

QUAINT BETHLEHEM.

SCENES ON THE HILLS WHERE OUR SAVIOUR WAS BORN.

The Caves of Adullam, Where David Took Refuge From the Philistines—Sunny Fields Recall the Charming Story of Ruth—Bethany and the Mount of Olives.

Bethlehem, revered of all Christians as the birthplace of the Saviour, lies six miles west of the citadel of Jerusalem. Bethany, where he loved to withdraw from the crowd and find rest in the society of near friends and disciples, lies about two miles to the east. The most hasty stay in the Holy City must include a visit to each of these places.

The road to Bethlehem is smooth and pleasant, and objects of extraordinary association approach the mind at every turn. Toward the southwest we behold the sunny fields which formed the lovely idyl of Ruth and Boaz, the most charming story of Hebrew literature. In the same direction is the cave of Adullam, where David, fighting man and captain, but not yet king, had a refuge while the Philistines held his native town. And we know that toward the northwest, though invisible to us yet, lies the valley where tradition tells us is the very field in which the shepherds were "keeping watch by night over their flocks." And the angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Be not afraid, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for behold there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord."

Bethlehem is a very picturesque hill town. Thirty years ago the most intelligent visitors estimated its population at 3,000, but now our careful Baedeker puts it down at 8,000, with scarcely any Mohammedans among them. It has shared the activity and the progress which have visited this entire region. The houses are uniformly of stone, and when we sought to approach the great Church of the Nativity we found the principal streets torn up in the process of laying down sewers and were obliged to get down and go on foot. The church is a vast and complicated pile of buildings, the Latins and the Armenians having constructed chapels and monasteries about the original edifice, which is in the hands of the orthodox Greek communion. Here, as in Jerusalem, a guard of Turkish soldiers constantly attends in the entrance of the church to keep the disagreeing sorts of Christians out of violent quarrels with each other. The church dates back to the first half of the fourth century. The architecture of the interior is simple, severe and most impressive, but some of the attached chapels are crowded with crucifixes, lamps of gold and silver, pictures and tapestries that bewilder the eye with their variety and splendor.

With lighted tapers in our hands we descended to the Chapel of the Nativity. It was originally a cave, and a staircase of perhaps 15 steps leads down to it. As we entered we found the chapel occupied by the vesper service of a brotherhood of Franciscan monks. The superior, a majestic old man, was officiating at the altar, and the fraternity, men of all ages, knelt upon the marble floor. The music they sang was noble, and the spirit of devotion that filled the scene was irresistible. Fortunate indeed are the pilgrims whose few hours in Bethlehem are made memorable by an accident so delightful as was our presence at the vespers of the good Franciscans.

While Bethlehem more than met our expectation, Bethany rather proved a disappointment. It is an insignificant and decaying little hamlet lying on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, and its few hundred people are all Moslems. To go there the most convenient method is to drive from Jerusalem. After you reach the points known as the grave of Lazarus and the house of Mary and Martha, you leave the carriage and make the rest of the journey over the Mount of Olives on donkeys. At the western foot of the mountain you visit the garden of Gethsemane, and then you take your carriage again to return to the city.

While we know that Bethany was a favorite place of retirement with Jesus, there is no evidence to convince us that one or the other of the two places pointed out by popular tradition and by the guides who conduct strangers was habitually resorted to by him, and no religious communion has adopted either of them as sacred or authentic. Yet as a whole Bethany is indissolubly connected with many of the most intimate and impressive occurrences of the gospel history. And as we pass slowly up its winding and neglected alleys upon our donkeys, with the height of the mountain before us and the clear autumn sky of Syria above, the mind is irresistibly carried back through the 19 centuries, and the persons and events of the ancient days seem to the fancy and almost to the eye to be there again all real and living.

And so we move forward to the great Russian church on the summit, with the wonderful outlook from its porch upon the distant valley of the Jordan, and the blue strip of the Dead sea which it reveals, and beyond all the mountains of Moab, with the peak of Nebo, whence Moses beheld the promised land which he might never enter. And then, mounting our donkeys again, we go down the western slope. There Jerusalem is before us and the mountains of Ephraim that close in the panorama upon the west, while at the foot is the garden of Gethsemane, with its bowed and venerable cypresses, whose age is counted by thousands of years, and there is the gentle and engaging old Italian monk who tends its flower beds and binds up packages of seeds for strangers to carry away. And as he receives the donkey that is reached toward him, "It is for the poor," he says; "it is not given in payment."

In all the world there is no other spot that so affects the thoughts of the visitor as any human narrative that can touch the heart with such infinite pathos as this of the Evangelist: "And they come unto a place which was named

Gethsemane, and he sayeth unto his disciples, Sit ye here while I pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John and began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled. And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Abide ye here and watch. And he went forward a little and fell on the ground and prayed that if it were possible the hour might pass away from him. And he said, Abba, father, all things are possible unto thee. Remove this cup from me, howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh and findeth them sleeping and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they wist not what to answer him. And he cometh the third time and saith unto them, Sleep on now and take your rest. It is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise; let us be going. Behold, he that betrayeth me is at hand!"—C. A. Dana in New York Sun.

The Propagation of Christianity.
There are two facts in the history of our race which infidelity cannot deny nor skepticism doubt. These facts are, first, the existence on this earth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, secondly, that in every century since his death there has been an institution known among men as the Christian church. Its establishment and continuance have been the most wonderful facts in history, as Christ himself was the most wonderful personage in the annals of our race.

The force of this argument has been keenly felt by the enemies of Christianity, and they have attempted to assign various human reasons for these wonderful effects. Gibbon, the author of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," assigns five such causes—namely, the zeal of the early Christians for the propagation of their faith, their belief in a future state of existence, the miracles said to have been performed, the great sanctity of their lives and the unity of their organization.

No one can doubt that these were great causes for the propagation of Christianity. But looking more closely into the subject any rational man must say that these causes themselves were but the effect of a primary cause. We must therefore look for the cause of these causes. What power inspired that courageous zeal? What power wrought those miracles, produced that wonderful sanctity and that perfect union and gave strength to the doctrine of a future state which has been previously taught? Zeal had been exercised before; miracles were performed before; sanctity and unity and the doctrines of a future state had been recognized before. But it was Christianity that caused men to perfectly realize them, and in realizing them they became the effects of Christianity, and therefore was Christianity the cause of these causes and therefore the cause of their effects.—Archbishop Ryan.

An Ancient Manuscript.
The American Journal of Archaeology describes a most interesting document submitted to the late oriental congress. It is a papyrus manuscript discovered a few months ago in Egypt and is supposed by some authorities to be the oldest copy extant of portions of the Old Testament books of Zechariah and Malachi. These pages of papyrus when intact were about 10 inches high and 7 inches wide, each containing 28 lines of writing, both sides of the sheet being used. The complete line contains from 14 to 17 letters. The sheets are bound together in the form of a book in a primitive though careful manner, with a cord and strips of old parchment. The Greek is written without intervals between the words. The papyrus is in fair preservation and is believed to date from the third or fourth century. It thus ranks in age with the oldest Greek manuscripts of the Old Testament in London, Rome and St. Petersburg. The differences in this papyrus tend to the conclusion that it was copied from some excellent original of the Septuagint (translated 280 B. C.).

The first summary examination has shown that it has several new readings which surpass some of the other Septuagint texts in clearness of expression and simplicity of grammar. It would also appear that it was copied from another Septuagint Bible and was not written, as was frequently the case, from dictation. It is hoped that this papyrus of the Bible, probably the oldest fragment of the sacred text in existence, will soon be published in facsimile.

Lovely Maggie Sullivan.
Oh, lovely Maggie Sullivan, your dark eyes' tender charm
Has stirred my soul to musing and wrought a deadly harm.
The coral reefs, your luring lips, have wrecked my lifeboat fair;
Stretch out your snowy arms to me and rescue from despair!

I heard the music of a bird beyond the hedge of thorn,
And lo! a rose had found a voice—"twas Maggie in the corn!
She tossed a dewy spray to me; she smiled so frank and true
That glance and smile were shafts to pierce my bosom through and through.

Her hair was like the burnished breast of birds from southern lands;
Her brow the home of gracious thought; her fair and dimpled hands
Had motions like white doves that flit between the earth and sky;
They wove for me the poetry of love too sweet to die.

The silken lashes kiss her cheek; might I that freedom take!
Long all worthy deeds to dare and do for her dear sake.
Though wit and soul, with beauty's curves, have made her so divine,
Yet all in vain her winsomeness if never to be mine.

My darling Maggie Sullivan, beneath the stars of June,
Your perfumed lips in soft eclipse set all my life astune.
To lofty measures, noble aims; I feel heroic thrills;
In every vein immortal pain has slipped and thrills.

—Helen Rich in Boston Transcript.

PUNISHMENT OF HELL.

Archbishop Ireland's Famous Discourse on the Church's Doctrine.

A State of Eternal Punishment Decried by God's Own Goodness—Reply to Dr. St. George Mivart's Article on "Happiness in Hell."

Archbishop Ireland's recent sermon on the subject of Hell and its punishment is attracting great attention. In the course of the sermon he spoke of Dr. St. George Mivart's pronouncement, and gave fully and clearly the Catholic doctrine upon the matter. The discourse is as follows:

Divine laws being the conditions whereby we arrive at a fulfillment to being, at life's journey's end, at happiness, there follows upon the violation of these laws a non-attainment of our end, a state of unhappiness, of misery. This state is called Hell.

I shall speak of one of the most terrible truths of revealed religion. It is, at the same time, one of the most necessary, and most salutary of its truths. It is a necessary truth; without it the ethical structure of religion lacks cohesive power and breaks to pieces. It is a salutary truth; whatever the purposes of Hell when life's probation is over, its purpose during this life is to impel us to righteous conduct, to the observance of God's laws. Divine justice and divine wisdom will hereafter be voiced by Hell; here it tells of primal love. Dante writes of his Inferno:

Justice, the founder of my fabric, moved:
To rear me was the task of power divine.
Supremest wisdom, and primal love.

Is there a Hell? Yes, as surely as there is an ethical ordering in this universe, as surely as the Christian revelation is from God.

Given a moral ordering—and this we have already proven—there is and there must be a sanction to God's moral laws. Virtue leads to reward, sin leads to punishment. The sanction not showing itself upon earth, it must be sought for beyond the grave. Without punishment beyond the grave, there is a premium set upon sin, which frequently leads to mundane felicity; virtue, which frequently suffers, or is without reward becomes an illusion.

Annihilation of the soul at death does not vindicate the moral law. The sinner would be quite satisfied with annihilation. His wish is to eat, drink and be merry and to-morrow die. God made man's soul indestructible, and crossing the portals of death it survives weal or woe, according to its deserts.

God's wisdom demands Hell, because it demands order in the universe, moral order for rational creatures, physical order for irrational creatures, physical order for the rational and moral order would be meaningless, in fact, without a sanction in the next life. God's own moral goodness, or holiness, demands Hell. He willed it to His holiness to draw the sharpest distinction between righteousness and sin, between the ending of one and that of the other. God's justice demands Hell. He is the supreme Master, the law-maker. Sin is the breaking of law, a rebellion against divine power and majesty. To allow sin to go unpunished is in God the dejection of His power, and the assertion of impotency before His creatures. Plato argues that "to do wrong, and not to suffer for it is the greatest of evils, for this is to perpetuate the wrong."

The human race has never been without moral instincts, and without a belief, however vague and undetermined in many instances, in a hereafter of rewards and punishments.

The existence of Hell—a state of punishment for the wicked after death—is the clearest of the teachings of the Christian religion. The denial of Hell is the complete setting aside of Christianity. The whole burden of the Gospel is the salvation from sin and Hell offered to men through the merits of Christ, and the punishment awaiting the unrepentant sinner.

The teaching of Christ as to the duration of the punishment of Hell is that it is eternal. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," will the Judge say to the wicked on the last day. "And these," it is added, "shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just into life everlasting." The same duration is assigned to the life of the damned as to that of the just. A carpenter's criticism of the Greek word for the adjective "everlasting" is of no avail to those who contend against the eternity of Hell. Applied to the future time this Greek word "aiónios," is nowhere used in the New Testament except of eternal life or punishment, as the late Dr. Pusey lucidly shows by numerous quotations. There are other passages, too, no less explicit than the words that describe the last judgment. There is the passage in St. Mark, "Where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not extinguished," and that in the Apocalypse, in which there is twice the vision of the "smoke of their torments" going up "forever and ever." The church in her councils has more than once formally declared the dogma of the eternal pains of Hell, so that there is no room for hesitation or quibbling of any kind. The Christian religion is unalterably committed to maintain the dogma of the eternity of the punishment of the lost souls in Hell.

Nor can this dogma be said to contradict reason, mysterious as it may appear under some of its aspects. Probation must some time or other come to a close, and if the sinner persists in his iniquity, punishment must go on, else, in the end, the sinner would triumph over God. Nor can an argument be adduced why probation should be renewed beyond the grave. As a fact, we learn from revelation that it is not renewed. All opportunities to turn to God are afforded during this life; if they are not put to profit, the sinner alone is to blame. Eternity of Hell is the law of persistence of energy. The soul, entered on a course, continues in it. It falls, on leaving this life, in the direction of its previous acts, and there it remains. If we were to consult unaided reason, we should be less astonished at this than we would be at the possibility of repentance and reintegration during the period of probation. Sin, it would seem, must always bear its conse-

quence, as it happens to the violation of physical law. Love and mercy for the sinner on the part of God should, if nature be our guide, astonish us more than justice and the awarding of penalty. Justice is a law of creation, a necessary law, and whatever exceptions are made to it on earth, none will be made to it hereafter, and Heaven and Hell are enduring states for souls.

The sufferings of the souls in Hell we must assume to be most acute. There is in Hell, first, the pain of loss. The soul has lost God, has failed to reach up to its destiny. There is the total wreck of being's purpose, the permanent emptiness of the soul, which was created for the infinite, from whom it is now severed forever. Upon earth the soul had no clear vision of its needs and powers; it found a half-satisfaction in creatures. In Hell it is cut off from creatures: it is conscious of what was its destiny, and is lost to it through its own wrong-doing. The soul becomes its own tormentor, its worm shall never die.

There is, next, in Hell the pain of sense. Scripture and common language of the church's doctors are so clear as to punishment from without, from created agencies working upon the soul, that we must hold the existence of this punishment as certain, although, I may add, there has been no formal church definition on the matter. The words of Scripture are: "Depart from me into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels."—"Every one shall be sated with fire."

In regard to those sufferings, two extremes are to be avoided. They are to be described neither in such a needlessly repulsive and extravagant manner as to shock our ethical perceptions, nor with such mildness as to induce the fancy that Hell ceases to be a strong deterrent against sin.

An article from the pen of a learned English writer, Dr. St. George Mivart, entitled "Happiness in Hell," has been going the rounds of reviews and newspapers and attracting a good deal of attention. We ask, what does it mean? The title of the article, we reply, is misleading, and suggestive of notions never entertained by the writer. Indeed, this title was given to the article, as late information assures us, not by the writer, but the editor of the Review.

The writer's caption was, "The Happiness in Hell," which means a degree whatever of happiness, even amid grievous sufferings. Next, Mr. Mivart, rather judiciously, includes under the same general heading both the abode of souls enjoying mere natural happiness outside of Hell and the abode of souls lost through personal mortal sins. This latter abode only is commonly understood when the word "Hell" is mentioned. Writing of Hell in this mentioned of the word, Mr. Mivart proposes to himself not to induce any comforting hope in the sinner's breast, but by the strictest economy of the church's teachings to bring the dogma of Hell within nearer reach, as far as this may be done, of our limited reason. He eliminates to good purpose, as we ourselves have done this evening, from the doctrine a few unfounded and rather repulsive popular notions. He then puts forward in a more or less tentative manner the notions that, ages passing by, the pain of sense in the damned may in some degree diminish; that the damned do not ceaselessly and necessarily hate God and sin anew in all their acts; that simultaneously, with never-interrupted suffering, they may have a few crumbs of comfort; that, universally speaking, existence, such as it is for the damned, may not be considered by them as a lesser good than non-existence. Those ideas of Mr. Mivart depart from the teachings of the greater number of theologians and doctors of the Church, but find support in the teachings of a few of her theologians and doctors, who believe that such assertions may be made without exposing oneself to be condemned by the Church. This, and nothing more.

Of the great Catholic truths regarding Hell, Mr. Mivart has no doubts, and no Catholic believer is allowed to have. These are that there is a Hell, in punishment of mortal sin of which there has been no repentance before death; that out of Hell there is no redemption; that the pain of loss is eternal; that a pain of sense in some degree shall endure. These truths have in store for the sinner sufficient terrors. I return to one of my first ideas; primal love permitted hell. The benefit to come to you and to me from a consideration of it is an accurate power to still our passions and to direct our souls upward toward God. Heaven calling us upward: Hell opening under our feet; O, my God, can I hesitate? Can it be possible that I yet sin, spurn thy love, despise thy threats, and so live as to compel thee to close against me the portals of thy kingdom of truth and holiness, and to permit me to depart from thee forever into everlasting fire?

The Unconquerable in Me.
There are certain thoughts, irrepressible, which no biting gibe, nor chilling system, nor pitiless logic can subdue. Like the grass of the field, or even like the flowers, the dreary winds of some cold autumnal philosophy may cut them off; but with the returning spring of more genial times they reappear and laugh at the winds which sought to kill them. You cannot silence love with an argument, nor slay man's noblest aspirations with a sneer, nor with his royal faith with a sarcasm.

In the province of Granada Professor Jose Baldomero Perez has made a humble and sincere reputation of his errors and follies in having joined a Masonic lodge and prevailing on others to follow his example. Repenting his past deeds he has made an unconditional and ready submission to the Holy Catholic Church, asking pardon, and entreating those whom he had led into the errors to leave the Society for their souls' sake.

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