

STUDIES IN TEXTS.

(Being suggestions for Sermons from recent expository literature.)

BY THE REV. HARRINGTON C. LEES, M.A.

"They sing a new song" (Rev. v. 9).

"They sing a new song" (Rev. xiv. 3).

"They sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are Thy works, O Lord, Thou King of Nations'" (Rev. xv. 3).

(Literature referred to. *Expositor*, July, 1918 = *E.*, 7, 18. Swete's *Apocalypse* = SA. Moffatt's Commentary on Apocalypse in *Expos.* G.T. = M. Donald Hankey's *Student in Arms* = DH.)

This is the song of those among others who have gained the victory over the Beast, and gave their blood to have the right.

It has its call for us in a New Year of Victory.

Prof. Rendel Harris (*E.*, 7, 18) says, "Apocalypse knows of three 'new songs' which may turn out to be one new song to which threefold reference is made."

Phrase not new (see Ps. xxxiii. 3; xl. 3; xcvi. 1; xcvi. 1; cxliv. 9; cxlix. 1 and Isa. xlii. 10).

Songs of Moses and Lamb, not opposed songs, but notes of heavenly songster with two wings, Law and Love, Force and Sacrifice. The reference of the phrase "new song" is definitely Gospel and Catholic, as against the idea of a song that only Jews could sing. It becomes a missionary watchword: "a prophecy of the new order inaugurated by Servant of Jehovah" (SA, p. 80). "Far more than mere National Messiah" (M., p. 386). The connexion is worth studying in the contexts.

i. *We have a Song of Victory.* Moses sang half in Exodus xv., "defiance as well as delight" here (*E.*, 7, 18, p. 12). A song of conquered nations, but transfigured peoples: not only a new map, but a better earth. New Testament destroys terrors, but discovers territories too. Water and blood in its cleansing waves. A new power in it.

ii. *We have a Song of Fellowship.* The song is a chorus and

not a solo. Every nation must contribute a distinctive note. Every individual can supply God with some particular service. A new brotherhood in it.

iii. *We have a Song of Hope.* Some new things are rapidly out of date. New song eternal in freshness. Its singers, while admitting the old is good, are for ever making provision of new wine-skins to receive each year's new vintage. A new joy in it.

iv. *We have a Song of Love.* John was told to look for the prevailing Lion, and beheld a Lamb that had been slain (Rev. v. 5, 6). There is gentleness in the triumph, else strength were mere brutality. Even in the world's pain we trace it. "Pain and suffering are something more than sheer cruelty, rather the conditions which turn human animals into men, and men into saints and heroes fit for the Kingdom of God" (D.H., p. 180). A new tenderness in it.

" Let the song go round the earth—
 Jesus Christ is Lord !
 Sound His praises, tell His worth,
 Be His name adored ;
 Every clime and every tongue
 Join the grand, the glorious song !"

For the songs which are being sung in Heaven are meant to be learned on earth, and rehearsed in the body, before they are perfectly rendered in the spirit.

