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that means that it behoves him to bridle himself with the general aims of community and saddle himself with its general interests.

3. The sense of brotherhood will prevent men from feeding on each other and making capital out of their necessities. Money-making is always a transaction between two parties, and when conducted in consonance with the Christian conception of property, each party will make account of the other's interests as well as his own. It seems to be considered that business is the art of getting whatever you can without any consideration of equivalents. Making money has taken the place of earning money. This matter is one that has no end to it. The question on the street is not one of value; but rather how much can I get for a thing if I am the seller, or how little can I get along with and pay for the same commodity if I am buyer. Values used to regulate prices; prices at present appear to determine values. And so the stockbrokers study 'quotations' and watch the 'tickers.'

Suppose that I want an article at my grocer's. It happens that he is the only one from whom I can obtain it, and that it is something I cannot get along without. The thing is worth, say, ten cents; but if he appreciates the circumstances he will quite likely charge me fifteen. That is, he will charge me the worth of the article and tax me fifty per cent. extra for the exigency. He loves me, and all that sort of thing; he 'brothers' me in the house of the Lord. It is not good form to gag and pinion me and deplete me burglariously; but if exigencies are snug enough to throttle me, and circumstances sufficiently expert to turn my pockets, he will appropriate the contents with a 'thank you,' call it trade, and invite me to come again. The element of reciprocal interest and reciprocal obligation comes into no kind of account with him. He will twist the screw upon me to the full limit of his courage. He has no conscience and no heart. I stand before him in the same posture that an oil well does to the company that is working it; with no other possible purpose to subserve but to be pumped—pumped dry. His is the true genius of a sucker, that will fasten itself to your arm and love you for the heart's blood it can drain from you. If his dealings with you are not precisely those of a cannibal, it is mostly only accident of birthplace. His methods are those of an old-

fashioned Fijian, or wild man of Borneo, only treated to a 'wash' of civilization; so that his brutality is somewhat more refined and his ferocity more polite and ornamental.

Add an illustration along a little different line. Our ladies explore the shops and stores and are constitutional bargain hunters. There are many articles—often the production of sewing-women—which come within the range of their pursuit and needs, that are obtainable at ruinously low prices. In view of such purchases it is not uncommon to hear the lady buyer declare that she does not see how it is possible for the goods to be made and sold for any such money. That is an unconscious confession that she has paid for the goods less than they are worth; and if she understands at all the state of the case it is furthermore a confession that she has allowed herself to make capital out of the extremity of the poor sewing-women, who are paid hardly enough for their work to keep their wretched souls inside of their half-starved bodies. And not only that, but if they will think a little further, they will be reminded that possibly some of the garments of their own wardrobe, purchased so economically as to allow of larger indulgence in other elegancies of attire, were made by hands so scantily remunerated that the sewing-woman's own body had to be put in the market to eke out the miserable pittance; so that perhaps the lady reader of this very page sails up and down the avenues decked in velvet and fur that were paid for in part by her own money and in balance by the hire of the brothel.¹

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Purpose and the Power.

'The power that worketh in us.'—Eph 3²⁰.

Before we speak of the Power let us understand the occasion for it. Let us understand first what God is aiming at, next how far that aim is from its attainment, and then let us consider the Power at God's disposal for attaining it.

1. It is a tremendous claim which is made in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The old Greek thinkers had dared to dream that somewhere up in heaven, could we but rise above the mists which shut it from our sight, would be found the pattern and the plan of all that is working itself out in the underworld of earth. The writer of the

¹ C. H. Parkhurst in *The New Princeton Review*.

Epistle to the Ephesians claims that the dream has become a reality. To him, he declares, that which before had not been made known to the sons of men has now been wonderfully revealed. To his freed spirit has been granted access into 'the heavenly places'; to him has been disclosed the mystery of the Divine Will, 'the purpose of the ages' and the meaning of the world. And he has been pledged to no secrecy; he longs, yearns to communicate the matter, 'to make all men see,' as through his eyes, 'what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things.'

(1) Do we ask after the ultimate goal, the end, the aim of the Eternal Purpose? What could be a plainer answer than this? 'That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ; the things which are in heaven and the things which are on earth.'

(2) Do we ask, again, to understand the way in which all this is being accomplished? the present working of the great design, with which it might be supposed that we in our measure could co-operate? Again the answer is given in unhesitating tones. The ideal of a Society is presented to our view; a Society which is to consist of elect representative elements, drawn from all portions of the human race, in order that it may exhibit the full life of the perfect man, and be 'the first fruits' and the pledge, as also the means and the instrument of the ever-increasing fulfilment of the purpose of the Creation and Redemption; that now 'might be known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Such is the ultimate goal and such the method by which it is being attained.

2. But when we turn from our vision of 'the pattern in the mount' to the sight of that which will meet our eyes in the plane of ordinary experience, we shall find the actual falling terribly far short of the heavenly ideal. Not to speak of 'the evil that is in the world,' we shall find in the Church which is to exhibit the type of the true life much, it will be well if sometimes we are not almost compelled to think everything, that is most contrary to its high vocation. We shall find low aims, unspiritual motives, miserable distractions, rivalries, misunderstandings, confusions. Sometimes it will seem as if there was not greater but even less power

of perception and understanding in the Church than in the world. We shall be reminded of the old and bitter complaint, 'Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent?' The evil will appear everywhere prevalent, sometimes predominant, and, greater misery still, we shall find that 'the good with good is at cross purposes.' Yes, and most certain of all, we shall find that all which we see without has its likeness in our own hearts—that the evil and confusion are there also, mocking our hope from within.

What, then, if the awful doubt should come, whether after all we can be certain that there is any great purpose of good steadily working to an appointed end? In such hours most assuredly we shall feel our need of something more than words and promises; something by which to reassure ourselves and others; some solid and substantial proof, some guarantee, some sign if it might be, to support and strengthen faith. So faith asks for a sign. It shall be given, and most liberally. A twofold sign, 'in the heaven above, and on the earth beneath': a sign that may avail for the moments of silent thought and a sign that may be ours, within and around, in the very heart of work and conflict.

(1) First there is the sign in the heaven above. It is the presentation of an object to thought, a great accomplished fact upon which the mind can fix and steady itself. It is the sign of *the Christ risen*. He who lived on earth and died is now by God raised and glorified and set there in man's nature as proof and evidence of the certainty of man's destiny, as well as of the glory which is in store for the Church which is His Body. To Him the soul of the Christian may turn as the needle to the pole, and the effect of such a turning will be peace. As often as we can truly 'lift up our hearts unto the Lord' shall we know of a certainty that our redemption is no vain hope, shall we grow in the assurance that in spite of all seeming to the contrary it is moving onward, drawing nigh.

(2) And there is the sign in the earth beneath: which is given as the result and so in its turn as the further evidence of that glorification of the Christ. It is *the Spirit given*. Given to be the 'seal,' and 'the earnest': these are the expressions employed, as you will remember, in this Epistle. 'The Spirit of promise,' whose coming is according to promise: yes, and whose presence is itself the pledge and promise of all that the future is to bring. How absolute and habitual was the Apostle's re-

liance upon the assurance so given will be seen at once by a glance over the pages which contain his words. It is not much to say that every desire, every hope of his for those whom he is addressing will be found to be intimately bound up in his mind with the hope which he derives from his sense of the ever continued working of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church of Christ. With this strong conviction to support him he feels that he need set no limit to his prayers and expectations: or here is a 'mighty power' which is 'able to do exceeding abundantly above all' he or any may 'ask or think.'

3. We have found the Power. Does the apostle believe that the eyes of his readers may be enlightened to see afresh the vision of the possibilities of their calling in Christ Jesus? It is because he can invoke for them the aid of 'a Spirit of wisdom and understanding.' Does he confidently expect to see them raised and lifted into yet more intimate relation with the spiritual sphere? It is because he is sure that there is already at work in them a quickening resurrection power. Does he further dare to hope to see them knit together into a true and vital fellowship with all the Saints? It is because he is persuaded that there is a 'unity of the Spirit,' a great reconciling influence by which

even Jew and Gentile may be brought into one family of the Father. Or again, is he urging upon them the necessity of a higher moral standard than that of their former heathen state? He points his appeal by recalling to their thoughts the presence of 'the Holy Spirit of God' within their souls. If they are to reach the richest joy of which their nature is capable, he tells them that they must 'be filled with the Spirit.' And he is confident that from 'the Spirit's calm excess' will follow not any sort of disorder, but the dutiful subjection and mutual subordination of Christian Service.

For St. Paul then the thought, the message of Christianity, would have been most incomplete without this third element, this indispensable witness to its truth. For him the great story of the Purpose of the Father, to be accomplished through the transforming of men into the likeness of the Perfection of the Son, would have wanted the most convincing attestation of its truth had it not been possible to appeal to unmistakable signs of the Power of the Holy Ghost. Here was the proof that all was not a dream of the fervid imagination. Here was that which could enable him to rejoice in a mission and ministry more exceeding glorious than that of the ancient lawgiver, inasmuch as it was a ministry 'not in word only but in power.'¹

¹ A. W. Robinson, in *The Cambridge Review*.

Two Commentaries on the Apocalypse.

BY THE REV. W. D. NIVEN, M.A., CAUSEWAYEND UNITED FREE CHURCH, ABERDEEN.

To collect and read even all the noteworthy books that have been written explanatory of the Apocalypse would be a life-task. No book of Scripture has been found so mysterious, and probably in consequence none so fascinating. The Revelation at any rate has proved to be *facile princeps* as a stimulus to expositors. There is, however, no need to read all the long series of Commentaries. For successive generations of scholars have sifted and stored for their own age all that was best in the work of their predecessors. In our own day two commentaries have appeared which are necessary for any one who would be abreast of modern study of the Apocalypse, and master of all the best that has gone before. I do not mean that readers can

afford to scrap all the former works on the subject; some of the older are excellent, and deserve not only respect but continued attention. But these two new books will for some considerable time hold a commanding and authoritative position.

One is English and Protestant,¹ the other is French-Swiss and Roman Catholic.² They have their resemblances and they have their differences, and one will do well to balance them against each

¹ *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John*, by R. H. Charles, D.Litt., D.D., 2 vols., pp. xcii + 373, 497 ('Internat. Crit. Com.'). Edinburgh, 1920.

² *Saint Jean, l'Apocalypse*. Par le P. E.-B. Allo, des Frères Prêcheurs, Professeur à l'Université de Fribourg (Suisse), pp. cclxviii + 373 ('Études Bibliques,' Librairie V. Lecoffre). Paris, 1921.