

In the Study.

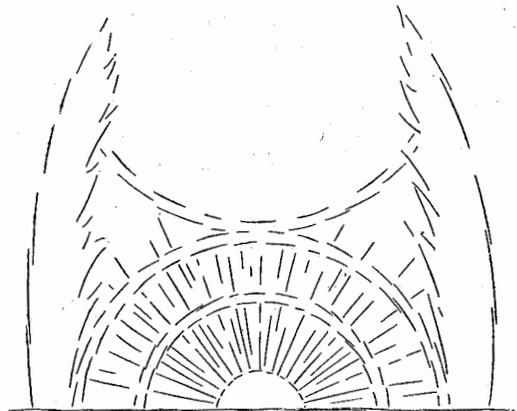
WHEELS BY THE CHEBAR.

MESSRS. SEELEY have published an account of an Englishwoman's eight years' residence among the women of the East. The title is *Behind the Veil in Persia and Turkish Arabia* (16s. net). The author is the wife of A. Hume-Griffith, M.D., D.P.H., who was with her and who contributes some narratives of his own experience. The book is illustrated by photographs, which are many and good. It is a gossipy narrative, without any pretension to anything scientific, whether medical or Biblical. It is just a pleasant narrative of travel, a woman being the traveller, and a woman's sympathy with women the motive of interest. Mrs. Hume-Griffith says in one place: 'Perhaps the Arab women are slow to give their love and trust, but when once given it is sure and lasting. Often these women have said to me, "Why do you love us, Khatoun?" They cannot understand that any one should care for them. Such an idea is outside the range of their experience altogether. One of the first sentences I learned in the Arabic language was, *Ana ahubbkum* ("I love you all"), and this is one of the most useful and necessary phrases to be learnt. Love is the magic key which opens a way to the hearts of the Moslem women, and which brings forth much fruit in return.'

But there are things in the book for the expositor. There is one thing of surpassing interest. Think of the joy it gave one to come unexpectedly upon a most likely explanation of Ezekiel's wheels, and of the visible form of the cherubim, in the course of a woman's unpretentious account of her travels among the women of the Near East.

'We had travelled through a weary stretch of waterless desert that day, and were rejoicing in the fact that our camping-ground for the night was by the banks of a river—the Chebar. Only those who have journeyed for days through a parched-up desert land can tell the joy with which a river is sighted. We experienced something of that joy on the evening when we saw water for the first time for two or three days. We pitched our camp as close to the river as possible, and, sitting at our tent door, prepared to enjoy to the full the beauties before us. Looking up I saw in front of me a

glorious sight. I quickly called my husband, and together we stood and watched this wonderful vision. The sun was sinking as a ball of fire behind the river, when suddenly from its centre there arose beautiful prismatic lights. These gradually resolved themselves into the form of a huge wheel, each spoke of the wheel being of a different colour, merging gradually and almost imperceptibly into the next, as in the rainbow. Within this "wheel" was another and smaller one, also composed of the same prismatic hues. The outer circle of each wheel was formed by a band of bright opaque light. On the top of these wheels was a visionary form resembling the beginning of another wheel, but it was too indistinct for me to say what definite shape it possessed. At either side of these wheels was a large wing, as it were overshadowing the wheels; these were also of a bright white. The whole formed a most wonderful and never-to-be-forgotten sight, and we felt indeed that this was a vision of God.



'When in Mosul, my husband had received a letter from a gentleman in England, asking him to keep a look-out for any such phenomenon as this. On reaching home it was interesting to find, on good authority, that the sight we had seen on the banks of the Khabour was one of historical interest. The form of the wheels is almost identical with the emblem which the Babylonians adopted to represent Divinity. On the same authority I learnt, too, that in all probability a vision similar to this was the origin of the cherubims. It is believed by an expert on the subject that the whole of the

"vision" is caused by atmospheric influences, the sun acting on the particles of frost in the air, thus forming the prismatic colours. Be this as it may, the result was truly marvellous, and we were thankful that we had been privileged to see "the heavens open," revealing this vision of God.

'The whole spectacle could not have lasted more than five minutes, but the sky retained its blaze of colour for about a quarter of an hour after; then darkness covered the heavens.'

COMMENTARIES ON THE APOCALYPSE.

In the year 1903 two articles appeared in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES (xiv. 151, 203) on the best Bible Commentaries. They were written by Mr. Henry Bond, Borough Librarian, Woolwich.

When any one called at the library asking for a good commentary, Mr. Bond had difficulty in finding it. It was the word 'good' that troubled him; commentaries were plentiful enough. So he wrote to a number of Old and New Testament students and asked them to say what they thought the best commentary on each book of the Bible. In his articles in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES he gave their recommendations. For the Book of Revelation he named Simcox in the *Cambridge Bible*, and Carpenter in *Ellicott's Commentary*. But since 1903 other commentaries have been published, other and better.

First, and best of all, Swete's *The Apocalypse of St. John* (Macmillan; 15s.)—a wonderful book. Since it was published in 1906 we have used it constantly, and now we are prepared to pass the deliberate judgment that it is equal in insight and expression to anything ever written by Lightfoot, and in fulness of reference to anything ever written by Westcott. A second edition appeared in 1907, and the student must see that he has it. There is also the Commentary by Hort (Macmillan, 1908; 5s.), which unfortunately covers only the first three chapters. And then there is Mr. Dummelow's *One-Volume Bible Commentary* (1909). But it is not part of Mr. Dummelow's plan to name the editors of the various books. It is, of course, very brief. There is also a useful commentary by Professor Weidner of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago, published by Messrs. Scribner's Sons in 1905.

Mr. Bond's scholars ought to have mentioned

Professor Anderson Scott's little commentary in the *Century Bible* (unfortunately undated, but published in 1902). It is alive from cover to cover, and independent. Professor Scott is also the editor of the Apocalypse in Dr. Robertson Nicoll's *Devotional and Practical Commentary* (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s.), which was published in 1905. Of the older commentaries worth naming are Sadler's (Bell, 1893; 6s.), Cresswell Strange's (Longmans, 1899; 6s.), and, of course, Dean Vaughan's Lectures (Macmillan, 1882; 10s. 6d.), which are thoroughly characteristic.

IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE.

There is a nationality in sermons as well as a time-spirit. But occasionally a preacher is great enough to rise above the fashion of his own country and preach for the world. Such a preacher is the Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst of the Presbyterian Church in New York. His books are often found in British studies. His latest book is his best—*A Little Lower than the Angels* (Revell; 3s. 6d. net). It contains twenty fairly long sermons, every one of them facing the real facts of life, but, in spite of that, courageous and inspiring. For Dr. Parkhurst's faith is the faith of the Apostle John; he knows and he also believes. And he is never tempted into trifling literary or philosophical side issues. The last sermon has the striking title of 'The Duel fought out in the Lord's Grave.' Its text is 'Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' (Ac 2²⁴). Dr. Parkhurst prints the word 'possible' in capitals, and then tells this story:—

'There was shown to me a few days ago by a friend, personally familiar with the scene portrayed, the picture of a grave in the cemetery of Hanover, Germany. It was the grave of a woman who lived in the time of Strauss the sceptic, who had been influenced by his teachings, had become antagonistic to the doctrine of the resurrection, but who from lingering suspicion that that doctrine might be true, left instructions in her will that upon the occasion of her death her entombment should be made so secure that the resurrection could not reach her. There was accordingly piled upon her grave, one upon another, massive slabs of marble and granite, sufficient, it would seem, to

protect her body from the disturbance of earthquake, and so deeply immured as to leave her ashes quite beyond the reach of the last trump. And not only was there all this accumulation of cemented masonry, but the superincumbent layers were bound to those underneath by clasps of steel, so that the entire pile had secured to it almost the solidity of native rock.

'Unfortunately, however, for the hopes of the suspicious lady, an atom of vegetable life got covered up underneath the imposed masonry, and a little shrub, nourished, we should like to suppose, by the decayed materials of her own body, commenced to grow, and with that instinctive impulse common to all plant life began to try to find its way out into the light and air. And as against the irresistibility of that bit of young vegetable omnipotency, artificial masonry did not count. Seams began to open themselves along the lines of original cleavage. The clasps by which the planks and blocks of stone had been knit together resisted the strain, till the energy of life came to the full assertion of its power and wrenched the clasps from their sockets, and pushed the slabs off from the path of its own victorious progress. And those slabs lie there to-day in a condition of beautiful disruption, with the full-grown tree standing in their midst, in quiet sarcasm upon the anti-resurrection ambition of the buried woman, and in a verdant eulogy upon the irresistibility of life.'

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

(Materials for the study of Phil. iii. 13, 14.)

'This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

1. He had found a purpose in life. The life of man is a vagrant changeful desultoriness; like that of children sporting on an enamelled meadow, chasing now a painted butterfly, which loses its charm by being caught—now a wreath of mist, which falls damp upon the hand with disappointment—now a feather of thistle-down, which is crushed in the grasp. In the midst of all this fickleness, St. Paul had found a purpose to which he gave the undivided energy of his soul. 'This one thing I do.'¹

¹ F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, i. 58.

Back flies the foam; the hoisted flag streams back;
The long smoke wavers on the homeward track;
Back fly with winds things which the winds obey:
The good ship follows its appointed way.

2. Had he found his life's purpose himself, or had it been given him? Partly both. He had, however, found himself first. He had said, 'I will arise and go.' Then he found that he had already been found by Christ—'I have been apprehended.' Now his discovery is that, when he was found, it was for a further purpose, and that, again, he must co-operate with God in attaining it—'that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended.' Throughout, God and he have been at work, and will be.

3. What is his purpose? To reach the goal and gain the prize. Life is a race: he a runner. There is a *goal*. It is likeness to Christ—that he may think as Christ thinks, speak as Christ speaks, go about doing good as Christ, and delight to do the Father's will. It is a great purpose in life, the only purpose that makes life worth living. And then there is a *reward*—the runner's prize. It is laid up in heaven, a crown of life that fadeth not away, right of entry to the Tree of Life in the new Paradise, the 'well done' of the Father.

4. How is he to accomplish his purpose? This is the theme of the text. His method is to forget the things that are behind, and to stretch forward to the things that are before.

A. Forgetting the things which are behind.

1. This is a universal law of progress.

This oblivion of the past is a forgetfulness with which we are familiar in other departments of life. When an artist begins a new picture, he seeks to forget all those he has already painted. For, as long as he is haunted by the memory even of his best work, he can achieve only a limited success, perhaps only repeat his former ideas. He must paint with his eye on what he is doing, not on what he has done.²

Mr. Story, the sculptor, was once showing his work to a friend who was visiting him. 'For which of the things you have done,' asked his friend, 'do you care most?' 'I care most,' was the answer, 'for the statue I am to carve next.'³

There is a touching story told of a modern sculptor, who was found standing in front of his masterpiece, sunk in sad reverie. When they asked him why he was so sad, 'Because,' he answered, 'I am satisfied with it.'⁴

This is a principle of which the application can be traced

² F. B. Macnutt, *The Riches of Christ*, p. 29.

³ S. Law Wilson, *Helpful Words for Daily Life*, p. 258.

⁴ A. Maclaren, *Sermons Preached in Manchester*, ii. p. 243.

all through the natural life. The blossom is not regretted when fruit is hardening in its place, nor the slender grace of the sapling when you have got instead the heart of oak, nor the green blade when the ear is bending down in yellow ripeness. So in the spiritual life we have not to mourn over the loss of simplicity if we have got instead souls indurated by experience, disciplined even by fall to refuse the evil and to choose the good.¹

A while ago the *Lancet* contained an article under the title of 'The First Lesson of Scientific Education,' which sought to expose the folly of wasting mental tissue and energy in useless regrets.²

Recently M. Albert Vandal of the French Academy, eulogized a distinguished family because 'it had lived with its time and never shut itself up in the mausoleum of its souvenirs and its regrets.'³

It is said that the Sultans of Turkey still imitate the signature of the illiterate Amurath. 'The Arabic letters of their name and style are interwoven into a rude outline of the impression of a human hand, in remembrance of the way in which Amurath, like the shepherd kings of Tartary, the Mongol conquerors, and Timour, ratified his treaties, by dipping his palm in the ink and leaving the print of it on the instrument.'⁴

2. What, then, are the things that are behind which are to be forgotten by St. Paul?

They are, says Lightfoot, 'the portion of the course already traversed.' To which Vincent adds, 'not his experience as a persecutor.'

The things behind which he forgets, says Liddon, are not merely the external prerogatives of Judaism. As the metaphor itself would suggest, they are the earlier struggles, the past experiences, the incomplete attainments of the Christian.⁵

3. What are the things behind which are to be forgotten by us? (1) The days of innocence. Early innocence (the word is used popularly) is nothing more than ignorance of evil. In regretting it there is much that is feeble and sentimental. Human innocence is not to know evil; Christian saintliness is to prefer good. Parents may prolong the duration of innocence unnaturally. (2) The days of youth. In middle life a man is apt to look back, and marvel with a kind of remorseful feeling that he let the days of youth go by only half enjoyed. It is a natural feeling, but it is not Christian. Manhood is a better thing than boyhood because it is a riper thing; and old age ought to be a better thing than manhood. There

comes in age a love more pure and deep than the boy could ever feel; there comes a conviction, with a strength beyond that which the boy could ever know: that the earliest lesson of life is infinite—*Christ is all.* (3) Past errors. The self-accusing temper that is always looking back hinders growth in godliness. There have been mistakes, perhaps irreparable ones. It is not by regretting what is irreparable that true work is done, but by making the best of what we are. (4) Past guilt. Remorse has done more harm than even hardihood. It fixed Judas in an unalterable destiny; it filled the monasteries with useless lives. Remorse paralyses our energies for Christ's work. Break a Christian spirit and it is all over with progress. 'Hath no man condemned thee?' 'No man, Lord.' 'Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more.' 'We must all die,' said the wise woman of Tekoah, 'and are as water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up again.'⁶

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw the mischief on.
The robbed that smiles steals something from the
thief;

He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

4. Mistaken remembrance of the past may take the form either of unavailing regrets or of unavailing remorse.

1. *Unavailing regrets.*—These may be (1) for a vanished prosperity. A young poet, who had got into trouble, and enlisted in the army, wrote over the manger of his troop horse, '*Eheu quam infortunii miserrimum est, fuisse felicem.*' (2) Repining over the lost strength and brightness of youth. 'What can I do for you?' asked a friend of the satirist Wolcott, when he lay dying. 'Give me back my youth,' groaned the unhappy man. Come back, come back, is such men's cry. (3) Unavailing anguish for the lost beloved. Some are ever sighing—

But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.

If their sun has set, 'God is always in the meridian.' And their sun has set to rise again.

Thou unrelenting past
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain:
And fetters strong and fast
Hold all that enter thine unbreathing reign.

¹ C. R. D. Biggs, *Philippians*, p. 148.

² W. L. Watkinson, *Themes for Hours of Meditation*, p. 12.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Church, *Miscellaneous Essays*, p. 363.

⁵ *University Sermons*, p. 127.

⁶ F. W. Robertson, *Sermons*, i. 61.

Thou hast my better years,
 Thou hast my earlier friends, the good, the kind,
 Yielded to thee with tears ;
 The venerable form, the exalted mind,
 Thine for a space are they :—
 Yet thou shalt yield thy treasures up at last :
 Thy gates shall yet give way,
 Thy bolts shall fall—inexorable past.

2. *Unavailing remorse.*—We cannot alter the guilty past. Not one deed of it.

The moving finger writes, and, having writ,
 Moves on ; nor all thy piety and wit
 Can lure it back to cancel half a line,
 Nor all thy tears wash out one word of it.

But though we cannot undo the past, we can repair it. We can repent of our past sins and forsake them. And the Son of Man hath power even on earth to forgive sins. Then we can say, 'The old things have passed away ; behold they have become new.'¹

5. How are we to regard past sin ? The answer is that we should forget it ; a truly astonishing answer. It may be misapplied, but the misapplication of a medicine does not destroy its essential value. It may be justified (1) as a counsel of moral sanity. It is not good to brood over past sin. We know to what a prison-house of despair and madness such brooding led so gentle and so pure a spirit as Cowper's. R. L. Stevenson says in one of his prayers, 'Help us with the grace of courage that we be none of us cast down, when we sit lamenting amid the ruins of our happiness or our integrity ; touch us with the fire of Thy altar, that we may be up and doing to rebuild our city.' (2) It is also an act of faith. God forgets. He remembers our sins no more against us for ever. The way of faith is to accept forgiveness with no false scruples, to forget the sin which God forgives. (3) It is also the one source of moral progress. We are allowed to forget only on condition that we aspire. Paul forgets the past because he is pressing to the mark. It is also the means of forgetting. Consecrate yourself to the struggle, and in the very act of struggling you will forget the past.²

Surely I repent ;

For what is true repentance but in thought—
 Not even in inmost thought to think again
 The sins that made the past so pleasant to us ?
 And I have sworn never to see him more,
 To see him more.—

TENNYSON, *Guinevere*.

¹ F. W. Farrar, *True Religion*, p. 59.

² W. J. Dawson, *The Evangelistic Note*, p. 113.

6. Are we to forget all that is behind ? Is the past to be blotted out of our remembrance ? There are some things which we are not to forget. (1) God's hand in national history. What does that history teach us ? That greatness and strength are with those to whom morality, the purity of domestic life, and the honour of God are dear. (2) God's hand in our own individual history. How often do the Psalmists stir up their own souls to remember God's wonders in the past. We are to remember that he hath not 'dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.'³

B. Stretching forward to the things which are before.

Whose hand shall dare to open and explore
 Those volumes closed and clasped for evermore ?
 Not mine ! With reverential feet I pass ;
 I hear a voice that cries, Alas ! alas !
 Whatever hath been written shall remain,
 Nor be erased, nor written o'er again ;
 The unwritten only still belongs to thee ;—
 Take heed and ponder well what that shall be !

The word translated 'reaching forth' in the A.V. is an exceedingly strong word, implying intense and sustained effort. It is a compound word, so compounded as to give it a maximum of force. It is a picture of the runner as he stretches forward with the intensity of his effort, every fibre stretched towards the goal.⁴

The body of the racer is bent forward, his hand is outstretched towards the goal, and his eye is fastened upon it.⁵

The eye outstrips and draws onward the hand, and the hand the foot.⁶

The word has passed into sporting language, 'the home-stretch.'⁷

The expression shows us in the most vivid way the body of the runner stretched forward as he is nearing the goal, just as he was represented in the lifelike bronze statues of the Olympic victors.⁸

I have read that Spain once stamped on her coins the Pillars of Hercules, and took as her motto *Ne plus ultra* ; but when the bold spirit of Columbus passed beyond those Pillars, and discovered the New World, she omitted the *ne* and left *plus ultra*—more beyond.⁹

³ J. J. S. Perowne, *Sermons*, p. 106.

⁴ J. Thomas, *Myrtle Street Pulpit*, iii. 202.

⁵ Vincent. ⁶ Bengel.

⁷ Vincent.

⁸ E. Curtius, *Expositor*, VII. iv. 445.

⁹ E. Paxton Hood, *C.W.P.* xxii. 237.

I. Paul's eagerness goes out in two directions: in that of fuller knowledge, and in that of more Christlike character. (1) If our religious life is to have a deep hold upon us it must be great not only to our hearts, but also to our minds. We must be theologians. The 'simplicity of the gospel' is sometimes an excuse for intellectual torpor. (2) To be a theologian is good; to be a saint is better. But sainthood is pressing on, not resting satisfied with attainment. To the end Paul would have to say, 'I count not myself to have apprehended. The very height of the calling was a constant challenge to him to climb the steep ascent.'¹

2. Liddon has two sermons on this subject, one, in the first volume of his *University Sermons*, entitled 'The Law of Progress'; the other, in *Sermons on Some Words of St. Paul*, entitled 'Religious Progress.' In the University Sermon he says that in our day no rallying cry has gained more prominence, or exerted more power, than the demand for Progress. The most opposite aspirations, aye, the most earnest and determined antagonists, range themselves simultaneously under the banner of Progress. Government, society, art, science, even religion, are in turn challenged, reviewed, judged, in the name of Progress. Even in Oxford, with its tradition of a thousand years overshadowing life in rich and varied memories of the past, the characteristic anathema to apply to any institution or society is to call it reaction. But what is it that we mean by progress? (1) True progress must be the progress of man—of man himself, as distinct from the organization, appliances, or embellishments of his life. (2) It must embrace the whole of human life; it must not consist in the development of a single power or faculty. There is a well-authenticated tradition of an argument between Bishop Horsley and Dr. Cyril Jackson, Dean of Christ Church. They sat late into the night debating the question whether God could be better reached through the exercise of the intellect or of the affections. Unwillingly, but step by step, the Bishop, who advocated the claims of intellect, retreated before the arguments of his friend, till at length he exclaimed, 'Then my whole life has been one great mistake.' (3) True progress must embrace, or at least recognize, the outlying conditions of life. (a) The fact of the Fall. There is indeed

¹ D. Fairweather, *Bound in the Spirit*, p. 287.

the theory of Rousseau (in his *Émile*), that man is born good, but is depraved by society. But that doctrine is now referred to only as a curiosity. (b) The wonderful phenomenon of grace. Grace is a real and active force. It is 'the power that worketh in us' (Eph 3²⁰), illuminating the intellect, warming the heart, strengthening the will. (c) The fact of immortality—an eternity beyond the grave, an eternal heaven and an eternal hell.²

One is as the Alpine traveller, who sees the mountains soaring into the sky, and can hardly discern where the deep shadowed crags and roseate peaks end, and where the clouds of heaven begin. Surely the awe-struck voyager may be excused if, at first, he refuses to believe the geologist, who tells him that these glorious masses are, after all, the hardened mud of primæval seas, or the cooled slag of subterranean furnaces—of one substance with the dullest clay, but raised by inward forces to that place of proud and seemingly inaccessible glory.

Goethe draws a striking picture in *Faust* of his hero standing and gazing on the setting sun. As he watches the slowly sinking orb, he longs for wings to follow it in its course. He longs

To drink its everlasting light,
The day before him, and behind the night.

For it is implanted in us by nature to strive both forwards and upwards. We never hear the lark singing in heaven, he says, we never watch the soaring of the eagle towards the sun, we never see the crane winging her homeward flight, but we long for the same glorious, heavenward freedom.³

Charles Simeon of Cambridge says in one of his last letters, alluding to his still abundant toils, 'I am so near the goal that I cannot help running with all my might.'⁴

The runner does not count the laps he has passed, but the laps that remain.⁵

3. Now for the goal and the prize.

Distinguish the mark (A.V.) or goal from the prize. The prize is heaven; the mark is Christ. St. Paul ran 'looking off unto Jesus' (He 12²).⁶

The mark is reached by the runner's efforts; the prize is the reward of victory. The former stands for 'being made conformable unto Christ's death,' the latter for 'attaining unto the resurrection of the dead'; in other words, the mark is moral likeness to our Lord, while the prize is whatsoever of glory and felicity besides He may be pleased to bestow on us.

The mark was perfection of character—the prize was blessedness. But the Apostle did not

² H. P. Liddon, *University Sermons*, i. p. 25.

³ J. J. S. Perowne, *Sermons*, p. 116.

⁴ Moule.

⁵ Chrysostom.

⁶ A. C. Price, *Fifty Sermons*, vol. iv. p. 57.

aim at the prize of blessedness, he aimed at the mark of perfectness. In becoming perfect he attained happiness, but his primary aim was not happiness. We may understand this by an illustration. In student life there are those who seek knowledge for its own sake, and there are those who seek it for the sake of the prize, and the honour, and the subsequent success in life that knowledge brings. They who seek knowledge for the sake of a prize are not genuine lovers of knowledge—they love only the rewards of knowledge: had it no honour or substantial advantage connected with it they would be indolent. But while the prize was not St. Paul's aim, it was an incentive. If his step began to flag, the radiant diadem before him gave new vigour to his heart; and we know how, at the close of his career, the vision became more vivid and more entrancing: 'henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory.'

In the sphere of conduct the prize is the serviceable life; in the sphere of personal morality, it is the regenerated character.

Life in God's contempt apart,
With ghastly smooth life dead at heart,
Tame in earth's paddock as her prize.¹

4. Why is the prize described as 'the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus'?

Dr. Vaughan is probably right in saying that the force of the phrase 'lies not in the idea of *upward* or *to heaven*, but in that of the Person who calls *being Himself above* or *in heaven*.' But as the Apostle regards the call as taking its character and object from this fact, *heavenly* is

¹ Browning, *Easter Day*, iii.

practically equivalent to *heavenward*. It is that summons or charge which comes to every Christian to make his home in the Jerusalem which is above.²

The determining feature in the high calling of the Christian is that it has Christ for its centre. His Word, His Will, is the law of the Christian's action. His sustaining and sanctifying influence pervades the whole of the Church's activity—pervades it in theory, and it is for us to see that it pervades it more and more completely in practice. 'If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.'³

The calling is not primarily a calling to receive a prize, but to run a race. The calling exists before the race begins. It is the invitation, the sanction, the authority by which the race is begun, the goal fixed, and the prize awarded. The high calling is, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the heavenly calling.⁴

It is a calling to be perfect; it is therefore not the Apostle's own, but God's. The work began with God. God will see to its accomplishment. It is this that gives his spiritual activity its greatest intensity. The calling is high, but not higher than by God's grace he may attain to. 'I like to think of that strong phrase of Calvin's—*irresistible grace*.'⁵

² W. Sanday, *Two Present-Day Questions*, p. 15.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴ J. Thomas, *Myrtle Street Pulpit*, iii. 203.

⁵ D. Fairweather, *Bound in the Spirit*, p. 289.

The New Hebrew Bible of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

BY PROFESSOR EBERHARD NESTLE, D.D., MAULBRONN.

To say a word on this new undertaking I am perhaps the more entitled, or even called upon, since my name has been mentioned in connexion with it in a way which must give a wrong impression.

Under the heading 'A New Edition of the Hebrew Bible' there was, in the *Times* of 23rd January, a long correspondence, together with a leader on it.

With the leader the Society was, it seems, not quite satisfied; so the secretaries sent a letter to the *Times* (27th January); whose last paragraph was:

'In order to ensure accuracy the committee have *obtained* for Dr. Ginsburg the help of three accomplished scholars *as proof-readers*—