simply and solely, so far as the record goes, *because he had not ascended to the Father*. If he were not to ascend right now, why send the message to his brethren by Mary at all? For during the subsequent forty days he would have abundant opportunities of communicating the fact to them in person. A little later he permits this very same Mary, and another Mary (the mother of James and Joses), not only to touch him, but worshipfully to hold his feet. Between these two occasions certainly something had occurred that made the reason of the forbidding inoperative; and what can that something be, other than this, viz., that, during the interim, *he had ascended and come back again?*"

A look of surprise, plainly tinged with incredulosity, came into the faces of the trio, which the pastor was quick to notice; but he continued, "You are familiar with the idea of Christ's three-fold office—prophetic, priestly, kingly. A prophet is not one who foretells future events only, but as the derivation of the word indicates, one who speaks for another. Christ had spoken for God in all the teaching he gave (Jno. 8 : 28), and with the completion of that teaching his prophetic function was fulfilled. Then came his priestly office, the type of which we find in the Old Testament high priest and his work. The Epistle to the Hebrews, as you know, is largely occupied with setting forth the priestly func-

tion in type and fulfillment. In Ex. xxx. and Lev. xvi. we learn that the high priest took the blood of the animal which he had slain and carried it 'within the veil,' *i. e.*, into the Holy of Holies, to 'sprinkle it upon the mercy seat' (Lev. 16 : 15), in order to 'make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sin' (Lev. 16 : 34). And this was done 'once a year,' the priest entering the sacred place 'alone' (Lev. 16 : 17, 34 ; Heb. 9 ; 7). Christ, in his priestly work of making atonement not for Israel only but for 'the whole world' (1 Jno. 2 : 2), was not only the officiating priest, the offerer, but was himself the offering, the victim. When Mary met him he was right in the priestly sacrificial act. He had been slain on the cross, his blood had been shed, and, emerging from death into life by the resurrection, his next step was to take the sacrificial blood and enter 'into the holy place,' in the 'greater and more perfect tabernacle' above (Heb. 9 : 11, 12). Of the Old Testament priest we read : 'There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out' (Lev. 16 : 17). So Christ, in the awful isolation of the act of supreme sacrifice, must be 'alone : ' he must suffer no common or defiling 'touch.' Hence the 'touch me not' to Mary ; and he bade her go to the brethren and say : 'I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.' While she bore the message he 'ascended,' and 'by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us' (Heb. 9 : 24). When he had 'come out,' then, as with the high-priest of old, he was ready to meet his brethren on the plane of fellowship and 'touch.' "

While the look of surprise was still on the faces of the young people, the expression of incredulity had passed

away, and Fred Leges said: "Of course the sacrificial work of Christ must be done, and unto completion too; and it seems to me that the only question that can be raised is as to *when* 'by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place.' Shall it be deferred for forty days, until the final ascension from Bethany, as recounted by Luke at the close of his gospel? Really, that does not seem to comport at all with the necessary continuity of the priestly service in the great act of making atonement. Begun, evidently it should be carried on without cessation unto completion. Remembering how little space-measures and moments have to do with divine movements, objections on the score of the little time of the interim would not hold. Moreover, the fact of his having ascended makes plain to me what I never understood before, viz., the reason of his altered relation to his disciples during the forty days. He manifestly did not company with them in the common earthly relations as aforetime, but the rather as an inhabitant of another world. And this makes plain, too, what he said to his disciples affrighted by his sudden and unexpected appearance in their midst, Lk. 24 : 44. 'These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled,' etc. Here is an evident contrast between two states, which his having gone to the Father and returned makes clear. The exposition our pastor has given not only seems to fit the situation completely, but to entirely remove the inconsistency which George has felt. I think there is nothing to do but to accept it." The others quite readily assented.

The pastor added: "What I have said does not, of course, exhaust the work of Christ's priestly office. His function in priestly mediation and intercession will con-

tinue until he enters upon his kingly office, which, as you know, is a matter of the future. Whatever may be true of his providential ruling and overruling now, only 'at his appearing and his kingdom' (2 Tim. 4 : 1) will he ascend his kingly throne."

CHAPTER XIV.

At this meeting, after the usual greetings and the little company was ready for work, the pastor presented a letter which he had received from Morocco, Africa, from which he read : "A Moslem teacher, employed by us as a helper at one time, cited Jno. 5 : 31 and 8 : 14 as a contradiction. The reading is the same in each passage in Arabic, as it is in the Greek. I should be glad to have the seeming discrepancy explained."

Jno. 5 : 31, "*If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.*"

Jno. 8 : 14, "*Even if I bear witness of myself, my witness is true.*" (R. V.)

Said the pastor, "These words of Jesus, which present an apparent point-blank contradiction, are nevertheless quite capable of reconciliation."

He went on : "The first text was spoken at the Pass-over time, near the beginning of the second year of Christ's ministry. He had healed a man on the Sabbath day (5 : 8-16), which the Jews regarded as a violation of the law of the Sabbath ; and worse yet he had blasphemously claimed equality with God (v. 17). 'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God' (v. 18). Of course Jesus must vindicate himself, which he proceeds to do. According to the established rule of Jewish jurisprudence, Numb. 35 : 30 ; Deut. 17 : 6 ; 19 : 15, the testimony of *one* witness was not 'true,' *i. e.*, was not valid, was not legal proof. He accepts the rule, and says, 'If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true,' *i. e.*, is

not legally valid. (The Greek dictionary gives to the word rendered 'true' these definitions : unconcealed, true, valid, sure, sincere, upright, just.) A prophet without divine attestation, or even the Messiah without legal evidence, should be rejected. Therefore, in accordance with legal requirement, he adduces other witnesses, viz., John (vs. 32, 33), his own works (v. 36), the Father (v. 37), and the Scriptures (v. 39, 46). Here is competent testimony. This is his vindication. The first text, then, was spoken from the view-point of the Jewish civil code."

The pastor continued : "Some seven or more months pass, and Jesus is again at Jerusalem. The plot to kill him thickens. The Jews, still regarding him as a contemner of the law of Moses and a blasphemer, hope to get evidence against him through the knotty case of the unchaste woman which they presented (8 : 3-11). And such a fiasco ! While doubtless leading her out into the light, he leaves them in the darkness of self-convicted sin (8 : 7-9). Then he says : 'I am the light of the world : he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life' (v. 12). The Pharisees come back at him with the old charge : 'Thou bearest witness of thyself ; thy witness is not true' (v. 13). But how changed the situation ! Back there he must be legally accredited as the Messiah. Accredited, he now presents himself as the Light of the world, a sure Guide through and from the moral darkness to the true life, concerning which office his own declaration cannot be otherwise than morally true ; and so he says : 'Though I bear witness of myself, my witness is true' (v. 14). And yet even here he does not leave himself unsupported, for, four verses farther on, he says : 'I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me' (v. 18). Thus while his own

assertion is morally true, which is what he now intends, by adding the testimony of the Father also he makes it legally valid, even as it is written in their law, 'the testimony of two men is true' (v. 17)."

Said Fred Leges: "I see it clearly. Jno. 5:31 is correct from its standpoint, viz., that of court process, or legal evidence; while Jno. 8:14 is correct from the standpoint of moral truthfulness or veracity. There is, therefore, not only no contradiction between them, but they are perfectly harmonious."

Said the pastor: "Here is a letter handed me by our Sunday-school Superintendent, which he received from a neighbor-friend with whom he had been having a discussion, and in which it is charged that God is the author of sin, reference being made to Isa. 45:7, where God is said to 'create evil.'"

George Argent's face brightened, and he said: "Now I hope I shall get a relief that I have been longing for. I must confess that my logic, as I reason back from effect to cause, lands me in the conclusion that God, as the first cause, must be the author of sin. But against this my whole moral nature revolts. So I was quite shocked last week, as I was reading Dr. A. H. Strong's 'Ethical Monism,' to find so great and good a man as the President of the Rochester Theological Seminary, saying: 'He who ordained sin ordained also an atonement for sin, and a way of escape from it.' He says: 'This is also the view of Dr. R. W. Dale, in his well-known work on the Atonement. He, too, holds that Christ is responsible for human sin, because, as the Upholder and Life of all, he is naturally one with all men.'"

Said the pastor: "If I were you, I would not take too seriously conclusions that result from the exigencies of a philosophical system. The question of the origin

of sin is *the* question of the ages, which every thinker has tried, but unsuccessfully, to solve. The difficulty does not belong specially to theology. Sir William Hamilton has on the title page of one of his works, this: 'No difficulty emerges in theology that has not previously emerged in philosophy.' When, where, how, did sin originate? I do not know: no one knows. The question, in the present limitations of our knowledge, and may be powers, is insolvable. You do right in revolting against the abhorrent conclusion that a just and holy God is the author of sin. We must not allow that for a moment. But what we are concerned with just now is the imputation upon the Scriptures contained in this letter."

Isa. 45 : 7, "*I [the Lord] make peace and create evil.*"

Ps. 5 : 4, "*For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; neither shall evil dwell with thee.*"

Looking at some texts kindred with Isa. 45 : 7,—Jer. 18 : 11 ; Lam. 3 : 38 ; Ezek. 20 : 25 ; Amos 3 : 6 ; and then some kindred with Ps. 5 : 4,—Deut. 32 : 4 ; Jer. 29 : 11 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 33, the pastor went on : "The Hebrew word rendered 'evil' is *ra*, and it is used some 620 times. It is translated by 44 different English words or expressions, and while it is translated 'evil' 422 times, it is never once translated *sin* ! The following will give you some idea of its use :

Gen. 19 : 19, "lest some *evil* take me."

Gen. 24 : 50, "cannot speak unto them *bad* or good."

Gen. 31 : 52, "Shall not pass over for *harm*."

Gen. 41 : 4, "the *ill* favored kine."

Gen. 44 : 29, "Bring down my gray hairs with *sorrow*."

Ex. 32 : 22, "They are set on *mischief*."

Numb. 11 : 15, "Let me not see my *wretchedness*."

Deut. 6 : 22, "Wonders great and *sore*."

Judges 11 : 27, "Thou doest me *wrong* to war."

Judges 15 : 3, "Though I do them a *displeasure*."

1 Sam. 10 : 19, "Out of all your *adversities*."

Ps. 34 : 19, "Many are the *afflictions*."

Ps. 141 : 5, "Prayer also shall be in their *calamities*."

Such are some of its uses."

"Now," continued the pastor, "a glance at Isa. XLIV. will show you that the main subject is the prosperity which would attend the arms of Cyrus ; and, as a result, reverses, calamities, *i. e.*, 'evil' natural, political, social, economic, should come upon the nations whom he would subdue. God raised up Cyrus to inflict upon them the 'evils' of military conquest in punishment of their idolatries and sins, and 'that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me: I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil [which is the opposite of peace, as the parallelism indicates]. I the Lord do all these things' (vs. 6, 7). The Hebrew word, you thus see, denotes the 'evils,' afflictions, adversities, calamities, of outward estate ; and while in a remote and secondary way, as other passages show, there may be added the idea of moral evil also, in connection with the actions of men, it can in no sense include moral evil as applied to God. The Scriptures nowhere give sanction to the monstrous proposition that God is the author of sin."

"Well," said George, "I am thankful that this gives me just the relief I was longing for."

Said the pastor, "In the letter to our Superintendent was another difficulty: 'It was prophesied of Judas, several hundred years before he was born, that he would betray our Master. Christ says he was born for that purpose.'"

The pastor went on : "There is no prophecy concerning Judas by name, as, for instance, there is concerning Cyrus, Isa. 45 : 1-4 ; nevertheless, the fact that was prophesied was fulfilled by the person, Judas (Acts 1 : 16). But to allege that Christ says he was born for the purpose of betraying him, is going quite beyond the record. This difficulty, however, is the old, old one of the apparent discrepancy between God's sovereignty in predestination and man's free agency in action. Even more, if possible, than the question of the origin of sin, has this been a question of the ages. Men, women, and even children, have exercised their brains with it, always to distraction rather than satisfaction so far as settling the question is concerned. Still, maybe we can settle ourselves in regard to it."

At this, the trio quickened into intense alertness, for they had had in abundance not only the exercise, but the distraction, and if they could get "settled" they would be heartily glad.

Continued the pastor : "First of all, there are two truths that must be recognized and allowed without any equivocation or abatement. The first is *God's sovereignty*. This necessarily belongs to the very-idea of an infinite, omniscient God. If he is God, he must foreknow whatsoever is coming to pass, otherwise he cannot be omniscient and so cannot be God. But he cannot foreknow an event without it is certain. And how can it be certain unless he provide for its certainty? All this belongs to the very idea of God. We cannot rationally deny or doubt it if we would. I admit that the logical conclusion of God's sovereignty, standing alone by itself, is fatalism,—absolute fatalism. But we are not yet ready for a conclusion, for God's sovereignty does not stand alone by itself. There are other material facts to be

introduced into our premises before a conclusion can be reached ; and the presence or absence of material facts will make all the difference between truth and error."

"That's so," interposed Fred Leges : "in a case we had in court last week, the late discovery of material facts exonerated our client, and we cleared him ; otherwise he would have been convicted, and most unrighteously so, as it turned out."

The pastor went on : "The second truth is *man's free agency*. The testimony of every person's consciousness is that he is free. He knows he is free. That is something which he cannot deny or doubt. Moreover, God everywhere treats him as free, for otherwise God could not hold him responsible. The two truths of sovereignty and free agency are in fine juxtaposition in Acts 2 : 23, 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.' 'Foreknowledge. . . determinate counsel . . . delivered'—that is sovereignty : 'wicked hands,'—that is free agency, for they could not have been 'wicked' unless free. We have, then, these two facts of sovereignty and free agency, neither of which can we rightfully deny or doubt. We must allow them to be both true. If true, they are harmonious, *for truths cannot contradict each other.*"

"The correctness of this position," said George Argent, "seems to me undeniable ; but how do you reconcile the apparent contradiction ?"

The pastor, smiling, responded : "If there is no contradiction, what is there to reconcile ? But I compose myself to the appearance of discrepancy this way : On my father's farm we had a hardworking but ignorant Dutchman for a tenant. One vacation, when I was home from college, I was telling him about the daily revolution of the earth upon its axis. He thought I was

guying him. 'No, no,' said honest John, 'you can't stuff yer college larnin' down *me*. Here we are, our feet down and our heads up ; now when we turn around onto the other side, we'd have our feet up and our heads down, and it's common sense we'd fall off. But we don't, and here we are, this side up all the time. Say, you ; quit yer foolin.' "

A hearty laugh followed this story, but the pastor went on : " You laugh at this poor man's ignorance : why not laugh at our own ignorance ? The antipodal, foot-to-foot, facts that seemed so contradictory to him, are perfectly harmonious to us, because we understand the law that reconciles them,—the law of gravitation that binds bodies to the earth. So, we have the antipodal, seemingly contradictory, facts of sovereignty and free agency, which, as we have seen, are perfectly harmonious because true : only we, in our ignorance, do not now understand the law which makes the harmony appear. Maybe we shall, hereafter, when ' in thy light we shall see light ' (Ps. 36 : 9). While I do not thus settle the question itself, I settle myself in regard to it, and rest content in an ignorance which, in God's good time, may give place to complete knowledge."

The trio, almost with one voice, responded : " You have settled us, too ; " and Miss Rysen added : " If there is anything lacking in the satisfaction, I certainly shall have no more distraction with this difficulty in the future."

" One more word," said the pastor ; " the difficulty, with respect to Judas, is neither more nor less than attaches to every free action, good or bad, of every man under God's sovereign government. ' No difficulty emerges in theology that has not previously emerged in philosophy.' Such is the natural constitution of things."

Said George Argent : "This subject of God's sovereignty and man's free agency brings to my mind the discrepancy, or at least the difficulty, I have felt in connection with the Scripture statements concerning the security of the believer—'once in grace always in grace,' as the idea is—and what St. Paul says about being 'a castaway.'"

Said the pastor : "I see the association of ideas in your mind. Your difficulty is perhaps best set forth in the following texts :

Jno. 6 : 40, "*And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life ; and I will raise him up at the last day.*"

1 Cor. 9 : 27, "*But I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*"

He went on : "The doctrine or truth, of the inviolable security of the believer, of the final perseverance of the saints, of the certain connection between grace and glory, is one of the most explicitly taught, as it is one of the most comforting truths of Scripture. When one truly believes on Jesus Christ he 'hath everlasting life' (Jno. 5 : 24 ; 6 : 47). Upon believing, the life becomes a present possession—'hath ;' and it is inalienable, for it is 'everlasting :' if everlasting it cannot come to an end. In Christ's discourse in Jno. VI., again and again, as in a strain of grand and solemn music comes the refrain, 'And I will raise him up at the last day' (vs. 39, 40, 44, 54). Whom God graciously calls, he not only justifies, but glorifies (Rom. 8 : 30). Paul's setting forth of this same truth you may also see in 2 Cor. 5 : 1-8 ; 2 Tim, 4 : 6-8 ; etc., etc."

"When Paul spoke of the possibility of his becoming

'a castaway,' was his final salvation within the scope of his intent? Did he have any reference to that at all? No."

The pastor continued: "The Greek word translated 'castaway,' *adokimos*, is used in the New Testament eight times. In Rom. 1 : 28 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 5, 6, 7 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 8 ; and Titus 1 : 16, it is rendered 'reprobate.' In Heb. 6 : 8, 'rejected:' 'But that which beareth thorns and briars is *rejected*.' The Revisers have very properly cast away the word 'castaway,' and accepted 'rejected.' So the verse reads: 'Lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.'"

"The Greek word is compounded of *a* privative and the adjective *dokimos*. The adjective is derived from a verb which, in classical Greek, is the technical word for putting money to the proof: that which endures the test is *dokimos*, approved, accepted, and that which fails is *adokimos*, disapproved, rejected, cast away. Here, say, are two coins just from the die in the stamp room of the mint. They go to the tester. One stands every test: it is *dokimos*, proved and approved, and is passed out into the world's marts to do its work in the realm of commerce. The other is just a trifle short weight, or has some other defect: it is *adokimos*, disapproved, rejected as a coin of commerce. It is a coin still, however: it is not counterfeit: it simply is not fit for use."

"Now, what is the application of this to the apostle Paul?"

"Note his course of thought. In the preceding chapter (VIII.) a question had arisen among the Corinthian Christians concerning the eating of meats that had been offered in sacrifice to idols. He tells them that the eating of such meat was not in itself wrong; nevertheless

it should be avoided if it gave offense or were a stumbling block to other believers. 'Take heed,' he says, 'lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak' (8 : 9). Then in chapter ix. he enforces the duty of consulting the good of the brethren, by showing that he had given up what men would call his rights, and had accommodated himself to the opinions and prejudices of people, *i. e.*, where Christian principle or the honor of Christ were not involved. This leads him to speak still further of the necessity of self-denial and earnestness of purpose, *not to be saved but to gain a crown.*"

"In urging this self-denial and earnestness, he takes an illustration from the Greek athletic contests—the Isthmian games—that were celebrated near Corinth. He says, 'Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain' (9 : 24). And he says, 'Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things' (9 : 25). 'Temperate'—they restrained and trained themselves for highest physical effectiveness. For what? At the end of the stadium, upon a post, before the eyes of the runner, hung the coveted crown, a quickly fading wreath of laurel leaves. 'Now they do it,' he says, 'to obtain a corruptible crown.' We? We do it to obtain an 'incorruptible' crown. Paul was in the Christian race: he kept his body under, he brought it into subjection, he trained it to make it helpful for service, lest untrained, lest the flesh becoming dominant, he should be disapproved in the contest, ruled off the course, rejected, and so fail to receive the crown. He preached to others, *i. e.*, (to keep the figure,) he was a runner, but he might not be a crowned runner."

Still the pastor went on: "Very plainly, therefore, it is not a question of salvation at all, but simply a question of reward. Salvation is a free gift: reward is something earned. As a contestant for a crown he might be rejected, cast away, because of unfitness for service. A person may be a child of God, and yet be disapproved as a servant of Christ. To be a servant of Christ involves self-denial, self-judgment, self-emptiness, self-control. We do not become children of God by such exercises; but most assuredly we shall never become successful servants of Christ without them."

"In first Corinthians, chapter III., we have something quite parallel. There, a person may rest on Christ, as a foundation, and build thereon, but with unworthy, combustible materials. In the testing time, 'he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire' (v. 15), but his builded superstructure shall be burned up, whereby he shall lose his reward—saved, but not rewarded."

Said Fred Leges thoughtfully: "I see that this removes the difficulty entirely. The casting away is not a question of salvation at all, but a question of service. But it is a very serious question, nevertheless. While we may rejoice in our security, it seems to me that we who love the Lord and want to serve him, should be most strenuously careful that we do nothing in any way by which we would weaken or lose our influence, or lessen the emphasis of or lose our testimony, and thus put ourselves in condition such that the Lord cannot use us, and so perforce make us 'a castaway.'"

The trembling in Fred's voice as he uttered his closing words showed that his feelings were deeply stirred; which so touched the hearts of the others that they could not but give a fervent assent to what he said.

CHAPTER XV.

Miss Rysen began by saying : "Our Sunday-school lessons being now upon our Saviour's passion, the differences in the inscriptions upon the cross have been brought up in my Bible Class." She read as follows :

Matt. 27 : 37, "*This is Jesus the king of the Jews.*"

Mk. 15 : 26, "*The king of the Jews.*"

Lk. 23 : 38, "*This is the king of the Jews.*"

Jno. 19 : 19, "*Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews.*"

Said the pastor : "Much has been made of these differences, and quite unnecessarily so, as it seems to me. Dr. Middleton went so far as to charge these superscriptions with 'want of accuracy and truth.' The problem is to account for the differences."

The pastor continued : "Luke and John say that the superscriptions were written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. There is an old idea, finely set forth in Dr. Gregory's 'Why Four Gospels?' that Matthew's gospel was for the Jew, Mark's for the Roman, Luke's for the Greek, and John's for the New Man in Christ Jesus. Matthew, it is thought, therefore took the Hebrew form of the inscription, Mark the Latin, and Luke the Greek. It is not difficult to justify this opinion. 'Jesus' is peculiarly a Hebrew name, of ancient flavor, and Matthew uses it nearly as many times as Mark and Luke together. Matthew's is pre-eminently the gospel of the kingdom, and he there presents Jesus as the king of the Jews, without the prejudicing name of Nazareth attached. Mark's gospel, for the Roman, the man of swift, decisive action and terse speech, uses the Latin form and simply says : 'The king of the Jews.' Luke's gospel, for the Greek, the man of thought and culture, gives the more rounded and

polished Greek form : 'This is the king of the Jews.' And it is noticeable that in naming the three languages Luke puts the Greek first, instead of the Hebrew as John does. John's gospel, for the Christian, uses the name 'Jesus' one-third more times than Matthew, and he is 'Jesus of Nazareth,' lowly, despised, and yet at the same time the exalted 'King of the Jews.' Hence his form of the inscription. Many are satisfied with this solution."

"Another solution is offered," said the pastor. "There was one (albeit in three languages), full, complete inscription, and each gospel-writer took from it just what suited his purpose; so each one was absolutely correct in presenting his form as in that measure the inscription. The full form, as given by Pilate, and the part of each would be as follows :"

Pilate : This is JÉSUS of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

Matt. : This is Jesus the king of the Jews.

Mark : the king of the Jews.

Luke : This is the king of the Jews.

John : . . . Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.

Continued the pastor : "This solution may be regarded by many as entirely satisfactory; but I think either should perfectly relieve the gospels of the charge of 'want of accuracy and truth,' or of the semblance of contradiction. Edward Garbett, in his 'God's Word Written,' p. 258, gives for the treatment of Bible difficulties, this very sensible rule: 'Rule 3. Variations of statement are not contradictions, when they arise either from recording different parts of some common event, or from assigning a different emphasis and importance to the same parts.' This rule, the reasonableness of which must certainly commend it to all, would, if applied, relieve not only this difficulty, but many of the so-called 'discrepancies' of the Bible."

Said George Argent: "The differences in the cross-

superscriptions, in their bearing upon the question of plenary inspiration, have not troubled me nearly so much as St. Paul's apparent disclaimer of inspiration in 1 Cor. 7 : 10-12."

1 Cor. 7 : 10, "*And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord.*"

1 Cor. 7 : 12, "*But to the rest speak I, not the Lord.*"

They all had the passage before them, and the pastor began: "You will observe that in this chapter the apostle is treating of marriage with respect to the unmarried, widows, believers united to unbelievers, and virgins in view of the 'present distress' (v. 26), *i. e.*, calamities, persecutions, either actually present or impending (Matt. 10 : 17 ; Jno. 15 : 20 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 7). When he says: 'I command, yet not I, but the Lord,' he refers to Christ's own commandment in the Gospels (Matt. 5 : 32 ; 19 : 3-9 ; Mk. 10 : 2-12 ; Lk. 16 : 18) ; but when he says, 'to the rest speak I, not the Lord,' he does not disclaim Divine authority and rest the command on his own private advice, but he authoritatively decides a new case on which the Lord had not spoken. And then, in v. 25, he says: 'Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord ; yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful,' *i. e.*, in absence of any direct command of Christ, he was guided by the Spirit (according to Christ's promise, Jno. 16 : 13) to give the prudential advice he gave, which, by leaving the matter open to each one's discretion, as a case of expediency, relieved their consciences and set them at rest. That this is the proper view is evident from the concluding words of the discussion, v. 40, 'I think also that I have the Spirit of God,' where the verb *dokeo*, *I think*, as in classical use, does not necessarily express a mere seeming, something

doubtful, but a seeming which is true. Says Hodge : ' *I think (doko) I have*, is only, agreeably to Greek usage, an urbane way of saying *I have*, comp. Gal. 2 : 6, 1 Cor. 12 : 22. Paul was in no doubt of his being an organ of the Holy Ghost.' Upon the authority of the Vatican manuscript the Emphatic Diaglott translates thus : ' I am certain that even I have the Spirit of God.' St. Paul, therefore does not disclaim inspiration, but, having the Spirit of God, he is divinely led to say, ' she is *happier* if she so abide' (v. 40), and thus there is Divine authority for the counsel which in this instance leaves option to the ones advised."

Said George again : " I have another Pauline difficulty on which I would like to have light thrown." He read the passages :

Acts 20 : 22, " *And now, behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem.*"

Acts 21 : 4, " *Who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.*"

Said the pastor : " The point of your difficulty is in identifying the 'spirit' in the first passage with the Holy Spirit—which is a mistake. If that were correct, there would be a glaring contradiction. In Acts 20 : 22, 'spirit' is sharply discriminated from the Third Person of the Trinity by the word 'holy' in the next verse : 'Save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.' The reference is therefore to Paul's own spirit, or mind. That both the authorized and revised versions so understand it is seen in the fact that they both print the word 'spirit' with a small 's' instead of a capital 'S.' To go 'bound in the spirit' was to go under inward constraint from an invincible sense of duty. Such overpowering compulsion would render him indifferent to

awaiting dangers, and insensible to remonstrances, as came to him, for instance, from his friends in Acts 21:4."

George interposed: "In that verse the word 'Spirit' is printed with capital 'S,' showing that the Holy Spirit is intended. This presents now a still graver difficulty. The Spirit bade him not to go to Jerusalem, and yet he went right along. Was he disobedient to a divine command?"

The pastor replied: "Did the Holy Spirit forbid him to go to Jerusalem? I think not. The ground of the disciples' remonstrance was the 'bonds and afflictions' that awaited him there, the foreknowledge of which the Holy Spirit imparted to them, and their affectionate regard for him led them to urge him not to go. Their foreknowledge was inspired, but the advice based upon it was a merely human inference. They gave admonition and warning, but not a positive divine command. He was apprised of the danger, and then left to the free determination of his own will. He accepted their good wishes, but did not yield to their warning. That Christ approved of his conduct may easily be gathered from Acts 23:11, 'The Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.' So any charge against the Apostle would not hold."

Said Fred Leges: "I was reading the third chapter of Numbers with considerable care, and I stumbled upon a difficulty that I do not see how to resolve." He handed the pastor a slip of paper on which was the following:

Numb.	3: 22, the family of Gershon . .	7,500
"	3: 28, " " " Kohath . .	8,600
"	3: 34, " " " Merari . .	6,200
		<u>22,300</u>
"	3: 39 sum, of the three families	<u>22,000</u>
	How account for the difference of . .	300?

Said the pastor humorously : " This is an old acquaintance of mine. That the writer intended to give any of these numbers with exact mathematical accuracy, seems hardly probable, for you will notice that in the first three instances they are given in even thousands and hundreds ; and in the last case, in even thousands. And it seems singular, too, that each family account should end in an even hundred. So, some would solve the difficulty by saying that when the families were spoken of separately the round thousands and hundreds were given, but when they were summed into the larger total, only the round thousands ; for it is a very common method simply to use round numbers."

" Then," continued the pastor, " others might solve the difficulty by applying the principle of the greater including the less. The actual total is 22,300, but when in v. 39 the writer gives 22,000, he does not say there were no more than that. If there were 22,300 there must have been 22,000, the less being included in the greater ; so there is no contradiction."

Said Fred impulsively : " That looks easy. Why didn't I see it myself !"

" But," said the pastor, " there is another solution which you may prefer." As Miss Rysen sat nearest the book-case, he asked her to take down Lange's Commentary on Numbers and read, from page 29, the marked passage. She read as follows : " The numbers of the tribe branches, 7,500, 8,600 and 6,200 added together give the sum 22,300 ; whereas the number given is only 22,000. We think the Rabbinical solution of this apparent discrepancy of numbers quite well founded, notwithstanding the doubts of Knobel and Keil. If the sum total of the Levites was to determine the ratio which they bore to the sums of the first-born in the other tribes,

because the surplus of the first-born had to be redeemed in money, then the first-born among the Levites should certainly not be included in the count, else there would be nullity in the calculation. For them 300 was therefore deducted. This seems to us a much more evident explanation than the supposition of a blunder in the text."

After this disposition of the case, George Argent said: "Yesterday I was reading about Samuel anointing David to be king over Israel. According to 1 Sam. 16 : 10, 11 and 17 : 12, Jesse had eight sons, and David was the eighth and youngest. I had the curiosity to look up the marginal reference to Chronicles, and I found in 1 Chron. 2 : 15, this : 'Ozem the sixth, David the seventh.' How can this be?"

Said the pastor : "In First Samuel, the story is of the time of David's boyhood, when there were eight sons, only four of whom were there named (16 : 6-13). The genealogical table in First Chronicles was evidently made at a later date, when the sons of the family were as follows : 1. Eliab ; 2. Abinadab ; 3. Shimea ; 4. Nethanel ; 5. Raddai ; 6. Ozem ; 7. David."

"Yes," said George, "but how about the 'missing link?'"

Said the pastor : "You will find him in 1 Chron. 27 : 18, 'Elihu, one of the brethren of David.' And it is said that the Syriac and Arabic lists place him between Ozem and David."

"Please pardon me," said George, "if I appear a little bit obstinate ; but is the Hebrew word there rendered 'brethren,' the one to denote persons born of the same parents?"

"Yes," said the pastor, "and it is the only one that is. Another Hebrew word, *rea*, in its more than 180

occurrences, while it is translated *another, companion, fellow, friend, husband, lover, neighbor*, is translated *brother* but once, Deut. 24 : 10, and the Revision renders that *neighbor*. But the word here, *ach*, is a primitive word for 'brother' in its closest consanguineous relations, and is, as I say, the only Hebrew word to express that relation."

The trio were now intently watching to see how these things were to be put together. After a moments thought the pastor said : "A few days ago my wife and our youngest son sat together on the piazza, when the census-taker called. To the question 'How many children?' she responded : 'We have three sons, and here [pointing to him] is our third and youngest.' To the census-taker she stated exactly the truth as to our living family ; but the fact is, we have had four sons, the eldest having died several years ago."

"Oh, I see," said Fred, "in David's boyhood Jesse had eight sons ; but years later, when the list of the 'census-taker' was made, Elihu had died, and David was therefore advanced from the eighth to the seventh place."

Said the pastor beamingly : "Fred, I confidently expect to see you wearing a wig and sitting on a wool sack some day, for not infrequently your summings up here have been worthy of a Judge. Your conclusion seems to me not only a most reasonable, but a very probable, supposition ; and a solution that carries a high degree of reasonableness and probability, and that completely and legitimately relieves a difficulty, is certainly to be preferred before crediting the text with a discrepancy ;" with which they all quite agreed.

CHAPTER XVI.

The work of the evening was introduced by George Argent saying : " Fred and I, in our recent Bible study together, hunting up some marginal references, observed the difference between passages in the Old Testament and as they are quoted in the New. For instance, in 1 Cor. 1 : 19 St. Paul quotes from Isa. 29 : 14, making a noticeable change :

Isa. 29 : 14, "*And the wisdom of their wise men shall perish.*"

1 Cor. 1 : 19, "*For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise.*"

In the next chapter is another instance of a change in quoting from Isaiah :

Isa. 64 : 4, "*God hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him.*"

1 Cor. 2 : 9, "*God hath prepared for them that love Him.*"

In the tenth chapter of Hebrews the changing of a verse from the Psalms is very marked :

Ps. 40 : 6, "*Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire : mine ears hast thou opened.*"

Heb. 10 : 5, "*Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast Thou prepared me.*"

Then, again, in Ephesians, fourth chapter, St. Paul apparently just reverses the meaning of the passage from the Psalms which he quotes :

Ps. 68 : 18, "*Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.*"

Eph. 4 : 8, "*Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*"

Said Miss Rysen : " I have often noticed these apparent discrepancies, and wondered what their solution is ; for I assumed that there must be good reason for the changes, even though I did not know what the reasons are."

The pastor, seeing their inquiring, not to say perplexed, look, said : " George, you have brought up one of the most difficult questions with which Biblical scholarship has to deal. Much, very much, has been written upon it, some of which has been wise, some quite otherwise. Of course destructive criticism has made the most of whatever difficulty there is. Accommodation, misunderstanding, misquotation, quoting from memory and memory playing false, etc., etc., have been alleged as accounting for these apparent discrepancies. For instance, Tholuck says : ' In very many, in most cases, in consequence of quoting from memory, the passage, so far as the words are concerned, is altered sometimes to such an extent that the deviation has even caused the supposition that the citation belonged to some apocryphal book.' "

Holding aloft Professor Howard Osgood's pamphlet, " Quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament," the pastor said : " I have here the entire embodiment of the Old Testament, so far as it has been embodied, in the New ; every quotation with the formula, ' it is written,' ' God said,' ' that it might be fulfilled,' etc., every quotation without a formula, every direct reference, and every similarity of word or thought. But we are now considering simply the matter of quotations."

" You will be interested to know," continued the pastor, " that Genesis is quoted 19 times, and in 9 New Tes-

tament books ; Exodus 24 times, and in 12 books ; Leviticus 12 times, and in 9 books ; Deuteronomy 26 times, and in 13 books ; the Psalms 59 times, and in 12 books ; Isaiah 50 times, and in 11 books. But I have not time to go through the list."

The pastor went on : "Of course you are entirely familiar with the fact that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek, and that the Septuagint is the translation of the Hebrew of the Old Testament into Greek, made at Alexandria in Egypt about 280 B. C. The Septuagint was in common use in Palestine. Now, the quotations in the New, of the Old, may be distributed into three classes: 1. Those agreeing verbatim with the Hebrew ; 2. Those agreeing verbatim with the Septuagint where it differs from the Hebrew ; 3. Those differing from both the Hebrew and the Septuagint, of which, according to Horne, there are nineteen."

"Formidable, apparently, as is the difficulty that confronts us, I have a solution that satisfies me," continued the pastor. "Of course I assume that the Old Testament is inspired of God, for in old time 'holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' (2 Pet. 1 : 21), and 'all scripture [*i. e.* the Old Testament writings] is given by inspiration of God' (2 Tim. 3 : 16). I assume also, in accordance with Christ's promise (Jno. 14 : 26 ; 16 : 13 ; Matt. 10 : 19, 20 : Mk. 13 : 11 ; Lk. 12 : 11, 12 ; 21 : 14, 15), that the New Testament is inspired. The Holy Spirit is the primal author of both. Now, an author certainly has the right to quote in one place what he has said in another, and if, in quoting, he finds it needful, for the accomplishment of his purpose, to make any change in the quotation, he certainly has the right

to do that. Applying this obvious principle to the case in hand, we must say that the same Holy Spirit is responsible for the original writing and for the changed quotation."

"Well, that is lucid, and I must say sensible," interposed the alert Fred Leges, with which judgment his companions agreed.

The pastor went on: "The reasonableness and sufficiency of this solution will appear, I trust, as we examine each of the passages to which George has called our attention. Take the first, 'the wisdom of their wise men shall perish' from Isaiah, and 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise' from Corinthians. The insufficiency of human reason to lead to salvation is taught over and over again in Scripture, and here the Holy Spirit is making clear by a second and further revelation, the cause of their wisdom perishing, is God himself. This is both pertinent and pat. Take the second, 'him that waiteth for Him' from Isaiah, and 'them that love Him' from Corinthians. By the way, a distinguished English clergyman has a sermon on this passage from Corinthians (vs. 9, 10), entitled 'God's Revelation of Heaven;' and the verses are usually quoted as though they had reference to the heavenly world. Not so; for both prophet and apostle are speaking of God's redemptive provision for mankind through the Messiah. But the Messiah, for whom the saints of the old dispensation waited in hope, has come; and to the saints of the new dispensation He is the personal object of love, both as they look back at his coming to earth and as they look forward to his coming again. Hope has been changed to love; and so it was needful that just this change should be made in quoting. The Holy Spirit is simply making an advance in revelation, casting new light on the way of truth and life."

Said Miss Rysen impulsively : " How delightful this is ! And how plain when once it is pointed out to you ! "

" Take the third," said the pastor : " ' mine ears hast thou opened ' from Psalms, and ' a body hast thou prepared me ' from Hebrews. Ears opened, or ' digged ' as the margin has it, with reference to Ex. 21 : 6, where the bondslave through love for his master is not willing to leave him, and so has his ear bored through with an awl in token of perpetual sacrifice of service and obedience, is the idea of the original Hebrew. But ' a body hast thou prepared me ' is the differing rendering of the Septuagint, which the New Testament writer adopts and on which he builds his argument. Says Lee : ' Commentators of the most opposite schools are singularly unanimous in regarding the New Testament form of exhibiting this passage as a strictly correct representation of *the sense* of the original. ' The teaching is, that personal obedience to the will of God rather than presenting animal offerings is the true sacrifice. And how could the Son of God coming into the world best show his obedience except through a prepared body ? To show his absolute and unreserved subjection of himself to his Father's pleasure as a servant (Jno. 4 : 34 ; 5 : 30 ; 6 : 38 ; Lk. 22 : 42), he took upon himself the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2 : 7), and in this prepared body he made obedient and serving sacrifice. Thus, in the New Testament quotation, the Holy Spirit gives a significant exposition of the idea veiled in the first writing. Manifestly, a divine wisdom is in the change. Take the last case : ' received gifts for men ' from Psalms, and ' gave gifts unto men ' from Ephesians. Christ, in his humiliation and fitting for his priestly office, must of necessity have somewhat also to offer, even as every high priest was ordained to offer gifts and

sacrifices (Heb. 8 : 3). He, therefore, 'received gifts for men,' and, in due time, ascended to dispense them, which he is constantly doing through this dispensation. Accordingly, as high priest and head of the church, he 'gives gifts unto men.' As Hengstenberg well observes, the giving presupposes the receiving, and the receiving is succeeded by the giving as a consequence. In the change of the quotation, the Holy Spirit made, not only a fitting, but a logical, advance in revelation, carrying on through a New Testament writer the work which he had begun. And I doubt not that the rationale which we have found in these four cases, and which seems to me valid and sufficient, has existence in every case of difference. If so, then the whole question of difficulty is settled. All we have to do is to go on, if we care to, and seek the rationale in the other cases."

Said Fred Leges, with an air of relief: "I see it. The proper thing to do, is to credit all these changes in quotations, not to any mistake or defect in the New Testament writer, but to the design of the Holy Spirit himself, he thereby carrying on to fuller unfolding the revelation begun in the Old Testament."

"Precisely so," said the pastor, "and this is just what is demanded of every view of the Scriptures which allows them to be in any adequate sense, the Word of God."

George Argent, turning to the pastor, said: "Your exposition of the matter seems to me eminently reasonable and satisfactory. And you have done a good deal more than simply to solve the difficulty in these four cases: you have exhibited a method which I trust we shall all be able to make available and successful in our further Bible Study;" which remark had the hearty concurrence of both Miss Rysen and Fred Leges.

CHAPTER XVII.

When the little company was ready for work, Fred Leges said: "I received yesterday another visit from the president of the Agnostic Club, and he began by saying: 'My respectable and respected young friend, I would respectfully acquaint you with the fact that if, for a few minutes you can lay aside your consideration of the great principles of jurisprudence that so profoundly engage your expanded and expanding intellect, and condescend to shed illumination upon a religious subject that is troubling my dark and benighted mind, you will confer a great favor upon me, and you will have your reward, if not in this world, then in the next one, if there be any such place, concerning which I have my serious doubts.' Of course I understood that his pretended seeking for light was only mockery; but I was interested to know what trap he was about to spring. Reaching for my Bible, he said: 'Please listen while I read:

2 Kings 24 : 8, "*Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months.*"

2 Chron. 36 : 9, "*Jehoiachin was 8 years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem.*"

And when that is illuminated,' continued the Agnostic, 'just turn your calcium rays on this:

2 Kings 8 : 26, "*Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.*"

2 Chron. 22 : 2, "*Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.*"

“And when,” continued Fred, “he showed by a reference to the close of the preceding chapter in Second Chronicles that this last quotation would make Ahaziah two years older than his father, I confess I was up against a proposition that I was unable to throw light upon.”

The young people together turned to their pastor, who responded: “I came upon these passages several years ago, and proceeded to satisfy myself in regard to them. As this may be our last meeting (at which suggestion tears sprang to their eyes, for their minister, finding himself unable longer to bear the peculiar burdens resting upon him, had resigned his pastorate and was soon to depart), perhaps I had better do a little more than simply treat the passages in question, and say something in regard to the numerous numerical difficulties in the Old Testament. These first, however.”

“Take the first one,” continued the pastor. “The difference of ten years in the case of Jehoiachin is very easily accounted for, on an eminently reasonable supposition based on the fact that we know from frequent mention in Kings and Chronicles that sons were oftentimes associated with fathers, as ‘consorts’ (see margin, 2 K. 13: 10; 15: 1) in the government. One of the most expert chronologists I know, tabulating the reigns of the kings of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and writing me of this matter, said: ‘Jehoram, of Israel, was associated with Ahaziah five years before his death and after his accident; Joash, of Israel, was three years associated with his father Jehoahaz, and he was eleven years, sick, associated with his son Jeroboam II. So Amaziah, of Judah, was associated three years with his father Joash; Ahaz was six years associated with Jotham, his father;’ etc. Accordingly, Horne’s introduction (Part II., Book

II., Chap. VII., Sec. II.), says: 'As sons frequently reigned with their fathers during the Hebrew monarchy, the reigns of the former are not unfrequently made, in some instances, to commence with their partnership in the throne, and in others from the commencement of their sole government after their father's decease; consequently the time of the reign is sometimes noticed as it respects the father, sometimes as it respects the son, and sometimes as it includes both.' And farther on it is said: 'The application of the rule above stated will also remove the apparent contradiction between 2 Kings 24 : 8 and 2 Chron. 36 : 9, Jehoiachin being 8 years old when he was associated in the government with his father, and 18 years when he began to reign alone.' "

"That," interrupted Fred, "perfectly accounts for the ten years of difference in Jehoiachin's case, and in such a reasonable way that I should think no one would have any hesitation about accepting the solution. But is the other case, Ahaziah's difference of twenty years, as easily disposed of?"

"Well," said the pastor, "that depends on how easy you are to satisfy! A solution that has been offered is this: the 22-year date of 2 Kings 8 : 26, refers to the age at which Ahaziah began to reign, while the 42-year date of 2 Chron. 22 : 2, refers to the period of the reign in the history of the kingdom of his infamous mother, Athaliah, or of the House of Omri, to which dynasty he belonged, and which fell before the assaults of Jehu. Accordingly we have: Omri 6 years, Ahab 22 years, Ahaziah 2 years, Joram 12 years, which added together make 42 years. This is the solution of Ben Gershon, Lightfoot, and others. And it is a singular fact that quite a considerable number of cases of apparent discrepancies in numbers will be removed by this peculiarly rabbinic method of computation."

“That may do,” said the young lawyer, “provided (though I should want to think of that farther) the number, 42 years, in 2 Chron. 22 : 2, referring to the House of Omri, is correct ; but what is the ground for that claim ?”

“Really,” said the pastor, “that is just what I would like to know myself. It seems to be an assumption pure and simple, for I see nothing in the terms of the text, certainly, to justify it ; and yet it is so plausible as to considerably commend it to credence. While not satisfied with this solution, because of lack of evidence, perhaps this difficulty would better be included among those which I had in mind when I suggested at the outset that I would have something to say on the general subject of numerical difficulties in the Old Testament.”

The pastor went on : “There are some sixteen numerical variations in the two tables of enumeration of those who went back to Palestine from the Babylonian captivity as given in Ezra, chap. ii., and Nehemiah, chap. vii. And then there are such variations as these :—

2 Sam, 8 : 4, 700 horsemen.	1 Chron, 18 : 4, 7,000 horsemen.
1 Sam. 10 : 18, Syrians, 700 chariots.	1 Chron. 19 : 18, Syrians, 7,000 chariots.
1 Kings 4 : 26, 40,000 stalls.	2 Chron. 9 : 25, 4,000 stalls.
1 Kings 6 : 2, 30 cubits.	2 Chron. 3 : 4, 120 cubits.
1 Kings 7 : 26, 2,000 baths.	2 Chron. 4 : 5, 3,000 baths.
2 Kings 8 : 26, Ahaziah, 22 years.	2 Chron. 22 : 2, Ahaziah, 42 years.”

“Now,” continued the pastor, “how are these variations to be accounted for ? The Hebrews had no numerical system of figures as we have, but they expressed their numbers by letters. There are twenty-two letters

in the Hebrew alphabet. The first nine letters, from Aleph to Teth, express the units from 1 to 9. The next nine letters, from Yodh to Tsadhe, express the nine tens, from 10 to 90. The remaining four letters, from Koph to Tav, express the four hundreds, from 100 to 400. Five of these letters are written in a second form, 'final,' it is called, when they end a word. These five final letters are used for the five hundreds from 500 to 900. Besides, thousands are represented by the letters for units with two little dots over them. Thus, Aleph stands for 1, but put two dots over it, and it means 1,000. This is the system, and it is by combination of these letters, simple, final, and dotted, that all numbers are expressed. Some of the letters very closely resemble each other, and a copyist might mistake one for another, and so make a variant reading. Accordingly, the late Professor Green, of Princeton, in his Hebrew grammar, section 9, says: 'It has been ingeniously conjectured, and with as show of plausibility, that some of the discrepancies of numbers in the Old Testament may be accounted for by assuming the existence of such a system of symbols, in which errors might more easily arise than in fully written words.' Thus, in the case of Ahaziah, if we do not accept the rabbinical explanation given above, but allow that an error has crept in, it is not difficult to see that a transcriber may have easily mistaken a Kaph, whose numerical power is 20, for a Mem, whose numerical power is 40. So Horne says: 'Differences in numbers not infrequently arise from false readings.' "

George Argent and Miss Rysen hurriedly asked, as in one breath, "But what effect does this concession have upon the doctrine of inspiration?"

"None whatever," replied the pastor. "Rev. Dr.

George F. Pentecost, in his published sermon, 'Inspired and Profitable,' p. 6, says: 'We may boldly and confidently say that the whole Book, as we have it, is inspired of God. In taking this broad ground, I, of course, do not wish to affirm that any errors which may have crept into the original text, in the course of transcription, or which can be manifestly traced to the hand of some interpolator, are inspired of God.' And the late Rev. Dr. James H. Brookes, the foremost champion in this country of the doctrine of verbal inspiration, in his magazine, 'The Truth,' vol. xxii., p. 65, says: 'It has never been claimed by any one that the copyists, transcribers, or translators of the Bible were verbally inspired, and hence there may possibly be errors of the pen, especially in numerals, which were represented by the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in this case [2 Sam. 8 : 4, and 1 Chron. 18 : 4], a striking resemblance existing between the Hebrew letter Nun and Zayin standing for 700 and 7000.'"

Still the pastor went on: "Professor Briggs in his 'Biblical Study,' p. 242, says: 'From the standpoint of biblical criticism, we are not prepared to admit errors in the Scriptures in the original autographs until they shall be proven. Very many of those alleged have already received sufficient or plausible explanations; others are in dispute between truth-seeking scholars, and satisfactory explanations may be given.' And Archdeacon Farrar says: 'The widest range of learning and the acutest ingenuity of criticism has never discovered one single demonstrable error of fact or doctrine in the Old or New Testament.' I suppose his reference must be to the pure text of Scripture. The reason back of these utterances must be that which controlled the Presbyterian General Assembly, in Washington, in 1893,

when it unanimously 'Resolved, That the Bible as we now have it, in its various translations and versions, when freed from all errors and mistakes of translators, copyists and printers, is the very word of God, and consequently wholly without error.' "

"The scrupulous, yes; almost superstitious, care exercised by the Jews in the making of manuscripts," said the pastor, "goes very far to guarantee the reliability of our text. The dress of the transcriber; the color of the ink and the mode of preparing it; the characters to be used in writing; the spaces between the lines and the sections; the ceremony to be observed in writing the name of God—all these, and many more, were minutely prescribed, and no one of them could be neglected without vitiating the work: a vitiated roll must be destroyed. We are told that they counted every verse, word and letter; recorded how many times each separate letter of the alphabet occurs; told how often the same word occurs at the beginning, middle, or end of a verse; gave the middle verse, middle word, and middle letter of each book of the Pentateuch; and they would not dare to alter in the text even an evident mistake, but had an intricate method of indicating it on the margin. I have somewhere read that Rabbi Ishmael said to a copyist: 'My son, take great heed how thou doest thy work—for thy work is the work of Heaven—lest thou drop or add a letter of the manuscript, and so become a destroyer of the world.' With such scrupulous heedfulness, surely we may say: 'Thy testimonies are very sure' (Ps. 93:5)."

As the pastor paused, Miss Rysen with repressed emotion said: "I cannot tell you, our dear pastor, how thankful we are for the confirmation of faith in God's Word which you have given us. Difficulties have been cleared away, methods of study have been exhibited

which we shall certainly use for our profit in the future ; and more yet, in all your ministry here, both public and private, you have inspired in us an earnest desire—I think I may say an insatiable longing, at least unsatisfied except as the longing is fulfilled—to translate the truths of the Bible into better and yet better living.”

To prevent an emotional breakdown the pastor hastened to say as he arose : “ As I look back over the happy student-evenings we have spent together, I can see that my own faith has been strengthened, too. We have gone over the very chiefest of the alleged discrepancies, and I think we have fairly and squarely solved them all. We have little patience with those whose attitude is that of the old Latin writer—*Aut inveniam discrepantiam, aut faciam* : ‘ I will find a discrepancy, or I will make one.’ I think Professor Terry, in his *Biblical Hermeneutics*, speaks truly when he says : ‘ Not a few of the alleged contradictions of Scripture exist only in the imagination of skeptical writers, and are to be attributed to the perverse misunderstanding of captious critics ’ (p. 514). And Professor Willis J. Beecher, in his paper on ‘ Historicity,’ published in *The Auburn Seminary Review*, October, 1902, p. 159, says : ‘ In recent books some thousands of instances are cited of alleged contradictions in the Scriptures. . . . But if you will take up these cases one by one, according to them the same fair treatment that you would demand for statements made by yourself, you will decide that in nine-tenths of them there is clearly no contradiction, and that only a small proportion of the remaining tenth presents any real difficulty.’ Barring the penslips of copyists, I am firm in the conviction that there is not a single apparent discrepancy in all the Bible that cannot be reasonably and satisfactorily

explained. 'Forever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven,' (Ps. 119:89), yes, and on earth, too.

'Almighty Lord, the sun shall fail,
The moon forget her nightly tale,
And deepest silence hush on high,
The radiant chorus of the sky ;
But fixed for everlasting years,
Unmoved, amid the wreck of spheres,
Thy Word shall shine in cloudless day,
When heaven and earth have passed away.' "

As the pastor impressively, and with a touch of awesomeness, repeated these lines of Sir Robert Grant, the little company reverently arose, standing in the arc of a circle before him, and, as at the close of the first meeting, so now, his voice glided into prayer. In tender tones he prayed for these, his beloved young people, that they might continue to grow in the knowledge of the Word and in all graces of the Christian life ; and he commended them, as did Paul the Ephesian elders when parting with them at Miletus (Acts 20:32), to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

And so these meetings for the study of Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible came to an end.

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