The Coming Day.

FEBRUARY, 1895.

THE WORLD'S FOUR COMING KINGS.

SPOKEN AT LEICESTER, OCT. 30TH, 1894.

(Concluded from Page 6.)

LET it be admitted that the crowned kings of to-day are doing a good deal better. There was room for it. The real kings have, for the most part, moved them on; but not everywhere. The Czar of Russia is a good specimen of the old proprietory king, a colossal object-lesson to the world: so is that amazing Emperor of China, who rejoices in the titles, "the son of Heaven," "the supremely mighty and majestic," and "the lord of millions of years," and who is worshiped by millions of adoring fools. But, leaving these on their great white thrones, and coming nearer home, what do we see? Italy, under a monarchy, is being bled to death; Spain, under a monarchy, seems condemned to sterility; Germany, under a monarchy, is too dangerously at the mercy of a half autocrat and half fanatic; England, under a monarchy (next to Switzerland and in spirit the truest republic in the world), is doing well because it early learnt to curb kings by Parliament, and to tie the hands of the monarch by the decisions of the people's representatives, and will do better as it further restrains the hindering power of irresponsible lords. So that to-day we have every grade of monarch, from the Czar of Russia, who is everybody, to the Queen of England, who is—herself.

Now, of all these, it needs to be said that the people own them and not they the people. We need to get rid of the glamour which surrounds the throne, and nothing will get rid of it sooner than the resolute effort to see where the real power lies, or whence the real power is derived. It is with kings and courts as it is with the great mountain peaks. Clouds and mists and mystery give them their seeming grandeur and awfulness, and the surrounding upbearing hills give them their height. In the Alps, the main difference between an alpine range and the surrounding hills is often only that these last manifestly belong to the land, while the snowy peaks are isolated and useless, clean and cold. But these aristocrats of the alpine country are where they are and what they are only because they are upborne by the mighty shoulders of the lower hills. The glowing Silberhorn, the soaring Jung Frau, the mighty Mont

Blanc, all shine where they stand because of the hills and plains that bear them up. In reality, every Alp is a hill on hills—or only a peak perched on a mighty mountain from which it rears its haughty head. The miles of hills reach up like sturdy shoulders. On they go, and up they rise, from height to height, and all rest on the basis of the plains, supporting, as a massive base, these soaring peaks.

Such is the social state. Monarchs and lords are only alpine peaks perched on the terraced hills which rise, tier beyond tier, from the common plain. Take away these, and the pretty silvery things, lifted so high above the common herd, would disappear. That is what the nations of Europe have to learn,—that they hold up the kings, not the kings them; that the nation is theirs, and that, only on sufferance and during good behaviour, should these rulers seem to own the nation.

But a great change is coming, and there may yet be the United States of Europe, as a vast republic ruled in righteousness, and by the people for the people's good. But, be that as it may, the rightful kings must come to their own—the kings, who will be, not proprietors with royal rights, but kings whose divine duty it will be to administer and to serve, who will reverse the old order, and be champions and defenders where the old kings were robbers; indeed raised up by God—the kings Emerson had in mind when he wrote,

God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

My angel, his name is Freedom,—
Choose him to be your king;
He shall cut pathways east and west,
And fend you with his wing.

I will divide my goods:
Call in the wretch and slave:
None shall rule but the humble,
And none but toil shall have.

I will have never a noble,
No lineage counted great;
Fishers and choppers and ploughmen
Shall constitute a state.

I break your bonds and masterships,
And I unchain the slave:
Free be his heart and hand henceforth
As wind and wandering wave.

And the four coming kings will make that, in spirit, true.

These four kings will be the poet, the prophet, the reformer, the workman. First, the poet, representing the ideal: second, the prophet, representing the teaching and assertion of the ideal: third, the reformer, representing the achievement of the ideal: and fourth, the workman, representing the fruiting of the ideal in happy service.

Call that Utopian and sentimental who will: I call it the intensely practical and the real. It is only a question of interpretation of human life, and my interpretation of human life compels me to see its perfect realisation only in that idealism for which even now, in sentiment, the poet and prophet stand. It all depends on what you think should come first, or what you believe will

come last. And I hold that first in longing and last in fact should be all that Jesus meant by the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

And, in truth, is not this the very thing towards which, from the first, all has been struggling? What is the meaning of the myriad uprisings of the people since history began?—of the yearnings for freedom; the strivings for united life, free alike from the disintegrations of barbarism and the tyrannies of kings; the rise of free cities, guilds, corporations, unions; the demand for constitutional government; the demand ot the vote for the mechanic and the labourer; the attempt to enlist art and music and literature and education in the service of the poor? It has all been pure idealism,—the urgent effort of the human to escape from the brutal, and to set the poor human prisoner free.

So we may truly say that in all ages, in some elementary form, the poet came first—the singer, the dreamer, the weaver of mythical stories and fairy tales—the oldest things in literature, among the very beginnings of the emerging of the human from the brute. "In the beginning was the word," said the old Greeks. What is that but the same as, In the beginning was the poet?

But the poet is not a mere rhymster. That is not at all what I mean. As Carlyle said: "The poet who could merely sit on a chair and compose stanzas, would never make a stanza worth much." The poet is a true hero,—"prophet, king, priest, or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into." "I fancy there is in him," says Carlyle, "the politician, the thinker, legislator, philosopher: in one or the other degree, he could have been, he is, all these." The vital conception of the poet is that he is musical: and, at the heart of that, are justice, mercy, pity, righteousness. Music is harmony, melody, pure truth. Listen again to Carlyle:—

> If your delineation be authentically musical, not in word only, but in the heart and substance, in all the thoughts and utterances of it, in the whole conception of it, then it will be poetical. . . A musical thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inmost heart of the thing; detected the inmost mystery of it, the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists, and has a right to be, here in this world. . . . The Greeks fabled of sphere-harmonies: it was the feeling they had of the inner structure of nature; that the soul of all her voices and utterances was perfect music. . . It is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that make him a poet. See deep enough, and you see musically, the heart of nature being everywhere music, if you can only reach it.

The poet, then, may be one who has never written a verse at all. Poetry—what we call poetry—is only one expression of the poet's mind and soul. The mind and soul of him may be expressed in many ways. Garibaldi was a poet, so was Kossuth, so was Tyndall, so were most of the rebels and heretics of the world: so are all who strive to find the inner heart of music by which anything is or has any right to be.

This is why I name the poet as a coming king. We want to get at the harmony and the melody in nature and life;—the hidden harmony and the melody of what we call society; the harmony and the melody of politics, trade, education, government. Up till now, all these have been more or less discordant, because cursed with the clashing of class interests. We have not been co-operating; we have been racing, fighting, checkmating. Let us have the poet mind, the poet conscience, the poet heart,—seeing musically, planning musically, and therefore seeing God's reality, and finding God's truth. Do you call that sentimental and not practical? Look now, and I will test it. The poet being our guide and master, we will make a new world of it. Put him in the Cabinet; make him leader of the House of Commons; set him to edit the *Times*, and the *Economist*, and the *Money Market Review*; make him chairman of the Board of Guardians; put him on the bench, appoint him governor of the jail; make him Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, if you must have bishops, make him one. Make him chairman of the tramway companies and of the railways of the State; put him at the head of the board for regulating the output and the sale of coal; make him overlooker, manager, boss! Do you not see how intensely serious this is getting, and how very practical I am getting? Put the poet in power, and you will have social and political music: you will have melody and harmony, and that is the same as saying you will have mercy, pity, justice. Make the poet king, and there will be no more strikes, for men would never strike against simple justice and common honesty and brotherly love. Make the poet king, and he will not allow you to work your signalman, your railway guard, your tramway driver, your baker, your shirt maker twelve or fifteen hours a day, and then send them to the workhouse when you have exhausted them. Make the poet king, and he will not endure the insolence of a House of lords baffling and beating down the longings of a nation, and the decisions of the people. Make the poet king, and there shall not be one old man or woman shoved into the pigs' trough you call a work-house—not one. Make the poet king, and the rich shall be made to pay for the poor. If necessary, he would sell Buckingham Palace and its vast, useless, barricaded acres, and, with the proceeds, build and endow, at Hampstead and Richmond, little cottage homes for London's decent aged poor. Or he would build those homes on the wasted grounds of Buckingham Palace itself. Surely, the very view for an ideal queen!

Make the poet king, and he will tell you to your faces that you are only half humanised while you thrust out your women from what ought to be the sacred arena of political power—while you call that "the voice of the nation" which is only the decision of your men.

So, then, by the poet as king, I mean justice as king, for again I say that justice is the very soul of social music in this world; and the one main business of life is to see that the universe is a harmony—to find that harmony, and to adjust all thought and action to it,

And of the prophet, in like manner, all this is true; for as Carlyle tells us, "at all times, prophet and poet, well understood, have much kindred of meaning. Fundamentally, indeed, they are still the same, in this most important respect especially, that they have penetrated, both of them, into the sacred mystery of the universe."

But the prophet is king in his own right, and his title goes farther back than that of any dynasty on this planet to day. Amongst the oldest writings in the world are the writings of prophets—teaching idealists, standing out for God, standing out for the people, standing out for righteousness. The prophet translates poetry into practical thought. The poet is the seer: the prophet is the teacher of what is seen. Read the books of the prophets, in the Old Testament —some of them the oldest of the Old Testament books. They all witness to the same truth. They give us the picture of men ahead, men above, men who were not afraid of mobs and kings, inspired of God just in so far as they stood out for ideals, and told the nations of the earth their dream of a city of God in which should dwell righteousness.

But the prophets of the Old Testament were by no means God's only prophets. They were only a few among many brethren. Ancient Egypt, India, Persia, Greece, Rome, had such prophets: so have modern Britain, Germany, America, France, and all have the same note—the lifting up, for God and man, the ideal of a better and happier world.

Don't call it sentimentality and fancy. I say it is the one solid rocklike fact in all human history: and it stands, and will stand till its fulfilment. All things change and pass away but it:—kings of the earth, dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel; mighty empires drifting, drifting to the grave: but this remains—the prophet's mandate: and, in so far as men and nations listen and obey, they tend to life; in so far as they disobey, they slowly go down to "dusky death."

Then, following the poet and the prophet, comes the reformer; after the dreamer and the teacher, the man of action, the translator of the ideal into the real. In every age the same, though called by many names,—traitor, rebel, incendiary, subverter of the realm; not always well-informed and wise, but always fired with the dream of the righteous kingdom, and always led on by the ideal of the poet and the promise of the prophet: scoffed at by the people and cast out by kings,—coming to their own, though their own receive them not, and perchance dying on the battle-field, the scaffold, or the cross. But always winning, always baffling tyranny, making cruelty look cruel, and liberty look desirable, and fanning in the breasts of the multitude the longing for a different and a happier world.

In days gone by, the reformer was a being to be suspected, watched, kept under. And, even now, he sets his hand to his work under a preliminary

disqualification or even ban. That will cease. The days are coming when the reformer will have the benefit of the doubt. Not obstacles to deter him but lights to guide him, will be set up: and he, too, will be our king.

And note this, that though I cite poet, prophet and reformer as different kings, they will always tend to merge and blend in one, as was notably the case with John Bright, and is with William Ewart Gladstone. The strength of both these men lay in their idealism. They were both poets and prophets: for, behind their strong masculine sense, lay the visioning faculty, and the fervour of the genuine idealist: for never let it be forgotten that it is the idealist who is the real creator; that, after all, it is the poet-prophet who leads the people into the Promised Land.

Then, last of all, the worker. By that I mean the human being who does any of the needed daily work of the world, with hand or brain. And for these it would be an unspeakably happier and sweeter world, but for those who work not, the aristocratic idlers and lordly loafers, always absurdly admired and petted by the foolish people whom, directly and indirectly, they impoverish. But the time is coming when the workers will rule—when all who toil will toil for themselves, when shall be fulfilled the fine old dream of the Hebrew prophet:—

> They shall build houses, and inhabit them: and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit: they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

Yes! all things are leading up to this, and this will come to pass—that the crowning glory of manhood and womanhood will be found in happy work and willing service. For this poets sing, and prophets preach, and reformers toil as they blend the forces of the world in making true our brother's prayer: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven!" Call it Utopian if you will. I call it the Almighty's Programme in the real creation of the human race—and it cannot fail. We cannot believe in its accomplishment because as yet the discords of the brute still dominate the human music, but the dream of that great poet-prophet, who was murdered on Calvary by men who did not understand him, will yet become the mastering practical reality of the world.

NOTES ON BIBLE CRITICISM.

THE MAGI.

BY A. D. TYSSEN.

In our previous articles we have principally been engaged in tracing the work of a recensor of the first Gospel, and we have given reasons for supposing that he annotated a previously existing manuscript, writing down from memory stories which he had heard narrated, and also giving from memory quotations from the Old Testament. In the course of our criticisms we have considered, *inter alia*, all the contents of the first chapter of the first Gospel, and now pass on naturally to the second chapter.

This chapter contains three episodes, known respectively by the names of (1) the adoration of the magi, (2) the massacre of the innocents, and (3) the flight into Egypt. All three episodes have been severely criticised, but before proceeding to discuss their truth, it will be convenient to devote a little time to examining their form. We think that we shall be able to establish three points concerning them, viz. :—

(1) That this chapter in its present form comes from the pen of the writer whom we have called the recensor,

(2) That he did his work piecemeal, adding one passage at one time and another at another, and

(3) That he has not reproduced the story quite as he heard it, but has transposed the order of some of the events.

As it will be convenient to print the passage before commenting on it, we will take the last point first, and print the story in the order in which we believe it to have been originally cast. The only substantial alterations which we shall make will be to postpone verses 4, 5 and 6 until after the first clause of v. 16, and to omit the words, "he sent them to Bethlehem," in v. 8. We will, however, at the same time, correct the translation in some other respects, so as to make it more in accordance with the original Greek. We will also add the commencement of chapter iii., which we shall notice in our comments.

Here, then, is the story with these alterations— :

1. Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold there came magi from the east to Jerusalem ;

2. Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews ? for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him.

3. But when Herod the king heard this he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

. . . . . .

7. And having privily called the magi, he ascertained from them the time of the appearance of the star.

8. And . . . . he said, Go and search

diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9. And they, having heard the king, departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10. And, seeing the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11. And having entered into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and having opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh,

12. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13. And when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14. And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.

15. And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the magi, was exceeding wroth.

. . . . . .

4. And gathering all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where the Christ should be born.

5. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa, for thus it is written by the prophet.

6. And thou Bethlehem, district of Juda, art not the least among the chiefs of Juda; for out of thee shall come a leader, who shall tend my people Israel.

16. Then Herod sent forth and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the environs thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi.

17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah, the prophet, saying,

18. A voice was heard in Rama, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20. Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead who sought the young child's life.

21. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother and came into the land of Israel.

22. But, hearing that Archelaus was reigning in Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee.

23. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene,

iii. 1, 2. In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

We will now call attention to the points in which the story is improved by the alteration which we have made in it. In the original, the re-appearance of the star to guide the magi to Bethlehem is unnecessary, as the magi have been already told that Bethlehem was the place. Herod is also made to act very foolishly in losing sight of the magi, when it was a very easy matter to send soldiers with them to Bethlehem. His command to them, also, to seek for the child is very inappropriate, when there is only one

village to be searched. The dream directing them to avoid telling Herod is useless, for he was sure to become aware of their absence in a few days time, and whether they returned to him or went off, it was equally necessary for Joseph to depart post haste. In our amended story all these difficulties disappear. The re-appearance of the star is required to take the magi to Bethlehem. It is natural for Herod to leave them to search alone, when they might have to search through all his dominions and try to discover the child by some mysterious signs or some occult knowledge of their own. His directions to them are very appropriate to such a search. The dream directing them to avoid returning to Herod, gives Joseph a long space of time in which to decamp, for some months may well elapse before Herod finds out that the magi have departed. The limit of two years becomes much more intelligible when it has to cover not only the journey of the magi from the east, but also a period for them to search through all Judæa and its neighbourhood. Herod also is made to act more naturally in first trusting to the magi to discover the child, whose birth they announced; and then, on their failing him, having recourse to the Jewish authorities to tell him the place of the birth of the expected Messiah.

We submit that these considerations constitute strong internal evidence to show that the story was originally told with the events in the order which we have given.

Let us next notice the piecemeal manner in which these birth stories have been written. In the first chapter we have an account of the birth of Jesus, but the writer has merely had in view the supernatural nature of the birth, and has not mentioned either the time or the place of it. Neither Herod nor Bethlehem is mentioned in the first chapter. Then, as the second chapter narrates incidents connected with both of them, it commences with the clause, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king." It is clear that the writer had not this story in view when he wrote the latter part of the first chapter vv. 18—25. On the other hand, the second chapter appears to have been written after the first. It treats Mary and Joseph as names familiar to the reader, and speaks of the infant Jesus in a way which would be inappropriate to a child of which Joseph was the father. There even appears to be a little patchwork in the second chapter itself. The 15th verse is clearly out of place. The words, "and was there until the death of Herod," are not wanted at all; and the rest of the verse would have come better after v. 21.

Furthermore, let us consider the commencement of chapter iii., "In those days came John the Baptist." We have just been dealing with the period immediately after the death of Herod, for the story represents Joseph as leaving Egypt before he hears who has succeeded Herod on the throne of Judæa. Now something like 36 years must have elapsed between the death

of Herod and the preaching of John the Baptist, so that the expression, "In those days came John the Baptist," is very inappropriate. On the other hand, if we are right in attributing to a recensor of the Gospel all the matter which intervenes between the end of the pedigree in chapter i. and the commencement of chapter iii., this difficulty is removed. For in that case we have first the pedigree leading from Abraham down to Jesus, and then the sentence, "In those days came John the Baptist," meaning that John the Baptist commenced his preaching in the time of Jesus.

Let us next proceed to examine the details of the story. We have a dream mentioned four times.

(1) In v. 12 we are told that the magi were warned in a dream not to return to Herod.

(2) In v. 13 we are told that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

(3) In v. 19 again that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, and

(4) In v. 22, that Joseph was warned in a dream.

The same element appears in v. 20 of chapter i., which we have already attributed to the recensor, namely, that it is said that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

On turning to Cruden's Concordance we find the word "dream" cited from only one other place in the New Testament, namely, Matt. xxvii., 19, in the account of the accusation of Jesus before Pilate. We shall have occasion to attribute this verse also to the recensor, but must postpone a consideration of it for the present; and we only know one other passage in which the word dream occurs, namely, Acts ii., 17, and to these we may add the passage about a vision in Acts xvi., 16.

In the chapter which we are considering we also meet with other expressions which are characteristic of the recensor, in connection with quotations from the Old Testament.

Thus we have, in the authorised version,

v., 15. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

23. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets.

These expressions may be compared with similar clauses in passages already attributed to the recensor, namely,

i., 22. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

xxi., 4. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet saying,

xxvii., 9. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

On turning to Cruden's Concordance we shall find that this form of expression is not cited at all from the second Gospel, and only twice from the 3rd Gospel, namely, in Luke xxi., 22, and xxiv., 44, and then it is used quite generally, without reference to any special text. Cruden, however, omits one text, namely, Mark xv. 28.

We ought to add, moreover, that since writing the preceding criticism, we have discovered that the apocryphal work called the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy contains some fragments of the story of the magi, and arranges the events in the order which we have given above. This circumstance appears to us to show that the criticism which we have expressed is correct, and that the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy brings us into touch with a version of the story earlier in date than that contained in the first Gospel.

THE DISCIPLESHIP OF JESUS TO JOHN THE BAPTIST.

BY WILLIAM MITCHELL.

MINDS the most gifted have to pass through the same stages of growth as those of lesser powers. In the orderings of God's Providence it has ever been so, as men have to learn before they can know. The difference between the higher mind and the ordinary one is that the more capable go on growing in keenness of insight and clearness of expression after the other has reached its fulness of development. Moreover, real merit is ever modest, and true greatness natural. Seeing in others, in the diffidence of youth, so much that is good, it becomes eager to be the disciple of any one who has anything to teach. Certainly it was so with him who has a name above every other name on earth. Thus, for awhile, Jesus stood in the relationship of a disciple to his cousin John, who was in every respect his inferior but in the mighty passion of earnestness. Enthusiasm always wins attention and, maybe, popularity, but unless there is also the soul-light of genius along with it, it soon passes away.

How long after he had been baptised by him (Mark i., 9), the discipleship of Jesus to John continued cannot be exactly made out but that it was an actual fact there can be little doubt. Indications of it are scattered throughout the gospels, and Jesus always spoke of him with the respect due from a disciple to his old teacher (Matt. xi., 6-11). People are apt to forget this because the greatness of the disciple has far eclipsed that of the master. Nevertheless, he was much influenced by the strong will and passionate temperament of John. When John was cast into prison, Jesus left Judea and returned to Galilee (Matt. iv., 12), lest he, too, should be implicated. Up to this time he had followed him closely, both in method and matter, pondering all he heard with eager zest, and with ever-growing power of mind; for was he not receiving his education as a preacher of righteousness? At first, when he was without the direct personal superintendence of John, he confined himself to using the phrases he had been wont to hear, calling upon all men everywhere, in general terms, to repent, as the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

And yet Jesus was a born preacher, and did

not long continue to be the mere echo of his master. Indeed, he was one of those heaven-inspired ones, the poets, who sing as the birds sing, because they must ease their hearts of their blissful burden even as Milton sung at first in short swallow flights of hymns, until, widened and strengthened by the years, his wings could soar to the divine heights of "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." Or like Shakspeare, who spent his earlier time in writing improved editions of old plays, until he gathered power enough to produce "Hamlet." Such was the experience of the greatest spiritual genius of time—just a learner, an imitator, and then an original, the Light of the World. While he took delight in preaching, his thought, his power of expression, his definitions of purpose, took time to grow and ripen. The influence of John is clearly seen in the earlier terms of his preaching. In the very words of his master he went about Galilee, crying out, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iii., 2, iv., 17). In these earlier days of independence, he went about in a perfect whirl of spiritual delight. Old and well worn by the prophets as this first theme of his was, it was much needed in the circumstances and conditions of society by which John and Jesus were surrounded.

Pretentious formalism everywhere passed for piety, while a hard and selfish all-grasping temper characterised the ruling classes. The æsthetic faculties were more active than they had ever been before among the Jews, and the intellect was as strong and acute as in any past period, yet the nerve of conscience seemed to have all but lost its sensitiveness, and sympathy for suffering was all but dead in the heart of every class. That age somewhat resembled our own, inasmuch as bewilderment of faith prevailed, while the most childish credulity often possessed the same mind along with the keenest scepticism. The call of John and Jesus was to all classes alike, the educated and influential as well as the great mass of labouring and ignorant men. "Repent!—turn round and amend your way of living," that was the call. And the heart of the great body of the people was soon in a wild turmoil. Maddened by their subjection to the Romans, alarmed by the preaching of Essene missionaries, and the strong denunciations of John, and called to reflection by the heart-searching appeals of Jesus, the nation was stirred to its very depths. In fact, Jesus so roused the attention of the people that "a fame of him went throughout the regions round about," and "through all Syria" (Matt. iv., 24; Luke iv., 14).

The desire of the multitude for a deliverer easily attached itself to any person of superior character who became very prominent. Any-one of great mental power and strong will soon drew round him numbers of followers. Almost in spite of himself he was hailed as the Messiah, the Redeemer. Even Herod was so hailed by some, and the leader of a terrible insurrection, named Bar Coc Bar, was so called as well as others. Not one of them fulfilled the expectations of their adherents, for they knew not the true remedies for the evils that oppressed them, and he who would have applied the real one they deserted in the very crisis of his fate, forsook him, and fled at the time when they ought to have been most faithful (Matt. xxvi., 56).

But to our more immediate theme. John won the fealty of Jesus in the morning freshness of his time.. He was as yet unconscious of the mighty powers within him, and he owed much to John in many ways. He was naturally of a deeply reflective turn, and such persons love to go apart from the tumults of life and commune with their own souls. When this habit becomes a fixed one, it not only leads to diffidence in society, but to a distaste of the presence of others, and a painful dislike of the bustle and excitements of the world, where thought is drowned in an ever-rushing flood of events. In addition to this, Jesus was a pious man—indeed, piety was his supreme characteristic, both by natural temperament, education, and inherited habit. Now the religious temperament is a sensitive one, and, acting on its own impulse, it would withdraw from the world and live alone with God. It is a delight to the soul to go apart from the noises of time, and in the silence feel His thrilling touch, and the flow of His spirit into the heart. For this joy men have foregone great careers, and have forsaken fortune and high position, and all that ambition strives after, and, what is harder to the loving heart, wife, child and friend, and passed long years in lonely contemplation and prayer. Being inclined to contemplation by natural temperament, and somewhat confirmed in it by habit in his youth, and being also of devoutest piety, ever-consciously in the presence of God (John viii., 16; xvi., 32),

there was a danger that Jesus would become fixed in his preference for a private and retired life, alike by the delights of thought and the joys of the spirit. It was the trumpet call and stern tones of John the Baptist that saved the world from this great loss. When the ascetic spirit was supreme throughout Christendom, much spiritual genius was wasted in the silent gloom of cell and cloister. John's fierce invective against the wickedness of his time, and the formalism and hypocrisy that prevailed, his loud calls to repentance, and his proclamation that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, reached Jesus in his quiet home in Nazareth, and roused within him an excitement that bore him away from the carpenter's bench into the midst of the throngs of men among whom his work for the world was to be done. He would have had the same pure heart, the same great soul, the same lofty character, if he had remained in private life, but what would mankind have lost! Some of the robuster faculties of his mind might have remained inactive, and so undeveloped. But what is a flower whose beauty is never beheld by an appreciative eye? or the sweet scent it casts on the air that is never enjoyed by a conscious being? And what is that genius that is kept under the cover of privacy, and so sheds no light on the world? or a great soul that gives no glory to character, or inspiration to lesser souls, because it is unseen and unknown? Had Jesus remained in private life, vast treasures of spiritual riches would have been lost to the world. But John saved men from this loss by winning the early allegiance of his cousin as a disciple, at least for a brief time. Unbending integrity and manly devotion to principle, irrespective of consequences, ever win the loyal devotion of pure and upright natures.

To this brief discipleship to John, Jesus owed some of the best lessons of his life; and fine fruit did they bear in his after ministry. Some of them are indicated in the events narrated in the gospels concerning him. First, the bold, unreserved language of John, his firm, unyielding will, would help to lift Jesus above the shrinking timidity which the quiet and contemplative habits of his life tended to produce, combined with his exquisitely sensitive temperament. A brave man's courage has a wonderful influence in rousing others to courage who would otherwise be lacking in that element, not from want of virtue, but from want of hardness and toughness of physical fibre, and because of gentleness of nature which shrinks from inflicting pain.

Jesus would also learn that though John was the preacher of a pure and lofty morality, which wrought wondrously on those who accepted it, yet there was something more deeply interfused needed, something more fundamental, more spiritual in its nature, to regenerate men who, out of a pretence of serving God, neglected human duties. On reflection, he would see that John's method was too loud, too sensational to pierce deep or last long, though it might attract much attention while it was novel.

John was also a political reformer as well as a moralist, and from his fate Jesus would learn that the reformer should not only have the truth on his side, but also the convictions and conscience of the people, if he is to be effective. His duty is not only to win the assent of their understanding, but also that of their moral nature. He has to rouse and educate the conscience of the masses, and enlist the spiritual forces in his cause. This often requires great exertions and much time to accomplish, but there is no lasting reform achieved where this is not done. This was the task Jesus set before himself when he once fairly entered on his life-work.

Moreover, Jesus learnt that though the austerities of the ascetic might win attention to begin with, yet as they do not warm the heart or kindle the affections into a glow of love, and so furnish man with those divine impulses that alone conquer evil passions and depraved appetites, they are far from essential to true manhood. In this respect, as in others, Jesus left John far behind. His free and easy habit of sharing in the festivities of his fellow men, in such contrast to the habits of John, his more genial tone and winsome manners, proved how much he profited from John, not only as a teacher, but also as a warning.

Jesus also learnt from John that fear produced but temporary results, even when it did work good. Just as too lax a discipline leads to disorder, so, when it is too severe, it tends to produce reaction and rebellion. John thundered his denunciations against evil doers, threatening them with all kinds of fearful punishments, and he produced a

revival kind of excitement which continued for some time, but he brought about little of what may be called a reformation.

Jesus bore away with him from this discipleship his first impressions of public life and much knowledge of human nature. He had made good use of his opportunities, for we are told he knew what was in man. If excitement does nothing else, it brings what is in the depths of man's heart to the surface, even as a violent upheaving of the waters of a lake throws to the top what else would have remained quietly at the bottom out of sight. This discipleship soon came to an end. The denunciations of John against the ambitious and wicked Herodias and the weak-willed Herod Antipas led to his arrest and imprisonment in the dungeons of Machæus (Matt. iv., 12), and Jesus at once left the province ruled by Herod. Leaving Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went and settled in Capernaum (Matt. iv., 13), in the synagogue of which he preached on Sabbath days. In these synagogues, or meeting houses, a custom prevailed that after the Psalms had been read and the prayers said, the first person who volunteered to do so could take the roll and expound the prophets to those present. Thus was it shown that the free Greek spirit was adopted and applied to conditions of Jewish life. It was a great means of education to them, and, alas! it also helped to fan their fanaticism into fierce and dangerous flame, so as to consume many of their nobler elements of character, and wrought dire mischief on all their interests. When John was sent to Machæus, Jesus began his own public life, and then was seen the difference in the spirit of the two, as well as in their views. If we examine the sermon Jesus preached in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv., 16-30), we shall find an echo of the spirit of John: we shall also find that it ascends into a far higher region of thought. He began by describing the true work of the reformer in all ages, of course, in the idiom of the Jews, and largely in the words of the prophet Isaiah (lxi., 1-2). There is a cheerful, almost a joyous view of duty, and exultation at the certainty that the time would come when men should be brothers instead of masters and slaves, and the empire of truth and righteousness equal the universe in extent, and God be recognised as the Father of each and all. The disciple soon outstripped the teacher; in addition to the destruction of the evils of his time, he included in his task the uplifting of the masses, by implanting in their minds those principles, and quickening in their hearts those affections, which would make true men, that is, children of God, of them. Thus it is with the greatest souls: they first go to school to the good and earnest ones, and having learnt what they can teach, and being quickened by their life-giving spirit, they draw from what they gain even grander conclusions than their teachers ever dreamt of. Nay, they gather lessons of wisdom from the selfish and wicked no less precious; for all experience is the school in which they study, and in which their faculties are developed and disciplined. Thus it was that Jesus grew in wisdom and mental stature, until he became the true chief and leader of all reformers, while his heroic piety made him the light of the world.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

"In all probability, my last book."—Many friends have written with anxiety concerning these words in the introductory note to "Pessimism, Science and God." No: it does not mean that the writer is ill. It only means that he has published as much as is necessary, that his particular message is about given, and that, with very much less trouble, he can do more useful and certainly more profitable literary work.

Dead Birds and Women. — *The Daily Chronicle* says that on the production of Oscar Wilde's new play in London, a certain Miss West, an actress, wore a dress studded with blackbirds with outstretched wings. Probably Miss West thought she would be very much in the fashion, and, in truth, it is pitiable to see how many women think it nice to wear dead birds, cut up or whole. There is something the matter with their heads or their

hearts, their sense or their souls. No, Miss West, you are on the wrong road; get out of it, and keep clear of it! But perhaps you were depicting some odious character?

We have received the first number of *Young Days* for 1895. It is only one penny a month, and is very sweet and wholesome for youngsters. The picture on the cover is worth all the money. It is published by the Sunday School Association, Essex Street, London.

The Father of Jesus.—The recently discovered Syriac MS. of the Gospels, found in the Convent of Mount Sinai, is making some good people unhappy. It has the following readings:—"Matthew i., 16: Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin, begat Jesus. Matthew i., 25: And he married his wife, and she bare him a son." Many good judges think that these passages correctly reflect the primitive idea; but Canon Farrar is up in arms. *The Christian World*, however, which seems to take every opportunity for shewing its rational colours, asks: "Where does he find the proof of the 'unquestioned' belief of the 'apostles' in the nativity story of Matthew? It is never mentioned in the Epistles or the Apocalypse, to which he appeals, nor in the Gospel of John, which he also calls in evidence. Both the Epistles and the Gospel assert the divinity of Christ, but that is another thing."

The Christian World then carries the war into Canon Farrar's camp, and says: "In addition to the fact that neither Mark nor John refers to the nativity story as given in Matthew and in Luke, and to the other fact that these stories in the last-named Evangelists are, in several points, mutually contradictory, we may cite St. Paul himself as against the Archdeacon's confident statement. His account at once of Christ's nativity and of his divinity are given in one sentence in the opening of the Epistle to the Romans, in which he declares Christ was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead.

It is interesting in this connection to note the evidence adduced by Mr. Conybeare from Philo to the effect that the Jews, in the time of Christ, deemed it possible and natural for a child to be conceived of the Holy Spirit, and yet at the same time to be begotten in the ordinary way."

We long ago came to the conclusion that the legend of the miraculous birth of Christ is the crucial matter. When that goes, all that is specifically "orthodox" will go.

LOWELL LINES.

1.—Earth's stablest things are shadows,
And, in the life to come,
Haply some chance-saved trifle
May tell of this old home;
As now sometimes we seem to find,
In a dark crevice of the mind,
Some relic which, long pondered o'er,
Hints faintly at a life before.

The Token.

2.—Beauty's chief reward is to itself.

Chippewa Legend.

3.—God may still be met with,
Nor groweth old, nor doth bestow
These senses fine, this brain aglow,
To grovel and forget with.

Gold Egg.

4.—They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

Stanzas on Freedom.

5.—To change and change is life, to move and never rest;
Not what we are, but what we hope, is best.

The Pioneer.

6.—Good never comes unmixed, or so it seems,
Having two faces, as some images
Are carved, of foolish gods; one face is ill;
But one heart lies beneath, and that is good,
As are all hearts, when we explore their depths,

Prometheus,

7.—MANHOOD hath a wider span
And larger privilege of life than man.
Harvard Commemoration Ode.

8.—ONE sincere key opes all Fortune's doors.
Columbus.

9.—TO WIN the secret of a weed's plain heart
Reveals some clue to spiritual things.
Sonnets.

10.—MAN cannot be God's outlaw if he would,
Nor so abscond him in the caves of sense,
But Nature still shall search some crevice out
With messages of splendour from that source
Which, dive he, soar he, baffles still and lures.
The Cathedral.

11.—SLIPPERY the feet that mount by stairs of gold,
And weakest of all fences, one of steel.
Ode to France.

12.—HE's true to God who's true to man.
On the Capture of Fugitive Slaves.

13.—STILL o'er the earth hastes Opportunity,
Seeking the hardy soul that seeks for her.
The Voyage to Vinland.

14.—TRUE love is but a humble, low-born thing,
And hath its food served up in earthen ware;
It is a thing to walk with, hand in hand,
Through the every-dayness of this work-day world.
Love.

15.—NOT suffering, but faint heart, is worst of woes.
The Washers of the Shroud.

16. Strive
In thought and word and feeling so to live
As to make earth next heaven.
Irené.

17.—WHERE'ER thy wildered crowd of brethren jostles,
Where'er there lingers but a shadow of wrong,
There still is need of martyrs and apostles,
There still are texts for never-dying song.
Ode.

18.—THERE'S One hath swifter feet than crime.
Villa Franca.

19.—GLORIOUS fountain,
Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
Upward, like thee!
The Fountain.

20.—WHOSO in one thing hath been true can be as true in all.
L'Envoi.

21.—ONCE to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.
The Present Crisis.

22.—'TIS sorrow builds the shining ladder up,
Whose shining rounds are our calamities,
Whereon our firm feet planting, nearer God
The spirit climbs, and hath its eyes unsealed.
On the Death of a Friend's Child.

23.—ALL true whole men succeed.
Glance behind the Curtain.

24.—WHAT the world teaches profits to the world,
What the soul teaches profits to the soul,
Which then first stands erect with Godward face
When she lets fall her pack of withered facts,
The gleanings of the outward eye and ear,
And looks and listens with her finer sense.
The Parting of the Ways.

25.—EACH drop of blood that e'er through true heart ran
With lofty message, ran for thee and me.
Sonnets.

26.—LONGING is God's fresh heavenward will,
With our poor earthward striving;
We quench it that we may be still
Content with merely living.
Longing.

27.—IF the chosen soul could never be alone
In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God,
No greatness ever had been dreamed or done.
Columbus.

28.—THE present moves attended
With all of brave and excellent and fair
That made the old time splendid.
To the Past,