



A. A. Campbell

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FAMILY CULTURE;

OR,

CONVERSATIONS

IN THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE

AT THE

CARLTON HOUSE.

BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL,

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TO
THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF NOTTINGHAM,
RICHARD BIRKIN, ESQ.,
THE LIBERAL SUPPORTER OF WHATEVER TENDS TO
ENLIGHTEN THE INTELLECT,
ELEVATE THE TASTE,
AND IMPROVE THE MORALS OF THE COMMUNITY,
This Volume,
BROUGHT OUT UNDER HIS PATRONAGE,
AND INTENDED TO PROMOTE
RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN THE DOMESTIC CIRCLE,
IS
MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY HIS WORSHIP'S OBLIGED AND HUMBLE SERVANT,
HENRY HUDSTON.

PREFACE.

It is difficult to speak or write in an adequate manner concerning the book of Genesis. The rags of modern criticism, and the brodiery of eulogium, seem equally mean beside that document which glows with the purple and gold of the Orient. Certainly the finger-marks of eld are upon it. Antique dignity and simplicity continually shine out. But age has had no withering influence. It is still full with affluence of life, and fresh with youthful vigour. Fundamental truth, historic reality, and spiritual importance, constitute the sap which cannot perish. It will always live, and always be life-giving. Its voice rings clear, and swells musically, because it is an authentic voice laden with divine signification. It is true that the German critics, renowned for erudition, have discovered nothing in Genesis save legendary poetry—the rustle of dead leaves, and the wail of hollow winds. But their eyes were not purged from the mists of sin, nor their lips purified by live coal from the altar of God. They were not qualified to see, hear, or speak with insight or reverence. For in this field the instruments of science are blunt and powerless, unless tempered in the fire of spiritual purity. The old Serpent, transformed into the Mephistopheles of Goethe, met them on the road to Paradise, and with infernal glozing and lying sophistry rendered them blind and perverse. So they found Eden a wilderness, and Eve an Arabian squaw.

We are introduced at once to the oldest system of physics, or metaphysics. Not that God designs in the Book to teach us Philosophy or Science. He has a nobler object in view. Yet, whatever Sciolism may prate to the contrary, all the statements are in strict and solemn harmony with the highest discoveries of educated reason and the deepest conclusions of philosophic generalization. We get a single glimpse of a region older than death or

time. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The statement deserves to be considered alone; for, in fact, ages uncounted, and revolutions without human historian, transpire before the Spirit broods with plastic power over the void of darkness and uproar. We are necessarily led backward to a fact which philosophy cannot measure, or even receive. To the period in the abysses of eternity when God created the very matter of the worlds. The human maker cannot create, in the radical or absolute sense. He has so much raw material before him which he fashions into diversity of form for the purposes of life; or, so many elements, which he mingles for the production of a new substance, under known conditions. But the Great Workman, the World-builder, had to create his materials without matter to operate upon: It is vain to evade this, as some have done, by contending for the eternity of matter. The theory only gives us another divinity, senseless and blind, an everlasting matter-god lying motionless under the shadow of the eternal throne. In leading us from the sanctuary of a solemn mystery *higher* than reason, it plunges us into a gulf of disorder and contradiction where reason is confounded. "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The Ancient of days, after an eternity spent in the glory of his own fathomless nature, and the enjoyment of his own perfections, sent abroad his energy of power. The potential will and the imperial voice called for the things that "were not, as though they were." In the void desert of space, stars and angels, worlds and spirits started into life, unsullied, in vestures of the morning. When Geological science first began to rend open the huge stone-book of the earth, and by the lamp of Induction read in dark mines the ancient annals of nature, some timorous Christians trembled, and many infidels were glad. It was feared on one side, and hoped on the other, that some scroll would turn up to falsify divine tradition, and darken the illuminated face of Moses. Especially was this the case when it became undeniably manifest that life and death were both in the world before Adam. According to old theology death came by sin, not only to Adam and his posterity, but likewise to the in-

ferior creation. But it so happened that the Biblical account was perfectly in accordance with the natural record. Death indeed came to Adam, and hath passed upon all men, because all have sinned; but the beasts of the field, and the fishes of the sea are not included in such category. Nature shews that death was from the beginning one of the conditions of their existence, and Revelation calls not in question the sentence. The scientific view, of the earth under divine agency passing through tremendous revolutions, in storms of flood and fire, and receiving into its bosom successive races of animal life, before the creation of man, is an elevating view. So far from coming into collision with the testimony of Moses it powerfully corroborates all that he declares concerning the original dignity of man. During measureless ages, and great cycles of being, the God whom we adore was building a stately mansion. According to his wisdom and pleasure he was gradually evolving a finished world. He crowded it with divine forms of sculpture, and landscapes of ethereal painting. And, at last, he fashioned one in his own image as lord and ruler, king and high priest of all. The fruitful valleys laughing in exuberance, the lofty mountains clothed with sunlight, the solemn woods hung with dusky crimson drapery, the glassy lakes serene in repose, the undulating hills robed in emerald, the crystal streams and rushing rivers, skirted with blowing flowers and branching trees,—all demanded a Seer and an Interpreter. One who might enter the vast temple of Nature with sacerdotal garments on, and collecting in his spirit the beauty and sublimity of all visible things, make creation vocal with intelligent worship.

A portion of this book has confounded a few unbelieving Astronomers. They read, concerning our earth, that the sun was appointed to give it light by day, the moon by night, and the stars appointed for times and seasons. In the spiritual Chronicle our orb is central, and other suns and systems of inconceivable magnitude, take a secondary place as ministering servants. The man whose soul is only mathematical, without faculty for moral grandeur, cannot understand this. From some high tower, telescope in hand, he takes a sweep of wide circumference in the wilderness of the universe. Returning from his journey in the milky way amid sublimely

wheeling suns, he looks coldly on this little planet, and almost scornfully on the ancient document which singles it out for prominence and conspicuous renown. He might be aware that even in our own world we have sacred streams, hallowed mountains, and consecrated valleys. Places which owing to intellectual, moral, and supernatural associations are always adorned with grace and splendour in the heart and imagination of man. Charmed by the genius and sorrows of the passionate, creative poet; purified by the crimson of the warrior, or martyr; washed and worn by the tears and footsteps of pure self-sacrifice;—such spots of earth are glorious for ever. The waters are always fresh and limpid there, the palm tree flourishes without winter, and the verdure is green with eternal bloom. As in the narrow field, so in the wider. There are many mansions in the house of our Father.

But there is one small orb in material extent, whose moral history is awful in depth and range. It is a place where the lights of heaven, and the glooms of hell, have met and com-mingled. With its tragedy of sin, and its mystery of love, it stands out as the spiritual battle field of everlasting destinies. Powers and principalities learn from it the manifold wisdom of God. Unfallen spirits, in all mansions of regal beauty, have their conceptions of God their Creator, dilated and deepened. They burn with more intense ardour of seraphic fire. They bow and adore under the veil of wings with reverence more profound.

We perceive at once that our original Head is not that sullen hairy savage which false philosophy has painted, in defiance of collective reason and divine tradition. We do not find an uncultured Barbarian roaming the forest for prey, and fighting with beasts hardly more ferocious than himself. But he arises before us erect and majestic, in material, mental, and spiritual beauty. We find not an outcast flung from the stern destinies to mourn in the solitudes of Nature, without articulate speech, or moral code, or open spirit-land. He is not a Fatherless child blindly seeking sustenance, society, law and religion through force of instinct, tortured with poisons, and mocked by phantoms on the road. No! we discover him walking with God, his Creator and Father, who has given him, as was well observed by the great Newton, “Both

reason and religion in the gift of speech." In his intellectual vision, his spiritual insight, and his visible regality he stands before us as the image of God, the anointed of the Father. His countenance glows with supernal radiance, he is clasped with angels in the covenant of love, and he lifts a mighty voice in the universal hymn which is music in the ears of the Holy One. Ethnology, as well as Geology and Astronomy, bears witness in our holy cause. Tradition, Institution, Language, point all races backward to one family. The immense flood of life whose roar is heard in all our gates, narrows as we travel eastward, till we reach its source in the golden fountain of Paradise. The sinless age, the malignant spirit, the fall, the sacrificial rite,—are in the deepest roots of the world's language, and among the oldest traditions of its people. Unity in variety becomes increasingly evident as Science widens her dominion, and sharpens her instruments. The Asian mystery comprehends and reconciles all. It cannot be outgrown or nullified. It is truly pleasant to find that the most credible science does not give us, what Coleridge called, an "ourang outang theory of the universe." We are not led in a dreary journey of shame and degradation to find our primal parent in a matted wood, or on a barren shore, as an unshapely lump of animal ferocity. We rejoice to look upon a son of God, environed with light and power, dilated with attributes of the highest life, and wandering the slopes of Eden in fellowship with his Creator.

We are approaching a portion of the record which brings heaviness and affliction. The prospect is unspeakably dreadful; but conscientiousness will not suffer us to close our eyes. As we look steadily and think seriously, the ancient scene lives again with its proximate consequences. Wailing voices of anguish are heard which rend the heart, and tears drop from eyes bright as the lamps of the azure. Sounds and shapes and voices of misery, wrath, and woe, accumulate and darken around us. The glory of Paradise perishes under the tempest of divine indignation. The shades of funeral gloom settle down as a pall over the garden of the Lord. We dimly perceive the high priest and monarch with sullied garments and a discrowned head. Disappointment, shame, remorse, and fear have stormed the citadel of a once pure

spirit. The subduing thunders of a violated Law, the awful countenance of offended Godhead, the triumphant aspect of the Fiend, the groaning of polluted Nature, the sullen gloom of the Criminal, the bitterness of Sin, the shadow of Death, the unknown Woe,—all in vivid light or solemn shady rise up before the reflective mind, and are powerfully heard, seen, and felt by the spiritual man. Modern Rationalism, which seeks to destroy or banish every supernatural element, has laboured to transform Satan into an abstraction. We need not be surprised at this, when we call to mind that she has sought to accomplish the same work with the personality of the living God. It is surely easier even to reason, to conceive of a *personal* fountain of evil, than of a bodiless abstraction floating over humanity, and falling on the mind like night-dew. The same frozen theory of impiety complacently informs us that Death is a debt we owe to *Nature*; but shuddering consciousness gives it the lie, by feeling that it is a debt we owe to *Justice*. The deepest convictions and healthiest feelings of the inner man are in religious consonance with the teaching of inspired truth. True, that a few daring leaders of the Infidel host, and a few imbruted profligates, have encountered the Angel of death with apparent tranquility. By a long course of unhallowed speculation and impure conduct, man may be dehumanized. Scaled and crusted over with Ignorance, Sin, and Godless theory, he may die as a dog dieth. But it is not the less true, that such cases are exceptions. The masses of the people tremble as they near the dark river, whose waves are threatning. They find themselves face to face with the issues of life, the realities of a moral condition, and the certainties of responsibility and judgment. Sin is the sting of death, and death is the penalty of broken law. It is a judicial infliction, connecting every man with the original representative father. But how can we open gates of mercy to those whose remorseful, clamorous, despairing cries ascend in such wild and ghastly terror?

The beginning of human ruin was the *belief of a lie*. The falsehood of Satan, through his instrument, the Serpent, consisted in imputing selfishness to God. As if the gracious Father were cruelly withholding from his child food necessary to the development of his nature, the clearness of his vision, and the fulness of his enjoy-

ment. Distrust in God and faith in the enemy conceived and brought forth sin in an external act of disobedience. The Evil Spirit was, truly, a liar and a murderer from the beginning, false concerning God, and destructive towards man. The victim, in the room of ascending into a loftier region of intelligence and fruition, made the strange discovery that he was naked, guilty, and miserable. The selfishness which had been imputed to God, clave to man as a robe of spotted leprosy, and remains as the radical disease of his fallen nature. Separated from God by sin, how may the re-union be effected, and life restored again? There is only *one road*. "I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE: NO MAN COMETH UNTO THE FATHER, BUT BY ME." "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Man rises from the ruin of the fall by the *belief of truth*. The truth of God in Christ shrined in the gospel testimony. And as the falsehood charged him with selfishness, the truth refutes the slander of Satan, by revealing God in all the glory of his infinite and disinterested love. O, my brother man! perish not at the base of that mountain, in sin and infernal pride. Look up! It is Calvary thou art near! The heart of God is unveiled in transcendant grace, unfolding in one astonishing view the wrath and compassion of the Eternal, the enormity of sin and the opulence of pardon, the severe majesty of law and the richness of abounding favour, the abyss of ruin and the completeness of recovery. Read those crimson lines in the light of human history, and by the fire of thy own consciousness, and wash away thy guilt in that purple flood. In fine, on this subject, as man originally entered into the kingdom of Satan by an action of positive disobedience, impelled by falsehood; so he now enters into the kingdom of God and of favour, through an action of positive obedience, inspired by the belief of the truth. In the Laver of Regeneration, the believer, in whose heart life divine has been awakened, is born of the water for the manifestation and enjoyment of his spiritual power and privilege.

It may be objected by some, that we are considering Genesis by the light of other documents. How can we do otherwise? It is not for us to throw away the advantages of our stand-point. We rejoice that our position in

space and time enables us to take a comprehensive survey. We stand under the great sheltering tree of life which the ages have nourished, and by the wide river, fed from a thousand branching streams, which maketh glad the city of God. We cannot speak as if in the infancy of time, or the youth of humanity, because we have read and seen the unfolding and ripening of the purposes of God. The temple has been built for which generations supplied the scaffolding, and we await, believingly and serenely, the return of the glorious Builder, to dwell in the midst of His people.

But unless we muse and meditate all through Genesis, which would make a volume large as the one we are pre-facing, it is time to say a few words concerning the book, and the author before us. Mr. Campbell is a clear-headed, large-minded man; evangelical in doctrine, and catholic in spirit. The exposition which he furnishes, in the dialogue form, is happy and efficient both in construction and execution. We cannot vouch for the accuracy of all the author's statements, especially when he makes excursions in the fields of science, chronology, and conjectural criticism. Still, in the main, his book is both solid and lively, compactly built, and instinct with the breath of life. Even the disquisitions which are questionable as to their truth or importance, only reveal that manly freedom which is willing to push speculation as far as may be consistent with reverence for established and fundamental verities. And always ready to step back and adore, where God has reared a boundary wall, putting the sandals off the feet when standing upon holy ground. The expositor occupies a position of great importance. Only second to the Prophet and Apostle who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Let not the reader suppose that expositors are abounding. You may find in shoals the men who prose or declaim, moralise or philosophise from texts, but an expositor does not arise once in an age. The laws of language and the laws of thought, the nature of evidence and the constitution of the human mind, the history of the world and the dispensations of God,—all furnish their contributions to his masculine frame. By Philology, Logic, and Induction; by context, ancient custom, and analogy of faith; but chiefly, by native energy of mind, and eminent purity of heart, the true

expositor absorbs and transfuses himself, until he catches the spirit of the original writer, in reasoning and feeling. He triumphs with him in the strength of his argument, flames with him in the fire of his passion, and soars with him on the wings of his imagination. Loosing himself in his subject, he reproduces in modern idiom, the grand outlines of truth and divinity which originally came from heaven in another language, amid diverse habitudes of thought, and dissimilar aspects of life. It is but seldom that a being is found sufficiently powerful, pure, and plastic for genuine, life-giving exposition. We are sorry to have to say, that the most of our pretended expositions are dull, unprofitable books. Remarkable for their specific gravity, and intolerable heaviness. The mind of God, the teaching of the Spirit, is not poured out fresh and limpid, as if flowing and warbling from the throne and fountain head. But, on the contrary, small dribblets of the wine of heaven are lost in torrents of ditch-water. Grim systems of fleshless metaphysics, and dry essays on subordinate topics make up bulky volumes, which *always* pay the booksellers, *sometimes* the authors, but never the readers. Let the reader, then, be thankful, that he has got hold of a genuine exposition; and if he be so far enlightened as to wish that it had been less fragmentary, and more consecutive and complete, he may console himself by the reflection, that it is, at all events, *the best of its class*.

GEORGE GREENWELL.

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Also, a copy of the Author's likeness, on receipt of *seven* postage stamps.

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“Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise, that hast survived the fall!
Though few now taste thee unimpared and pure,
Or, tasting, long enjoy thee; too infirm,
Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets
Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy chrystal cup.
Thou art the nurse of virtue—in thine arms
She dwells, appearing, as in truth, she is,
Heav’n born, and destined to the skies again.
Thou art not known, where pleasure is ador’d,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist,
And wand’ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of novelty, her fickle, frail support;
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding in the calm of truth tried love,
Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.
Forsaking thee, what shipwrecks have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown !”

BETHEL;

OR,

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOUSE.

THE superabundance of grace displayed in the Christian system is not likely to be appreciated, much less exaggerated, in this cold and selfish and sensual age. It would sometimes seem to me as though not one of a thousand in the whole army of the church militant did realize the amount of privilege, of wealth and honour guaranteed to those in covenant with the Lord Messiah. The state and estate are, it would seem, alike unknown and unknowable, to the plodding votaries of man-made systems of devotion—seekers of religion—apprenticed converts—the speculative catechumens of sectarian schools.

The religion of the Lord Messiah is indeed a *personal* affair—a *spiritual* concern—a soul-absorbing, subduing, ennobling institution. The subject and the object are persons, not things—not doctrines, not theories, not forms; but living, thinking, talking, acting agents. The elements of this celestial invention are one person believing, trusting in, loving, admiring, rejoicing in, and obeying another person. It is the intercourse, the commerce, the converse, the intimacies, the communings and communications of two kindred minds of very unequal standing—of very dissimilar rank and dignity. It is a sinful creature pardoned,

reconciled, sanctified, adopted, saved, in covenant with the supreme intelligence, the uncreated God, as appearing in the person and character of the *incarnate* WORD, the only begotten Son of God.

The disparity of their rank greatly heightens the confidence, affection, and esteem of the humbler party, and heightens the superior in affording a wider and deeper channel for the benignant communications of his condescending love. A league of truer, purer, and more enduring amity can always be formed and maintained between a magnanimous and generous Prince and his own reconciled subjects, than between Princes of equal rank and independence. The forest oak that kindly raises from the ground the humble vine, receives not only its fond embraces for the help and protection which it affords, but it is also adorned by the beauty of its foliage, as well as honoured by the music and the melody which its flowers, its odours, and its fruits allure to its branches.

No co-partnery on earth like marriage, and yet this is but a feeble type of an eternal union of all interests between the Bridegroom of heaven and his earthly spouse. He gave himself for, and then transfers himself to his bride ; and thus by an everlasting covenant the parties are united in an identity of interests, honours, and enjoyments commensurate with all the powers of blessing and being blessed, possessed by the contracting parties. Did Christians realize all this, how different would be their earthly career from what it too often is. Their hearts would be temples for the Spirit of Holiness, and their houses Bethels for the God of Jacob

By a recurrence to the patriarchal age, to the time of Jacob, we shall find the origin of *Bethels*. This renowned patriarch of eternal fame, whose new name *Israel* is transferred to all the elect of God, and whose first name is a part of God's own memorial to the end of all generations, had commenced his earthly pilgrimage; and with the blessing of his father upon his head, and the prayers of his mother, he had set out to form an alliance with the remnant of the faithful in the motherland of his pious ancestors.

On the first night of his pilgrimage he had the celebrated vision of the ladder suspended from the threshold of heaven to the rocky pillow on which, amidst the hazle thicket, he slept so sweetly and dreamed so truly, while his father's and grandfather's God spoke to him of unborn ages, and promised to be with him in every place whither he went, or in which he waked or slept during his whole peregrinations, until his return to the covenanted land. It was then the fear and awe of the heavenly Majesty constrained these words—“How dreadful is this place: this is none other but *the house of God*:* this is the gate of heaven.” When the patriarch rose up early in the morning he took the stone on which he had slept, and setting it up for a monumental pillar, he anointed it with oil and called the place *Bethel*. There he made his covenant with God, and solemnly vowed allegiance and devotion to him, on the terms of an immutable covenant.

Now it occurs to us that what was true of Israel is still true—that all the Israel of God are a covenanted people—that the God of Jacob is still

* *Beth El* is the Hebrew for *the house of God*.

their refuge, and the Holy One of Israel is yet their King. Therefore we should still build an altar and rear a pillar to his name. Every Christian dwelling should still have its family altar, and its monumental record of what God has said and done. If indeed as the Apostles say, the Christian people are severally and collectively, “*a habitation of God through the Spirit,*” “*a holy temple,*” “*a spiritual house*”—then I ask, Should not their dwellings be houses of prayer and of song, and in them “be heard the melody of praise” continually?

We come, then, directly to the point, and affirm it is our conviction that all Christian dwellings should be *Bethels*—houses consecrated to God, in which his word should be read, his praises sung, and his name invoked on all the days of the year. Wherever the people of God under the first dispensation pitched their tents, they erected their altars to the Lord. Under the second dispensation they were, by divine commandment, daily to read or teach the word of God to their families. Then it became a proverb, that “the voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.”*

May we not then say to the righteous under the third dispensation, “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart:”—“for praise is comely for the upright.” “Thy statutes,” said a Jewish king, “have been my song in the house of my pilgrimage;” and will not a Christian father say as much of himself and his house as a Jewish king? Are not Christian householders as much bound by divine authority to bring up their families for the Lord—to nurture and train them for the royal

* Psalm cxviii. 15.

family of heaven! And what son of God is there who has a heart, a tongue, and a Bible—children and servants under his care, and will not anoint his pillar, erect his altar, and worship the Lord constantly in his family? Thus teaching his children by his example how much he loves and delights in God, and with what pure affection and tender love he seeks their moral excellence and their eternal life.

Needs it be proved that those children who morn and even receive the parental benedictions along with their stated lessons from God's own book, have brighter evidence not only of the piety and godly sincerity of their parents, but also of their parental tenderness and affection! What knowledge or belief can the sons and daughters of prayerless professors have of the piety or Christian benevolence of their parents? Surely they afford them no unequivocal demonstrations of genuine tenderness, no convincing proof of unsophisticated affection, who seldom or never bow the knee with them, and invoke in their own language the blessings of God upon their sons and daughters. Natural or animal affection for their offspring they may have; so have inferior animals. But where, I ask, are the proofs of that heaven-born Christian affection and feeling that looks to the true and eternal interests and honours of our offspring! It cannot be seen, and as little can it be imagined, in the absence of those demonstrations of parental piety.

The two branches of religion are piety and humanity. These in all their developments towards Creator and fellow-creature, contain the whole. They are visible, sensible, and demonstrable things. They are to each other in equal ratios

—as cause and effect: the more of one, the more of the other. Theories, or doctrinal views of these things, are not the things themselves. We want to see the things, the effects, the fruits of piety more fully displayed in our generation, and more especially amongst those of our brethren who certainly are standing on higher and holier ground than other professors; and from whom all men expect not merely a more rational, a more scriptural theory; but a purer, a holier, a more divine and heavenly practice. Every one in our ranks is by profession a saint,—a “partaker of the heavenly calling;” and from such all men look for a more scriptural piety, a more perfect morality than can be developed or displayed under a party dispensation of opinionism and sectarism.

Family instruction and social prayer are as indispensable means of family salvation as any other means to any other desirable ends in a moral system. Besides, what pleasure does it afford all householders and heads of families to believe that the angel of the Lord encamps around their dwellings, and that their places of repose are houses consecrated to the Lord in which he deigns to dwell. This persuasion sweetens all social and domestic enjoyments, and greatly elevates the dignity and moral excellence of all the inmates of such consecrated homes. No person who has long lived in a Bethel can ever after relish the tabernacles of ungodly men. Some instructions for those about to consecrate their dwellings into habitations of piety and righteousness, will be found in the subsequent Conversations at the Carlton House.

FAMILY CULTURE.

CONVERSATIONS AT THE CARLTON HOUSE.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

To foretell the fortune of a family with unerring certainty, is not more difficult than to estimate how much good, present and future, direct and indirect, may be achieved in any neighbourhood by only one person of great energy of character, of superior intelligence and moral worth, who sincerely and devoutly undertakes the improvement of society. The excellent Olympas, long resident and master of the Carlton House, in Carmel Place, and his beloved Julia, are yet living monuments of the great moral force of well disciplined minds, energetically and affectionately employed in advancing the religious and moral conditions of human existence. Their philanthropy was rational, pure and fervent; and sought the most natural and capacious channels through which to communicate its blessings to society. While their commiserations and sympathies embraced the Turk, the Jew, and the Indian, they wasted not their time nor their substance in the formation of Utopian schemes for their conversion; but supremely employed their energies in family and neighbourhood advancement in the paths of literature, religion, and morality. They felt the

impulses of heavenly charity to be warmest and strongest for those at home; and therefore superlatively sought the moral excellence and eternal salvation of their children, relatives, and neighbours. Yet did they not look with a cold indifference on the destitute and wretched of other climes and languages; but, reversing the policy of some of their more popular compeers, they contributed their pence to Hindostan and spent their pounds at home.

But their domestic administration and manner of disciplining and training their own immediate family, is that which at this time most especially interests us, because it very happily exemplifies, in an intelligible and practical form, those principles and rules of family culture which both our theory and experience would commend to those who are supremely devoted to the eternal honour and happiness of their own dear households. To further our aims and wishes we shall be at some pains to give in detail a few of those lessons in which we had the pleasure to participate under their consecrated roof, around the family altar, at the morning and evening hour of domestic instruction and social prayer.

The family was large, consisting of nine children, natural and adopted, with some half dozen of domestics, of different ages. All were arranged in classes according to their ages and capacities. The first consisted of three, under seven years old; the second of four, under fourteen, and all the rest made up the third class. All that could fluently read, with book in hand, sat round the room, and in turn read their several portions of the daily lesson. After the

reading of one or two chapters, as the case might be, a free conversation ensued in the form of question and answer, frequently interspersed with practical views and remarks adapted to the capacity of all present, and animated with pious emotions and moral sentiments, fitted to imbue the minds of all with the fear and love of God, and to infix in the youthful heart the solid and enduring principles of pure religion and Christian righteousness.

The morning hour, from six to seven, thus became an intellectual and moral feast—a spiritual breakfast of the most refreshing and invigorating efficacy to us all. The plan in one important feature soon impressed itself upon my admiration. The infant class, as I may call that composed of those from five to seven, was exercised primarily upon the simple facts in the lesson, while the second class explained them; and the third drew the inferences and deduced the practical bearings of the subject as it applied to themselves and society at present.

Another very cardinal view of the whole exhibition immediately arrested my attention. Olympas, instead of calling upon his family to attend family worship, was accustomed to assemble his household to the morning and evening lesson. Family instruction, rather than family worship, was the prominent idea. True, indeed, the praises of God were frequently sung, and prayer and thanksgiving were always offered at the close of the lesson; but as instruction extended to all present, and only a part could properly unite in the worship of God, it was much more apposite to denominate it family teaching than family worship.

Apart from its religious and moral character and influences, contemplated as a literary and intellectual affair—as purely educational in the common acceptance of the term, it was nearly equal to a common school course. Two hours per day, well and faithfully applied in this way, gave to the whole household of Olympas a literary and intellectual superiority over every other family in the neighbourhood who enjoyed in every other respect the same educational advantages.

Hence it was usual for Susan, James, and Henry, of the junior class, to be foremost in the Sunday School—foremost in the primary school—as it was for William and Mary, Edward and Eliza, of the second class, to gain all the honours in all the classes at the common and high schools of Carmel City. The domestics of the Carlton House were a sort of aristocracy for intelligence and respectability among their co-ordinates in profession—among all their compeers who attended at the Carlton church. But it would be impossible for any one often to visit this consecrated family—the Carlton Bethel, and not to anticipate such fruits from a system of instruction and moral government so admirably adapted to all the exigencies of humanity in the morning time of its existence. The pre-eminence mentioned was but the proper fruit, the genuine effects of a system of training in perfect harmony with the conditions and wants of human nature.

These conversations are intended as specimens of the plan which we would most affectionately recommend to all Christian parents who have in their hands the immense responsibilities of rearing a family for the Lord.

CONVERSATION I.

MONDAY morning, six o'clock, being a second reading of the two first chapters of Genesis, containing fifty-two verses, eleven persons read five verses each in rotation. After a distinct enunciation of these chapters, Olympas interrogated the junior class in the following manner:—

Tell me, Susan, who created the heavens and the earth?

Susan. GOD; which as you told me, means the GOOD BEING.

When, James, did God create the heaven and the earth?

James. “In the beginning.”

In the beginning of what, Henry?

Henry. In the beginning of time.

And what, Susan, was before the beginning of time?

Susan. God.

Were the heavens and the earth, James, both created at the same time?

James. They were both created *in the beginning.*

And where, Henry, did God dwell before the heavens and the earth were made?

Henry. I cannot tell.

Can any of you tell?

William. Moses does not tell us; but one of the books says, he dwells in Eternity.

Which of the holy scribes says this?

William. Isaiah calls him, "The High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity."

Olympas. Observe, then, that time is no part of eternity: for as in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, the heavens and the earth are the beginning of time. We would then say that God created time by creating the heavens and the earth. In how many days, Henry, did God create the heavens and the earth?

Henry. In six days.

What was created the first day?

Susan. Light, which God called *day*.

And who created *darkness*, Susan?

Susan. I do not know; but I know what God called it. He called it *night*.

And what made the first day, James?

James. "The evening and the morning made the first day."

Then was not darkness between the evening and the morning, William?

William. It was. Still light is called day; for we have to count darkness in time, and include a portion of it with light, in counting events; and thus evening, night, and morning are computed as one day.

Olympas. You mean, that while day means light, in *time* it denotes both a portion of light and darkness.

William. Yes; in computing the week we have to count darkness as a portion of time, and make seven days and seven nights a week.

Olympas. Mary, can you tell what darkness is?

Mary. It was not created, and is therefore nothing.

Olympas. It is indeed, no substance; and

therefore was not properly created. But it is spoken of as a thing, and is figuratively said to be created. God says, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." But he creates darkness by removing the light; for darkness is but the privation of light. Do you think, Edward, that light is a substance?

Edward. It strikes my eye with force, and sometimes with pain, which darkness never does; and is therefore a substance.

Olympas. Can you, Eliza, recollect any reference made to the creation of light in the New Testament?

Eliza. Paul, I think, says that "God commanded the light to shine out of darkness."

William. I read in Plato, or some other book, that "light is the shadow of God."

Olympas. But neither Plato nor the poets, are of any authority here. A beautiful saying and a true saying, are not identical. Some have thought that the original term *AUR*, which represents both *fire* in general, and lightning or electricity, here refers more to the *matter of light* than to the display of it, because the luminaries were not made till the fourth day; but this to you is more curious than edifying. Tell me, James, what was done on the second day?

James. God made the firmament on the second day.

Olympas. Nothing else, Susan?

Susan. Yes, he made the waters also, and separated them into two parts.

Olympas. We are not told that he created the waters on the second day. He only separated

them by the firmament. Can you, William, explain what the firmament is ?

William. God called it *heaven* ; and it would seem as if it were the place where the stars are fixed.

Olympas. The firmament here spoken of, being placed between waters, can only indicate the expanse called the atmosphere, in which we live and in which the birds fly : hence the birds are said to fly in the midst of heaven. The waters floating in the clouds, and in form of vapours through the atmosphere are said to be separated from those on the earth.

Edward. Father, will you please tell us when the waters were created ? They were not created on the first day, nor on the second day, and yet they are spoken of as existing when the expanse or air was created.

Olympas. Neither the waters nor the earth are included in the details of the six days. First of all, God created *the substance* of the heavens and the earth. And before the details of creation are given we learn that “ the earth was without form and void,” or one confused mass of land, water, and all other things ; over which darkness presided, and on which “ the Spirit of God moved.” Out of this heterogeneous mass of discordant elements, he first created light ; and on the second day he created air : and having separated light and darkness, the waters above and beneath the atmosphere, he made a second pause, or completed a second day. And what, Henry, did God create on the third day ?

Henry. He said, “ Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree

yielding fruit after its kind." He covered the earth with grass, and herbs, and trees.

Olympas. But was there not before this a farther separation of the waters, Susan?

Susan. He separated on the first day light from darkness; on the second he separated the waters above and beneath the firmament; and on the third he again separated the waters from the land; then he clothed the earth with plants and trees.

Olympas. What did he call the dry land, when separated, and the waters when gathered together?

James. He called the dry land *earth*, and the gathered waters *seas*.

Olympas. What was created on the fourth day?

Susan. The sun, moon, and stars. These luminaries were placed in the firmament of the heaven.

Olympas. For what purpose were these so placed?

William. To divide the day from the night—for signs, for seasons, for days, and for years.

Olympas. Can any of you explain these *signs* and *seasons* for which so many luminaries were placed in the upper firmament, or in the heavens?

Edward. You told us, when going through Genesis the first time, that *signs* mean tokens; and certainly they are tokens of God's care and goodness, of his wisdom and power, as exercised for us. They also make seasons for labour and for worship; and then we count on time by the motion and position of these luminaries.

Olympas. What was created the fifth day?

Eliza. Fish and fowl.

Olympas. Whence were the fowls formed?

Mary. From the waters. Fish and fowl were formed from the same element.

Olympas. Were they only water fowls, or were all sorts of birds formed out of the water?

Mary. All sorts of fowls that fly in the open firmament of heaven.

Olympas. This, I presume, is the cause of that peculiar knowledge of the humid changes in the weather, for which all manner of winged fowls are so remarkable. Does any of you remember the remarks made about a year ago on the waters bringing forth abundantly?

Thomas Dilworth. You said that the waters were infinitely prolific of life—that so many as 30,000 animalcules were discovered in one drop. You also said that the fecundity of fish transcended any thing on the earth or in the air. A carp, you said, laid 20,000 eggs, and a codfish about 10,000,000. Thus the sea is-capable of sustaining many more individuals than the earth. God blessed the fish, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas.”

Olympas. And what remained for the sixth day?

Susan. On the sixth day he created all the inhabitants of the earth—beasts, cattle, reptiles—everything that liveth and moveth upon the earth; and, last of all, man and woman.

Olympas. Reuben Thom, can you name the different creative acts in order?

Reuben. I will try sir. 1st. The substance of the heavens and the earth. 2nd. Light. 3rd. The vast expanses, the atmosphere, and the ethereal regions. 4th. The vegetable kingdom. 5th. The luminaries of heaven. 6th. The fowl and the fish. 7th. The animal kingdom that belongs particularly to the earth.

Olympas. Let me propose this matter in another form: How many distinct commands did God give in all the details of creation? Can you inform us, John?

John. I find ten distinct imperatives. 1st. Let there be light. 2nd, Let there be a firmament. 3rd. Let the waters be gathered together. 4th. Let the dry land appear. 5th. Let the earth bring forth grass, &c. 6th. Let there be luminaries in the heavens. 7th. Let the waters bring forth abundantly. 8th. Let the earth bring forth living creatures. 9th. Let us make man. 10th. Let him have dominion.

Olympas. Observe especially the order of creation. It is as perfect as the creation itself. Order has respect to the nature and relations of things as regards cause, effect, mechanical force, time, place, circumstance. The creation of the materials is naturally first. Hence the substance of the universe was first made. Out of this mass light is first formed, because of the unsuitableness of darkness to a display of wisdom, power, and goodness; and because in light, associated with heat, as expressed in the Hebrew *AUR*, is the vital principle of animated nature. After light, the ethereal, as essential to the separation of the various creations, as well as to life; probably itself the effect of the electric principle associated with light. Then the separation of land and water, as prerequisite to vegetable existence; then the clothing of the new formed earth with vegetable apparel; next the sun, moon, and stars to nourish those plants, and shrubs, and trees; for although they could be made without this influence, they could not live or flourish without it. Then the peopling

of the water and the air after the vegetable kingdom produced them subsistence. Finally, the earth-borns, when all things were ready for their nourishment and defence. And last of all, man, for whom, as the ultimate end, all mundane things exist.

John. How could light and darkness alternate so as to produce night and day three days before the sun, moon, and stars were created?

Olympas. Have you never observed the Aurora Borealis, sometimes called the Northern Lights, irradiate our portion of the earth almost with the brightness of day? Now this is demonstrated to be electric light, or, if you please, primitive light; and we have only to conceive of an increase of said light and of the rotatory motion of the earth on its axis, antecedent to the creation of the celestial luminaries. Terrestrial light, or the light of electricity, was necessarily prior to solar light, as an agent to form the expanse or firmament; the medium through which the "bright effulgence" of solar light reaches our eyes. Into this light the earth merged as it now merges into solar light, because of its diurnal motion. But, Edward, are we to suppose that the process of creation can be fully comprehended by man?

Edward. God's ways are often inscrutable, and he is said to dwell in light, to which no man can approach.

Olympas. We do not, then, seek to explain the process; but we intend to show that it is as congruous to our reason as any thing we can imagine; or, in other words, that it cannot be rationally objected to: so far from it, that the more the

order of creation is considered, the more philosophy—the more wisdom will be discovered in it. The creation is a grand original. It had no model. It was no imitation or resemblance of antecedent existences. The archetype of the whole and of each part lay eternally in the deep recesses of the Supreme Intelligence. But we must interrogate you more particularly on the formation and primitive state of man. This, however, we must reserve for the evening lesson

CONVERSATION II.

AFTER reading on Monday evening the first, second, and third chapters of Genesis, Olympas resumed his interrogations on the creation of man.

Olympas. Tell me, James, of what materials did God make man?

James. We are not told in the first chapter of what he was made. It reads, "God created man in his own image;" but it does not say of what.

Olympas. But we have a second narrative of the creation of man in the second chapter. What do you learn from it, Susan?

Susan. "God *formed** man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;" and thus he "became a living soul." Father, how did God "breathe into his nostrils?"

Olympas. He caused the air, which is the breath of *lives*—of all *animal lives*, to enter his lungs, and thus to put them in motion; and so man began to live: but he also inspired him with a *spirit*—as Elihu says, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding;" and thus "he teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven." We are not, indeed, told of

* The words *created* and *formed* are as different in the original Hebrew as they are in the Greek and English. God created man, he formed him out of the dust, and breathed into him the breath of life; and thus man became a living soul.

the manner of the communication of the spirit, because we could not understand it; for man cannot understand any thing about the nature of spirit. We only know that God has given us a spirit as well as a body.

Olympas. Can any of the senior class mention any passage of scripture that distinctly states the two-fold origin of man—as springing from Heaven and from Earth?

Thomas Dilworth. Solomon, when speaking of death, seems to refer to this double origin of man. His words are, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God that gave it.” Eccles. xii. 7.

Olympas. But does not the same Solomon elsewhere say that the beasts and their souls, and man and his soul, alike return to the earth? His words are, “All go unto one place; all are of dust, and all turn to dust again.” And the *all* in this connexion relates to man and beast,

T. Dilworth. But he only there speaks of all that is visible: for concerning the invisible spirit of both, he immediately adds, “Who [discerneth or] knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward,” ascends to God; “and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth.” Man’s spirit, then, ascends to God, and the beast’s spirit or animal soul goes with it to the dust.

Olympas. Reuben, can you name any portion of the New Testament scripture that speaks of the compound nature of man?

Reuben. Paul somewhere speaks of the body, soul, and spirit of man; but I know not where.

Olympas. You allude to his praying that God would sanctify the Thessalonians—body, soul, and

spirit, I presume. It is evident, then, that man has a spirit that at death goeth not downward as the spirit of the beast. But we must ask the junior class some more questions. Henry, when God made man, what did he give him?

Henry. Dominion.

Olympas. Dominion over what?

Henry. Over all cattle, fowl, and fish—over the earth and every thing upon it.

Olympas. And where did he put him?

Henry. In a garden he planted for him eastward in Eden.

Olympas. What kind of fruits and trees grew in this garden, Susan?

Susan. “Every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food.”

Olympas. The senses were all consulted in this garden. The word *Eden* and the word *Paradise*, both mean *delight, pleasure*. It was *eastward* in reference to the land of Canaan, or to the place where Moses wrote the law. But let me ask, What were the most celebrated trees in this garden?

James. The Tree of Life, and the Tree of Death.

Olympas. I have sometimes called one of these the Tree of Death in contrast with the other; but I enquire for the name which God gave it?

James. “The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

Olympas. Where did these trees stand?

Henry. The Tree of Life grew in the midst of the garden; but I do not know where the Tree of Knowledge grew.

Olympas. It would seem as though it were not

far from the Tree of Life. It is, however, of little consequence as to its position in the garden. What was Adam to do in this garden?

Susan. He was to dress it and keep it in order.

Olympas. But we have gone too fast. I must return and ask the second class some questions. Have we not, William, a sort of double narrative of the creation of all things?

William. We have a history of what God done, and a history of what the Lord God done.

Olympas. I do not understand you, William. Explain yourself.

William. The history of what God done ends with the third verse of the second chapter. And the history of what the Lord God done begins with the fourth verse of the second, and ends with man's expulsion from Eden and the third chapter of Genesis.

Olympas. Why do you make this difference between God and the Lord God?

William. On counting the first section, I find the word *God* by itself thirty-four times, and the Lord God never: the Spirit of God once. But in the second section, which ends with the third chapter, I find *Lord God* twenty times, and *God* not once.

Olympas. Have you all made the same observation?

Mary. I find the word *God* by itself three times in the third chapter.

Edward. But Moses never uses it. The serpent uses it three times. He never says *Lord God*, but only *God*. William and I have made the count twice, and find it just as he says. The first account ascribes it all to God, whom Moses

names thirty-four times, and his spirit once; while in the second he ascribes all to the Lord God, and names him twenty times.

Olympas. Have you extended your observations beyond the third chapter on this point?

Edward. The fourth chapter contains a different narrative; and Moses used the name of the *Lord* alone nine times. Thus the first section of the history ascribes every thing to God—the second every thing to the Lord God, while the third acknowledges only the Lord. Afterwards these titles appear to be used indiscriminately.*

Olympas. Names always represent persons, actions, things, or relations. Different names applied to God represent the various relations in which he stands to himself, and to the universe of which he is the author. But, Eliza, will you tell us all you know about the origin of woman?

* *Lord* and *God* are both Saxon words. The former denotes a *dispenser of bread*; the latter denotes *good*. *Elohim* is the original for *God*, and *Jehovah* for *Lord*, which for the first time, is found in the fourth verse of the second chapter.

Our English word *Lord*, while it uniformly represents the Hebrew *Jehovah*, does not give the particular meaning of it, but simply denotes the being who is *Jehovah*. The reason of the difference in the style of these three sections seems to be that in the first God appears as Creator simply; in the second, as provider, dispenser, and governor as well as God; and is therefore always called the *Lord God*. In the third section he appears more in the character of *Lord*, and generally throughout the book of Genesis. But after these titles are thus clearly introduced and defined in the first three sections, they are frequently used without any apparent regard to their particular meaning. We have, indeed, a very clear representation of God, the Lord, and the Spirit of God, as co-operating in the great work of creation.

Eliza. Woman's creation is found not in the first, but in the second section of the history ; after Eden was planted and all things arranged for her comfort, the Lord God caused a deep or death-like sleep to fall on Adam. Meanwhile he extracted a rib from his side, healed up the wound and out of that rib made a woman, a help meet, or companion for Adam. Adam on recovering his senses, and on receiving this present from the Lord God, exclaimed, " Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh ; thou shalt be called woman, and for thee henceforth shall a man forsake father and mother, sister and brother, and to thee shall he adhere as his own flesh."

Olympas. And what now was to be the future destiny of this happy pair ?

Eliza. They were to live in that delightful garden and partake of all its pleasures—to eat of the Tree of Life, and be for ever young, beautiful, and happy, while they obeyed one single precept.

Olympas. What, Reuben, do you call that precept—a positive or a moral precept ?

Reuben. A positive precept—a guarantee of liberty and life, requiring only abstinence from one tree.

Olympas. Why was it *positive* and not *moral*, think you ?

Reuben. Positive precepts are explicit demands from a sovereign in demonstration of his own rights, and of the attachment and allegiance of his subjects. Moral precepts have respect to our fellows, and regulate our duties to them.

Olympas. To test obedience, and to secure privileges, positive precepts are, then, more wise and safe than moral precepts ; inasmuch as they

simply assert the rights of the sovereign—furnish one argument only—appeal to but one motive—and make the tenure or condition of enjoyment to depend upon a single, clear, unequivocal action of the subject: and in this case the charter of privileges was so rich and extensive, the restriction so small, the temptation so trivial, that more could not be given nor less required on any principle at all adapted to prove the loyalty and devotion of man to his Creator and Father. What, then, was the result, Mary?

Mary. They were subdued by the serpent, and disobeyed God.

Olympas. To what passion, feeling, or desire in them did this serpent address himself?

Mary. To their desire of knowledge. “You shall be as gods, knowing both good and evil!”

Olympas. And what, Mary, have you learned of the author of this temptation?

Mary. The serpent was the most ingenious and companionable of all the creatures that ministered to man. The adversary, who was “a liar and a murderer from the beginning,” entered into this animal, as he entered into Judas and into many other persons and animals, and made it the instrument of his machinations, and thus deceived our Mother, who, believing a lie rather than the truth of God, obeyed her enemy, and involved her husband with her in the catastrophe.

Olympas. Whence did you learn this?

Mary. Moses describes the Serpent as the most intellectual or subtle of all brutal creations; and had it not been accustomed to speak to man in some way before the hour of temptation, Eve would have been startled and would not have

listened to it. But that it was the Old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, that operated by it on the ear and imagination of Eve, we cannot doubt, because of the allusions to it in the New Testament; indeed he is called "*the Tempter*," because of his constant assaults upon mankind, and is denominated "a liar and a murderer from the beginning."

Olympas. Enough now on this subject. They both fell and were expelled from the garden; but not until they were judged and condemned to death. Tell me, Reuben, have we any documentary proof of how long they had lived in Eden?

Reuben. I could not learn from the Bible; but there is an ancient and universal tradition, as I have read somewhere, that they continued only forty days in the garden of delights. The Asiatics say that the reason why the number *forty*, like the number *seven*, has been consecrated, is because of its allusion to this fact. The *seventh* day celebrates the rest of the creation week, and the many mysterious *forties* in both Testaments celebrate or commemorate man's continuance in bliss.

Olympas. I will ask the junior class in rotation, the forties. Each of you mention some event that required forty days.

Susan. It rained forty days and nights in the beginning of the flood of Noah.

James. Moses was forty days in the Mount with God in receiving the Law.

Henry. He was a second time forty days in getting a second edition of the Law.

Olympas. We shall extend it to the second class:—

William. They were forty days in spying out the promised land.

Mary. The Prophet Elijah fasted forty days.

Edward. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights.

Eliza. And he was tempted forty days and nights.

Olympas. We must advance into the senior class :—

Thomas Dilworth. Our Saviour abode on earth forty days and nights after his resurrection from the dead.

Reuben Thom. Ezekiel was to lay on his side forty days to bear the iniquity of Judah. “I have,” says the Lord, “appointed thee a year for a day.”

Olympas. Francis Cush, can you recall any other remarkable incident of forty day's continuance ?

Francis. Forty days were spent in embalming that Joseph who had been a slave, but who died governor of Egypt.

Olympas. There is yet remaining another forty days not mentioned. Rufus, can you think of it ?

Rufus. Yes, master. Jonah the preacher said, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.” But it was not, because they repented during forty days.

Olympas. But it is not only in respect of days, but of years also, that this number is celebrated. Israel eat manna forty years, wandered in the wilderness forty years, bore their iniquities forty years, were sustained by miracle forty years, &c. Besides this, we have this numeral distinguished in its application to other subjects. Can you recollect any of these subject, Sarah Black ?

Sarah. The Jews were not allowed to inflict more than forty stripes, save one, on those whom they punished.

Olympas. But of these *forties* only a part, like the numbers *three* and *seven*, are of mysterious or allusive import. Such as Moses' forty days in the Mount twice repeated, Elijah's fast of forty days, Christ's fast and temptation of forty days and nights in which he abode on earth, the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness.

The numbers *three* and *seven*, as well as *forty*, are sacred numbers, and of frequent occurrence. In reference to *days*, they are both more frequent than forty; but in their mysterious and allusive character, they seem to be equally distinguished. There is, then, reason to think that some most interesting and important *forty*, as well as *three* and *seven*, gave rise to the frequent and mysterious use of that number; and as a very old tradition has pervaded Asia that Adam only continued forty days in Paradise, it is probable that it may have allusion to that; if not, there is no event known to man to which it does relate.

We must leave the geographical allusions and facts in these chapters to another time. But a few general questions which I shall propose to you all for volunteer answer, must close our present lessons. Is there anything peculiar in the creation of man, from that of other animals?

Edward. Yes, God breathed into his nostrils that which made him a *living soul*—not a mere animal; for they are never said to become living souls. A breath of life they have; but a breath of *lives*, as you say it is in Hebrew, they have not received, which makes them living souls.

Olympas. Can any of you explain what was the power of the Tree of Life?

Thomas Dilworth. It did not give, but preserve life. Without it, Adam in Paradise must have grown old and died. It therefore had the power of always renewing his age, or making him young again as respected his worn or wasted energies—just as ordinary fruit has the power of making us strong after exhaustion.

Olympas. And why was the Tree of Death called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil?

William. Because it gave the experience of evil and of good, and introduced man into a mixed state of good and evil here, to be terminated by death.

Olympas. In what sense did Adam die, in the day of his transgression?

Reuben. He was sentenced or condemned to die; and in law was dead, just as you once told us the antediluvians became *spirits in prison*, whenever the sentence of limitation to one hundred and twenty years respite was pronounced upon them. To “become mortal” and to die, are said to be two modes of the same expression among Jews.

Olympas. How many things appear to have been taught Adam before his fall?

Edward. The art of speaking, of naming things, what to eat for health and comfort, and how to employ his faculties.

Olympas. We shall resume the subject in the morning, and now let us sing our evening hymn.

CONVERSATION III.

THE fourth chapter of Genesis being read, Olympas called upon the junior class for the facts in the lesson for the morning. "Tell me," says he, "Susan, how many sons of Adam and Eve are named in this chapter?"

Susan. There are three—Cain, Abel, and Seth.

Olympas. We shall leave out Seth for the present, and attend to the history of Cain and Abel? What were the employments of Cain and Abel?

James. Cain was a farmer, and Abel a shepherd.

Olympas. And what, Henry, was the employment of Adam their father?

Henry. He was a gardener.

Olympas. And so the three most ancient callings in the world were gardening, farming, and keeping sheep. Certainly, then, they were simple, innocent, and pleasing employments. But what need was there for pursuing any calling? Was not Adam very rich? How rich was Adam, Susan?

Susan. He had dominion over all the earth, and all the beasts and cattle and fowl. He was as rich as the whole world.

Olympas. And why did he work? Do people, Edward, that are now called very rich, labour at any calling?

Edward. Adam was commanded to dress and keep the garden of Eden, and he most likely commanded his sons to select some business and pursue it.

Olympas. True, he was commanded to dress and preserve the garden as God gave it to him. The reason of this is, there is no happiness in being idle. Indeed, there is no enjoyment but in employment. If we do not look, our eyes afford no pleasure; if we do not listen, our ears cannot charm us; unless we use that wonderfully constructed instrument the hand, we can neither admire nor enjoy it. Goodness, then, ordained that man should work. Every wise and good father will teach his sons and daughters to employ themselves in business, that they may enjoy themselves—that they may be useful and happy. For this reason it is that I am at so much pains to teach my sons agriculture and horticulture; and that your mother employs her daughters in domestic affairs. If king Adam, the richest sovereign that ever lived, made his children labour, who were joint heirs of all the goods and chattles, of all the real and personal property on the terraqueous globe, can it ever be a disgrace to any other king's son to be industrious? What say you, William?

William. I should rather think it a disgrace to be idle. Indeed all the idle boys at our school are bad boys; and Mr. Turner, our teacher, says all the young men in this parish who have no trades, and whose parents think it a disgrace for them to use their hands, are vicious and likely to be an injury to society.

Olympas. What think you of Eve, William? Was she a good woman?

William. If to acknowledge the Lord in every thing, and to teach religion to one's children, be the marks of a good woman, I think Eve was a

good woman; for she acknowledged the Lord when Cain was born, and taught her sons to worship God; and that is all we know of her.

Olympas. How do you know that she so instructed her sons, Eliza?

Eliza. So soon as Cain and Abel are next heard of, they were employed in worshipping God by presenting sacrificial offerings. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord, and Abel also brought some of the best lambs in his flock. Now unless their parents so taught them, I cannot see how they would set about making such religious presents to the Lord.

Olympas. Can any of you tell why these offerings were presented to the Lord? Did he need them? Did he ask them? Or were they offered of their own accord?

Reuben. The Lord can need nothing, because his is the heavens and the earth; and he imparts to all whatever they possess and enjoy. But he must have either asked or commanded these offerings; else I know not how they could have thought of presenting either bread or flesh to the Lord who created them for man's use. Please, uncle, explain this subject to us?

Olympas. There is, indeed, no record of the *institution* of these offerings to the Lord; but that they were divinely ordained cannot be doubted—not only from the impossibility of demonstrating how a rational being could conclude by any fair process of reasoning that such things could be pleasing to God who first gave them, more especially in the immediate family of Adam; but also and still more evidently from the fact, that God accepted Abel's and rejected Cain's offering. Now

where there is no law there is no transgression, and consequently no obedience. There was, then, a law of offerings which Cain transgressed and Abel obeyed. Hence the one was accepted and the other rejected by the Lord.

Olympas. Can you not, Reuben, find in Paul's writings some comment upon the offerings of Cain and Abel?

Reuben Paul to the Hebrews says, "By *faith* Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."

Olympas. This, then, is demonstration that there was not only a command for sacrifice, but also some testimony of promise concerning it: for as there can be no *obedience* without law, there can be no *faith* without testimony. In the original there is no word for *excellent*: it is simply "*more sacrifice.*" And the Hebrew may be translated in conformity to this, Gen. iv. 4. "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord: Abel also brought it, and of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." That Paul so understood it, is farther evident from these words: "God testified of Abel's *gifts.*" "More sacrifice," then indicates more gifts. But it was not only because of the number of gifts, but of the principle from which he offered, that he was approbated. Faith distinguished the sacrifice of Abel. Therefore there was some promise, some testimony of God regarded in the offering of Abel, not seen nor regarded in that of Cain. We cannot doubt what the promise was. It was the hope of Adam and of Eve concerning the seed of her's that was ordained to break the serpent's head. Abel's lamb, then, was Christ in type. That rock was

Christ said Paul, when speaking of Horeb. That lamb of Abel was, in the same style, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Have we any account of slain beasts before the days of Cain and Abel, Thomas?

Thomas Dilworth. That they were slain by God's own appointment before Cain was born, we are not told in so many words; and yet, as you say concerning sacrifice, we are sure they were killed by divine authority; for God clothed Adam and Eve with their skins.

Olympas. Might not those animals whose skins our first parents wore have been killed for food, or have died a natural death?

Thomas Dilworth. Man was not allowed to kill and eat till after the flood; and we cannot conceive why animals should already have died; or if they had, we cannot imagine that God would have taken the skins of diseased animals to cover man, respited as he then was, from the grave. There is but one conclusion admissible, viz.—that God taught sacrifice to Adam and Eve immediately after the Fall, and covered them with the skins of the first victims of death. The blood of atonement was the first blood that fell upon this earth; and before a sinner died a sin offering was made.

Olympas. That is a glorious fact. Satan thought to kill and destroy the whole human race; but before any one died even a natural death a sacrificial lamb was slain, and expiation taught from the day that God tore off the flimsy tattered fig-leaf garments of our parents and covered them with the spoils of the first death which the sun saw, the winds breathed, or nature heard. Mark

the difference between the two suits—that prepared by Adam and that put on by God! How much more permanent and useful the skins of sacrificial victims compared with fig-leaves! Do you recollect, Reuben, when reading the fifth chapter of Romans, what was the definition of the word *atonement*?

Reuben. I think you said it meant a *covering*, inasmuch as the Hebrew word *copher* is rather anglicized than translated by *coffer* or *covering*. The verb *to cover* is frequently translated to atone, to propitiate; because there must be a hiding or *covering* of faults—an expiation—before there can be a reconciliation or a remission.

Olympas. You are right in your recollections. Pray tell me, James, did God accept the offering of Cain?

James. No: he accepted that of Abel, but not that of Cain.

Olympas. Tell me, Thomas, how was this known?

Thomas. By some sensible demonstration. I think when going through Genesis before, you said it was probably consumed by fire from heaven, as was the sacrifice at Aaron's consecration—those offered by Gideon, Solomon, and Elijah on Mount Carmel, &c.

Olympas. We could not explain the wrath of Cain on any other principle, than that there was a manifest acceptance of Abel's offering and a rejection of his. Filled with jealousy and envy, his countenance fell; being the *first born*, and consequently expecting more, he received less Lord his junior brother. What, Mary, did the than say to him?

Mary. He promised him acceptance on doing well, and that he would still have the rights of the first-born. And if he failed of these rights, sin was the cause—the only thing in his way.

Olympas. How did this controversy end, Susan?

Susan. Cain killed his brother when they were in the field. But the Lord called him to an account for it, and pronounced a curse upon the very ground that had received the blood of the good Abel.

Olympas. He cursed Cain also; but on his suing for mercy God gave him a sign or pledge that he should not be killed by the hand of violence; for so means the *mark* here spoken of. It is a sign, *token*, or pledge, and not a particular mark on his person. Observe that the first death grew out of religious pride and jealousy. Cain was a persecutor—Abel was a martyr. He died in faith. The first death of an animal was a sin-offering—a covering from guilt. The first man that suffered death was a martyr to the faith in sin-offering; and the first Deist was a murderer. Do you recollect, Reuben, any thing that John says on this subject?

Reuben. He asks why did Cain kill Abel? and responds, “Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.”

Olympas. Wicked men sometimes, like Cain, thank God for health, peace, and competence; but they have not that faith in sacrifice which “works by love and purifies the heart.”

Reuben. Would you please inform us why you call Abel’s offering a *sacrifice*?

Olympas. Paul says by faith he offered more

sacrifice than Cain." I shall interrogate you at our next reading on *faith*; and especially on the faith of Abel. Meanwhile, what came of Cain after this time?

Reuben. He went into the land of Nod, married a wife, founded a city, and named it for his son.

Olympas. Where did he find his wife?

Reuben. You told us that independent of Cain and Abel, at the time of the birth of Seth, allowing the other children of Adam to have been married at the age of twenty, and to have only doubled every twenty-five years, there would have been when Seth was born, and at the time of Cain's departure to Nod, (or the place of the *vagabond*, as the word indicates,) at least *thirty-three thousand souls*. Amongst these Cain certainly might have found a wife.

Olympas. And what, Thomas Dilworth, were the fortunes of Cain's family?

Thomas. They appear to have been an enterprising people. Cain founded a city, and gave birth to a numerous family. Indeed the most useful inventions and social improvements were introduced by Cain's descendants.

Olympas. Tell me, Susan, who was it invented tents for graziers and the keeping of travelling herds?

Susan. Jabel, the son of Lamech. He was "the father of all that dwell in tents and keep cattle."

Olympas. And who Edward, invented harps and organs?

Edward. Jubal, the brother of Jabel. He was a lover of music; and skilled in playing on instruments, one would think, when he invented

both *stringed* instruments and wind instruments.

Olympas. Were any other of Cain's posterity famous for useful arts, Elizabeth?

Elizabeth. Yes: Tu-bal-cain was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron."

Olympas. Hence we may learn that men of the world are more apt to be enterprizing men in all temporal affairs than the sons of God. They are more devoted to such improvements as pertain to this life, because it is to them the only life of which they have any idea, and for which they have any relish. You must not, therefore conclude when you hear persons praised for their enterprize and ingenuity, that such are at all either rational or exemplary characters, unless their enterprize be for the promotion of the spiritual and eternal happiness of men. Cain and his sons down to the first polygamist Lamech, the father of these great inventors, sought stimulus to their minds from worldly pursuits, because they had it not in religion. The other branch of the Adamic family was renowned for piety, and this for carnality and worldly prudence.

CONVERSATION IV.

HAVING read a second time the fourth chapter of Genesis, Olympas proceeded to ask general questions on some points slightly touched in past conversations.

Olympas. I promised, this morning, to interrogate some of the elder members of my household on faith at this lesson. I hoped you have all been thinking of it to day. Tell me, Thomas, the sum of our winter lesson on faith.

Thomas. You have frequently taught us to discriminate between the definition of a *word* and the description of a *thing*. The word *faith* means *belief of testimony*, or the persuasion that a report is true. It therefore implies four things: One that reports—the hearing of the report—the understanding of the report—and the assenting to it as true. If it be assented to, the report is believed: if it be not assented to, it is either doubted or disbelieved; for you say that there are but three states of mind concerning any report.

Olympas. True: every report appears to us true, untrue, or doubtful. When it appears true, it is believed; when it appears untrue, it is disbelieved; when it appears neither true nor untrue, it is doubted. You say faith implies four things: A reporter, or a witness—hearing—understanding—and assurance. Can you refer to the Scripture, Edward, that so represents the subject?

Edward. Paul to the Romans says, “ Faith

comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." But how do you make four things out of this brief account of the matter? The "word of God" is the testimony; for if he did not speak we could not hear. That hearing comes by speaking is as certain as that faith comes by hearing. If no one speaks, nothing can be heard, if nothing be heard, nothing can be understood; if nothing be understood, nothing can be believed. God speaks—the ear hears—the soul perceives—the heart believes. So that a *voice*, an *ear*, an *understanding*, and a *heart*, are all essential to the faith that saves the soul.

Olympas. But is there not something peculiar to saving faith, contradistinguishing it from every other faith? Tell me, Thomas, what that is?

Thomas. I remember only this difference, that God must always either speak the saving truth himself, or sanction those who speak it.

Olympas. You mean, then, that saving faith is the belief of saving truth: for it is not the believing, but the thing believed, that saves the soul, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

Thomas. Yes, sir; the power of believing is as much in the belief or things believed, as the power of seeing is in the sight, or of eating in the food. It is neither eating nor drinking that sustains life, but the things eaten and drank. So it is not believing, but the thing or truth believed that saves the soul.

Olympas. Saving faith is therefore the belief of saving truth. Now as God alone can speak, propound, or inspire saving truth, the faith that saves the soul has this peculiarity—that the truth believed is divine or inspired; and, therefore, no

man can say that Jesus is Lord but by a divine testifier as well as a divine testimony. Any other peculiarity in the faith of the gospel, Edward?

Edward. This faith having a *person* rather than a *thing* for its final object, has always in it the idea we call confidence. Hence you say that we both believe Christ and believe *in* him, because he is both the testifier and the testimony.

Olympas. Not only the testifier and the testimony, but because the testifier Jesus is so placed before us in the testimony as to constrain our confidence in him and affection for him. Thus faith in Christ works by love. Demons believe Christ, but cannot believe in him. Why is it, William, that demons can believe Christ and not believe in him?

William. Because, I presume, Christ offers them nothing in himself. He makes them no proposition—no offer. He shows them no favour; therefore no promise, no trust, no hope, and no love.

Olympas. Very just, William. No promise, no trust, no hope, no love. If, then, demons believe, they must hate and tremble, because their evil nature and evil deeds call for vengeance; and the guilty always hates the avenger. Are there not some wicked men, think you, who, like the demons, believe and tremble?

William. If there were none such, I know not why James should have brought up their case.

Olympas. Tell me, Thomas, in the fewest words, the difference between the faith of a reprobate and a Christian.

Thomas. The latter believe *in* Christ—the former only believes him. The Christian trusts in Christ, because he appropriates all his testi-

mony. The reprobate does not trust in him because he cannot appropriate his promises.

Olympas. There are those who reject a part of the testimony of Christ, and receive a part of it. But is not this an error of the understanding, rather than of the heart? or, to express myself more familiarly, are there not persons who only believe a part of the testimony, because of their ignorance or prejudice, who are nevertheless well disposed to Christ, and not under the influence of a reigning depravity?

Thomas. I cannot answer this question.

Olympas. Can any of you?—All are silent. Well, mother, we must call upon you.

Mrs. Harriet Olympas. The question I could not answer but from my own experience. I remember for a time I did believe Christ without trusting in him, without appropriating any of his promises. I was not happy. But so soon as I discovered certain promises which suited my case, I not only believed Christ, but believed in him. I therefore conclude that all are not reprobates who do not trust in Christ. Some there doubtless may be. But many, like myself, badly educated, believe only a part of the testimony, and either understand not or observe not other parts of it. I am now assured that all who know the gospel will trust in Jesus, not only as the Messiah, but as their own Saviour and Redeemer.

Olympas. I believe my question was too abstract, but it is now well answered. We shall proceed to more simple and intelligible matters. How many kinds of faith do the Scriptures speak of, William?

William. They say there is but *one faith*.

Olympas. But that may be "*the truth*" simply: for instance, when we are commanded to "contend for the faith formerly delivered to the saints," it denotes truth handed down through them.

William. I read of "*faith unfeigned*," and I presume that one epithet always implies another: there must, therefore, be two kinds of faith—viz. a *feigned* and an *unfeigned* faith.

Olympas. These terms do not represent two sorts of faith, but two sorts of professions of it. There are the sincere believer and the pretender.

Edward. There are dead a faith and a living faith.

Olympas. But a dead faith, like a dead man, represents not a distinct thing, but the same thing in another state. As the same man may be living or dead, so the same faith may be dead or alive.

Thomas. I understood you to say that there were a true faith and false faith.

Olympas. I did. But true faith is the belief of truth; and a false faith is the belief of falsehood. Remember that faith is faith, and neither more nor less. Many "believe a lie;" still they have faith. They are deceived in the object; but they are persuaded of its truth. So far as believing is concerned, like seeing or hearing, the act or operation is uniformly the same; but the object may be very different. He that believes the truth has true faith, and he that believes a falsehood has false faith. Do you remember, Reuben, the remarks of Evangelicus, the preacher, who staid with us all night, last Christmas, on the power of faith?

Reuben. I think he represented the power of faith to be in the *object* rather than in the *subject*.

He showed us that we may have weak faith or strong faith ; but the soul-subduing, salutary, and all-conquering power of faith was in the thing believed rather than in the believer. It was what Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, &c. believed that imparted to them the power by which they obtained for themselves an eternal fame.

Olympas. This brings us back to the place of beginning. This examination of faith originated in the account given of Abel's acceptance at the altar, and Paul's comment upon it. It was by faith that Abel obtained acceptance and a good report, God testifying of his gifts. We simply argued from the fact of Abel's faith, that revelations and promises were more full and clear than we now suppose were enjoyed by the antediluvians.

Reuben. How could Adam say to Eve on the day of her creation, "And for thee henceforth shall a man forsake father and mother, brother and sister, and to thee shall he adhere as his own flesh," before the relations of father, mother, brother and sister existed? How did he know any thing about fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters?

Olympas. I shall put this question round your class. Can any of you explain this mystery?

Thomas Dilworth. It does not so read in my Bible. Adam does not mention brother or sister in the whole affair, nor does he say any thing about adhering to Eve as his own flesh.

Olympas. True, Reuben has not put the question as it is in the book ; still the difficulty is the same : for as yet there was nothing revealed about father, mother, wife, or child. Adam seems to have been wiser than his years or his experience.

If we will allow our Lord to interpret this passage we shall find an easy solution of this apparent difficulty. The words are not Adam's: they are God's own institution of marriage in his own language. It is not altogether evident that Adam even uttered them; but whether or not, it was God who spoke through him. Do you remember, William, the passage in which the Saviour comments on this transaction.

William. In Matthew's Testimony, nineteenth chapter, fourth and fifth verses, it is thus explained: "Have you not read that he that made them at the beginning made them a male and a female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh: therefore they are no more two, but one flesh."

Olympas. The matter is decided. Jesus says that these words are the Creator's and not Adam's. "What, therefore," adds Jesus, "God has joined together let not man put asunder." This addition in Matt. xix. 6, makes these words not only God's but it presents them in the form of an institution. It is worthy of note while we are called back to this subject, that God has positively condemned both celibacy and polygamy in this transaction, with all that accompanies them. Can you tell, Reuben, how celibacy is condemned?

Reuben. I know not, unless it be in the reason that God gave for the formation of a woman. He said, "It is *not good* for man to be alone."

Olympas. And certainly in so saying he intimated very clearly that it is *bad to be alone*: for what is not good must of necessity be bad. Every son of Adam should then find for himself the lost

rib in the person of some suitable daughter of Eve. And how, think you, Edward, is polygamy prohibited in this affair?

Edward. It must be tacitly : for nothing is intimated concerning marriage with one or more persons. Is it not inferred to be unreasonable and evil from the fact, that God made it impossible for Adam to have but one wife? Wherefore did he create but one woman, if he intended a plurality of wives?

Olympas. True: with him, as Malachi has observed, was at that time the residue of the Spirit. “And wherefore did he only make one?” The answer is as divine as the question: for the Prophet adds, “That he might seek a godly seed.” Polygamy has corrupted the offspring of man, while celibacy prevented it. They are both contrary to the revealed will of God *at the beginning*. Moses, indeed, tolerated divorces because he feared the cruelty of wicked husbands — “because of the hardness of your hearts” he permitted a bill of divorce : but from the beginning it was not so. Is there any Christian law on this subject, Thomas?

Thomas. Paul, you told us, alluded to this when he said, “Let every man have his own wife,” (not wives,) “and every woman her own husband.”

Olympas. This command prohibits these two great errors from the ancient order of things—celibacy and polygamy. They are alike contrary to reason, nature, and providence.

Thomas. How are they contrary to providence?

Olympas. Because God has most remarkably preserved such an equality between the sexes in point of numbers, as to evince his opposition both

celibacy and polygamy—as to make it possible for every man to have his own wife, and for every woman to have her own husband, and robbery to have more than one.

Mrs. Olympas. Do you not thus condemn Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, Paul, and many others?

Olympas. Abraham did wrong in conforming to a wicked custom, and brought upon himself severe afflictions, as did Jacob, David, and Solomon. What wise or good man could possibly envy their lot? There appears a million of times more temporal, more rational, more refined bliss in one equally yoked and loving and beloved wedded pair, than any of these renowned characters enjoyed. Domestic bliss was not often a guest with them. Paul, indeed, was justified for his celibacy, because of the existing distress and the great work upon his shoulders. And in some rare instances, of a similar character, an individual may be allowed to prefer celibacy to a gift from the Lord. Still, I opine, these occasions in our day are rare indeed; and therefore it is not good for Adam to be without Eve.

Mrs. Olympas. The Pope, however, says it is better for himself and his ecclesiastics to be alone than to have every one his own wife.

Olympas. Indeed, the Pope, willing to make his power known, seems often to delight in opposing God and Christ, and the Holy Apostles and Prophets; and hence when God says, “It is not good for man to be alone,” or without a wife, the Pope says, “It is good for man to be alone, because he can serve the Lord better alone than with a wife.” And, strange to tell, this is the

man that pretends to be the successor, not of Paul, who made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven's sake, but of "*Peter the Vicar of Christ*," who had a wife and family!! But how far are we got off from the fourth chapter of Genesis! Tell me, Susan, where did our last lesson end?

Susan. At Lamech, the son of Methusael, who took to him two wives.

Olympas. And what were their names?

Susan. Adah and Zillah.

Olympas. It is a singular fact that only five names of women that lived in the first two thousand years of the world have reached our time. Can any of you tell the names of these five women?

Eliza. They are Eve, Adah, Zillah, Naamah, and Sarah the wife of Abraham.

Olympas. Strange oblivion of female excellence and renown! Of these five, only two are favourably known to us. Other two of them were the wives of the first polygamist. It is worthy of note that polygamy and war commenced in the Cain branch of Adam's family.

Olympas. How, Thomas, ought the twenty-third verse of this chapter to be pointed?

Thomas. You read it thus:—"Hear my voice, you wives of Lamech! Have I slain a man that I should be wounded, or a young man that I should be hurt? If the killing of Cain should be avenged seven-fold, surely he that kills Lamech would be punished with seventy-and-seven fold vengeance!"

Olympas. Such is the punctuation most accordant with the most rational scope of this dark passage. It supposes some fears for the life of

Lamech on the part of his wives. They had not very peaceful consciences, and were fearful of the life of their husband. Polygamy seems to have been a curse from its beginning.

CONVERSATION V.

THE fifth chapter of Genesis being read, on Wednesday morning all the household being present, Olympas continued his instructions in the following manner :—

Olympas. Here, in the compass of a few periods, we have the book or record of the generations or descendants of Adam for one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years—from the creation down to the birth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now although this appears to us rather a barren subject, being a mere record of births and deaths and the interval between them, when properly considered, it becomes a very useful and edifying section of sacred Scripture, and a fruitful source of many religious sentiments and emotions. Let us, therefore, examine it with care. Tell me, Susan, which branch of Adam's family is written in this chapter?

Susan. Abel's: for we had Cain's yesterday.

Olympas. Was not Abel killed by his brother; and having no account of his marriage or his offspring, how can we regard this chapter as containing an account of this branch of Adam's family?

Susan. Seth was born to fill Abel's place.

Olympas. Yes, I taught you to consider the name and reputation of the protomartyr as preserved in Seth's person and family, inasmuch as Eve said, "God has appointed me *another seed*

instead of Abel whom Cain slew." In these words our mother Eve shows her faith in the first promise, that "her seed should bruise the serpent's head." She looked for the promise through Abel, and not through the wicked Cain; and seeing him slain for his faith, she received *Seth* in the faith that God through him would fulfil all that she expected through the righteous Abel. Her confidence was not vain: for the only lineage of Messiah on earth, in fact or in form, is found in the line of Seth.

Olympas. What, Henry, did I tell you means the name of *Seth*?

Henry. "THE APPOINTED."

Olympas. The name itself, then, indicates what was in the mind and expectation of Eve. This was the person appointed to fill up the promise which she had expected through Abel. Repeat, William, the names of the sons of Adam and Eve in this line down to the flood, as given in this chapter.

William. Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah.

Olympas. What came of the other descendants of these families? For example, had Seth no son but Enos, and Enos no son but Cainan? &c.

William. It is not only presumable, but certain that they had. But as you told us, the Bible is formed on the plan of giving the history of only one family from Adam to Jesus of Nazareth; and only so much of every other family is given as is necessary to present this one fairly before us.

Olympas. Very true; Cain's family all perished in the deluge, as did all Seth's offspring save Noah and his family. We have, therefore, only

the ancestry of our Lord through ten generations in this chapter. How old, James, was Adam when Seth was born ?

James. One hundred and thirty years.

Olympas. How old, Susan, was Adam when he died ?

Susan. Nine hundred and thirty.

Olympas. Who of all the antediluvians attained the greatest age ?

James. Methuselah lived to be nine hundred and sixty-nine.

Olympas. Tell me, Reuben, in what year of the world did he die ?

Reuben. He died in the year 1656, just before the flood.

Olympas. He must then have lived a long time contemporary with Adam, and no doubt often conversed with the father of all mankind. Explain to us, Reuben, how long Methuselah may have conversed with Adam ?

Reuben. Seth was born in the year of Adam 130 ; Enos, in the year 235 ; Cainan, in the year 325 ; Mahalaleel, in the year 395 ; Jared, in the year 460 ; Enoch, in the year 632 ; and Methuselah, in the year 687 ; which sum taken from nine hundred and thirty, the whole age of Adam, leaves two hundred and forty-three years in which they lived and may have conversed together. This may again be shown by subtracting nine hundred and sixty-nine from 1656 ; that is, the whole life of Methuselah from the whole period before the flood, which leaves 687 for the nativity of Methuselah two hundred and forty-three years before the death of Adam.

Olympas. So then all the experience of Adam

was communicated to Noah and his three sons *by one person*. For if Noah was five hundred years old at the deluge, and Shem ninety-eight, as we are informed, then the entire history of all time reached Shem, Ham, and Japheth by one person; corroborated, indeed, by innumerable vouchers. For when we say one person, we do not mean one witness; but that one person only was necessary, because he that for two hundred and forty-three years talked with Adam, talked with Noah five hundred years; with Shem, ninety-eight; with Ham, one hundred; and with Japheth, at least one hundred and two years. But he conversed with many others of his own ancestors and descendants besides these, and they with one another; so that the true faith and true history of all time were most carefully and safely kept to the deluge by a few chosen spirits. Who, Susan, was the father of Methuselah?

Susan. Enoch, who was translated.

Olympas. What mean you by translation, James?

James. To be translated is to be carried from one world or place to another. Enoch did not die, but his body was carried up into heaven.

Olympas. Can you, Edward, name any allusion to this subject in the New Testament explanatory of it?

Edward. Paul says to the Hebrews, chap. xi., "By faith Enoch was translated that he might not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God."

Olympas. This translation of Enoch is a truly grand and important event, and must be well

understood by you all. He was taken up into heaven, body, soul, and spirit, without sickness or death, as you understand it, Edward?

Edward. I suppose he was *changed* some way before he entered heaven; inasmuch as Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—Enoch, then, must have been changed in a moment, as will be all that are alive at the coming of the Lord. "They shall be caught up into the clouds," as Enoch was translated to heaven without the sensation of death.

Olympas. The translation of Enoch is a whole volume in itself. It was a gospel and a revelation of a future and happy life to those who had honesty and capacity to consider it well. It must have been a soul-absorbing and thrilling question, *Whither went Enoch?* Do you think, Edward, there was any search made for him?

Edward. They certainly made search for him, as it is affirmed that "he was not found." Had they not looked for him, they could not have said this.

Olympas. Do you, Edward, remember a similar search for a Prophet that was lost?

Edward. It is said, I believe, that they searched three days for Elijah after God had taken him up in a whirlwind into heaven.

Olympas. True: and the spirit, or wind, from the Lord "suddenly caught away Philip" the Evangelist; but "*he was found* at Azotus." Enoch was not found, because God had translated him. But you have not told us, Edward, how the translation of Enoch demonstrated a future and a happy life.

Edward. The character that was translated imports future happiness: for if “walking with God” and being “perfect” are the ways of blessedness, surely one pre-eminent in these, snatched away from earth to heaven, fully indicates a state of blessedness consequent upon removal from these coasts of mortality.

Olympas. Be it granted, then I ask at what time did this event transpire—before or after the death of Seth, Abel’s substitute?

Edward. Before the death of Seth. Enoch was born in the year of Adam 622, and died in the year of the world 987, fifty-five years before Seth died; for all the days of Seth, born in the year 130, were nine hundred and twelve years.

Olympas. This is the point to which I have been leading your attention. The translation of Enoch happened so early as that all the sons of Adam in our Lord’s ancestry had the advantage of it. On the sacred page, so far as the written document goes, the first man that left this world was slain—the second died—the third was translated. Murder, death, and translation follow close in the succession of history, if not in actual fact—in these three good men, Abel, Adam, and Enoch?

Olympas. What, Reuben, was the profession or calling of Enoch?

Reuben. Enoch was a prophet and a saint. He “walked with God,” and it is said “he prophesied.” He was a preacher and a saint.

Olympas. Do we know any thing about the sermons of Enoch?

Reuben. Jude alludes to the book of Enoch; at least he says that Enoch, the seventh from Adam,

prophesied, saying, "Behold the Lord comes with his myriads of holy angels to pass sentence upon all and to convict all the ungodly among them of all their deeds of ungodliness which they have impiously committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Olympas. From this sermon or text of Enoch how many distinct subjects of revelation are intimated, Eliza?

Eliza. The coming of the Lord—the existence of myriads of holy angels—the providence and supervision of God—human responsibility—a general judgment—and the punishment of the wicked. If each of these may be regarded as a distinct topic, then there were some six or seven very fundamental matters revealed and taught ever since the fall of man.

Olympas. If to the altar, the priest, the sacrifice, the sabbath, we add that knowledge of the principles of general piety and morality which enabled Enoch to walk with God, and to be perfect in his generation; I say, if to these we add his teachings, much more light and knowledge of the being and perfections of God—of his creation, providence, and redemption—the principles of righteousness and piety—of future rewards and punishments, was communicated and possessed in the first ages of the world, than many now seem to imagine. Of all which the translation of Enoch was a seal and confirmation difficult fully to appreciate. Tell me, Thomas Dilworth, what think you would be the most likely train of reflections to which such an event would give rise?

Thomas. That man is predestined to live again; at least susceptible of a new life in some other

world than this. That the transition from this state to that is rapid and direct, and that the virtuous and morally excellent will, on quitting these confines of mortality, be admitted into the presence of the Lord; for it is implied that God took Enoch to himself.

Olympas. It is then presumable that Abel, and Enoch, and Adam, who died in faith, were all taken to the Lord?

Thomas. Being all the children of men and the sons of God, I know no reason nor Scripture that forbids the idea of their all going to one place.

Olympas. Paul says, "Absent from the body, and present with the Lord." But as Enoch was not absent from the body, could he be present with the Lord in the same sense as Abel?

Thomas. The ten thousand angels of whom Enoch preached were present with the Lord. But while in the presence of the Lord there is fulness of joy, there are many ways of being in his presence. We in this family are all in your presence at this time; yet we are not all standing in the same relations, nor performing the same services. I think that Gabriel, Enoch, and Abel are equally in the presence of God, though not sustaining the same rank, nor performing the same services; and though all happy in the ratio of their several capacities, yet differing in these as much as those who now surround your fireside and enjoy the light of your countenance and instructions.

Olympas. I believe, Thomas, your views are substantially correct and scriptural; for Elijah who was translated, and Moses that died and was buried, appear in the same company, performing

the same mission on Mount Tabor; while Peter, James, and John enjoyed their company and heard their communications with each other and the Lord, while conversing about his death at Jerusalem, then soon to happen.

Thomas. It was your remarks on that scene, and on 2 Cor. v. 1—5, that lead me to these views and conclusions concerning the righteous dead. But may I ask, for instruction, what difference was there in the character of Abel, Enoch, and Noah, that should have occasioned such a difference in their end. Abel was slain, Enoch was translated, and Noah died, and yet all were *perfect* in their generation? You say there are no degrees in perfection; and why this difference?

Olympas. But, Edward, are we agreed that these three were all equally excellent persons?

Edward. Paul says, By *faith* Abel offered—by faith Enoch was translated—and by faith Noah prepared an ark. They all walked by faith.

Olympas. Still others as well as these walked by faith, who were in moral excellence much their inferiors—such as Samson, Barak, Gideon, &c.

Edward. But more is said of Abel, Enoch, and Noah than of those three; for Abel obtained witness that he was *righteous*. Noah was declared to be *perfect*, and Enoch *walked with God*. Now it would appear that they were equally perfect men: for if God said in fact that Abel was *righteous*, and Noah *perfect*, and Enoch *walked with him*; they were doubtless of equal moral worth, differing only in times, circumstances, and things purely accidental.

Olympas. So let it be. It will then follow that the wise and benevolent ends of the Father of all

required that Abel should be a martyr—that Enoch should carry his own body into heaven—and that Noah should be the Saviour of a world. The universe required these three distinct services; while the three servants having done their work, were equally acceptable to God—equally perfect in their generation and circumstances; and are now equally, though diversely, blessed in the presence chamber of the King, the Lord of hosts. “One star differeth from another star in glory;” while all are stars in the same heavens, made of the same matter, and serving the same God. Eliza, was not Enoch a *prophet*?

Eliza. So Jude would intimate: for he says, “Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied.”

Olympas. Of what, Eliza, did he especially prophesy?

Eliza. Of the coming of the Lord with his angels to judge the world and to avenge his enemies.

Olympas. It is, then, indubitable that the doctrine of a future life, the consummation of all things—the doctrine of the origin and destiny of man, was taught from the earliest ages of the world. The translation of Enoch was a demonstration of its truth, and a confirmation of its certainty vouchsafed to all the renowned fathers of mankind before the death of Seth the immediate son of Adam. Did not I request you, Reuben, on a former occasion, to trace the history of tradition, and from the Bible to determine through how many hands the knowledge possessed by the ancients was communicated to Moses?

Reuben. You did, sir. And from the tabular view I have completed on this subject, I find that all the knowledge, natural and supernatural,

which man enjoyed in the first two thousand years of the world came to Isaac *through but two persons*. Indeed, I have satisfied myself that all nations had one common fountain of knowledge, and that one universal tradition obtained through Methuselah and Shem.

Olympas. This is both curious and edifying; but we must defer the farther investigation of this subject till the evening

CONVERSATION VI.

Wednesday Evening.—Farther Remarks on the Traditions of the Patriarchal Age.

Olympas. What do you mean, William, by *tradition*?

William. Any thing handed down from our fathers.

Olympas. Our names, goods, chattels, and hereditaments are handed down to us from our fathers. Call you these traditions?

William. Only their opinions, views, and experience.

Olympas. The latter term includes all that we value in tradition. We need not the opinions nor the views of our forefathers half so much as we need their *experience*. Their experience is often of great importance to us, and should always be respected.

Reuben. Is tradition necessarily oral, or may it be both oral and written?

Olympas. It is both oral and written. Books that are truly useful are written traditions, or the narratives of human experience. Can any of you recite a passage in Paul's writings that demonstrates his views of tradition as being both oral and written.

Thomas Dilworth. To the Thessalonians Paul says, "Hold the traditions you have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." This would

imply that traditions, in his esteem, were both oral and written.

Olympas. And how, Thomas, do you define *experience*?

Thomas. Experience is practical knowledge, or our acquaintance with things from an immediate contact with them. So, I think, our school-master defined the word. He used to say that every man's experience was his knowledge, and that no person knew any thing but by experience.

Olympas. Human knowledge has, indeed, but two chapters—our own experience and the experience of others. Faith invests us with the latter, while memory furnishes the former. But true knowledge is all comprehended under the term *experience*; all else is theory, hypothesis, conjecture. Tradition, then, is most valuable, as it records the knowledge or experience of past generations. But unfortunately other ideas and things have been called *tradition*—the dogmas, opinions, and hypotheses of men. Jews and Christians have volumes of written and unwritten traditions, which have no real knowledge or experience in them; and because of the use they have made of these, the very term *tradition* has fallen into bad repute. The Jews with their *oral* law, or unwritten written law, and the Romanists with their written unwritten opinions and hypotheses, called *traditions*, have made faith in tradition a disreputable belief. Still, when properly interpreted, tradition is the record of human experience. It is history, verbal or written. The Bible is, for the most part, tradition; for it gives us the experience of many individuals, and the divine procedure with them: and saving

faith itself is but the belief of the traditions found in the New Testament.

Reuben. Did you not say that “*saving* faith” was practically more than belief of testimony or the assent to tradition?

Olympas. True: but these traditions respect a *person*, not a *thing*. Now the belief of the traditions concerning that person, necessarily imply confidence in him. therefore, when we wish to simplify to the humblest capacity, we say, that saving faith is *trust in Jesus*; or believing on Jesus as our Saviour; or trusting in God, through him, as the only way to God—as the truth and the life. Every one who trusts in God, and rejoices in Jesus Christ, is a saved person.

Reuben. This is, then, the reason why the saints of the ancient Scriptures are so frequently spoken of as trusting in God, and why they are described as “they that trust in him.”

Olympas. But we must return to our lesson. Tradition, when properly defined, is, you will perceive, the most useful of all the sources of intelligence to man. The Bible is a volume of traditions; and they that add to it their own traditions as of equal authority, as far as in them lies, make the word of God of no practical value—they make it void by their traditions.

Thomas Dilworth. Is there any now-a-days, who, like the old Jews, make the word of God of non-effect by their traditions?

Olympas. The doctrine of the church of Rome, according to the Council of Trent, is, that “the truth and discipline of the catholic church are comprehended both in the ancient books, and in the traditions which have been received from the

mouth of Jesus Christ himself, or of his Apostles, and which have been preserved or transmitted by an uninterrupted chain and succession."

Thomas. And what do Protestants say of tradition?

Olympas. That "the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." This is safe doctrine, if Protestants would not give it up in practice.

But as all religious truth was in the first place a matter of oral tradition, it was kind to have it conveyed through few hands, and carefully written on the memory of those who were entrusted with it. This was accomplished in the best possible manner by the persons employed in keeping the oracles of God during the first ages of the world. It was stated at the close of our last lesson, that all the experience of the human family was communicated to Abraham and Isaac by two persons—Methuselah and Shem. How old, Reuben, was Isaac when Shem died?

Reuben. Isaac was born in the year of the world 2108, and Shem died in the year of the world 2156, or five hundred years after the flood. Isaac was therefore in his fifty-second year when Shem died?

Olympas. You said, at our last lesson, that the history of two thousand years reached Shem through two persons. You assume that Methuselah saw and heard Adam two hundred and forty-three years; that Shem saw and heard

Methuselah ninety-eight years; and that Isaac saw and heard Shem fifty-two years. We know they might have done so; and what was possible in such a case is the most natural event; because who, in the time of Methuselah, would not wish to have seen and heard the first man? Who of us would not travel across all Asia to see the first man, so late as the close of the seventh century from creation, and to have heard him tell the wondrous story of his most eventful life!

Adam, Noah, and Shem must have related their experience more frequently and with more minuteness, because so often interrogated, and so universally interesting, than ever did any other men. Hence its superlative accuracy and safe transmission to Moses. Every word was stereotyped. If Adam after the year 400, related his experience before and since the Fall, only once for every year, he must have told it at least five hundred times. Surely then he must have remembered it well. This is true of Shem, who carried in his memory the records of the antediluvian ages, as well as of ten generations after the flood. But tell me, Reuben, when you say that all the knowledge, that is, all the experience of two thousand years, must have reached Isaac through but two persons—Methuselah and Shem—do you mean these two only, or these two supported by other witnesses?

Reuben. I presume there were for much of this time, innumerable concurring witnesses; but I mean in point of *descent*, it needed to pass but through two persons till it reached the ears of Abraham and Isaac.

Olympas. And through how many from Isaac to Moses?

Reuben. Isaac may have conversed several years with Levi, his grand-son; for Isaac lived contemporary with Levi some fifty-three years.

Olympas. How do you make that appear?

Reuben. Isaac was born in the year of Abraham 100, or in the year of the world 2108; Jacob was born in the year of Isaac 60; and Levi in the year of Jacob 67; that is, in the year of the world 2235. Now as Isaac lived one hundred and eighty years, he died in the year 2288, which was the fifty-third year of Levi.

Olympas. How old was Levi when his second son, Kohath, the grand-father of Moses was born?

Reuben. I never could find that out from all my readings of the five books. I find, Exod. v., that Levi lived to be one hundred and thirty-seven years old, and Kohath, one hundred and thirty-three, and Amram, Moses' father, one hundred and thirty-seven; but in what year of Levi Kohath was born, I know not.

Olympas. It is inferred from various circumstances that he was born in the hundredth year of Jacob and thirty-third of Levi. Being thirty years old when Jacob migrated to Egypt, he must have lived in Egypt one hundred and three years, or within thirty years of the birth of Moses. This would leave but thirty years for Amram to occupy in communicating intelligence from Levi to his son Moses.

Olympas. Can you, Thomas, repeat the dates of the deaths from Abraham to the death of Moses?

Thomas. Abraham died in the year of the world

2183; Isaac, in 2288; Jacob, in 2315; Levi, in 2372; Kohath, in 2401; and, allowing Amram to be born in the thirty-fifth year of Kohath, he died in 2340, at which time Moses was about eight years old. But it may have been several years later, as we have no very certain data from which to infer his age at the birth of Moses.

Olympas. It is, then, upon the whole evidence before us, plain—that Methuselah could have communicated to Shem; Shem, to Isaac; Isaac, to Levi; Levi, to Amram; and Amram to Moses, the history of all things from the creation. Moses in the genealogy of historians, is, then, but the sixth from Adam. Adam, the first; Methuselah, the second; Shem, the third; Isaac, the fourth; Amram, the fifth; Moses, the sixth. Between Adam and Moses there stand but four successive witnesses—sustained, indeed, by an innumerable multitude of concurring voices. When, then, you hear any persons cavil at the narrative of Moses on account of the unwritten traditions of preceding ages, or because of the number of hands through which these documents passed, remember that it may have passed through but *four persons* from Adam to Moses; and that from the frequency of the repetitions necessarily called for, all things must have been most accurately retained and delivered over to Moses, who, in addition to all this, had the guidance of the unerring Spirit of God.

Who, of all these oracles of the patriarchal ages, think you, William, was most illustrious?

William. Enoch. I suppose, because he was translated.

Olympas. We are now speaking of these six oracular historians.

William. Shem, I imagine, because he lived in two worlds and had conversed with the antediluvians and postdiluvians, and had more experience than any other man from Adam to Moses.

Olympas. Tell me, Susan, what does the word *Shem* mean?

Susan. You told us that it means RENOWN: you also said it means *King of Peace*.

Olympas. You mistake when you say that the name SHEM indicates any thing more than *renown*. When I spoke of the King of Peace it was in reference to the opinion that Shem and Melchisedeck are both names of the same person. Edward, can you sum up the reasons I gave for the opinion that Shem is the mediator called Melchisedeck.

Edward. You said that Shem was a personal name, and Melchisedeck an official name; that *malchi* denoted king, and *zedek* righteousness—“*king of righteousness*,” and that *Salem* corresponded to Jerusalem, the City of Peace; for *Shalam* imports *peace*.

Olympas. But this does not amount to a reason why we should identify *Shem* and *Melchisedeck*.

James. You said that the eldest and most illustrious branch of every family was priest; and of the family of Noah Shem was doubtless in the time of Abraham the most venerable and illustrious member. And in the second place you observed that Paul himself held up to admiration the superlative dignity of that person, even in comparison with Abraham, and showed that as Shem was the most renowned father of the Messiah, and of Abraham too, as their progeni-

tor, it behooved that, if any one was to fill the high place of Universal Priest, especially in reference to the progenitors of our Lord, Shem should be that person.

Olympas. But we give that consideration more significance by the fact that Shem was, in point of age, experience, and personal dignity, the first man in the world. He was the oldest, most intelligent, and authoritative person, being then the head of *nine* generations. "Consider," says Paul, "how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave tithes of all!" Again, it is certain that Shem was living at that time, and being the chief progenitor of our Lord, who could be High Priest over him! It would have been an infraction upon the patriarchal institution to have made a *son of Shem* High Priest over him. No person could, in compatibility with that institution, be High Priest over Shem. The words to Cain indicate this principle: "If thou doest well, shalt not thou have the excellency [over thy younger brother?] unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." It was right that Abraham should have received the benediction from father Shem, who lived at Jerusalem and was High Priest of the world. He, too, of all postdiluvian men, in respect to these high official honours, was without beginning of days or end of [priestly] life; without father and without mother, having no priestly ancestry, nor succession, but a Priest of his own order, officiating for a world during the interregnum from Noah to Abraham, and that too to the day of his death. He was, therefore, a most eminent type of the high priesthood of Jesus. But our speculation on Shem has led us a great

way off from the strict subject of our morning's conversation ; but our excuse is, that we shall find in the book of Genesis the seeds or elements of all the subsequent revelations, precepts, and promises, vouchsafed to man. We must therefore note them as we proceed. Having now sketched the history of tradition, and the memorable events of the antediluvian world, we shall, at our next lesson, take up the history of the flood.

CONVERSATION VII.

AFTER reading in order the history of the deluge, Olympas thus began:—

Olympas. We are now come to the end of one world and the commencement of another. What, Thomas, were the causes that ushered in this awful catastrophe?

Thomas. Murder, violence, and rapine seem to have completed the measure of human enormities. Moses says, “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”—“The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” “For all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth; and God said, The end of all flesh is come before me: for the earth is filled with violence through them, and behold I will destroy them with the earth.”

Olympas. God our Father, then, intended more than the destruction of the human race and the living creatures on the earth. He said he would destroy them *with the earth*. Tell me, Susan, with what element did God destroy the earth with its inhabitants?

Susan. With water.

Olympas. Whence did the waters come, William?

William. From the windows of heaven, and from the fountains of the great deep.

Olympas. How long did it rain, James?

James. "Forty days and forty nights."

Olympas. How do you, Reuben, understand "the windows of heaven" and "the fountains of the great deep?"

Reuben. The clouds may be called the windows of heaven, because the waters that float in the air, are poured through the clouds on the earth; and the subterraneous oceans may be called the fountains of the great deep, because they supply the lakes and seas with water.

Olympas. If the quantity of water in the earth be at all proportioned to the quantity on its surface, it only required an impulse from the almighty hand to overflow the earth, to submerge every mountain and hill to the depth of the tallest pines on their loftiest summits. But in doing this there must have been a tremendous disruption of the earth, the heaving up of new mountains, and the sinking down of immense areas of the ancient surface; so that while the waters of the great deep made for themselves new channels, their ancient beds were filled up with dilapidated masses of the primitive soil, and thus the earth itself, with its wicked inhabitants, was literally wasted and destroyed. Are there yet existing any monuments of this ancient deluge?

Reuben. I have read in the history of the Greeks and Western Nations accounts of the Flood; and of the tradition of the Chinese, the Africans, and Americans, concerning a deluge which left at great distance from the present seas, and on the summits of lofty mountains, trees deeply imbedded in the soil; with the teeth and bones of numerous land animals; as well as entire fish, sea shells,

petrified fruits, ears of corn, and various vegetable remains of a former world. Sir William Jones, as I read the other day in his *Indian Researches*, has also added other monuments from the mythological traditions of those ancient nations, evidently deduced from Moses', or other ancient records of the same catastrophe long since lost.

Olympas. Philosophers, geologists, historians, religionists of every name, are constrained to admit one deluge at least. Some, indeed, arbitrarily deny universality; but all admit its generality. How do you prove, Thomas Dilworth, its universality?

Thomas. Moses says, "The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits and upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered."

Olympas. That is enough for those who take the word of the Lord for proof. Was the destruction of life also universal? I mean, of course, *terrestrial* life.

Thomas. The same author says, "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl and of cattle, and of beasts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man."

Olympas. Definite enough. But, Susan, did the whole human race perish?

Susan. All but Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, with their wives. In all eight persons.

Olympas. How, James, were these eight persons saved?

James. In an ark which Noah built.

Olympas. What were its dimensions, William?

William. Three hundred cubits by fifty ; or, as you once computed it for us, five hundred feet long, seventy-five wide, and forty-five high.

Olympas. How many tons would it carry ?

William. Forty-two thousand and five hundred tons—equal to eighty-five ships of five hundred tons burthen.

Olympas. Yes, and our most accomplished mathematical calculators say, that no vessel could have been more rationally and scientifically arranged and constructed, than was this immense ship, for the purpose of carrying a large freight without sailing far from the place of its construction. How long was it in being reared ?

William. One hundred and twenty years.

Olympas. Of what sort of timber constructed, James ?

James. Of gopher wood, covered over with pitch.

Olympas. But did I not teach you that *gopher* probably meant square timber, and that there was much reason to believe that the ark was built of cedar or of cypress, because these growths abound in Asia, and might have been called *gopher*, because they put out quadrangular branches in the same horizontal line. Thomas, how many quadrupeds do you suppose were taken into the ark ?

Thomas. There were pairs of all sorts ; but of the *clean* there were seven pairs.

Olympas. The difference between *clean* and *unclean* is, then, older than the flood. But are we, Thomas, to understand *clean* and *unclean* as referring to food or to sacrifice ?

Thomas. To sacrifice, as it is evident that sacrifice was practised before the flood ; but the eating of flesh began afterwards.

Olympas. How many sorts of clean animals, William?

William. Five—the calf, the sheep, the goat, the turtle dove, and the pigeon. You said that Abraham offered all these on one altar, and that God ever after selected them for sacrifices.

Olympas. In the ark, then, there were how many quadrupeds?

Thomas. According to Buffon there are only some two hundred and fifty species, which would make only some five hundred and fifty in all, clean and unclean.

Olympas. But did I not show on a former occasion that this number was by far too small—that from more recent and accurate details we might set down more than one thousand species of mamallia, (animals that nourish their young by breasts;) of birds, five thousand species; and of reptiles, insects, &c. one hundred thousand. Now, putting down the quadrupeds at one hundred lbs. each, large and small, this gives only one hundred tons weight; the birds five lbs. each would give seventy-five tons; and all other terrestrial creatures would not yield over fifty tons more. In all animated nature, as known to man, taking of each one pair, the weight would not exceed two hundred and twenty-five tons. But to be safe; double the amount, and say we have four hundred and fifty tons; can any one then doubt the capacity of a vessel of forty-two thousand five hundred tons, to stow away the live stock of the earth, and provisions for one year!! The ark, then, was large enough and strong enough to contain comfortably all that Moses embarked upon it. In what form was it put together?

Thomas. In the form of a chest, square at each end ; something like an Egyptian or New Orleans flat-boat.

Olympas. How many doors and windows, Susan ?

Susan. Only one door and one window.

Olympas. Was the roof flat, James ?

James. I do not read any thing about its roof.

Olympas. Read the sixteenth verse of the sixth chapter.

James. " A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above ; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof, with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it."

Olympas. " And in a cubit shalt thou finish *it* above." The *it* refers to the ark, and not to the door. The roof was raised one cubit in the centre that the rain might run off with more facility. Think you, William, this vessel was designed for sailing ?

William. Not for sailing, sir ; but for floating.

Olympas. Did it find a shore, or landing, far from the port whence it was launched ?

William. It rested on Mount Ararat, in Armenia, which, for so long a time, was a very short distance ; Ararat lying in latitude 39, 30, N., and in 40, 39, E. longitude, nearly in the middle of the immense stony ridge called Taurus, which, according to the ancients, girdled the whole earth.

Olympas. How high was this summit called Mount Ararat ?

William. It is said to be as high as Mount

Blanc, in Europe, which is about three miles above the level of the sea.

Olympas. Is not this mountain covered with snow, Reuben ?

Reuben. It is at this time generally enveloped in snow to the extent of five thousand feet. But it is not presumable that it was on the very peak of this mountain that the ark rested.

Olympas. Do you recollect the Percian name of this mountain ?

Reuben. They call it *Asis*, which means "The Happy Mountain," because Noah landed there.

Olympas. And what do the Armenians say, who inhabit that region ?

Reuben. That Noah after landing his family and stock, settled at Erivan, thirty-six miles from Ararat, and in its vicinity planted a vineyard, where to this day grapes are cultivated, and excellent wine manufactured.

Olympas. James, tell me—How did Noah decide when he should leave the ark ?

James. He sent forth a raven, and then a dove.

Olympas. Why did he send the raven first, William ?

William. You said the raven being a bird of prey, and feasting on dead animals, would most readily discover whether the earth were dry by two senses—smelling and seeing ; and would indicate this by not returning, as was the fact. But next he sent a dove, fond of the ground, of picking up seeds, and of returning to its rest ; but finding no earth, it soon returned. This induced Noah, after another Sabbath, to send it out on a second expedition. It then came back, carrying in its beak an olive leaf plucked from a tree.

Olympas. What, Reuben, is the ancient geography of that region on which Noah made his first settlement?

Reuben. Strabo says it was a land of olives. It was high and hilly, having beautiful plains and valleys between its mountains; very rich and easily cultivated, and peculiarly salubrious.

Olympas. Rufus, can you give us the calendar of the year of the world 1656, or the memorable year of the flood, according to Stackhouse, Basnage, and some other books that I gave you to read?

Rufus. I will try, sir. The year began in September.

1. September. Methuselah died, aged nine hundred and sixty-nine years.

2. October. Noah and his family entered the ark.

3. November 17. "The fountains of the great deep were broken up."

December 26. The rain began and continued forty days and forty nights.

January. All the men and beasts on earth perished.

February. The rain continued.

March 27. The waters began to abate.

April 17. The Ark rested on Ararat in Armenia.

May. They rested while the waters were retreating.

June 1st. The tops of the mountains appeared.

July 11th. Noah sent the raven.

18th. He sent a dove.

25th. It returned with the olive branch.

August 2nd. The dove made its third and final departure from the ark.

September 1st. The dry land appeared.

October 27th. Noah went out of the ark with all his house.

Olympas. Very good. Tell me, Susan, of what is an olive leaf the emblem?

Susan. Of peace and returning prosperity.

Olympas. And of what, Eliza, is a dove the emblem?

Eliza. Of peace and love.

Olympas. Any incident in the New Testament that reminds you of this?

Eliza. Yes; the dove from heaven descended on the head of Jesus, indicating peace and love, symbol of the Holy Spirit, spirit of peace and holiness and love divine. Happy omen of the advent of the great pacificator—the Son of God. Presage, too, of the peace of all the sons of God.

Olympas. Francis, you are fond of history and of geography. What countries afford the strongest memorials of this awful visitation of a universal deluge?

Francis. All the lofty eminences on earth attest the deluge. On them all are found the spoils of the ocean. Skeletons of sea fish, and aquatic monsters of all sorts, are scattered on the Alps, the Appenines, the Pyrenees, the Andees, Ararat, Atlas, and every peak from Mexico to Japan. Not only this, but in America we find the animals and plants of the torrid zone petrified; in Europe we find American animals and plants preserved in rocks, in ice, and in eternal snows. The moose deer, a native of America, is found buried in Ireland; Asiatic and African elephants have been

disinterred in England ; crocodiles, natives of Egypt, are found in the rocks of Germany ; and American shell-fish and the fish of our seas are found in the four quarters of the globe. The tea-plant has been found petrified in Ohio, and the fish of India converted into rocks at the bottoms of our rivers.

Olympas. Were all the trees uprooted think you, Francis, in this tremendous catastrophe ?

Francis. We have no reason to conclude that they were. All trees from one to two hundred feet high, which covered the summits of the highest lands, stood many feet out of the waters. Indeed, as the water only rose twenty-two feet above the Himalaya mountains, or the loftiest Asiatic summits, many trees of humble stature would lift their boughs above the turbid waters.

Olympas. But are not the tops of the Himalaya, the Andes, Ararat, and many others, covered with eternal snows ; and, therefore, incapable of vegetable or animal existence ?

Francis. They are so now. But did you not teach us that before the deluge there were no frozen nor barren peaks ; that all the earth from pole to pole was of one temperature, and that one perpetual spring and summer presided over the whole planet ; that the earth was not dependent on the sun alone for heat, but was warmed by the decomposition of its own minerals, or by those subterraneous fires which after the deluge were so deeply quenched or slacked as to afford no heat ; and that now depending on solar influence alone, we have an alternation of heat and cold, of summer and winter, of seed time and harvest, by which change of the elements the stature of

human life has been contracted from seven, eight, and nine hundred, to seventy, eighty, and ninety years?

Olympas. True, I have substantially, at different times, made such suggestions to some of you. The axis of the earth is inclined to the ecliptic $66\frac{1}{2}$ degrees; consequently it declines $23\frac{1}{2}$ from a perpendicular position to the plane of the ecliptic, or to the plane of its own orbit; and this gives us a variety of seasons: whereas if the axis of the earth were perpendicular to the plane of its own orbit round the sun, the following three consequences would be inevitable:—

1. Its north and south poles would be always enlightened.

2. There would be no diversity of days and nights.

3. And we would have but one season throughout the year.

Such, I think, was the antediluvian earth. Therefore, the health, vigour, and longevity of man—therefore, the plants and animals of all climates were then found in all the latitudes of human abode—and, therefore, too, the great immorality of the human race after the fall, and previous to the deluge. So happy a climate, so perpetual a spring, so vigorous a constitution, so long a life, did not suit so fallen and so degraded a being as man. The mildest climes, the most genial seasons, and the most fruitful soils, when combined, produce the most luxuriant crops of human follies, vices, and enormities. The temperate zones, the six months winter, and the six months summer, have, since the flood, been the abodes of the most exemplary characters, the regions of the most

mental and moral vigour of our species, and will likely continue to be so till the millennial age shall have introduced a better order of things.

The flood changed the constitution of the earth, and probably did it chiefly by changing its position; by sinking, as it were, one of its poles $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees towards the plane of its own orbit, and elevating the other the same distance above it: thus subjecting it to a continual alternation of cold and heat, from the extreme horrors of a northern winter to the scorching heats of a tropical summer.

Moses induces the belief that a radical and extensive change has pervaded the entire constitution of our devoted planet. The cataracts of heaven opened their stores of indignation, and the deep dark fountains of the great abyss were broken up to consummate its ruin. An ocean's flood was heaved from beneath over all its fertile valleys, sloping hills, and lofty mountains. The planet yawned as if bursting asunder to swallow down the untold millions of its infidel and atheistic inhabitants. The solid crust of the "rock-ribbed earth" was rent in pieces, while the solid stratas ascending from the beds of ancient oceans, gave mighty proof that Omnipotence had indignantly risen to assert the rights of its insulted majesty before an astonished universe. The former abodes of men became the beds of new seas and oceans, while the channels of the ancient waters occasionally became the *terra firma* of a new world.

The sea-drenched earth, the miserable wreck of its ancient grandeur, chilled by its long submersion in this watery waste, became the cold and comparatively dreary abode of the new family of man.

But Noah, soon as it became dry, reared an altar to the Lord, and presented a grateful offering to his Almighty Benefactor, who had safely piloted his unwieldy ship on a dark and shoreless ocean to a safe and comfortable anchorage in the cliffs of Ararat—where we shall leave him till our next lesson.

CONVERSATION VIII.

AFTER reading the eighth and ninth chapters a second time, the conversation was resumed.

Olympas. Tell me, Susan, how many human beings were saved in the Ark?

Susan. Only eight: these were Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their four wives.

Olympas. Of the three sons of Noah who was the first born or eldest?

James. Shem, I presume, because he is always first named.

Olympas. Is that a scriptural rule, that that which is first named is first done, or the person first named is the first born, Eliza?

Eliza. No: for Moses and Aaron prove that the most important and reputable frequently take precedence. Aaron was certainly three years older than Moses; yet Moses is always first named, because most honourable; and so in this case Shem is most certainly younger than Japheth, and yet he is always first named. This is also true of Jacob and Esau.

Olympas. How do you prove, Reuben, that Shem was younger than Japheth?

Reuben. 1st. Because when Moses relates the families of these three, he begins with Japheth, chapter x., proceeds to Ham, and ends with Shem. 2nd. Because he calls Japheth *the elder*, chaps x. xxi. He is said to be older than Shem. According to age it would read Japheth, Ham, and Shem.

Often the last in birth is first in rank: as Moses and Aaron, Jacob and Esau, Paul and Barnabas, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, &c.

Olympas. Is there any allusion to the salvation of Noah and his family in the New Covenant Scriptures, William?

William. Peter says baptism saves us as the ark in the deluge saved Noah.

Olympas. Perhaps you ought not to put the ark alone as the type, but the persons in the ark immersed in the deluge. The antitype, not of the ark so much as of the persons immersed in it. Baptism doth also now save us who have thus entered into the new covenant with Christ. Eight persons encased in a wooden chest, submerged in a world of waters, celestial and terrestrial, were indeed a good figure of those who enter into Christ and are immersed into his death. But does not Peter explain the salvation of which he speaks, Reuben?

Reuben. Yes, sir. "It is not," says he, "the putting off the pollutions of the skin, or of legal defilement, but the answer of a good conscience towards God, through the resurrection of Christ."

Olympas. A good conscience is the effect, not the cause of remission; and baptism is but the means of obtaining it; baptism saves no farther than it secures to us a good conscience. But without remission of sins, or a release from guilt, no person can have a good conscience; and therefore no one is saved from the condemning power of sin, but through faith and obedience according to the stipulations of the New Institution. But,

Thomas, in what sense, think you, does baptism save us ?

Thomas. It appears to me that if baptism in any sense save us, in that sense the unbaptized cannot be saved. But I do not fully comprehend in what sense it is that baptism saves us ; I only believe that it saves in some sense, else Peter would not have said so.

Olympas. Salvation is a good deal like a cure. Of the diseased some are said to be healed and cured that are only partially so. But none are perfectly cured who are not restored to sound and vigorous health. The saved and the cured are not those who are merely getting better, or those who may hereafter be restored to good health, but those who are now healed, actually restored to perfect soundness. This perfect soundness in our moral nature requires a good conscience—an assurance of pardon founded upon the testimony of God—and a perfect reconciliation of heart to God. Now as this state of feeling and spiritual health presupposes a complete practical knowledge of the death, burial, and resurrection of Messiah ; and as none can possibly have that deep practical knowledge of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ but the baptized ; so none but they are wholly saved from sin, and intelligently and cordially reconciled to God.

Thomas. But are there not many baptized who have not this perfect and complete knowledge of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and can they be said to be saved in the sense of the Apostle Peter ?

Olympas. No more than the unbaptized. He that is baptized without previous faith in Christ,

repentance towards God, and intelligence as respects his death, burial, and resurrection, cannot have that spiritual and moral health which constitutes that cure called by Peter *salvation*. But we are getting too much into the antitype of the salvation of Noah by water. Let us look again at father Noah when the Ark was uncovered.

Thomas. It looked, indeed, very like the opening of a grave. There was no opening of the door, but an uncovering of the roof. Noah and his household seemed to arise from the dead, as those who had been long interred. There was a figurative burial and resurrection in this salvation of Noah.

Olympas. And in another point of view might he not be regarded as one born again?

Thomas. So it would appear to me; for he entered the world again—a new world too—the old having been destroyed.

Olympas. And what, Edward, is the first recorded act of the regenerated Noah?

Edward. HE BUILDED AN ALTAR UNTO THE LORD.

Olympas. Remember, my good children, that the first building on the new-born earth, after its immersion was an *altar*—an altar *for the Lord*; and that *altars* are reared *for Jehovah* alone. Let us, then, attend carefully to this circumstance. Tell me, Edward, was this the first altar that was ever built?

Edward. It is the first recorded but not the first that was built. Cain and Abel, after the example of Adam their father, offered sacrifice; and without an altar nothing can be *offered* to God. Altars and sacrifices are, then, as old, as

the fall of man. Both worlds began with altars, victims, and priests.

Olympas. Reuben, you are fond of tracing the etymology of words: whence comes the word *altar*?

Reuben. From *altus*, high. Hence the veneration for high places for worship—the peaks of mountains, rocks, and hills. Thus Jacob reared a stone pillar, and Gideon offered a sacrifice upon a table-rock.

Olympas. But *altus* is Latin. Altars are older than the Romans. Whence got the Romans the idea?

Reuben. From the Greeks. Their *bomus* signifying *basis*: an elevated basis by which to ascend, was the place of their *thusiasterion*, or altar; which term indicated slaying, or offering sacrifice.

Olympas. And all these from the Hebrew word *mizbeach*, from *zabach*, to slay: *the place for slain sacrifices*, on which they were presented to God. Learn, then, from all this, that *all true religion is founded on sacrifice*. The first thing in Adam's family was the altar. It was also the first thing in Noah's, Abraham's, Jacob's, &c. Where, Thomas, did altars usually stand?

Thomas. Always about the entrance of temples and places of worship. The Jews placed theirs in the outer court, near the entrance; from whom other nations derived the custom.

Olympas. Eliza, did you ever read of an altar in heaven?

Eliza. Yes, I read of a golden altar which stands before God in heaven, Rev. ix 13.

Olympas. Relate to us all that you know about this altar in heaven.

Eliza. It stands immediately before the throne of God. It has fire upon it, and a cloud of incense towers above it, an angel ministers at it, and the prayers and thanksgivings of the saints are offered on it in a way acceptable to the Lord. Rev. vi. viii. and ix.

Olympas. An altar, then, is essential to acceptable worship in all places and at all times. It was so in the family of Adam; it was so in the family of Noah; it was so in all the families of the Patriarchs and Jews; it is so in heaven. And need I add that it is so in the Christian church. "We," the followers of Christ, "have an *altar*, at which they have no right to eat who serve in the tabernacle." Jesus Christ is our altar, sacrifice, sin-offering, passover, circumcision, prophet, priest, and king. What, Eliza, were the offerings of Noah?

Eliza. "He took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."

Olympas. Enumerate the clean beasts and the clean fowls.

Eliza. The lamb, the kid, the calf,—or the sheep, the goat, the bullock, among beasts—the turtle dove and the pigeon, among birds, were only those used in sacrifice. Noah took of them all, and made a rich burnt offering to the Lord.

Olympas. Edward, can you explain the meaning of a *burnt offering*? What saith the law?

Edward. It was wholly consumed by fire. The offerer and the priest shared in other things, but not in this. It was wholly devoted to the Lord.

Olympas. Were the victims put on alive, or after they had been slain?

Edward. Not until their blood was spilt upon the ground.

Olympas. How, James, did the Lord regard this offering of Noah?

James. I do not know.

Olympas. Read again the 21st verse, James.

James. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savor; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, though the imagination of man's heart be evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Olympas. Observe then, James, that "*the Lord smelled a sweet savor*" while the burnt offering was consuming on Noah's altar. This phrase means, *the Lord was delighted with this burnt offering.* What, Thomas, do you infer from this?

Thomas. I infer, first, that God had commanded such altars to be built, and such offerings to be made, else he could not have been pleased with it: for he has always rejected the inventions and traditions of men in his worship.

Olympas. And what do you infer, Reuben?

Reuben. I infer that this offering was a type of Christ's offering himself a sacrifice to God, because Paul seems to quote these words, Eph. v. 2.

Olympas. Read the passage, Reuben:

Reuben. "Christ has loved us, and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God —for a sweet smelling savor."

Olympas. Yes, and let me tell you. Reuben, Paul quotes from the Septuagint Greek the very words found in this passage. These significant words are, *osmen euodias*—a “sweet smelling savor.” Let us, then, sum up the whole:—

1. The first *building* reared on the new earth was an *altar*.

2. The first *blood* that was shed was *sacrificial*.

3. The first *smoke* that ascended from the turf was that of a *burnt offering*.

4. It was offered *to* the Lord, and accepted by him.

5. It superinduced new promises, and secured a new covenant with man.

6. It was certainly a type of Christ's sacrifice for sin, which also was offered to God, and was perfectly acceptable to him, and secured to us a new and better covenant, established on better promises than any before vouchsafed to man. From all of which considerations, and others which may afterwards appear, we learn that, without sacrifice—without bloody sin offerings, there is no access to God by sinful man, nor any communication from God to him. All religion is, therefore, founded on *justice*; for Paul says, God set forth his Son, a mercy seat, or propitiatory through faith in his blood, to exhibit his justice or moral righteousness in forgiving sin. Learn, then, this great lesson, that sinful man can approach God in religion only by sacrifice *express* or *implied*. No man can approach God but through the slain Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Do you, William, remember any passage in the visions of heavenly things which corroborates this view?

William. In the Apocalypse, fifth chapter, we read of a Lamb that stood between the throne and the four living creatures, as if it had been slain. To this SLAIN LIVING LAMB the mysterious four and the twenty-four celestial senators fall prostrate, shouting, "Worthy art thou ; for thou wast *slain*, and hast *redeemed* us to God *by thy blood.*" To these were added myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, in chorus repeating, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing !"

Olympas. He is, then, a most worshipful personage ! Is he not, William ?

William. Yes, for the universe in acclamation shout, "To Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing, and honour, and glory, and strength for ever and ever !"

Olympas. He is the Alpha and the Omega, then ; he is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world in promise and in type, and he is the slain Lamb in heaven worshipped for ever and ever. Do you not love such a Saviour as this, my dear children ? One who is the ALPHA and the OMEGA, the BEGINNING and the ENDING, the FIRST and the LAST—one whom all in heaven worship in equal strains with the Father that sent him. "To Him that sits upon the throne, even to the Lamb, be ALL glory," &c. He is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. He upholds all things by the word of his power ; he made expiation for our sins ; he is the Son of God, the Son of Man, Emanuel, Messiah the Lord, our Saviour !

Mrs. Olympas. Some of the family asked me

the other day touching that *fourth person* seen walking in the fiery furnace, into which were cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, by order of the Chaldean chief. The pagan king is represented as saying, "I see one like the *Son of God* walking with them in the midst of the fire." "How," said they, "did the wicked king know the *Son of God* in those days?"

Olympas. Had our translators been a little better accomplished for the task given them by King James, the question would not have been asked. It reads exactly as follows:—"A son of the gods"—a superhuman or angelic being. *Bar Elohim*, without an article, in the Chaldee, as in the Septuagint, *Huios i Theou*, can indicate no more than what the Pagan centurion exclaimed, "Truly this was an extraordinary person—a son of a god."

We have not yet finished the egress of Noah, nor the incidents of that memorable era. There is the covenant with Noah, and certain family incidents, worthy of your attention. O tell me, Susan, are the names of Noah's wife and daughters-in-law given by Moses?

Susan. I asked mother the other day, and she could not tell me the name of Mrs. Noah. Do you know, father?

Olympas. Her name was *Naamah*, the daughter of Enoch, who had been translated.

Thomas. Where shall we find that information?

Olympas. In the book of Jasher.

Thomas. I thought that book was lost.

Olympas. It was; but it is said to be found, and here is a copy of it recently translated. I will read the passage:—"And Noah went and took a

wife, and he chose Naamah the daughter of Enoch, and she was five hundred and eighty years old. And Noah was four hundred and ninety-eight years old when he took Naamah for a wife. And Naamah conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Japheth, saying, God has enlarged me in the earth; and she conceived again and bare a son, and he called his name Shem, saying, God has made me a remnant, to raise up seed in the midst of the earth. And Noah was five hundred and two years old when Naamah bare Shem, and the boys grew up and went in the ways of the Lord, in all that Methuselah and Noah their father taught them." Concerning the pretensions of this work, we may say something again. It is at best only of traditionary authority, and is not entitled to our homage only so far as it corresponds with one who certainly spake as moved by the Holy Spirit.

CONVERSATION IX.

ON COVENANTS.

AFTER reading the covenant with Noah and all flesh, Olympas made the subject of Covenants the burthen of the conversation for the day.

Olympas. Can any of you give me a scriptural name for this *transaction* between God and Noah after his devotion at the altar ?

William. It is called a *covenant*.

Olympas. Has any of you met this word before ?

William. It has not occurred before this time in the writings of Moses. It is, indeed, often used after this date.

Olympas. But when I ask for a *name* for this transaction with Noah, I ask for more than the title found in Genesis ix. Has it no other name than a *covenant* ?

Reuben. I think you told us that the Lord alluded to this transaction by Jeremiah when he said, “ If you can break my covenant of the day and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season.”

Olympas. Yes ; in Jeremiah xxxiii. 20, 25, the Lord speaks of day and night as *covenanted* matters, never to be changed ; and we knew of no other instance in which they are solemnly guarantied, except this one. We therefore regard this Noahic Covenant as a “ *Covenant of Day and Night,*” guarantying their continuance while the earth endureth. What is a covenant, Reuben ?

Reuben. A covenant, according to Walker, is “a contract, a stipulation, a compact.”

Olympas. Or it may be defined, “an agreement between two parties on certain terms.” The parties may be called *covenanter* and *covenantee*. The former stipulates, the latter restipulates or agrees. *Covenanter*, since the civil wars of England and Scotland, has a sort of political and appropriated meaning, indicating one who takes a covenant; but in common signification it indicates one who proposes and stipulates a covenant; while the *covenantee* denotes the party who accedes to it. Still you must note here that a divine covenant is not called *sunthekee*, but *diathekee*. In a *sunthekee* the parties meet as equals, but in a *diathekee* the covenanter may be a father or a king, and the covenantee may be a son or a subject. A full proof of this you have in our lesson. God is here the covenanter, and Noah and all the fowls of the air, and all the beasts of the field are covenantees. Read the text, James.

James. “And I, behold, I established my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you, from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will established my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and

the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

Olympas. Thus you see "all flesh, fowl, cattle, every living thing upon the earth," are included as one party to this everlasting covenant of temporalities. It was to be commensurate with time, with the earth, and the present course of nature, and is a guarantee or pledge to animated nature that such a desolation as that just ended should never again occur. As a matter for future reference I would now state that it is not incompatible with the nature of a *diatheke* or scriptural covenant, that the covenantees be both passive and unconscious; nor is it incompatible that they be not only conscious, but active and leading in the transaction. God often propounds every item, and by his authority and supreme benevolence makes it the duty of man simply to acquiesce. What, Eliza, are the items of this covenant?

Eliza. They are but two:—1st. That all flesh shall never again be cut off by the waters of another flood; and, 2nd. That the earth itself shall never again be destroyed by a universal deluge.

Olympas. And what about Day and Night, Eliza?

Eliza. This is only implied here ; for it was promised just at the altar.

Olympas. Read the passage, Susan.

Susan. "And the Lord smelled a sweet savor ; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake ; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth : neither will I smite any more every living thing as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

Thomas. I never could understand why the Lord assigned the wickedness of man as a reason why he would not again destroy the race.

Olympas. This is a mistranslation. It ought not to read, "*For* the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." It ought to read according to the original, "*Though* the imagination of man's heart should be evil from his youth." *Ki* in Hebrew signifies *though, although*, as well as *for* and *on account of*. If man should be ever so wicked, I will not again drown the earth. He has promised to burn it. The present earth is reserved for *fire*, not *water*.

Olympas. And what, Thomas, concerning the *token* of this covenant ? Was there no *rainbow* before the flood ?

Thomas. It is a physical effect ; and I think it probable that there were as many rainbows as there were the causes which now produce them. But did you not teach us that the consecrating of a stone into a monument, or the ordaining of any thing in nature for a sign, token, or pledge, was just the same as originating that thing altogether, because it has received a new meaning.

Olympas. Substantially you are right. It is not important to decide the question whether this was the first rainbow; it is certain that it then became a new sign and received a meaning which it had not before. It is now a speaking token to all who believe the Bible—a solemn pledge that we shall have the present course of things physical till the day of fire and everlasting destruction.

Thomas. May not covenants be regarded simply as promises and pledges from the Lord, and as the ground-work and reason of all human expectation?

Olympas. They are indeed the rule and measure of all human hope and expectation. God has promised and covenanted all that he ever will do for us, and these covenants make requisition of our duty and obligations to him, based upon his gifts and covenants. We must be in the covenant, however, before any of its provisions are ours, or before we can justly claim any thing from it. In what covenants are we in consequence of our birth, Eliza?

Eliza. We are born within the covenant with Adam, and within the covenant with Noah, and the covenant with Abraham.

Olympas. Then we must have been represented by three great men. In what respects did Adam, Noah, and Abraham represent us, Reuben?

Reuben. Adam and Noah were the fathers of all mankind, and whatever they had guarantied to them as such belongs to their children, their heirs, and successors for ever. But I do not understand how Abraham is our father according to covenant as Adam and Noah were. They were the heads

and fathers of all mankind. Abraham is only the father of nations.

Olympas. Abraham is indeed the natural and covenanted father of only a part of mankind ; but Adam and Noah of all. They are all, however, covenantees. There was a covenant with Adam, else we could not die for his sin. There was a covenant with Noah, as you have now read, under which we enjoy all temporal blessings : and in virtue of the covenant with Abraham his descendants by Isaac and Jacob became the inheritors of a certain country, a rich and beautiful land. They also inherited the right to the flesh of the Messiah, and various other worldly blessings, in none of which we are interested as partakers with them. Eliza, then, is mistaken when she says that we are born in covenant with Abraham. How did you, Eliza, imbibe that idea ?

Eliza. On the last fast day at Mr. Paido Raino's chapel I heard him say that all his congregation were in the covenant with Abraham as much as with Adam ; for that Abraham was a natural and a spiritual father, the natural father of all the Jews, Edomites, Ishmaelites, and other nations, and the spiritual father of believers of all nations.

Olympas. Well, my daughter, when you hear any one speak on the Bible, you must learn to try what they say by what is written in the book, and not to try the book of God by what they say. This Mr. *Paido Raino* is the pleader for a practice which falls to the ground, unless he could sustain that point. And yet the very ideas which you have quoted from him prove him to be in error. He said that the Ishmaelites, Idumeans, and Jews were the natural seed of Abraham.—This is true, and

once his circumcised seed too; but he added that Abraham was the father in covenant of all his congregation, because he is the father of all them that believe of all nations; and yet he dare not say that all his congregation are believers in the Messiah, the promised seed and heir of all Abraham's covenanted spiritual blessings. It is indeed true that Abraham is the natural father of the Jews, Edomites, Ishmaelites, &c., and he is the covenanted father of all the Jews, as well as their literal and true progenitor; and it is true that he is the spiritual and covenanted father of all believers of all nations, *but not of the fleshly seed of true believers*. This last point is the corner stone of Mr Paido Raino's chapel, church, and congregation. The fleshly seed of true believers are not the *natural* nor *spiritual* seed of Abraham and therefore are neither in the temporal nor spiritual covenant with Abraham. Paul teaches that if Gentiles are *in Christ*, then, and only then, are they Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise—"They who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham." But it no where says in the whole Bible, Old Testament or New, that the natural posterity of believers are the children of Abraham in any sense whatever; and therefore they are not in covenant with Abraham. But of this we may speak more fully when we come to the Abrahamic covenants. What, Thomas, think you of the entails upon our race in virtue of the Adamic and Noahic covenants?

Thomas. By the former mortality is ours, and by the latter a freedom from another destruction of the species, the earth and its inhabitants, by water, is secured to us.

Olympas. True, we inherit death and the curse, as well as life and all that is desirable in it, from Adam. We are the sons of a degenerate and degraded father, and participate with him in all the consequences of his violation of covenant, whether it be in constitution, person, or estate: for when a covenant is broken by one party it is not disannulled. The other party demands the fulfilment of its conditions or the penalty of a failure from all the covenantees to the expiration of the last item in its provisions. Observe, therefore, that all the gifts and callings of God are on his part without repentance or change, and that we are all living, while in Adam the first, under the consequences of a broken covenant. How many covenants, William, can you find in the Old and New Testaments of divine authority?

William. There are six in the Old Testament: The Adamic, the Noahic, the Abrahamic, the Sinaitic, the Aaronic, or sacerdotal, and the Monarchic with David and his line.

Olympas. Do you concur, Reuben, with that view of the matter?

Reuben. I think there are a plurality of covenants with Abraham—one concerning his natural offspring and their inheritance, and another concerning Christ.

Olympas. Can you give us the names of these covenants?

Reuben. Paul speaks of the "*covenant concerning Christ*," made four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law. Gal. iii. 17. And Stephen calls the covenant found in Gen. xvii. "*the covenant of circumcision*." This was some twenty-four or twenty-five years after the former.

Olympas. Whom did these two covenants respect?

Thomas. That concerning Christ respects the whole world; that respecting circumcision respected the seed of Abraham only or his natural offspring.

Olympas. What is the date of the covenant of circumcision, William?

William. It was made in the hundredth year of Abraham, four hundred and five years before giving the law.

Olympas. And what was the date of "the covenant concerning Christ?"

William. It was made in the year of Abraham 75, or four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law; and respected spiritual blessings only through Christ.

Olympas. There are, then, two covenants with Abraham—one concerning flesh; another concerning spirit—his natural offspring and Christ; the one represented by Hagar and Ishmael—the other by Sarah and Isaac. Gal. iv. So that we have *two* at least with Abraham. Indeed, some reckon three—one concerning the Messiah, Gen. xii.; one concerning Canaan, Gen. xv.; one concerning his fleshly seed, Gen. xvii. But the two last being engrossed, Gen. xvii., make but one covenant concerning his fleshly seed, and that leaves the other for his spiritual or believing children wherever they may be found. We may then count a covenant with Adam, one with Noah, two with Abraham, one with the whole nation Sinai, one with Aaron, and one with David, in all seven. The great covenantees are Adam and his heirs, Noah and his heirs, Abraham and his heirs natural, Abraham

and his heirs spiritual, the Jews and their heirs, Aaron and his heirs, David and his heirs. Now, to understand these seven covenants, is to understand the Old Testament well, and that is the best preparation for the New. But as I wish frequently to touch upon these covenants till you all comprehend their meaning, I will dismiss them for the present with one observation, viz.— You are all interested directly in the first two—*passively*, indeed, as were all the fowls of heaven and the cattle in the Noahic covenant, of which we now treat. You were born under the dominion of two; but none of you by virtue of mere natural birth can inherit the blessings of the covenant concerning Christ. You must become the children of the Christian covenant by faith in the Messiah. Then, indeed, if you be Christ's, you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

CONVERSATION X.

Olympas. BEFORE reading the tenth chapter of Genesis this morning, I ask the family by what authority it is said that Noah was a hundred and twenty years in building the ark?

William. The Lord said man's days should be a hundred and twenty years when he repented that he had made him, and immediately gave orders for building the ark. Now we presume that Noah was obedient to the heavenly precept, and soon commenced.

Olympas. But a gentleman who heard our conversation on Gen. vi., has observed that the birth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth was announced before the order to build the ark. And as Shem was only ninety-eight years old when the flood commenced, the ark could not have been a hundred and twenty years in building. How do you dispose of this difficulty?

William. I never thought of that before.

Olympas. How do you dispose of it, Reuben?

Reuben. It does not lie in my way: for I have had my doubts about the time the ark was a-building. I think that in one hundred and twenty years some parts of it would have been worm eaten, and consequently unsafe.

Olympas. What, Thomas, do you say to this difficulty?

Thomas. The fact that the sons of Noah are mentioned before the order to build the ark, does

not prove that they were born before that order. Historians sometimes anticipate themselves. Thus Moses gives an account of the generation of the heavens and the earth, and afterwards the formation of the earth. But the reason why I have supposed that the ark was a hundred and twenty years in building, is from the words of Peter. In his first epistle he says the long-suffering of God waited while the ark was preparing. Now as he measures the long-suffering by the time of building the ark, or the building of the ark by the long-suffering, we are authorized to say, that as the long-suffering is affirmed to have been a hundred and twenty years, the ark was that time in being builded. Besides, I see all our chronologists date the order for building the ark with the promise of one hundred and twenty years forbearance.

Olympas. So I reason. It is probable, however, that Noah consumed several years in the preparations for that stupendous superstructure. It is not unreasonable to suppose that half the time was spent in getting out and seasoning the materials, &c.

Thomas. There are some points in the ninth chapter which were deferred, not yet attended to—Noah's drunkenness and the irreverence of Ham, with the curse on Canaan.

Olympas. True, these points were not considered in our last lesson. Well, then, what think you, James, was the employment of Noah? You remember Adam was a gardener, Cain a farmer, and Abel a shepherd. How did the new world begin?

James. Noah began to be a husbandman, or farmer, and planted a vineyard.

Olympas. This was a new pursuit. The cultivation of the vine is, however, sanctioned by authority very ancient and very high. But was it not a snare to Noah, Eliza?

Eliza. Noah drank to excess, and was drunken.

Olympas. You must not judge too hastily about this affair. Noah in all probability was ignorant of the power of the juice of the grape. And no one can lawfully infer that this ever occurred before or after in the life of this good and excellent man, the father and saviour of the present world. The innocence of Noah in this accident is fully proved from the fact that he was gifted with the spirit of prophecy immediately on awaking from this sleep of wine. He foresaw in a glance of his eye the future destinies of his sons. Who of the three sons dishonoured his father, William?

William. Ham, the father of Canaan. Why Canaan was cursed for this deed of his father I cannot say; but it would seem as if the curse fell on him.

Olympas. It fell not upon him specially, but upon his descendants. Still, as in the family of Adam and Abraham, the behaviour of the father yet affects the offspring, the curse upon Canaan (probably a participant with his father) has descended to many generations.—Children are *temporally* involved in all the fortunes of their parents. If eternally, it is because of something of their own superadded. The curse on Canaan, or on this branch of Noah's family, is that of servitude in this world. It reaches no farther. But the

descendants of Ham, in some branches of his family, especially in the line of Canaan and Cush, have been the veriest slaves to Shem and Japheth. What means the name *Ham*, Reuben?

Reuben. You taught us that Ham signifies *burnt*, or *black*. The Cushites, the eldest branch of Ham's family, dwelt in the hottest part of Asia, and from them it is believed that the Ethiopians descended. Egypt also was formerly known as the land of Ham.

Olympas. How long after the delivery of this prophecy was it before the Canaanites served the sons of Shem?

Thomas. Thirty Canaanitish kings were subdued by Joshua, who made the Gibeonites and others servants of the Israelites some eight hundred years after this time. The Greeks and the Romans, sons too of Japheth, subdued the Tyrians and Carthagenians, whose offspring have served both the Saracens and the Turks.

Olympas. Some have justified servitude from the fact that it came from the Lord—was foretold and ordained of Heaven. What think you, Reuben—how would you reason this point?

Reuben. The Lord's foretelling an event does not authorize any one to bring it about; for then Judas would have been innocent in betraying the Lord. If then, the Lord, foreseeing the future fortunes of Canaan, did not interpose to prevent them, but intending to permit them, foretold their occurrence, no person is warranted or allowed to inflict any evil upon them.

Olympas. So the scriptures and right reason teach us. The Lord gives over to their enemies them that have forsaken him, and yet he will

punish them that have afflicted them. But a more accurate attention to the distribution of the three branches of Noah's family will assist us in tracing the fortunes of this people. Let us read the tenth chapter of Genesis, the most valuable piece of ancient history in the world.

[The chapter being read, the conversation is resumed.]

Olympas. With which of the three sons does the historian commence when about to show the location of their descendants?

Susan. With Japheth?

Olympas. Why?

Susan. Because it is most comely to begin with the eldest, and Japheth was older than either Shem or Ham.

Olympas. How many sons had Japheth, James?

James. Seven viz.—Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras.

Olympas. And of their sons how many, William, are named?

William. Seven also—only, however, the sons of Gomer and of Javan.

Olympas. In profane history tell us, Thomas, who corresponds in name with Japheth?

Thomas. The ancient Greeks generally, I believe, call Japheth by the name of *Japetus*.

Olympas. So historians generally concur. The Greeks are therefore sprung from Japheth: the Germans, from Gomer; the Scythians and Tartars, from Magog; the Medes, from Madai; the Ionians, from Javan; the Iberians, from Tubal; the Muscovites, from Meshech; and the Thracians, from Tiras. What countries were settled with them, Thomas?

Thomas. Europe generally, with the northern extremes of Asia.

Olympas. By these seven sons, and the seven sons of Japheth, were “the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands;” all Europe and the northern parts of Asia Minor, and most probably some parts of ancient America were of the posterity of Japheth. God, then, has fulfilled his promise to Japheth. He said he would enlarge Japheth—indeed, the word *Japheth* signifies *enlargement*. How many sons of Ham are named, Eliza?

Eliza. Only four, viz—Cush, and Mizraim, Phut and Canaan.

Olympas. How many grandsons, William?

William. Twenty-four are named, besides other descendants.

Olympas. From these that are named nations arose, whose countries are sometimes called after them. What countries were settled by the four sons of Ham?

Thomas. Part of Arabia and Ethiopia was settled by Cush; Egypt, by Mizraim; Lybia, by Phut; and the Promised Land, by Canaan.

Olympas. Amongst the descendants of the third and fourth generation of Ham there are some very renowned names, Reuben.

Reuben. Yes, sir.—Nimrod, Ashur, and Philistim.

Olympas. What great cities were founded by these, Eliza?

Eliza. Babel, Enoch, Accad, Nineveh, Rehoboth, and Calah.

Olympas. Two of these, Babel and Nineveh, are of great renown; and, indeed, the names of the sons of Ham are inscribed on many countries

—Egypt was formerly called Mizraim; and Seba, Havilah, Sheba, Lybia, Philistina, Sidon, &c. unequivocally declare their origin.

William. Have we not a proof that events are antedated in the narrative, or that the order of narration is not always the order of events, in the sixth and twentieth verses of this chapter.

Olympas. Wherein, William?

William. We are told in the fifth verse that the Isles of the Gentiles were settled by the sons of Japheth *according to their language*; and yet there was but one language in the world: for in the first verse of the next chapter we are told the whole earth was of one language and of one speech?

Olympas. William, I believe you are right; and in the twentieth verse also of the tenth chapter we are informed, as you say, that the sons of Ham according to their tongues settled certain countries—those of one tongue going together.

William. Was I not justified, then, in saying that the ark was one hundred and twenty years in building; for the mention of the birth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth before the narrative of the order to build the ark, no more proves that they were born before the order, than that there were many tongues in the earth before the building of Babel, because we are informed of many languages before we are informed of the building of the tower which occasioned the cleft tongues.

Olympas. I think, William, you are triumphant in this potent fact against all the world, should they attempt to prove either the order of Christian worship or any other events, merely from the uniformity of historians in narrating things in the

order of occurrence. But to keep to our lesson, tell me, James, how many sons had Shem?

James. Five, sir—Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

Olympas. What countries, Eliza, think you, are denoted by those five chiefs of the Shemites?

Eliza. Elam was the ancient name of Persia; Asshur, of Assyria; Arphaxad, of *Artacata*, first called Arrapacha, in Armenia; Lud gives Lydia, in Asia Minor, and Aram gives the Aramians, afterwards called Syrians.

Olympas. Very true. We have, then, the Persians, Assyrians, Arminians, Lydians, and Syrians, deriving their names and origin from the five sons of Shem. And what, Sarah, can you tell about the grandsons of Shem?

Sarah. I read of Uz, Hul, Gether, Mash, Salah, and Eber, Peleg, and Joktan.

Olympas. Yes, my daughter; but Eber was the great grandson of Shem, and Peleg and Joktan were the great great grandsons.

Sarah. I think if they were so far off, they should be called the little grandson, and the little little grandsons of Shem.

Olympas. Well, custom says great great grandfather and great grandson, and we cannot change it now; but *great* applied to ancestors and *little* to descendants, might perhaps have done as well.

Thomas. Were the Hebrews so called from Eber, their father?

Olympas. What do you say, William?

William. I think they were, if Eber was one of their progenitors; but I cannot learn that he was from this chapter; for we have only the descen-

dants of one of his sons, Joktan, and not those of Peleg.

Olympas. In other chapters we are informed that *Eber* was an ancestor of Abraham; still it is not certain that they were called Hebrews from Eber. *Aber*, or, according to other orthoepists, *Eber*, signifies *passing over*; and because Abraham passed over the Euphrates on his way to Canaan, some learned men with more plausibility argue that they were called Hebrews, or Pilgrims, from their passing over the Euphrates, and because for a long time they had no country of their own. I incline to this opinion. They confessed, said Paul, that they were pilgrims (i. e. Hebrews) in the land of promise. By dwelling in tents in their own land, they lived as foreigners or as persons on a journey. So ought Christians to live as pilgrims here.

Edward and Henry, as you have been sick for some days, I have not interrogated you, not having had time to prepare your lessons by previous study; but now that you have heard the last two lessons, I must see what attention you have bestowed on our examination. Tell me, then, Henry, how you would compute the relative population of the three branches of Noah's family from all you have heard.

Henry. Do you mean their present population, or their population at any given time?

Olympas. I mean their population in all time since the first settlement of their families; for we calculate upon this principle, that the drawbacks from climate, soil, wars, pestilences, famines, &c. are equal or nearly so.

Henry. I would count all their descendants

mentioned by Moses at the time of their settlement, and making the aggregate amount the denominator, and the descendants of each the numerator, I would thus display their relative numbers now.

Olympas. And how, Edward, would you go to work to solve this problem?

Edward. I would not take all the descendants mentioned by Moses, because he gives more generations of one than of another. Now had he given the same number of generations of them all, Henry's rule would be correct. I would, therefore, take the sons, and leave the other descendants.

Olympas. Edward, you are right; but Henry's principle and yours are the same—you only differ in the application of it. Well, Henry, give us your denominator and your three numerators.

Henry. Japheth, *maximus natu*, the oldest, had *seven* sons; Ham, the *senior*, the second born, had only *four* sons; and Shem, the *minimus natu*, or the youngest, had *five* sons. Now add all their sons for a denominator, and we have sixteen in all. Then the relative data are, Japheth has seven-sixteenths of the human race; Ham, four-sixteenths; and Shem, five-sixteenths.

Olympas. Very good, Henry. You suppose the same ratio of daughters as sons, and that is reasonable. But is not a difference of one in the starting a great deal in a thousand years—more than the mere relative value at the beginning?

Edward. No: the relative number is still the same. For example: Suppose that they all had exactly the same number of grandsons—that is to say, four each; then Japheth's grandsons would

be twenty-eight ; Ham's sixteen ; Shem's twenty. The denominator would then be sixty-four, and Japheth would have twenty-eight sixty-fourths—that is just equal to seven-sixteenths ; Ham would have sixteen sixty-fourths, that is just four-sixteenths ; and Shem twenty sixty-fourths, that is five-sixteenths.

Olympas. You have carried your point. We may safely conclude, then, that in all probability while only one-fourth of the human race have sprung from Ham, and a little more than a third from Shem, nearly one half are sprung from Japheth. But, Thomas, what does all this prove?

Thomas. It all proves that Japheth received his name by prophecy, and that Noah spake by the Spirit when he said, “ God shall *enlarge* Japheth.” His name is ENLARGEMENT.

Olympas. Make room for Japheth ! God gave him a large estate—the north of Asia, all Europe, and the most of America. But better still, “ He shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” What of this, my sons ?

[All silent.]

William. It is difficult—because 1st. “ *He*” may refer to God or to Japheth. Then it would be, “ *God* shall dwell in the tents of Shem.”

Olympas. This was true ; but still, although it might be so answered, I prefer to read, “ And he, *Japheth*, shall dwell in the tents of Shem.” This denotes not only what has often happened, viz.—that the sons of Japheth in the persons of the Scythians, Greeks, Romans, Tartars, Britons, &c., have taken the lands and houses of the sons of Shem, but that his descendants should partake of the blessings of the Lord God of Shem, and be

made one body with them under Christ. But our time is drawing to a close, and it is whispered into my ears that an important point in the ninth chapter has been passed over. But we cannot finish these things perfectly in one or two courses : we must leave something for the next time. But before we conclude this lesson, Edward, tell me what countries were possessed and are still possessed by the sons of Shem ?

Edward. Japheth, as before stated, peopled all Europe, Lesser and Northern Asia, and there being but forty miles or less, bridged too by islands, between the northern ends of Asia and America, it is most probable that the northern hive of Asia sent some swarms across the island of Behring into this vast country, and so the sons of Japheth are American, European, and Asiatic.

Shem filled the upper and central Asia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Media, Persia, and the countries reaching to the ancient Ganges and the Indus ; while Ham got the hot regions in the south of Asia and Africa, Egypt and Philistina, Lybia, Sidon, Tyre, Carthage, and some of the islands of the Southern Ocean.

Olympas. Any thing to say about the colours of these families ?

Henry. The lessons you gave us on the colours of the human race I do not fully remember ; but this much I recall, that Asia is yellow ; America, red ; Africa, black ; and Europe, white.

Olympas. True : as these lands approach each other they mingle their colours, or shade sinks or rises into shade, till we have the white, the yellow, the red, and the black. But the moral of this

lesson, and we will file something for to-morrow. What is the moral, Thomas?

Thomas. As respects the whole affair of the division of the earth amongst these three sons, and their respective families, the facts are first to be considered. Shem had the most honourable family, and the richest and best patrimony. All the Prophets, Apostles, and lights of the world, together with Emmanuel himself, belonged to Shem. Japheth had the largest posterity and the most extensive land and sea estate; together with the fairest, hardiest, and most enterprising people: while Ham has the fewest people, only one-fourth; Shem and Japheth having full three-fourths of the human race. His patrimony was small, his colour dark, his talents few and feeble, and his rank inferior to that of his brothers. The cause was, *he dishonoured his father.*

Olympas. What a lesson! What a moral! May the Lord lead you all to honour your father and your mother, which is the first command with promise!

CONVERSATION XI.

Olympas. SOME of you said that there were some important points omitted in the ninth chapter. Who will mention them?

Thomas. The first six verses of the ninth chapter, so far as recollected by me, were passed by without much or any notice.

Olympas. Read them, Thomas.

[He reads them.]

Olympas. What are the points of importance here?

Reuben. There is the grant for flesh for food, which seems to be a new arrangement.

Olympas. Wherein does it, Thomas, appear to be new?

Thomas. Because allusion is in the grant to a former one—"As I have given you the vegetable, so now give I you the animal kingdom for food." So it would seem to read to me.

Olympas. I will now wait upon the second and third class for their voluntary remarks on this passage. You of the second class will therefore proceed with your own remarks and interrogatories.

William. I have seen the second verse fully accomplished on many occasions while travelling with my uncle through the wild woods where no person lived. God said to Noah that he would put the fear and dread of man upon all the beasts of the field, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all reptiles. Hence when man appears they all flee. I have

seen squirrels, wild turkeys, and various birds all assembled in one place, and familiarly sporting together; but when a man appeared among them they all fled. There is a reverence for man, a dread of his presence upon all animals, differing much from their fear of one another.

Mary. God, in bestowing flesh for food to man, did not allow him to eat the blood. Is it, therefore, still wrong for us to eat blood?

Edward. I should suppose it was, because it seems to have been a precept to the whole world; for as yet there was neither Jew nor Gentile, but one family included all human nature.

Eliza. I wonder what harm there is in eating blood, more than there is in eating flesh; or why it should be wrong to eat blood, and not wrong to eat the flesh formed out of it and nourished by it.

Olympas. A divine precept always settles what is right and what is wrong. The doctor's say blood is unwholesome—a very indigestible substance. But this is not the reason given. “*The life is the blood.*”—This was never known to naturalists till since Hunter's time; but God made it known to Moses long before. It would seem not only to be a prohibition of cruelty, but also to have some reference to the great fact that blood was given for an atonement, and to be in sacred use for expiation. But the fact that God prohibits blood is enough. The man that eats blood sins against the precept of God given to father Noah for the benefit of all his children. Do you remember any allusion to this precept, or any similar prohibition in the New Testament, Eliza?

Eliza. The decrees passed at Jerusalem, on a reference from Antioch in Syria, forbid to the

Gentile Christians blood, whether by itself or in animals strangled, having the blood in their bodies.

Olympas. This, then, is enough, Blood is forbidden the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Christians. Surely, then, we ought to abstain from it. It has often been observed that the eating of blood brutalizes those who are addicted to it; and certain it is that they are savages who drink it from the veins of animals. Still I opine that our heavenly Father, intending it for a most sacred and to us salutary use, enjoined an abstinence from it chiefly on this account.

William. There is yet a very obscure point in this context which I cannot understand. It is in the fifth and sixth verses.

Olympas. I have reserved these for the senior class. I ask the views of the senior class on this passage.

Reuben, The fifth verse begins with a solemn declaration that God would require the blood of human life from the hand of beasts. Whether the Lord meant he would demand human blood for cruelty shown to beasts, or that he would not allow a beast to live that had ever killed any one, I am not confident. I refer this point to some of my class-mates.

Thomas Dilworth. Had not some preacher in my hearing strongly affirmed that this passage referred to all acts of cruelty to beasts—such as horse-racing, cock-fighting, and all manner of cruelty to brutes—I should not have found any difficulty in understanding it. To me it seems to indicate that God would require at the hand of every beast the blood which it shed. Of course it

is human blood. By this phrase I would understand that he would allow any animal to be slain for slaying man. Nay, indeed, not only allow it to be slain, but he solemnly requires it to be slain.

Francis. While I accord with the preacher who says that all cruelty, oppression, and hard service imposed on animals, deserves the frowns of indignant heaven; and while I believe that the man who for his pleasure, or even for his interest, abuses a horse, an ox, or a dog, will be charged with it in the day of judgment, if he repent not; especially horse-racers, bull-baiters, and cock-fighters, I think this is fully taught in other places, and that here exclusive reference is had to shedding human blood.

Rufus. Truly, I think that he that said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox treading out the corn," will not hold that man guiltless who starves his horse, who overworks his ass, or wantonly torments any creature detrimental to his existence.

Mary. Mr. Cowper on this subject, exactly expresses my idea, only more elegantly than I could have done it—

"I would not place him on my list of friends,
Though polish'd with fine manners and good sense
Who heedlessly would tread upon a worm."

Olympas. I may conclude, then, that we all agree in the sentiment, while we repudiate this as the sense of the passage.

Thomas Dilworth. I think in this case, as in all others, the context helps us out of the difficulty. The preservation of human life from violence seems to be the mind of the Spirit in this connexion.

It may read, "At the hand of every beast, and at the hand of man will I require the blood of your lives." Nay, farther, he adds, "At the hand of *every man's brother* will I require the life of man."

Reuben. And this certainly is confirmed by the following unequivocal precept: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Does not this command some person to kill the man who has voluntarily killed his brother? And if man must die for killing man, surely a beast ought to die for the same deed, although incapable of reason, and therefore not a subject of moral law.

Rufus. But this would not simply allow, but constrain the punishment of murder by inflicting death in every case. And was this the law ever since the flood?

Francis. It was not the law before the flood; for Cain, the first murderer, who literally slew his own brother, was not put to death, although his blood called to heaven for vengeance. And is it the Christian law?

Olympas. Cain was not killed—civil government was not yet set up—nor, indeed, does it appear that civil government was instituted by any divine authority before the flood. And this may explain the reason why the earth was filled with violence, private vengeance and retaliation. But in newly organizing human society after the flood, God early provided against the outrage of the antediluvian age, by making it the duty of man to set up a magistracy clothed with power of life and death.

Thomas. Are we, then, to understand that it is now the duty of the civil magistrate to punish

murder with death, in consequence of a precept given to Noah? Is not the Old Testament done away by the New, and a better—that is, a milder, a Christian government set up? I read something about the *lex talionis*, the law of reprisals and retaliation, as being contrary to the genius of Christianity. I would be glad to understand this matter.

Olympas. The Scriptures called the “*Old Testament*,” said to be done away, is that described by Paul which came from Mount Sinai in Arabia. That was the covenant of the Jewish peculiarities. It was an episode or digression from the patriarchal institution, and not being identified with it at its rise, or in its history, it could not be abolished with it. Some learned men have, indeed, confounded this precept with the law of Moses, and thus subjected it to the same abrogation. But this precept is older than Abraham by three hundred and fifty years, and older than Moses by more than seven centuries. *The precept is therefore as old and as universal as the present world.* The Jewish code had its cities of refuge for the innocent man-slayer, and its death for the murderer, and various other regulations on this subject. But here is a precept of God antecedent to it, not confined by it, and as broad as the whole stream of human nature, and extending through all dispensations and generations of men, neither vacated nor abolished by law or gospel.

Reuben. Does not the Sermon on the Mount teach “No longer eye for eye, tooth for tooth, stripe for stripe, burning for burning?”

Olympas. So it does; but that sermon was addressed not to civil governments but to Christ’s

disciples. And what have Christians, as such, to do with putting men to death, or of sitting on civil judgment seats! There is no compulsion in Christ's kingdom—no prosecution of disciples of Christ by disciples before civil magistrates on any account known in the New Testament. It proves nothing here to admit that Christians are not to retaliate any injury whatever. The question is not what Christian or Jewish governments, but what *human* governments are to do. The text says, "He that sheddeth *man's* blood, by *man* shall his blood be shed." This is a positive statute of man's Creator; and if civil government be an ordinance of God, then the ministers of that government have sin upon them who disobey the precept which institutes all civil and political rule. For to what precept, if not to this, shall men look for civil authority of any sort! This precept has in it the whole of civil government. In giving to man power over the life of man, as God's minister to execute wrath, power over the entire person and property of man is delegated, inasmuch as the greater always includes the less. God has sometime and somewhere given the sword to the civil magistrate. It is a real sword, and not a picture of one, which the civil magistrate wears upon his thigh. It is a sword to shed the blood of him that has taken the life of man in deliberate wrath or malice. Now if God has given the sword, when and where did he do it, if not in the text before us? This, my young friends, is the true and primitive and divine institution of civil government which has to do with *man* as *man*—not with man as a Jew or a Christian; but I repeat it, with men *as man*. Those who would strip the

magistrate of the sword, have mistaken God's precepts, and have aimed, without intending it, a mortal thrust at all civil government. When there is no world, but all church, we will need no jails, pillories, scaffolds, swords, or magistrates; but till then I plead for the civil magistracy and the civil sword for a terror to evil doers, and for a praise to them that do well.

If God's precept were obeyed, and every duellist and murderer were promptly put to death as the Lord has commanded, many lives would be saved, and the world would stand in awe of the righteous judgment of God. But I fear there is much blood-guiltiness on the heads of this land for their winking at various forms of murder, and therefore disobeying a positive command of God,—“*By man shall his blood be shed.*”

Rufus. Ought the civil sword of which you speak to be employed in shedding any other blood than that of the murderer? For example, ought the thief, the robber, the burglar, or the man guilty of arson, to suffer death?

Olympas. By no means: except in case of house-burning human life be not taken.

Francis. But the reason given for slaying the murderer, or for enforcing the precept, is to me somewhat mysterious. It is, “For in the image of God made he man.”

Olympas. This speaks a volume. It is not in the spirit of retaliation nor of restitution that the murderer is slain. It is because he has profaned the image of God by casting it to the ground. To kill a man wrongfully is to despise the image of God, and for this alone the malefactor deserves to die. No man therefore has a right to forgive

murder. It is an offence which man cannot forgive; for it is more than the simple breach of a divine law: it is a marked contempt for the very person of the Lawgiver himself. It is a crime that caps the climax of human daring, and leaves a brand black as hell and deep as eternity on the face of him that perpetrates it. "No murderer can have eternal life abiding in him." The devil's worst character is, that he was a murderer—a duellist from the beginning.

My sons, be admonished by this lesson never to cherish an unkind feeling to any human being. It is dangerous to get angry with your brother. Cain's murder was the fruit of Cain's passion. Anger sleepeth only in the bosom of a fool. Let not the sun ever set upon your wrath, and it will never rise upon your guilt. Regard that class of murderers called "duellists" as unworthy of your company. Remember that however men in their folly may wink at their crimes, the broad stamp of heaven's indignation is upon them, which nothing but the blood of Christ, accompanied by the purest tears of heart-felt sorrow that ever dimmed the vision of the sincere penitent, can wash away. To appear before the tribunal of Christ with the blood of God's image resting upon one's conscience, is the most hideous and appalling thought that ever pierced with anguish the human heart. Remember the petition—"Lord, abandon us not to temptation, but deliver us from evil."

I had intended a few questions for Susan, James, and Henry, as well as for John, who has been so long absent from home, but the time will not now admit. We have finished, I think, the first ten chapters of Genesis, and are now fairly

up to the eleventh—to the building of Babel, and the confounding of human speech, which, after my return from the city, I intend to take up in order. Meantime, you will reconsider the past, and prepare for the sequel of Genesis.

CONVERSATION XII.

Olympas. My dear children, hitherto has the Lord helped us. He has brought us to see the early dawn of a new year. Its first sun already gilds the gates of day and spreads its golden radiance over the joyful chambers of the morning. We welcome its rising glory and praise the name of the Lord whose mercy endureth for ever. To Him we owe life, and health, and all that we have that is worth possessing, with all that we hope that, is worth enjoying. Praised be his name! We live and enjoy life, while many as young, as cheerful, and as fond of life as you, whose eyes on last new year's morning sparkled with life, and whose rose cheeks bloomed with health and beauty, have "left the warm precincts of the cheerful day," and gone down into the cold, dark, and dreary mansions of the dead. Let us sing a song of thanksgiving, and consecrate this first fruits of the new year to the Father of our mercies, whose days are the days of eternity, and whose years know neither beginning nor end.

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past
While life, and thought, and being last,
And immortality endures," &c. &c. &c.

We read this morning the eleventh chapter of Genesis, which is itself the commencement of a

memorable epoch in the history of the human race. You will read audibly and slowly five verses each in rotation.

“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth,” &c.

[The chapter being read, the question was. Who were confederate in this bold and heaven-defying project of raising a fortification against heaven; whereupon the conversation commenced]

Thomas. It would seem as the whole human

race were confederate, inasmuch as it is said, "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech; and immediately after it is said, "they journeyed from the east."

Olympas. The *whole earth* is not the antecedent to *they*. The construction intimates no more than as men journeyed from the east. Besides it would be much more incredible, because without any evidence or reason that the whole human race then existing should rise up and leave all their improvements, and the labours of a century or more behind them, and go in quest of a new location, than to make the pronoun *they* represent a part of mankind, as we are wont to use that word every day; as when we say, "They say so," "The people love to have it so," and "They will have it so;" intimating not the whole human race, but those of a certain district or country. True, there is little or nothing of any importance depending on the latitude we give to the pronoun *they* in this passage. I am more concerned to determine the legitimate use of the sacred language, than to establish any point of doctrine involved in this passage.

Edward. Were we to suppose that Noah, Shem, and all their immediate descendants were a part of their colony, we should then have to encounter other and greater difficulties, as it appears to me, than merely to find cause for their abandonment of their early plantations and local attachments.

Olympas. Of these difficulties of which you speak, will you state the chief?

Edward. We should have Noah who was perfect in his generation, and Shem, and the holy seed all in one daring conspiracy against heaven

—all engaged in an attempt to prostrate the designs of God in allotting to each family its own country and clime; or, if not in this, in something worse—the erection of an idolatrous temple devoted to the sun, as some of my late readings would clearly intimate.

Olympas. True, my dear Edward, this would be a strange case, that Noah, in one hundred and twenty years after the flood, who had faithfully served the Lord so many centuries before the flood, should now abandon his worship for idolatry, or for any scheme, to subvert his decrees and appointments. We think, therefore, that in journeying from the east they left in the east the faithful portion of the human race, who were determined to cleave to the patriarchal altar in the families of Noah and Shem. This new colony, this swarm from the east, as all ancient records seem to indicate, were, for the major part at least, composed of the families of Ham and Japheth.

With regard to language, James, how many were spoken before the flood?

James. Only one.

Olympas. And till this time of which we now speak, how many were spoken, Susan?

Susan. Only one “The whole earth was of one language and of one speech.”

Olympas. Can any of you tell the difference between being “all of one language and of one speech?” Are not language and speech the same thing?

Edward. The margin says they were of one *lip* and of one *word*. But this may mean the same thing.

Olympas. Unity of design and unity of language appear to express the original full as well as any other terms we have. Now that this is the meaning is further evident from the sixth verse. "And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they all have one language; and this they begin to do, and nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." And hence we learn the power of unity of language and unity of design. If the whole world still spoke one language, and were of one opinion, who could calculate to what extent they could carry any project of good or evil intent! The strength of Satan's realm consists much in this fact, that he and his angels are of one language and of one design. What, William, constituted the region called "the east," in the Old Testament style?

William. Mesopotamia, Assyria, and the lands east of the Euphrates.

Olympas. The tide of emigration has, it seems, from ancient days, rolled westwardly. From Mount Ararat Noah and his sons descended the valleys that marked the course of the Euphrates. Tell me, William, what notable persons came from the East?

William. Abraham came from the East. From the mountains of the East Balaam came to curse Israel; and from the East came the Magi to pay their honours to the new-born King of the Jews. And "still the star of empire westward wends its way."

Olympas. Where, Susan, did this migrating colony first settle?

Susan. They found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

Olympas. Tell me, Edward, where Shinar lay?

Edward. It lay along the Tigris, or was a part of that rich valley that bordered on, or lay between the Tigris and the Euphrates, once the richest valley in the world.

Olympas. And there they projected the tower of Babel, that immense pile, designed as a monument of their skill and as a means of consolidation and concentration to prevent their dispersion over the earth. Of what, James, was this tower composed?

James. Of brick and bitumen.

Olympas. How high was it, William?

William. According to Strabo and other ancient historians, such as Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, it was one stadium, or five hundred feet in height, having a statue of Belus of forty feet.

Olympas. And what was its square at the base, Henry?

Henry. You said it was one thousand feet.

Edward. It was almost as high as the steeple of St. Paul's Church in London, which formerly measured five hundred and twenty feet.—But since the fire of London it has been reduced, and it was twenty feet higher than the loftiest pyramid of Egypt.

Olympas. Whence, Edward, had it the name *Babel*?

Edward. It was called *Babel* because there human language was confounded, and because from that place the Lord dispersed them over the earth.

Olympas. It was, indeed, a marvellous confusion; because it was instantaneous, because it seems to have run in families according to con-

sanguinity, and because it was both a bond of union and a cause of schism. Many languages made many parties, and one language made one party. For the Lord, it is said, divided them according to their languages—"every one after his tongue, after their families in their nations."

Henry. Did the Lord come down himself to see this city and tower which they builded?

Olympas. This is rather a form of expressing that the Lord took notice of it, and considered the meaning and design of it, than that he literally descended from heaven and came to Shinar to survey this work of rebellion, or of idolatry.

Thomas. Into how many languages were the Babel-builders divided? I have read somewhere that they were divided into seventy-two, according to the number of the Sanhedrim.

Olympas. This is more imaginative than real. It is obvious to those who have closely examined the structure of the languages of the world, that they have sprung from a common origin, and that three branches corresponding to the three sons of Noah, may be demonstrated to be the remote parents of all the modern languages of the whole earth. True, indeed, their languages are greatly mixed up with innovations and amalgamations which greatly obscure their common origin, and justify the hypothesis that the languages introduced at Babel were as numerous as the nations and colonies into which these arch-masons formed themselves.

Many linguists have been at pains to trace the origin of the languages of Asia, Africa, Europe, and America, to one common fountain. Take,

for example, the very word *origin*: it is plainly sprung from the Latin *origo*; from *orior*, I raise; whence *oriens*, the East; and the *orient*; and thus *orior* from the Greek *oro*, to raise; and that again from the Hebrew *or*, to lift up oneself, to raise. How evident the descent! Hebrew *or*, Greek *oro*, Latin *orior*, *orient*, *origo*, English *origin*. Take another: The word *air* comes from the Latin *aura*, from the Greek *aer*, from the Hebrew *aur*. But we may trace its kindred branches still farther: in many of the Eastern languages are evidences of its passing through them. Thus in the Chaldee *ur* denotes *fire*; in the Egyptian *or* represents the *Sun*; in the Gentoo, or Sanscrit, *our* expresses *day*; and in many Eastern languages the same word denotes light, fire, and air. Of all the dialects the Hebrew spoken by Noah, Shem, Abraham, and Moses, seems to have escaped the wreck of tongues, and to have been the dialect of Adam. Some foreign words are found in it, but that they have crept in from junior rather than from senior dialects, is more probable than any other supposition. Thus we find Latin words in Greek authors, and Welsh terms in Roman.

Among the sister dialects of Europe, the French, Spanish, German, Italian, &c. we have many proofs of a Roman parentage; and among the sister dialects of Asia, the Chaldee, Abrabic, Sanscrit, Chinese, &c. &c. we find equal vouchers for a Hebrew ancestry. But the Lord inflicted these diversities of tongues in indignation for past abuses, and as merciful preventions of greater misfortunes to the human race.

Thomas. And may not the neighbourhood, posi-

tions, and localities of certain nations—their frequent intercourse, commerce, and conflicts, greatly contribute to the introduction of many foreign words into all their languages, and have had an influence in assimilating them to one another in some respects?

Olympas. True, it had, as in the case of France and England, whose dialects, terms, and phrases are now more incorporated with each other, than they were even some fifty years ago. Tell me, Thomas, in what positions did the elder nations after the flood radiate from the dwellings of the first plantation?

Thomas. As I have learned, the three families of Noah first located themselves bordering on each other in the very central regions of Armenia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia. From these, time after time, new colonies were formed, and new and even far distant communities erected. To every point of the compass they directed their way from the central settlements. The Chinese, Persians, Ethiopians, and Indians directed their journeys in an eastern direction; the Arabians, Egyptians, Phenicians, Lybians, and some of the Ethiopians, went southward; while the Goths, Greeks, and Latins, Peruvians, Mexicans, and Americans migrate westwardly, leaving the North for the Scythians, Celts, and Tartars.

Olympas. The affinities in the dialects of these people and nations are in the ratio of their proximity to each other, and the frequency and familiarity of their intercourse, and satisfactorily demonstrate the force of circumstances that sometimes combine in the amalgamation of dialects and the transformation of language. But enough

of this for the present. What moral lessons are we taught in this affair? Will you all in rotation tell me your reflections, and what moral instruction you have derived from this marvellous event? We shall begin at the youngest and ascend.

Susan. How happy it would have been for us had Ham and Japheth accepted of their lot and not presumed to unite in opposing God! We would then have had to learn but one grammar!

James. And we could have travelled all over the earth and needed no interpreter! How many good lessons we might have learned from those nations whose speech we cannot now understand!

Henry. And then, too, we would have needed no translations of the Scriptures, and could have sent them all over the earth as soon as we can send them all over America!

William. There would have been no controversy about the meaning of foreign words, and in a few years we might have got from school and been employed in business which would be better for ourselves than others!

Mary. We would also have loved mankind better; for those who speak the same language always like one another better than those who speak foreign languages. Now had we all spoken one language, still there would have been more love and less hatred in the world. Indeed I do not think there would have been half so many wars.

Edward. I have read that language was at first a divine revelation, and now I believe it; for as many new languages began to be spoken on the same day, they could not have been acquired by art, but must have been communicated by God.

Eliza. On the day of Pentecost, God gave the gift of tongues to the Apostles, that they might gather the nations into one fold that had been scattered by the confusion of speech at the building of Babel. God can therefore make many languages a blessing after they have been a curse, and therefore I think the more languages we now learn the better, that we may converse and commune with more of the family of man.

Thomas. I have found a new argument for the truth and authenticity of the Bible in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. It is this: It gives a proper reason for what no infidel can explain. All animals on earth have a language of their own. Every species has its own dialect, and they understand one another. Birds and beasts of the same species, brought together from Asia, Africa, America, and Europe, understand one another. But "lands intersected by a narrow frith" understand not each other. Dialects interposed make enemies of nations, who else "like kindred drops had mingled into one." The true definition of a Barbarian is one that speaks an unknown tongue. Now why is it that man, the master spirit too of language is so babelized and confounded that he and his dog can parley with each other more fluently and intelligibly than he and his neighbour that lives across the river? This is a mystery—an anomaly which no infidel can explain without the fact that Moses records.

Olympas. The fact of the confusion of language is undeniable, and the cause, as you say, is inexplicable from all the lights of philosophy. It is therefore of the order of miracles, and a miracle must be assumed or believed in the case. The

sceptic, you mean, assumes one, and the Christian believes on good testimony: Proceed.

Reuben. So far as the first eleven chapters of Genesis develop the ways of God and the grand scheme of moral government, it appears to me that sin, even under a remedial system, requires severe and frequent interpositions of vengeance in the way of checks and restraints upon its progress. Already in a space of one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five years four tremendous checks have been laid upon its progress—the deluge, the contraction of the period of human life from hundreds to tens, the confusion of human speech, and the wide dispersion of mankind all over the earth. But for these, human guilt would have transcended even the bounds of God's forbearance.

John. And yet what misfortunes have resulted to mankind! what impediments to salutary, benevolent, and grand enterprize have followed these prolific calamities so necessary to the endurance of the world! But my principal moral reflection remains to be stated. It is this: If the confusion of speech was a necessary means to the dispersion of the human race—to the formation of distinct and rival nations; does it not seem, then, that the restoration of one language to the world is as indispensable to union, as dialects are to sects and parties? I do not assume that diversities of tongues are the only causes of division; but certainly they are a cause—a chief cause; and while they exist a strong, if not an insuperable barrier to union, harmony, and co-operation. The friends of union among nations and religious parties, it would seem, then, have a lesson of the most practical and influential

character in this chapter, the philosophy of which seems to me to suggest the only rational and practical course of uniting the jarring and discordant sects of Christendom and the world.

Olympas. True, very true. The restoration of a pure speech, and of one speech, is essential to the raising up of the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, the rebuilding of the city and the temple of the living God on earth, as the skilful architects of Galilee laid the foundation in Jerusalem of old. The creeds, then, are the dialects of Babylon: the Bible, the pure and the only divine speech. To call Bible things by Bible names is, as I have often told you, the only way to obtain a true, permanent, and blissful union among the people of God. But we have some other questions and suggestions to offer on this chapter at our next lesson.

CONVERSATION XIII

THE eleventh chapter of Genesis being slowly, audibly, and emphatically read, Olympas thus began :—

Tell me, Thomas, why became it necessary that human language should be shattered into so many dialects ?

Thomas. To break in pieces the power of the people—as it reads, “They have all one language, and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.”

Olympas. Unity of language is, then, a mighty power, not easily to be subdued. The strength of the heavenly city will in part consist in the unity of language of all its inhabitants. In the Millennium there will be but one language spoken in all the earth, according to some of the ancients; and that will be a portion of the social strength of the people of that day.

Reuben. Is that the meaning of the Greek verse at the bottom of the title of the Polumicrian Testament ?

Olympas. You allude to, “*Pollai men thneetois, gloottai, mia d’Athanoisin.*”

Reuben. Yes.

Olympas. That refers to the celestial state, and simply means, *Mortals speak many tongues—the immortals but one.* The times indicate a return to one language Protestant England will send

her language and her religion to every land and nation under heaven, wheresoever her merchants seek for wealth or her soldiers fight for glory. The cupidity of her merchants traverses all the ends of the earth, and pioneers the way for her armies and her navies to subdue the idolators that oppose her interests or her honour; while her missionaries, with the Sword of the Spirit, follow in their train and assail the idolatries of her colonies, and prepare the way for their submission to the King of the world. This honour seems to await England and her language because of the prayers and devotion of a larger remnant of the faithful in her realms than is found in any country in the four quarters of the globe. But this is rather prophetic than didactic, and we shall proceed to the sequel of the chapter. Let us have, Eliza, the names of the antediluvian progenitors of the Messiah.

Eliza. Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah.

Olympas. How old was Noah, James, the year of the flood?

James. Six hundred years.

Olympas. Sarah, how long from Adam to the flood?

Sarah. Sixteen hundred and fifty-six years.

Olympas. Name the patriarchs from Noah to Abraham.

Sarah. Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Heber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abraham.

Olympas. How many years from the flood to Abraham?

William. The flood occupied one year. Arphaxad was born two years *after the flood*; Salah,

thirty-five; Heber, in thirty more; Peleg, in thirty-four; Reuben, in thirty; and Serug, in thirty-two more; Nahor, in thirty more; and Terah, the father of Abraham, in twenty-nine years more. Hence Abraham's father was born just two hundred and twenty-two years after the flood; which, added to the one year the flood continued, and the sixteen hundred and fifty-six years before the flood, makes Terah's birth eighteen hundred and seventy-nine years from the creation. But I cannot tell how long after this it was before Abraham was born, because it is said, "Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haran." But which of them was the first-born I know not.

Olympas. Is not Abraham placed first, and does not that prove he was born first, according to a theory which proves that the *fellowship* should precede the *breaking of the loaf*, and the breaking of the loaf, the prayers, because narrated in that order, Acts ii. 42?

William. That theory is exploded from facts already stated in the narrative of Shem, Ham, and Japheth; for the sacred historians often place the most renowned persons first. And it is farther disproved from the fact now before us; for if Abraham was born seventy years after Terah his father, he was born in the year of the world 1949, *fifty-nine years* before the established chronology of the world!! Hence, if that theory be true, the world is counted almost three score years older than it is; and Jesus, instead of being born in the year of the world 4004, was born in 3944!

Olympas. You have certainly proved that Abraham was not the firstborn of Terah, or that

the world is sixty-six years younger than it is. We are then to choose between the theory in question and the popular chronology. How do you explain this matter, Thomas?

Thomas I confess I do not understand it. It will not help the matter to suppose that Abraham, Nahor, and Haran were all born at the same time, and therefore I am unable to expound it.

Olympas. Can any of you explain it?—What! all silent! It is, indeed, a difficult passage. We usually expound it thus: Haran, the oldest son of Terah, died before his father; Terah then, and Abraham, with Lot, Haran's son, migrated towards Canaan and stopped in Haran, where Terah died at the age of two hundred and ninety-five years. After Terah died Abraham left Haran, at which time we are positively informed that he was seventy-five years old. This settles the point, demonstrating that Abraham was seventy-five years old when his father died, consequently he was born in the year of his father 130, and in that of the world 2009.

William. But, father, you differ from the popular age of the world one year; for all our Bibles make Abraham to have been born in the year of the world 2008.

Olympas. True; for they do not count the year of the flood. I do, when I compute with accuracy. We agree that the world was 1656 years old at the deluge; and we are positively told that Arphaxad was born two years *after* the flood. Well, the flood counted one year; and certainly Abraham was born in 2009, and not in 2008. This is something, indeed, in chronology, but it is not much as respects the meaning of Scripture.

William. Allow me, father, to ask, How do you show for certain that Abraham left Haran just when his father died? Might he not, for all that Moses says, have lived some years in Haran before his migration?

Olympas. Whatever might be imagined from the narrative of Moses, we are freed from all dubiety by the declaration of Stephen, Acts vii. 4. His words are, "When his father was dead he removed from Haran into the land of Canaan." This places the matter on a clear foundation. So much for Bible chronology, a subject which I hope to make you understand as we proceed—a subject, too, of much importance, though much neglected by students of the Bible. Having got the history correctly drawn from Adam to Abraham, we shall dismiss it for the present. Why did Abraham, Thomas, migrate from Haran after the death of his father?

Thomas. Because he was called by God to forsake his kindred and to become a pilgrim in a foreign land.

Olympas. How old was Abraham at this time, Sarah?

Sarah. He was seventy-five years old.

Olympas. In what year of the world was this, James?

James. 2084.

Olympas. What, and how many promises were tendered to Abraham at this time, as inducements to obedience, Eliza?

Eliza. There were *two* at least—Abraham should become a great, mighty, and renowned nation; and that by a descendant of his all the families of the earth should be blessed. Besides

the special care and blessings of God was promised to himself.

Olympas. To what principle, Reuben, does Paul attribute this obedience of Abraham ?

Reuben. To faith. His words are, Heb. xi., "By faith Abraham when he was called, obeyed; and went out, not knowing whither he was going."

Olympas. Faith, then, is a strong principle of action when it can, on the strength of God's promise, induce a person to forego friends, country, relations, and all natural endearments. Who were his companions in the undertaking, Edward ?

Edward. Sarah his wife, Lot his Nephew, and their servants and cattle.

Olympas. Was there any remarkable incident on this journey ?

Edward. Yes; at Moreh, on his way, the Lord actually appeared to him, and added a new promise, saying, "*Unto thy seed will I give this land.*"

Olympas. And what did Abraham then ?

Edward. He builded an altar to the Lord who appeared to him.

Olympas. Was this the only altar Abraham reared, Thomas ?

Thomas. No: journeying thence to a mountain between Bethel and Hai, the place of the first altar, he pitched his tent, reared an altar, and prayed to the Lord.

Olympas. In what course did Abraham travel from this mountain, Mary ?

Mary. He went on to the South ; but finding a grievous famine in Canaan, he went into Egypt for bread.

Olympas. A famine in the land of Canaan, the

most fertile of all lands! Alas for those who confide in a rich soil, when so early as the year 2084, four centuries from the flood, the iniquities of Canaan had brought a famine on the land! What, Mary, is the most remarkable incident in this tour of Abraham and Sarah to Egypt?

Mary. The trouble that Abraham had to save his life and his wife.

Olympas. Narrate the circumstances, Edward, as you have learned them.

Edward. The Egyptians being swarthy, and Sarah being fair, it occurred to Abraham that his wife, always beautiful, but more so in contrast with the women of Egypt, would become an object of attraction among the princes of Egypt. It seems also that the Egyptians were very licentious, and consequently human life was very insecure when it came in the way of their passions. Abraham knowing all this, was alarmed for his personal safety; and thinking his life would be more secure in company with Sarah as a sister than as a wife, persuaded her to pass herself off as his sister only, preferring the risk of losing his wife to that of losing his life.

Olympas. Think you, Edward, that was all just what it ought to have been?

Edward. He told the truth, or at least would have her to do it; for she was the daughter of the same father, though not of the same mother. She was what we usually call a *step*-sister. The fault was that of suppressing a part of the truth, not that of falsification. On another occasion he did the same, and justified himself by saying, "She is, indeed, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother." Gen. xx. 12.

Olympas. Did this expedient greatly benefit the Patriarch ?

Edward. She was, as expected, much admired by the Egyptians, and commended to Pharaoh, who took her to his house. But the Lord having plagued the king and his house because of Abraham's wife, the king restored her to her husband.

Olympas. Thomas, how old was Sarah at this time ?

Thomas. I conclude she was about sixty-five years old.

Olympas. How do you prove this ?

Thomas. I learn she was ninety when Abraham was one hundred. This makes her ten years younger than Abraham, who was certainly seventy-five years old at this time.

Olympas. Would not a lady of sixty-five appear somewhat faded, think you, William ?

William. Yes ; but when ladies lived to one hundred and twenty-seven, as did Sarah, they were just in the prime of life and beauty at sixty-five.

Olympas. True, very true, William. She was as young and beautiful at sixty-five as the American ladies are at twenty-five or thirty.

The Lord saved Abraham's life and wife according to his promise, and Abraham was put to shame for his want of confidence in his Lord : he was like many of his children, who can trust the general covenants and promises of God, but cannot commit their present business, protection, and property into his hands. This was a great weakness in father Abraham, and demonstrates that the best of men are only men at the best. It is

the grace of God that makes and keeps a man holy, good, and greatly noble. Without this they are frail as other men. Truly, it is hard to learn the lesson which our blessed Saviour taught his disciples, saying, "Without me ye can do nothing." You will observe, my dear children, that the knowledge of God and the primeval institutions of religion and morality were not yet forgotten in Egypt, else the plagues laid upon Pharaoh would not so soon have convicted him of sinning against those sacred ordinances of God.

William. Did the same family of Pharaoh continue on the throne of Egypt from Abraham to Moses?

Olympas. All the kings of Egypt were called *Pharaoh*, from the days of the Cushite shepherd-kings till the Grecian monarchy.—Afterwards they were called *Ptolemies*.

William. When did they commence?

Olympas. About the time of Abraham's birth. The earliest origin that tradition gives these shepherd-kings is about seventy-two years before Abraham went down into Egypt. The meaning of the word *Pharaoh* in Hebrew is radically a *free-booter*—a pilgrim plunderer; but its Egyptian signification is most probably *sovereign*, or king. Josephus in his Jewish Antiquities says, "The title of *Pharaoh* was applied to the kings of Egypt from Menas to Solomon's time, but not afterwards, and that it is an Egyptian word signifying *king*. But it is found later than Solomon's time in other records; and it is also affirmed by some historians that there were not less than three hundred and forty-one kings who wore the name of *Pharaoh* during the period of fourteen hundred years.

The Egyptian mythologists say that Egypt was under three different dynasties of kings. The first, was the *immortal gods*, of the highest class ; the second, demigods, or heroes ; and the third, mortal kings—the Pharaohs.

William. Why so much more said in Genesis about Abraham than Adam ?

Olympas. Six chapters record creation and the antediluvian age, while nineteen are chiefly employed in the history of Abraham. The reason I presume is that with Abraham commences the history of the Jews, and the special history of the ancestry of the Messiah. Abraham was a person of the highest renown, a prince, the *progenitor of the Israelites*, the *father of the faithful*, the *friend of God*, and the benefactor of the world. We must then, my dear children, study with great care the history of Abraham. Its details include both law and gospel ; faith and works ; circumcision and baptism ; a temporal and an eternal inheritance.

As the land of Canaan was the grand theatre of Abraham's renown, and as its position is most conspicuous in the Bible, I will require of the senior class that they repeat the description of it at our next lesson so far as its geographical position is concerned, as you will find it in Stack house's Introduction.

CONVERSATION XIV.

THE twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Genesis being read, Olympas called upon Reuben for a description of the Promised Land.

Reuben. It lay between the Mediterranean sea and the mountains of Arabia, and extends from Egypt to Phenicia. It is bounded on the east by the mountains of Arabia; to the south, by the wilderness of Paran, Idumea, and Egypt; to the west, by the Mediterranean, called in Hebrew *the Great Sea*; and to the north, by the mountains of Libanus. Its length from the city of Dan, since called Cesarea Philippi, which stands at the foot of these mountains, to Beersheba, is about seventy leagues, or two hundred and ten miles; and its breadth from the Mediterranean sea to the eastern border, in some places thirty leagues or ninety miles. This country, though small, lying in the very midst of the then known world, was chosen by God wherein to work the redemption of mankind. It was first called the land of Canaan, from Canaan the son of Ham, whose posterity possessed it. Afterwards it was called Palestine, from the people whom the Hebrews called Philistines, and the Greeks and Romans corruptly Palestines, who inhabited the sea coasts, and were first known to them; the Land of Promise from God's promise to Abraham of giving it to him;—the Land of Israel, from the Israelites, who afterward possessed it;—the Land of Judah, or Judea, from the tribe

of Judah, the most considerable of the twelve tribes, and the only one that remained after the Captivity:—and lastly, the Holy Land, from being the scene of the birth, miracles, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Olympas. It is well repeated, and I presume you have traced these lines accurately upon the map. How many names had this land according to the description and history which you have heard?

William. No less than six—Canaan, Palestine, Land of Israel, Land of Judea, Land of Promise, and the Holy Land.

Olympas. The Land of Promise was then the family estate of Abraham in virtue of this divine charter. It was, however, his as yet only in promise: for at that time seven nations called it their own country. When, James, was Abraham called to go and sojourn in this land?

James. When he was seventy-five years old.

Olympas. He left Haran at that age; but the question is, At what time was Abraham called to forsake his native land, his kindred and home?

William. We are not informed at what time, only that the Lord at some previous time “*had* said.” This phrase allows even years to have intervened. He was, indeed, seventy-five years old at the time of his departure from Haran; but how long before that time he was called, we cannot tell.

Olympas. But as Paul says, “Abraham, when called, obeyed and went out not knowing whither he was going,” are we not allowed—nay, constrained to think that as soon as he was called he obeyed?

William. If the call was to do it immediately, he could not have obeyed the call but by immediately rising up and commencing his journey. But the words seem to indicate that at some previous time to his departure the Lord had intimated to him his views and will, and that now the time was come to comply with them.

Olympas. True, the style so intimates; and we are allowed to infer that before he came to Haran, and while he was yet in Ur of the Chaldees, this call had been given to the Patriarch. We may have use for this distinction again, and whether or not, I would have you always to note dates accurately, for often much depends upon them. This is one of the most remarkable passages in the life of any man, and I would have you mark it with all care. Tell me, Thomas, how would you understand and classify the blessings promised to Abraham, the belief of which induced him to forsake all; and to follow the guidance of the Shekinah, or divine manifestation?

Thomas. There appears to me but two distinct promises in this transaction—the one special, the other general—the one personal, the other national—the one temporal, the other spiritual.

Olympas. Some might say there are six promises. Does it not read, 1st. “I will make of thee a great nation; 2nd. I will bless thee; 3rd. and make thy name great; 4th. and thou shalt be a blessing; 5th. and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; 6th. and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Thomas. These are but the amplification or detailing out of the contents of two distinct

promises; for example, your 1st., 2nd., 3rd., and 5th. make one; and your 4th. and 6th. make another. “I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee,” are all personal, special, and temporal. These might have been and were all fulfilled, in Abraham as a prince and renowned ancestor of nations. But “I will make thee a blessing, and in thee shall all nations be blessed,” are general and spiritual, and concern all mankind as much as the natural offspring of Abraham.

Olympas. So far you are correct: but might it not be said that in making Abraham a blessing no more was intended than temporal advantages—as, for instance, in the case of Joseph who was made a blessing to Egypt?

Thomas. Had it never been explained, it might, perhaps, have been doubtful; but its connexion with all families being blessed in the seed or son of Abraham, and especially Paul’s speaking of the blessing of Abraham coming on the Gentiles through faith, determine its acceptation to be spiritual and not temporal.

Olympas. Well, Reuben, what do you learn from these remarkable verses not already stated?

Reuben. Nothing, sir, not embraced in what has been said. I see that Abraham is treated as “the friend of God.” He is a root of two sorts of blessings; and these two include all things temporal and spiritual. Abraham’s flesh and Abraham’s faith are the stocks on which are grafted the scions of all good. Temporals are conveyed by fleshly relation, and spirituals by spiritual relation. Flesh and faith in the father,

and flesh and faith in the offspring, constitute the connective principle and reason of inheritance.

Olympas. Abraham, then, is truly a *grandfather*. Nations descended from his flesh are accounted honourable for his sake; and they of all nations who believe in God, and obey through faith, are reckoned his spiritual progeny. Two Covenants, two Wills, two Testaments, and two Dispensations, are based on these two classes of promises, Gen. xii. 2, 3. Other, indeed, numerous arrangements, special providences, and peculiar covenants—such as the priesthood in one of Abraham's natural descendants—the royalty in another, grew out of these grand promises, just as the blessing of Abraham through faith included justification, sanctification, adoption, salvation, resurrection, immortality. Still as these two promises are the basis and root of all blessings, they ought to be distinctly marked, understood, and remembered by all students of the Bible. I will, therefore, endeavour to place them before you in the various forms and under a variety of circumstances as we proceed.

Eliza. Did you not say, father, when we last read through Genesis, that the two Testaments, called the Old and the New, grew out of these two verses, or the two blessings contained in these promises?

Olympas. Yes, this subject may be so viewed. The nation of Israel in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ and the New Testament, equally sprang from these two covenants or promises. And hence they ought to be a most memorable epoch; and they are in truth made so. Sarah, how old was the world when these two promises were first made?

Sarah. Abraham was born A. M. 2009, and he is now seventy-five years old. This, then, was the year of the world 2084.

Olympas. What do you mean, James, by A. M. and A. D.?

James. A. stands for *Anno* and M. for *Mundi*: *Anno Mundi*, in English, in the year of the world; and A. for *Anno* and D. for *Domini*, in the year of our Lord.

Olympas. Eliza, does Paul make this promise a date of any importance?

Eliza. He dates the promulgation of the Law with a special reference to this date. The Law, he says, was four hundred and thirty years after this transaction.

Olympas. Where is this found?

Eliza. In Galatians iii. 17. It reads, "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of non-effect."

Olympas. But how do you know that this promise in Genesis xii. is the covenant *confirmed of God in Christ*?

Eliza. Paul says the seed, in the promise "*in thy seed*," was *Christ*. And therefore this covenant concerned Christ.

Olympas. But it is said the covenant was confirmed *in Christ*.—What does that mean?

Eliza. I cannot tell.

Olympas. Explain it, Thomas.

Thomas. The word you said that is translated *in* is not *en*, but *eis* in Greek, which means *into*, and concerning or in order to, which sufficiently explains the passage. The covenant of God con-

cerning Christ, or in reference to, or in order to Christ. The covenant or promise, (for all God's promises are covenants, to which, when we agree, we are in covenant with God,) of the blessing of Abraham, was in relation to his seed—"He says not to *seeds*, as of many; but to thy seed, which is Christ."

Olympas. You have made one excellent remark, to which I call the attention of the whole family. All God's promises are covenants, and he that embraces them is in covenant with God. Well, if man does not fail in holding fast the promise, God cannot fail, and the thing is secure. The covenant or promise concerning Christ it is said was four hundred and thirty years before the Law. How do you make that out, William?

William. Abraham was seventy-five years old when this promise was made; Isaac was born twenty-five years after; Isaac was sixty when Jacob was born, and Jacob was one hundred and thirty when he went down into Egypt; and the Jews were in Egypt two hundred and fifteen years before the exodus was complete. Now these several sums make exactly four hundred and thirty years. Well, the Law was given three months after they left Egypt, which places the Law four hundred and thirty years from the covenant or promise confirmed by God concerning the seed, Christ.

Olympas. In what year of the world then, Eliza, was the Law given?

Eliza. We have only to add four hundred and thirty years to the year 2084, when Abraham was seventy-five years old, when he became a pilgrim. That places the giving of the Law of Ten Com-

mands A. M. 2515, or in that year. The Law, then, is three hundred and fifty-nine years after the flood, and four hundred and thirty after the covenant concerning Christ, confirmed by God to and with Abraham.

Olympas. I will often call you to this most prominent subject; but in the meantime we shall proceed to some other points. Tell me, James, who accompanied Abraham on his tour?

James. Lot his brother's son, Sarah his wife, and all their substance, and the souls they had gotten in Haran.

Olympas. What substance, and what souls were there, William?

William. In the thirteenth chapter we learn that Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold; and we also learn that he had many servants; and these were the souls that he had gotten in Haran.

Olympas. True, William. Abraham's servants and Abraham's cattle were different sorts of property; for his servants had souls, and his cattle had not. After they had returned from Egypt, where he had so much trouble in saving his wife, which way did he direct his journey, Sarah?

Sarah. He returned to Bethel, the place of the altar, and there again he called upon the name of the Lord. And Lot was with him still.

Olympas. Was Lot rich, James?

James. Yes; he had flocks, and herds, and tents, and the land was too small for their flocks and herds; for their substance was so great that they could not dwell neighbours. And a strife arose between their servants.

Olympas. James, explain the words *substance*, *flocks*, and *herds*.

James. *Substance* means wealth; *flocks* mean sheep, and *herds* cattle.

Olympas. Very just. And how was the controversy among their servants adjusted?

William. Abraham gave Lot his choice of the country, and they separated from each other.

Olympas. Observe that there is not so much sociability and neighbourhood among the rich as among the poor. The rich have large possessions, and that separates them. The more wealth and honour in all countries and in all ages, the less neighbourhood, the less social intercourse. The grandees of the world have neither friendship, nor society. They have wealth and honour; but the poor have society, friendship, and love. I mean not the abject poor, but those comparatively poor. Abraham and Lot, though strangers in a foreign land, though standing in the position of uncle and nephew, were separated by their wealth, and a strife arose among their servants about pasturage.

But you must farther observe that if Kings and Queens have no society, and if the very great and opulent have little or no friendship, still a good and a great man is a generous man. Hence the noble and generous magnanimity of Abraham in anticipating Lot by making him a tender of the first choice of the whole country, and in taking to himself that which his nephew refused. The sequel will show that Abraham's course was not only the most noble and the most approved by Heaven; but it turned out, as it generally does in such cases, the wiser and the better policy.

CONVERSATION XV.

GENESIS XIV.

Olympas. This is the oldest battle on record ; and were it not that it embraced some part of the history of Abraham and Lot, it never would have been preserved till now. Who were the belligerents, William ?

William. They were Amraphel, Arioch, Chedorlaomer, and Tidal, on the one part ; and the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, on the other—five kings against four.

Olympas. What was the cause of this ancient battle ?

William. Tyranny on the one part, and rebellion on the other. These five kings had served Chedorlaomer for twelve years, and had rebelled in the thirteenth ; and in the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and his allies attempted to reduce the rebel kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, to submission.

Olympas. How did they succeed, Reuben ?

Reuben. In the first place Chedorlaomer and his allies smote the Rephaims, the Zuzims, the Emims, the Horites, the Amalekites, and the Amorites,—men, as you have taught us, of gigantic stature. After these conquests the five kings went out to meet the conqueror. But they fared no better at his hand.

Olympas. Where was this battle fought ?

Reuben. In the vale of Siddim, now a part of the Salt Sea.

Olympas. With what success?

Reuben. The vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. Then Chedorlaomer and his allied sovereigns pillaged the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and carried off all their goods and provisions; and amongst the sufferers was Lot the nephew of Abraham, whom they despoiled of his property and carried captive.

Olympas. It seems, then, that plunder and booty were quite as ancient as war; and that killing, captivating, and plundering were amongst the principal items of vengeance as understood and practised by rival kings in their conflicts with one another ever since war began. We also learn from the fortunes of Lot, that it is dangerous to pursue wealth in immoral and licentious locations. Abraham dwells safely in the plain of Mamre, and his servants, flocks, and herds are round about in health, peace, and prosperity; while Lot, for the sake of richer pastures and more profitable grazing in the vale of Siddim, is not only vexed with their licentiousness, but is despoiled of the labours of years and carried captive into the bargain. Did Abraham, Eliza, hear any thing of the disaster to his kinsman?

Eliza. Yes, he heard by one of the friends of Lot, who had escaped the general destruction, and fled to the tents of Mamre the Amorite. Now this Mamre was the brother of Eshcol and Aner, and these three were confederate with Abraham.

Olympas. How confederate?

Eliza. As shepherds, I suppose; for they lived together in the same plain, and pursued the same business; for as yet they had been engaged in no wars.

Olympas. A confederacy, then, for mutual protection; and such were all the ancient confederacies among the shepherd-kings of the first ages. But in this instance it seems to have been as much a league of friendship and good neighbourhood as any thing else. Even Abraham required some society besides his wife and family; and, therefore, consorted with these three—Mamre, Eshcol, and Aner. But what, William, did Abraham do when he heard of the capture of Lot?

William. He armed his servants and went to the rescue.

Olympas. Armed his servants! He had a magazine, then; and brought out his arms and munitions of war. But what servants were these, James?

James. They were born in his house, and consequently his own servants.

Olympas. How many were there of this class?

James. Three hundred and eighteen.

Olympas. These servants must have been very well used, James, else Abraham dared not to have armed them. We, in Virginia, do not like to arm our servants when an enemy approaches. Did you ever read of the Americans arming their servants when the British, or Indians, or any one else, made war upon us, Thomas?

Thomas. No, Sir; we have not quite so much confidence in our servants as Abraham had in his.

Olympas. Perhaps there is some difference between the system of servitude then and now.

Thomas. Servants then were either bought with money, or were born in the house of their master ; and it seems from the history of Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael, that the conditions of servitude were very much the same with them as with us.

Olympas. How then came it to pass that Abraham could arm his servants, and trust his life and that of his family and all his property into their hands, and we dare not do so now ?

Thomas. Abraham was a *saint*, and we are *professors* of Christianity. And saints, I suppose, had an art of attaching the hearts of their servants to themselves, which we Christians, in America, can never learn. But this is a mystery which I cannot develop. At all events, Abraham's servants acted valiantly and faithfully, and won the day.

Olympas. Give us the details of this battle, William.

William. Abraham commanded the battle in person. He divided his troops, and surrounded them in their encampment by night, and smote them with a great slaughter. He killed their king Chedorlaomer and his allied sovereigns, and pursued the retreating army as far as Hobab, on the left of the ancient city of Damascus.

Olympas. And what, Susan, came of Lot and his goods ?

Susan. Abraham recovered his brother Lot and all his goods, and the women also, and all captured Sodomites that were in Lot's company, on account of which the king of Sodom went out to meet and congratulate old General Abraham.

Olympas. Did any other notable person meet Abraham, and congratulate him on this splendid victory, James ?

James. The king of Salem met him.

Olympas. His name, James, and the meaning of it.

James. Melchisedeck, King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High God.

Olympas. What is the import of the term "Melchisedeck," Eliza?

Eliza. *Melchos* or *Malak* means king; and *tsadik* means righteousness or justice.

Olympas. Well, that is nearly the etymology of the word; and it is enough for you to know that the compound term *Melchi-sedeck* means *King of Righteousness*, and *Salem* means *Peace*. You will observe that this is an official or an appellative name, rather than the name of a person. Who was the person, think you, William, that had this honourable standing in the days of Abraham?

William. You gave us as your reasons for *Shem*, as being the person who at this time was King of Righteousness and Peace, and the High Priest of all the people of God then living. To which I know no objection, save that I have read of Melchisedeck in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, and also in the Hebrews, and it looks as if it was sometimes the name of a person.

Olympas. It was, indeed, the name of a person, as much as *Israel* was the name of a person—of the person called Jacob; but as the name *Israel* was given to Jacob, or as *Peter* to Simon, and *Boanerges* to James and John; so was Melchisedeck, *in my opinion*, given to Shem. You know the difference between *faith* and *opinion*. While I cannot, then, affirm it as a fact, I intimate it as an opinion, and you must judge of it as such. What occurred, James, at this interview between Abraham and Melchisedeck?

James. He met Abraham with "bread and wine," faint and fatigued as he was with the toils of the war.

Olympas. And what else, Susan?

Susan. He blessed them in these words:—"Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand."

Olympas. And what did Abraham give him, Susan?

Susan. He gave him tithes of all.

Olympas. That is the tenth of all the goods he gained in the war; for the King of Salem was Priest of the Most High God; and, as such, entitled to an offering from the conqueror Abraham. Do you remember, Thomas, what Paul says on this transaction?

Thomas. He descants upon the official pedigree and standing of this High Priest as far superior to the Aaronic priesthood, and represents Levi as paying tithes rather than as receiving them in the person of his progenitor Abraham. He represents him as one who had neither predecessor nor successor, nor any term of service; but as being the beginning and the ending of his peculiar office, underived from and incommunicable to, any other person; essentially inalienable from his person and inseparable from his life. He was superior to all other priests: he blessed Abraham, who is thereby proclaimed his inferior, received tithes from him, and presented to him bread and wine.

Olympas. Who was the *antitype* of Melchisedeck, Fliza?

Eliza. I am not sure that I understand the word “antitype.”

Olympas. “Type” is a figure, and the “antitype” is the reality, or thing figured out in the type.

Eliza. Then Jesus is our High Priest, the antitype of Melchisedeck. He has neither beginning nor ending of days; he had no predecessor nor successor in office; and imparts blessings without receiving any thing in return but the offering of a grateful heart.

Olympas. What sort of a king at this time reigned over Sodom?

Eliza. He appears to have been a reasonable and grateful prince; for he offered Abraham all the spoils of the war, if he would return him the persons he had recaptured from the great Chedorlaomer.

Olympas. Would Abraham accept this offer, Susan?

Susan. No, indeed! He said to the king of Sodom, “I have lifted up my hand to the Lord the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou should say I have made Abraham rich—save only the portion which the young men, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, my allies have eaten.”

Olympas. How noble this conduct of Abraham! He went to war not for booty nor for fame. He interposed for a friend and a brother; and having rescued him and avenged his wrongs, he asked no more. He returned to his tent and reposed in peace. He had solemnly covenanted with God for victory, and he obtained it. He forgot not his

covenant ; but having performed his vows, returned with his faithful and triumphant servants to the tranquil and peaceful scenes of the pastoral life —where we shall leave them for the present.

CONVERSATION XVI.

GENESIS XV.

Olympas. WHEN was it, James, that God said to Abraham, “Fear not, Abraham: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward?”

James. After those things which occurred in the battle at Dan, or when Abraham refused the spoils of victory offered him by the king of Sodom.

Olympas. It would seem then, William, that this magnanimous conduct of the venerable patriarch had the approbation of Heaven, and that the refusal of reward from King Bera invoked a greater reward from the King of heaven—“I am thy exceeding great reward.”

William. I cannot see why the Lord should have here spoken of an exceeding great reward, unless in contrast with the reward offered by the king of Sodom; and, indeed, thus compared, it was exceeding far all earthly reward.

Olympas. Learn, then, from this illustrious example, my son, to disdain reward from ignoble hands for discharging the debts of friendship—for fulfilling the obligations which nature and religion have equally imposed on all the sons of God. Heaven approves this truly noble example of heroic benevolence, of generous and exalted sympathy for a suffering relative and brother. Never accept from human hands a remuneration for having relieved distress—for having discharged the mere debt of humanity and religion. Remember

God said to the venerated father of all saints for such a noble deed, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Tell me, Thomas Dilworth, why think you did the Lord precede the promised reward with the intimation of a *shield*?

Thomas. It would seem that Abraham needed more a *shield* than a *reward*, inasmuch as he had exasperated the surviving friends of the vanquished alliance of the confederated kings.

Olympas. True, most true; and in this we have an important lesson and a new incentive to the discharge of hazardous duties. Can you fathom the full meaning of this, Reuben?

Reuben. No, sir, if it indicate more than that the Lord will always defend them that do right.

Olympas. This includes all, it is true, that is intended; but it is too general, and strikes not the special point. Some good men have been intimidated from reproofing sin and aiding injured innocence, fearful of the vindictive resentments of wicked men, to whom these words furnish a severe reproof and a strong persuasive to faithfulness to the claims of true religion and suffering humanity. Abraham jeopardized his life, his property, and the secure possession of the calm repose and serene contemplation of the greatly exposed position of the shepherd's peaceful life. He hazarded all this on the account of an injured brother, and the demands of an afflicted relative, through the promptings of the tender mercies of the saint. Therefore said the Lord, FEAR NOT: Abram, I am thy SHIELD. It was after, not before, the patriarch triumphed, the Lord promised this special care—this guarantee of property and life. Never then, my son, fear the consequences of

duty: be first persuaded that it is your duty—that the God of nature and religion has so enjoined upon you. Any thing else in this connexion that excites your admiration, Reuben?

Reuben. Yes; I admire Abraham in every point, as his character developes to my mind. He knew the *mollia tempora fundi* of Virgil; or, as one of the sons of Grecian lore used to say, he knew the *kairon gnoothi* of Pittacus.

Olympas. Quote not these Pagan authors while we worship God, and meet in the family temple. It is as incongruous as to quote Byron and Shakspeare in the pulpit to set off the doctrine of Christ. You mean by these quotations that it is wise to know the proper time to speak, and to secure a moment favourable to a kind reception. Proceed, Reuben.

Reuben. Abraham at the moment of these new condescensions thought it suitable to ask, “Lord, how long shall I live without the child of promise, and my Damascene steward be my heir?” But when the Lord assured him that he had not forgotten his promise, but renewing it with amplification, led him to expect from the aged Sarah an issue numerous as the stars, and countless as the sands, he instantly responded, “*I believe it, Lord.*” Therefore says Moses, and says Paul, this ready belief was counted to him for righteousness.

Olympas. Thomas, was it the belief in the promise of the seed of blessings, or the belief of the promise, “*So shall thy seed be*”—numerous as the sands, that was accounted to him for justification?

Thomas. Paul says (Rom. iv.) that it was the belief of the promise, “*So shall thy seed be;*” for on this account he comments, saying, “Being not

weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when about a hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb, (about ninety years old,) he staggered not at the promise of God—(*so shall thy seed be*)—but was strong in faith, giving glory to God”—his power and faithfulness—“being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform.”—Therefore *it* (his belief in this promise) “was imputed to him for righteousness,” or justification.

Olympas. Is this, Thomas, the same sort of faith now imputed to us for justification?

Thomas. Yes; for, adds the Apostle “It was not written for his sake that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it—(similar faith in a similar promise)—shall be imputed;” provided we have the same belief or confidence in Him who raised up Jesus from the dead womb of Sarah, and from the barren rock of the Arimathean's sepulchre the dead body of Him who was delivered for our sins to the cross, and was raised from the dead for our justification.

Olympas. Well spoken, Thomas. It is even so. The same faith in the new promises exhibited by Abraham in the old promises will be reckoned to us for righteousness. I emphatically note this, because many will tell you that it was faith in the Messiah, and not in his promise, that was reckoned. No doubt the virtue is in the object of faith; but that is not the question here. The virtue in faith, which finds the virtue in the object of faith, is the sincere and heartfelt persuasion of the faithfulness and power of God.

Reuben. But Abraham seems to want a pledge of the inheritance of Canaan, if not of the fulfil-

ment of the promise concerning the nations to be born of him. How are we to understand this?

Olympas. As yet there was no guarantee of the inheritance of Canaan. It had been mentioned, but not defined, nor covenanted.—Therefore he asks, “Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” Assurance is naturally desired when the object proposed deeply interests the heart. The painfulness of doubt is ever in the ratio of the magnitude of the interests contemplated. Hence the desire of certainty in all the great concerns of life. The Lord has always kindly vouchsafed it—sometimes independant of, and without, the solicitations of man; at other times, in answer to their prayers. On this occasion Abraham asks, and God tenders a covenant, and all the sacred victims are appointed. You can tell me, James, what and how many were the clean beasts, or acceptable sacrifices, of the patriarchal and Jewish times.

James. They were five:—The cow kine, the goat, the sheep, the turtle dove, and the pigeon.

Olympas. How were they disposed of at this time, Eliza?

Eliza. The beasts were killed and divided in the midst, and laid each piece one against another on the altar, so that the parties covenanting could walk between them.

Olympas. Can you, Eliza, name any place in the Bible that alludes particularly to this practice?

Eliza. Jeremiah xxxiv. 18. The Lord says, “I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me

when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof. The princes of Judah," &c., "who passed between the parts thereof."

Olympas. Do you remember, Reuben, whether any Greek writer alludes to this custom?

Reuben. Homer, in the first book of the Illiad, says, "They cut the quarters dividing them in two, and cover them with the fat," when preparing them for sealing a covenant or making a sacrifice.

Olympas. The Chaldeans, Greeks, and Romans borrowed this custom from the Patriarchs. They were wont to imprecate upon themselves destruction should they break the covenant thus confirmed over dead sacrifices. "That day," says Moses, "God made a covenant with Abraham," or gave him a pledge that from the Nile to the Euphrates his seed should possess the land then occupied by ten distinct idolatrous tribes. The Lord also prefigured to Abraham at the going down of the sun, through dark omens, and in a dream foretold the afflictions of his people during four hundred years' pilgrimage in a strange land. He also declared the decree of the reprobation and condemnation of their Egyptian masters, and their deliverance from a servile and cruel bondage. These, together with other items of personal importance to Abraham, were kindly intimated to him; and thus assured not only of all the great points concerning his seed, but also of such incidents in his own history as could be gratifying to him, the Lord withdrew from him and left him to his own reflections.

Thomas. As much depends upon a right perception of the faith of Abraham, it being a model

faith, I desire to ask wherein specifically lay its chief excellence?

Olympas. Not, we have seen, in its object; not in any specific promise, such as, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed," not even in the words, "*So shall thy seed be;*" for although according to Moses and Paul, this proposition was that so cordially and so firmly grasped by the faith of the patriarch, which secured to him an eternal honour, still the peculiar excellence of his faith was not in that promise, but in the firmness and strength with which he embraced it; being fully persuaded that what he had promised he both could and would perform.

Thomas. I can easily perceive that if the virtue of his faith consisted in the promise, or object of it, "*So shall thy seed be,*" we, not having such a promise tendered to us, never could have a similar faith; and, therefore, must necessarily be precluded from the honours and advantages of the heirs of the Abrahamic faith; yet I have understood you to teach that the salutary virtue of faith lay in its object, and not in the manner of believing it.

Olympas. True; and whenever the question arises about the *manner* of faith and the *object* of faith, we strongly affirm the conviction that as it is not the manner of eating, but the thing eaten, that supports life; so it is not the manner of believing, but the thing believed, that sanctifies and saves us; for a man may eat poison as he eats food, and die through eating; so may he believe a lie as he believes the truth, and die through his faith; for to believe a lie of Satan, or to disbelieve the truth of the Lord, as to eat poison, or to refuse to eat food, will equally end in death. But

the faith that justifies and saves through the object believed, is a faith that doubts neither the power nor faithfulness of God, but acquiesces in the conviction that the Lord both can and will do what he has spoken. There is, then, no promise that can justify or save unless it be believed; and there is no belief that can justify and save unless there be both justification and salvation in the thing or promise believed. But now we are characterizing the belief of Abraham, and not the promise which he believed; and so far as his faith is a model faith, its excellence consists in its promptitude and strength. He immediately and firmly received the promise, acquiescing in the power and veracity of God to do what he said.

Thomas. If, then, we hold as certain the promise of forgiveness, adoption, the resurrection of the just, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord to those that are in him, are we not then possessed of the faith of Abraham, and constituted heirs of an eternal inheritance?

Olympas. Abraham believed the certainty of the promise with a special reference to himself: if, then, we believe the promise of forgiveness, adoption, &c. with a special reference to ourselves, we are walking in the steps of his faith in the promise, "So shall *thy* seed be."

Thomas. You make a difference, then, between the belief of a general and special promise.

Olympas. No difference so far as simple *believing* is concerned; but a great practical redeeming and exhilarating difference between believing that *some persons are pardoned*, and that *I am pardoned*. Multitudes believe that Christ died for sinners, who do not believe that he died for them; I say,

multitudes of sectaries believe that Christ died for *some* sinners, who do not believe that he died for them; and even those who believe that he died for all, and that all are pardoned who have received Christ, there are many who do not rely upon him and confide in him with an assurance that they are pardoned, adopted, and saved. To believe the promise made to us as Abraham believed the promise made to him, is all that we need, so far as faith goes, to constitute us Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise made to us of the eternal inheritance. Few seem not to appreciate the great moral and sanctifying difference between believing Christ and believing in him. Demons believed Christ, but they did not confide in him as their Saviour. Still while believing a person, and believing in a person, are as cause and effect in some instances, and yet different states of mind, those who now intelligently and cordially believe what Christ says, will confide in him; provided only, they are conscious that they do the things that please him. But there are some other points in Abraham's faith and character that will come in our way as we advance in the biography of this great and honourable patriarch.

CONVERSATION XVII.

GENESIS XVI.

Olympas. This chapter opens now, Thomas, to our contemplation. New personages appear in the family group of the venerable Patriarch. Who are they, James ?

James. Hagar is the first, and Ishmael the second stranger to whom we are introduced.

Olympas. Of what race was Hagar, Susan ?

Susan. The Egyptian.

Olympas. In what relation did she move in Abraham's household, Eliza ?

Eliza. She is called the "handmaid" of Sarah.

Olympas. Can any of you tell how she came into this relation ?

Reuben. From the fact that Abraham and Sarah had been in Egypt, and from the fact that Egypt was the oldest slave-market in the world of which we have any memorial, the probability is, I think, that Abraham bought her while in Egypt.

Olympas. He might have received her as a present from Pharaoh, as one of the old fathers, St. Chrysostom, thought, because the fact of Abraham's having servants is first mentioned in connexion with the good treatment that he received from Pharaoh. Gen. xii. 16. Pharaoh entreated Abraham well for Sarah's sake. "And he (Abraham) had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels."

Thomas. I should not think it probable, as

Abraham went down into Egypt because of the scarcity of bread in Canaan, that he would likely purchase servants. I therefore think that the reason why we have such an inventory of Abraham's property, is to illustrate the hospitality of Pharaoh, or, at least, his partiality for Sarah, Abraham's alleged sister-wife, that he did so kindly treat a person of such extensive property, who would of course require a great deal of food and provender for such a household and for so many cattle.

Olympas. Do you, Thomas, regard men-servants and maid-servants as *property*?

Thomas. If sheep and oxen, asses and servants are property, then were maid-servants and men-servants, because the same word designates them all. "And Abraham possessed sheep, oxen, asses, men-servants, maid-servants," &c. But what the nature of this property was I cannot define. The fact of possession, which I understand to be the principal idea of property, is undeniable: for the Patriarch had servants as much as he had sheep and cattle.

Reuben. So he had a wife, and she was his property too.

Thomas. Property she was, but not the same property; for Abraham did not buy nor inherit his wife, nor receive her as a present. Again, Hagar was an Egyptian, a daughter of Ham, a descendant of the servant family—"A servant of servants unto his brethren."

Olympas. But do you not assume too much when you assume that Abraham's Hagar was either bought, inherited, or received as a present?

Thomas. That Egypt was a slave-market is

undeniable from the fact that Joseph, the great grand-son of Sarah, was sold to the great-grand-son of Hagar!

Olympas. How do you learn that fact, Thomas?

Thomas. Joseph, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Sarah, was sold by his own ten brothers for fifteen dollars, to a caravan of Ishmaelites in co-partnery with some Midianitish merchants who were trading to Egypt. Of course they bought him, like their spices, to sell again; and we all know that Joseph was sold for a slave into Egypt.

Olympas. Sold for a slave Joseph was, and no doubt a market for slaves had been long before established. But will the antiquity or popularity of the practice justify the moral rectitude of it?

Thomas. Then we must justify polygamy and war, for both are more ancient than any account we have of making human beings mere goods and chattels.

Olympas. But human beings were never regarded as mere goods and chattels in the worst days of slavery. The slave had rights since the days of Abraham, which were never supposed to belong to goods or chattels; and, indeed, the property held in slaves in the Abrahamic family had a peculiarity which no writers have accurately described. It is expressed in the words of the proposition which Sarah made to Abraham concerning his taking Hagar, her slave, into his bosom.—The words are, “*That I may have children by her.*” The logic of Sarah’s language was—“Hagar is my property; her offspring will be more my own than the offspring of any free woman which you could marry: therefore, as I

have no children in my own person, I may, by such a marriage, have children by her who is my own property."—That this is not an inference founded on this solitary passage, I need but to mention the cases of Zilpah and Bilhah, the female slaves of Rachel and Leah, who were given to Jacob by his Rachel and Leah as Hagar was to Abraham by his beloved Sarah.

Thomas. But is there not in the very idea of property itself a variety of meaning? A husband has property in a wife; parents have property in their children; masters have property in their servants; and landlords have property in their farms and their live stocks. But no two of these is property in the same sense, or on the same terms and conditions. Consequently the property in *persons* and the property in *things* are not of the same nature, nor do they exist under the same conditions, stipulations, and agreements.

Olympas. Certainly there is a great difference in the application of the word *property*, and it is a great error in our reasoning to allege that because it is applied to so many subjects, they must be homogeneous. But it is enough to our understanding the lesson of the morning, to know that while Abraham had sheep, and cattle, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels, as property, they were not held under the same laws nor subject to the same conditions; nor was there any thing either grievous or immoral under the servitude in which his servants lived.

Reuben. May I ask a question before you dismiss this subject? I read in a book at school, that the

wives of eastern princes have absolute property over their female slaves, and that therefore the husbands have no control over them. In that case the meaning of the passage might be, that Hagar being the property of her mistress, and not of Abraham, her issue would be Sarah's own, and not Abraham's.

Olympas. So some ancient writers affirm. In that view, then, Hagar's offspring would not only be rearer to her in relation, but absolutely her own; for which reason the ancient women, who loved their husbands, in many cases gave their hand-maids for secondary wives, as our Saxon forefathers were wont to call them. But we must ask the juniors some questions. How old was Abraham when Sarah gave him Hagar?

James. Eighty-five years old.

Olympas. Prove that, James.

James. Abraham was seventy-five years old when he left Canaan, and after he resided in Canaan ten years Sarah gave him Hagar. This makes him eighty-five years old.

Olympas. Did Sarah and Hagar continue as good friends now as before, Eliza?

Eliza. No: Sarah was despised by her servant Hagar.

Olympas. So true it is that few servants can endure exaltation. Yet we see Abraham yielding to the difficulty, and recognizing the absolute property of Sarah in her servant Hagar. And how, Susan, did the matter end?

Susan. Sarah dealt hardly by her, and Hagar ran away.

Olympas. Ran away! Servants, then, anciently ran away when badly used.

Thomas. But her mistress offered no reward for Hagar. She ran away with her consent it would seem.

Olympas. What, Reuben, happened to the runaway Hagar?

Reuben. An angel from the presence of the Lord hailed her.

Olympas. And what did the Angel say?

Reuben. He advised her to return to her mistress.

Thomas. And did angels advise runaway servants to return home!

Olympas. Yes; but in those ancient days it was running away from *home* to run away from such a household as that of Abraham and Sarah. And such was the character of Sarah that the angel added, "Submit thyself to her hands." Humanity and mercy are twin-sisters, daughters of a divine faith, natives of the heavens, and always point to deeds of kindness and benevolence. Therefore, those who run away from the righteous, run away from home. But what farther did the angel say to Hagar, Eliza?

Eliza. The angel of the Lord foretold her destiny, and the number of her descendants by Abraham, in these words—"I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude;" and the angel added, "Call thy son Ishmael."

Thomas. Could angels promise to multiply the seed of Hagar exceedingly, and fulfill such promises?

Olympas. This is one of many instances, which we shall meet in the Mosaic writings, of the angel of the Lord designating the Lord, the

Logos, who, before his incarnation, often appeared to the patriarchs under the style of "The Angel of the Lord." Hagar knew it was no ordinary angel that addressed her; for in the thirteenth verse Moses says, "She called the name of the Lord that spake to her, *Thou, God, seest me.*" Moses, indeed, calls the angel *Jehovah*; for, adds he, "She called the name of the Lord [*Shem Jehovah*] that spake to her."

Thomas. Did you not on a former occasion tell us that this "angel of the Lord" appears under other names in the sacred writings of the Old Testament?

Olympas. Yes; he is called *Ham maleak, Hag-oel*, the Angel, the Redeemer; *Maleak Panaiiv*, the Angel of his Presence; *Maleak ha berith*, the Angel of the Covenant; and here *Maleak Jehovah*, the Angel of Jehovah. The angel speaks of himself as both *omniscient* and *omnipotent*—at least he speaks of himself in reference to such works and ways as pre-suppose the existence of these divine attributes. His predictions concerning Ishmael on the present occasion indicate this. Who gave the name Ishmael, William?

William. The Lord gave this name before Hagar's son was born.

Olympas. What does the term "Ishmael" mean, Reuben?

Reuben. The margin says, "*The Lord hath heard,*" or *shall hear my affliction.*

Olympas. What, Thomas, is the amount of the prediction concerning this child Ishmael?

Thomas. It was preached before his birth that he should be a wild man—"his hand uplifted against every man, and every man's hand against

him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.”

Olympas. What nations now existing have sprung from Ishmael, Reuben?

Reuben. The Bedouins, wandering Arabs, and probably some of the American Indians, have sprung from Ishmael.

Olympas. What country do the Ishmaelites proper, or the wandering Arabs now occupy?

William. It reaches from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea, and from Egypt to the Persian Gulf—almost two thousand miles in length by one thousand in breadth.

Olympas. Have these people never been subdued, Thomas?

Thomas. It is said Sesostris, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, and some of the Cesars have attempted their subjugation without success. So that for almost four thousand years they have possessed their own country, despite of all the world.

Olympas. This then is a singular demonstration of the inspiration of Moses. A people exactly answering the prediction—their hands against the world in the character of freebooters, warriors, depredators, and the whole world against them, in every age; and yet inhabiting their own deserts, and retaining their own character, despite of all revolutions and changes in human affairs, is an irrefutable demonstration of the divine mission of Moses and the truth of the Pentateuch. What name, Eliza, was given to the well at which Hagar received this oracle?

Eliza. It was called Beerlahairoi; but I do not understand this hard name.

Olympas. It was a sort of dedicatory name: a

well this is to the Living One who now sees me." She intended it to be a memorial of the interview which she had with the angel of Jehovah who had spoken to her such strange words concerning her progeny for so many ages to come. And is not this case worthy of our observation and regard? In the eighty-sixth year of Abraham's age, an Egyptian slave gave to Abraham and the world a child of such lawless liberty and freedom of life, that he transmitted for so long a time, to so many millions, such a love of liberty, plunder, and rapine—such a hatred of the restraints of social life—of cities, towns, and settlements—that, like a wild ass (*phere Adam*, a wild ass-man,) "his house should be the wilderness, the barren land his dwelling, and that his hand should be lifted up and stretched out against every man, and every man against him." You must mark a few singular particulars in this case. 1. This is the first time in the history of man in which we read of the appearance of an angel. 2. It is the first time that we have the name of any person given by the Lord before he was born. 3. This is the first time also that a nation's history for many an age was pronounced before its origin, not having any special relation to the Messiah; and it is the first time in ancient history in which the outward condition of both mother and child was so diametrically opposed to the spirit and character of all their posterity. Upon the whole the history of Ishmael, from first to last, affords a monument imperishable as the mountains of the truth of prophecy, and of the divine authenticity of the Bible. The following notes from two distinguished persons must finish our present lesson:—

“They dwelt in tents in the wilderness as long ago as Isaiah’s and Jeremiah’s time—(Isa. xiii. 20 ; Jer. iii. 2) —and they do the same at this day. This is very extraordinary, that, “his hand should be against every man, and every man’s hand against him;” and yet that he should be able to “dwell in the presence of his brethren;” but extraordinary as it was, this also has been accomplished, both in the person of Ishmael and in his posterity. As for Ishmael *himself*, the sacred historian afterwards relates, chapter xxv. 17, 18, that “the years of the life of Ishmael were a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he died in the presence of all his brethren.” As for his *posterity*, they dwelt likewise in the presence of all their brethren: Abraham’s sons by Keturah; the Moabites and Ammonites, descendants of Lot; the Israelites, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the Edomites, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Esau. They still subsist a distinct people, and inhabit the country of their progenitors; they have from first to last maintained their independence; and notwithstanding the most powerful efforts for their destruction, still dwell in the presence of all their brethren, and in the presence of all their enemies.”—*Bp. Newton*.

“The region inhabited by the Arabs is not remote or insulated, separated from social life; and, therefore, exempt from the influence which naturally results from intercourse with other countries. It is situated in that portion of the globe in which society originated, and the first kingdoms were formed. The greatest empires of the world arose and fell around them. They have not been secluded from correspondence with foreign nations; and thus attached, through ignorance and prejudice, to simple and primitive manners. In the early periods of history they were united as allies to the most powerful monarchs of the East: under their victorious Prophet they once carried their arms over the most distinguished kingdoms of the earth; through many succeeding ages the caravan of the merchant and the companies of Mahometan pilgrims passed regularly over their deserts even their religion has undergone a total change. Yet all these circumstances, which, it might be supposed, would have subdued the most stubborn prejudices and altered the most inveterate habits, have produced no effect upon the Arabs; and they still preserve unimpaired a most exact resemblance to the first descendants of Ishmael.”—*Richards*.

CONVERSATION XVIII.

GENESIS XVI, XVII.

AFTER reading over the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters of Genesis, Olympas proceeded as usual—calling upon the seniors for New Testament allusions to the case of Hagar and Sarah, and their sons.

Thomas. We find a beautiful allegory made out of this case by Paul to the Galatians iv. 21—31, which we will read with your permission: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath a husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the

son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free."—The two mothers, the two sons, the two births, with the two fortunes of these renowned persons are very interestingly depicted by the Apostle.

Olympas. What is an *allegory*, Eliza?

Eliza. A continuation of tropes or comparisons—not a single metaphor, but a series of metaphors in illustration of some important subject.

Olympas. A comparison of two subjects under a fixed imagery may, indeed, include all that rhetoricians intend by the use of this animating and impressive figure of speech. State then, Reuben, the points of comparison.

Reuben. The principal points of comparison are four:—1st. The two mothers represent two constitutions or dispensations, usually called the Two Covenants. These are the two covenants—one from mount Sinai; the other from mount Zion, or Jerusalem. 2nd. The tendency of the two institutions is compared to the condition of the two sons—the one a slave, the other a freeman. 3rd. The peculiar character of the birth of these two sons—one in the course of nature: the other out of, or above, the course of nature, "born after the flesh," "born after the Spirit." 4th. The character of the two children indicative of the character of the subjects of the dispensations—"Him that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit." Even so it is now.

Olympas. Any other point, William?

William. Yes, it appears to me that the fortunes of the two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, are also contrasted.

Olympas. The fortunes of the sons only?

Thomas. The fortunes of the mothers too—
“Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not inherit with the son of the free-woman.”

Olympas. These are five great points admirably illustrative of the immense difference between a Jew and a Christian—between living “under the law” and “under the gospel;” for that is the main subject illustrated in the allegory. State, Thomas, the facts of the case indicated in the allegory.

Thomas. Some of the Jews in the Galatian churches were desirous of being more or less subject or conformed to the Jewish covenant. Against this amalgamation of law and gospel, of old covenant and new, the Apostle seems to have been remonstrating; and to complete the whole argument closes with the allegorizing of the whole history of the sixteenth chapter of Genesis.

Olympas. But where, Eliza, shall we find this covenant from Agar corresponding to Hagar, the hand-maid of Sarah, and the mother of Ishmael?

Eliza. Is not the covenant of circumcision in the flesh, of which we have just now read in the seventeenth chapter?

Olympas. Not exactly: it is only a dispensation of that covenant. Can you explain, William?

William. Mount Sinai is defined to be the place whence the covenant personated in Hagar is said to have been issued, as Jerusalem is said to be the place whence the new covenant was promulged, or that indicated by Sarah.

Olympas. True; but observe that as the promise of blessing all nations in Isaac the seed, was

developed and embodied in the form of the gospel covenant of promise; so the promise of giving to Abraham a numerous natural progeny, and the land of Canaan for inheritance, elaborated into the covenant of circumcision, became the basis of that dispensation or covenant from Mount Sinai in Arabia.

Thomas. I desire to understand this subject more fully because of some confusion in my mind occasioned by the baptismal sermon of Parson Godfather, in the Princeton Chapel, at the late christening of Elder Miller's household. Dr. Godfather is said to be a very learned man, and he affirmed that the Christian covenant, called the New Testament, was only a full dispensation; or, as I understood him, a development of the covenant of grace, as he called it, found in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis.

Olympas. The covenant of grace in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis! There is neither a covenant of grace nor a covenant of works named in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis. Change the names, and you will soon make Judas Iscariot out of Jude the brother of James. What, my dear Susan, does Stephen call the transaction found in Genesis seventeenth?

Susan. "The Covenant of Circumcision," sir.

Olympas. You are right, daughter. The Lord himself authorized it by a single expression in Genesis seventeenth. What think you is it, William?

William. After specifying the two comprehensive items of the covenant—1st. "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee"—2nd. "I will give to thee and to thy seed after thee the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession"—

he adds, "This is my covenant in your flesh: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised—born in thy house or bought with thy money. And my covenant *shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*"

Olympas. This is, indeed, a "covenant in the flesh," "the covenant of circumcision," and became the basis of the Sinaic or old covenant, just as the promise or "covenant confirmed of God in reference to Christ" became the basis of the new covenant, or that from the Jerusalem above. Give us the sum of this matter, Reuben.

Reuben. Two promises made to Abraham—one filled with spiritual and eternal blessings, the other with fleshy and temporal advantages,—constitute the basis of two national institutions. The two Abrahamic covenants are denominated in in scripture, "The Covenant confirmed by God concerning Christ," and "the Covenant of Circumcision;" from which sprang, when dispensed nationally—one from Sinai, called "The Old Covenant;" the other from Jerusalem, called "The New Covenant."

Olympas. These are the two covenants in the allegory—the first *in the flesh*; the second, *in the spirit*; the first stipulating a wordly and temporal possession of Canaan on certain carnal conditions; the second, stipulating a spiritual and eternal inheritance in the heavenly country on certain spiritual conditions—the one springing out of flesh, the other out of spirit—the one replete with law, the other with gospel—the one circumscribed by blood, the other by faith. Hagar and Ishmael, therefore, most aptly represent the whole fleshy state,—“covenant in the flesh,” “born after the flesh,” fleshy or carnal mind, and the earthly

inheritance; while Sarah and Isaac as fitly represent the new covenant of better promises—born after the spirit, living in the spirit, and the spiritual inheritance.

Eliza. What means the seals of the covenant?

Olympas. Circumcision is the seal of the old covenant, and a holy spirit the seal of the new.

Reuben. Doctor Godfather says, "Circumcision and baptism are two seals of the same covenant."

Olympas. Doctor Godfather never uttered a greater absurdity. A covenant made two thousand years before baptism, whose mark was in the flesh, to be sealed with two seals, one two thousand years before the other!—one made by cutting off the flesh, and the other by putting water on the face! Transubstantiation is a feasible tale compared with this. The mark on the flesh was the seal of the covenant concerning the flesh, and the mark on the spirit is the seal of the covenant concerning the spirit. There can be no outward mark of a spiritual change in heart or state. I, therefore, novel though it may seem, hazard the assertion that circumcision was adumbrative not of baptism, not a shadow of a shadow, not a figure of a figure! but of the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Spirit—not of the wetting of the skin, not of the bedewing of the face; but of the separating and sanctifying of the spirit to God by God's own Spirit.

Circumcision was a very apposite mark of a covenant concerning flesh and blood descent, flesh and blood relation, feelings, character, and inheritance. But water is no mark of any thing; and neither sprinkling, pouring, nor dipping could be the seal or mark of a spiritual covenant. Hence

the baptized were "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise in their hearts." This is, indeed, the true antitype of circumcision; for, truly, now-a-days "circumcision is in the heart, in the spirit," and neither in letter nor in water.

That circumcision was a sign as well as a seal, a shadow as well as a substance, was not only intimated in the law, but is also confirmed by the Apostles. Moses says, Deut. xxx. 6, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." This is the true or real circumcision. So Paul says, "We are the *true circumcision that worship God in the spirit.*" There never was a more glaring hoax ecclesiastic practised on mankind than that which makes baptism the antitype, the substitute, or substance, or the shadow of circumcision. They are not two seals of one and the same covenant—in one dispensation or in two dispensations. The new covenant is sealed by "the circumcision of Christ. The cutting off of his flesh, the shedding of his blood was the seal. "This," said he, "is the new testament *in my blood.*" We formally enter into this covenant by baptism—that is, by putting on Christ; by dying, being buried, and rising again with him; and then he gives us the witness, that the sign, the *sphragis*, the seal of his own spirit, circumcising our hearts to the Lord. Only, then, in this most subordinate sense can baptism, not the water, but the putting off the old man and putting on Christ, be called a sealing of the covenant or a confirmation of our determination to serve the Lord.

What, Thomas, do seals to covenants mean?

Thomas. They are confirmatory marks affixed by the parties.

Olympas. Do both parties always make a mark in guarantee of the stipulations?

Thomas. So it would seem.

Olympas. But does God make any mark in person?

Thomas. No: he only appointed us to make some mark.

Olympas. He did more: he appointed a Mediator to sign and seal for him. For when Moses had spoken every word of the Hagar covenant to the Jews, he sprinkled the parchment and the people with blood, and so marked the bond and the people. Thus the parties were bound to fulfil the conditions. The old covenant in the circumcision and in the Sinaic form was sealed by blood. So is the new by better blood. But on the adoption of it we are immersed into Christ, and sealed by his Spirit in our hearts.

Thomas. Is a seal of any value when the covenant is dead or changed?

Olympas. It is then of no more value than a seal would be cut off from a bond. If the covenant and the seal be separated, or either of them changed, the other is of no earthly value.

Reuben. I wonder, then, how persons so learned as Dr. Godfather and Elder Miller could think and teach that circumcision was done away to infants, and baptism came in the room of it, and that they were both seals of the same covenant.

Olympas. Wonder not at this. The Pope and all his Cardinals believe and teach that a wafer is transubstantiated into the proper flesh of the Messiah, and wine into blood, by the breath of a

Priest; and they are much more learned than Dr. Godfather and Elder Miller. Besides, Elder Miller is one of the most hazardous and reckless men of the Princeton Chapel. He says that as the Jews' infants, by virtue of the flesh, were born members of God's political and worldly church, the commonwealth of Israel; so infants, by virtue of Dr. Godfather's faith, are born, by virtue of carnal generation, members of Christ's spiritual kingdom. Indeed, both Dr. Godfather and Elder Miller have found out that Dr. Nicodemus was right, and the Prophet of Nazareth wrong, when the latter asserted, and the former doubted the necessity of being born again. But I have several lessons for these scribes as soon as I can write them out. Meanwhile let us look back to the five points of the allegory. Which be they, Susan?

Susan. Hagar, Ishmael, born after the flesh, living according to the flesh, and the earthly inheritance.

Olympas. And what the contrast?

Susan. Sarah, Isaac, born after the Spirit, living according to the Spirit, and the eternal inheritance.

Olympas. And what, William, is thus allegorized?

William. The two covenants, the two seeds, the two births, the two ways of living, and the two inheritances.

Olympas. And, Eliza, what saith the Scripture as interpreted by Paul?

Eliza. "Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not inherit with the son of the free-woman."

Olympas. Well, then, brethren, we are children

not of Hagar, but of Sarah; not of the flesh, but of the Spirit; “not of the bond-woman, but of the free.” Now had not Hagar literally gendered to bondage, she could not have fully represented the true genius of the Law or Sinaic covenant; and had not Isaac been born above and beyond nature, by a promise, and by faith in that promise, he never could have been a fit metaphor to represent the Christian people under a covenant that genders to liberty—an emancipation from sin, death, and the grave.

Olympas. What, James, was the doom of the uncircumcised man-child?

James. “The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people.”

Olympas. Do not all the substitutes fill the place and occupy the ground of the principal? If then, Eliza, any ordinance come in the place of circumcision, then the law of circumcision is the law of that ordinance. For example: Did baptism come in its place, then the unbaptized man-child should be cut off from his people—he has broken the covenant.

Olympas. Rehearse, Reuben, the whole law of circumcision.

Reuben. The whole law of circumcision comprehends some six items of primary importance.—

1st. Its subjects were males only.

2nd. Its subjects were sons or slaves.

3rd. The day of circumcision was the eighth.

4th. The administrator was not a religious functionary.

5th. It guaranteed a share in Canaan to the worthy.

6th. And secured the flesh of the Messiah.

Olympas. These are a few specimens of its peculiar law, and show that its substitute is not easily found in this our day and generation. Was there no adult circumcision?

William. Yes, Abraham was an adult, and all that were proselyted to the Jew's institution were, like him, circumcised.

Olympas. How was it a seal to Abraham rather than to any one else?

Thomas. Paul says it was a seal of a righteousness of faith which he had before the command was given; consequently it never could be to any one what it was to Abraham. The fact that God selected Abraham on account of his faith, was an approval and pledge—a sign and seal as peculiar to him as was the singularity of his position in the human family.

Olympas. We will have to take up this subject again.

CONVERSATION XIX.

GENESIS XVII, XVIII.

Olympas. SOMETHING remains on the subject of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith. At this point we left off our morning lesson. What do *seals* imply, William?

William. Something previously stipulated or agreed upon.

Olympas. When covenants are under consideration, that is true; but when Paul says that Abraham received the “*sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised,” does it allude to a covenant transaction at all?

Thomas. It would seem that Paul meant no more than that God’s giving to Abraham the covenant of circumcision was a pledge, or an approval, of that faith which he had formerly exhibited in believing and obeying the first promise concerning the seed of blessings.

Olympas. You are right: the sign of circumcision was to Abraham not merely a sign, as it was to Ishmael and Isaac; but in addition, a proof of the excellency of that faith which he had twenty-four years before Isaac was born, or the covenant of circumcision ordained.

Thomas. Can baptism be a seal to any one of the faith which he has before he receives the ordinance?

Olympas. No; in strict conformity to the facts in the case of Abraham, it cannot be said either

of infant or adult baptism, of believing or not believing baptism, that it is a seal of the righteousness of the faith which the subject previously possessed.

Eliza. Of infants it could not be, because they have no previous faith; but Dr. Godfather preaches that to those who have faith in person, or by proxy, baptism like circumcision, is a seal of the righteousness of the faith which they before possessed.

Olympas. Dr. Godfather is not infallible, nor is his opinion so profoundly learned or wise, as that it were either a sin or a shame to differ from it. But, however learned or wise in other matters, I will take upon me to say, that, in this respect, he is greatly mistaken.

Thomas. I read in some of the Baptist books that baptism, like circumcision, may be called a seal of the righteousness of faith to those who have faith before baptism.

Olympas. They are, indeed, in this point as much mistaken as the Pedobaptists: for their case and that of Abraham have no analogy in the point in which Paul contemplates the affair. Abraham's case was this: He had believed and obeyed God in a very singular way long before the birth of Ishmael or Isaac. The Lord's making a formal and special covenant with him afterwards as an approval of his previous faith and obedience, was, indeed, a striking seal or pledge of the excellency of his faith; but baptism requires only a confession of faith from any one, and then it is common to all such confessors, and cannot be to any of them a formal, or special divine interposition, or solemn approval of his faith or of its righteousness; and therefore no man's baptism

can be to him from God what Abraham's circumcision was to him—a special pledge of the righteousness of his previous belief. Baptism never is to any one what circumcision was to Abraham—an immediate pledge from God that his faith is fully approved. We shall now hear you read in turn the eighteenth chapter of Genesis.

[The chapter being read Olympas called upon all the family in order, to ask him, or each other, a question on some point in it.]

James. What means “the Plains of Mamre?”

Susan. Mamre was the brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner, and is called an Amorite.

William. Who were these three visitants that appeared to Abraham?

Eliza. Three angels, I presume.

Reuben. One of them was *more than an angel*. He seems to have been the Lord.

Rufus. Yes; for Abraham shows by his words and his actions in accosting one of them, and in bowing so humbly towards the ground, when he invited him into his tent, that he supposed him to be more than a mortal.

Francis. Abraham was a very polite gentleman. He bowed very courteously to the sons of Heth on another occasion. It would, therefore, be too strong an inference to deduce from this the divinity of any one of the company.

Thomas. Some of the circumstances would seem to conflict with the opinion that they were angels; and yet it is difficult to contemplate them in any other light.

Olympas. The ancient rites of hospitality are admirably depicted in this passage. See the ven-

erable Prince Abraham sitting at the door of his tent, during the heat of the day, casting his eyes occasionally along the plain, that, should any fatigued pilgrim appear, he might invite him to enjoy the hospitalities of his tabernacle. Meanwhile, three pilgrims in human form present themselves. They suddenly stood by him; and, lifting up his eyes, he ran to meet them at the door of his dwelling; and from some indications of superior standing, he humbly bowed to the ground while he solicited the favour of their company; and thus prevailed with them to sojourn with him for a few hours. They accepted of his kind invitation; and immediately, after informing Sarah of his wishes for his guests, and selecting a fatted calf, which he gave to a servant to prepare with all despatch, he had their sandals removed, and their feet refreshed with a cooling bath. The refreshment being prepared, and the table spread under an oak at the door of his tent, simply furnished with bread and roasted veal, butter and milk, Abraham himself in person stood at the table and waited upon his illustrious guests.

Edward. Why did not Abraham call half a dozen of his Negroes to wait upon his guests, rather than officiate in person? Had he not many servants? Was it not parsimony, rather than politeness, that prompted this? And what gentleman, who owns five hundred or a thousand slaves, would have his wife to go out and prepare a meal for his friends when they call upon him? I do not understand this.

Henry. I did not know that Abraham had any *Negroes* in those days. Were Abraham's servants *blacks*?

Olympas. Abraham's servants were of his own colour, and were not kept about his tent to wait upon his person, or upon that of his wife. They were for other uses in these patriarchal times. Besides, work was no disgrace to either patriarchal gentlemen or ladies. To be employed in the reasonable and necessary labours of the house, the garden, or the field, was then regarded as both pleasant and honourable. Besides, it was in much better taste for Abraham to serve his guests as he did, than to have employed inferior persons as proxies to do it for him. Would you not, Edward, consider it a greater honour to have the master of a large household, his wife, or his sons and daughters, to wait upon you in their own persons, than to have him call up either a hired servant or a servile Ethiopian to minister to your comforts?

Edward. Doubtless I should: yet still I do not see the use of servants if we must wait upon ourselves.

Olympas. We often have more business than we can manage or perform. it is therefore expedient to have help—not, however, to enable us to dispense with labour, or to make it either irksome or disgraceful to ourselves. Depend upon it, my children, whenever any one regards labour as disgraceful, he is far gone in the theory of profligacy and ruin. God made man to work, and furnished him with a case of instruments, called *hands*, of the most admirable contrivance, and with a patrimony on which to employ them both pleasantly and profitably. But with Prince Abraham in our eye serving his strange guests, who can regard such services as discreditable or humiliating? But I would have you more especially to mark the

bill of fare for the day. It was princely fare; for Abraham was a great Prince, rich in gold and silver, in flocks and herds, in men-servants and maid-servants.

Reuben. We should not call it *princely* fare in America. It would not be more than good common farmer fare—cakes baked on the hearth, roasted veal, butter and milk. It was very good common fare.

Olympas. True indeed, Reuben, Abraham called it only a “morsel of bread”—a mere hasty repast, got up at the moment. What could a King eat better than bread, and butter, and milk, and veal! Earth has not more luxurious fare. It is good, palatable, and healthy, and only needs to be a little more difficult to obtain, to make it quite luxurious living. If God had made these aliments scarce and costly, the products of some far distant land, kings would have preferred them to every thing else, and left our modern luxuries to their vassals.

Diseases are always in the ratios and qualities of food. If our food be various, complicated, and over plentiful, diseases are complex, numerous, and difficult of cure. If the fare be simple and moderate, diseases are so too. Hence, in part, the healthfulness and longevity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the more illustrious patriarchs of those times. And hence the dyspepsies, nervous and biliary diseases, fevers, consumptions, and nameless new and outlandish maladies which follow in the trail of our expensive and too rich and luxurious modes of living.

I doubt not it would be a mercy to the age that now is, and to that which is to come, were we compelled to live as Abraham feasted these most

illustrious guests : for if he was mistaken, and by not being forgetful to entertain strangers, he happened on this occasion to entertain angels unawares, he covered their board, and waited upon them in the best style that east or west could afford.

Touching the quantity, it has been supposed that Abraham on this occasion was somewhat extravagant. Three measures of flour were baked, (about seven and a half gallons, more than fifty pounds weight,) and a whole fatted calf served up for three guests ! The ancients were a working people, and therefore were larger eaters than some of the moderns. And as Abraham's family and his heart were large, he was accustomed to have abundant fare. It was, however, usual among the ancients to be very abundant in the quantity of their provisions. Thus Homer represents the hospitality of the ancient Greeks. Eumeus, when he invited Ulysses to eat with him, dressed two pigs for himself and his guest.

“ So saying, he girded quick his tunic close ;
And, issuing, sought the sties. Thence bringing *two*
Of the imprisoned herd, he slaughtered both,
Singed them, and slashed, and spitted them, and placed
The whole well roasted, banquets, spits, and all,
Reeking before Ulysses.”—*Cowper's Homer.*

William. Sarah, it seems, was not present. Abraham alone stood by them under the tree.

Olympas. I presume the customs of the country forbade a lady from being present when the guests were exclusively gentlemen. It seems she was in a tent behind that in which the guests sat ; or rather, in the tent behind them as they sat under the oak ; for it is said, one of these three sat immediately before the door. This most dignified

of the three intimated a strange event—that the aged Sarah should have a son within a year of that day. How, James, did Sarah receive this intelligence?

James. She laughed at the novel idea!

William. Incredulous, I suppose. Hence the Lord said, Why did Sarah laugh?

Reuben. How could a woman so exalted as Sarah, be thrown off her guard so much as to deny this little affair?

Olympas. What think you, Thomas?

Thomas. The person that promised this extraordinary event suddenly seemed to assume a superhuman dignity; and, with a voice filled with majesty and authority, asked, “*Is any thing too hard for the Lord?*” She was panic-stricken, overcome with terror, and lost in amazement, and in the confusion of the moment denied the fact.

Olympas. A good apology, Thomas, for mother Sarah. But the Lord said, “Nay, but thou didst laugh.” And there is no other extenuation of it other than Sarah was a woman—a good woman; but she was but a woman—and the *best of women* are but *women at best*. Abraham, indeed, once displayed a similar weakness; and therefore there is no just reason to impute to Sarah either less faith or less courage than to her husband Abraham, in this, as in all other cases, his own not excepted. Still it was a sin of which she did repent; and Moses faithfully records, with like impartiality, the virtues and the vices of those he admired and valued most.

Thomas. Are not these three men, now beginning to appear to be unearthly men, natives of the skies?

Olympas. The sequel will make it plain that they were two angels and the Lord himself—not merely the *Adonai*, but the *Yehovah* of Abraham. They only assumed the human form, speech, and manners, and appeared to eat, and to be in all respects of the human race. The transfiguration on Mount Tabor, and the appearance of two men from heaven that were then present with the Lord, were not greatly unlike to the transfiguration of the Lord here and that of his attending spirits, who, with him, assumed the human form and tried Abraham's hospitality and Sarah's faith in the most discriminating style. But as we have not time to amplify on every incident here, I especially request your profound attention to the reason why the Lord divulged the secrets of his providence to Abraham at this crisis; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him," as said king David of old.

Abraham, in true eastern politeness, accompanied his guests from his tent into the path that led them towards Sodom, whither, at that time, they were intent on going. Meanwhile, as the Lord conversed very intimately with Abraham while the two angels seemed to walk on before, he said to himself, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him: for I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

Here is a volume in one sentence. Abraham is

a model of faith, of obedience, and is destined to be a model in family training and government; and because of these attributes he is to be, as in many other points, a great benefactor of nations. I know Abraham that he will “*command his children.*” What, Thomas, think you, means the commanding of children and households?

Thomas. It would indicate the exercise of authority, tempered with wisdom and benevolence—attributes of which both God and man speak with approbation.

Olympas. To *command* a family is only another way of saying that it is subordinate to the parental government; and this, indeed, is a rarity in our land. Democracy is breathed into the infant’s nostrils with the breath of life in the American atmosphere; and children soon learn to know that they, too, as well as their parents, have certain natural and inalienable rights and privileges from which they ought not to be debarred; amongst which are self-will, liberty to dissent from the commands of their parents, and the pursuit of pleasure any way and every they judge most fitting. Under this system there can be little or no moral culture. Abraham was to be monarch of his house: “I know Abraham that he will command his family and his household.” He was to act the *patriarch*—the monarch father—and the result would be—“They shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.” This is the native consequence of such a system. I hope, therefore, we shall all do our duty, and that you, my dear children, will early learn to do justice and judgment; for these imply every relative duty. We must leave the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Abraham’s intercession, till our next lesson.

CONVERSATION XX.

OLYMPAS having commanded the household to read the eighteenth and nineteenth chapters of Genesis, resumed the close of the eighteenth as follows:—"We have found one of the three guests of Abraham, under a very high title, communing with him on the immediate fate of Sodom. How is this revelation introduced?"

Reuben. "And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." This certainly would indicate that the Lord did not know all things, if we understand it literally as it reads. But I presume it is an accommodation of things supernatural to our usual modes of ascertaining facts.

Olympas. No more than when it is said,—"*Grieve not the Spirit*"—"God *repented* that he had made man"—the Lord *sees*—the Lord *remembers*—the Lord *hears, walks, rises, stands, &c. &c.* These all are accommodations, and this is an Eastern *periphrasis*—a beautiful circumlocution, intimating that the Lord will impartially examine and adjudicate all the actions of men according to truth before he pronounces sentence. "The men then turned their faces from thence towards Sodom, and went on before the Lord."

Thomas. This would intimate to me that the

Lord's saying "I will go down and see," means not a descent from heaven, but from the place that he then occupied in communing with Abraham. Am I right?

Olympas. I almost fear to say you are right, and yet I dare not say that you are wrong; for all the Rabbies, Hebrew, and Greek, and English, down to Tillotson the Archbishop, A. Clarke, and all the moderns, speak of the Lord as descending from heaven. But this is one instance, that to follow the connexion and common sense is generally more natural and safe than to look afar off to hypothesis, analogy, or theory for light on difficult passages. The case is simply this: 'The Lord on earth was talking to Abraham on an eminence above the plain in which these four cities stood. To Abraham he says, "I will go down and examine the fame of Sodom, and ascertain its truth." The accompanying two angels left him and Abraham in converse, and departed as the Lord's messengers to examine the character of the inhabitants, as we shall see in the sequel. Meanwhile, Abraham stands in solemn attention to what Jehovah says; and waxing bold in his confidence, and full of compassion "*he drew near*" to the Lord and began his intercessions—the Lord and he standing upon the same piece of earth. He begins his intercession on the plea of fifty righteous being found in the city. And what numbers next, James?

James. Forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten.

Olympas. Why did he not descend to *five*.

Susan. He was ashamed, I think, to go below ten.

Henry. Abraham asked six times, and I think

he ought to have been ashamed sooner, rather than to have asked any more.

Olympas. What seems to be the point, the main point in the intercessions of Abraham, Eliza?

Eliza. The confounding of the righteous with the wicked. His plea was, "Wilt thou slay the righteous with the wicked?" This, Abraham thought, would be wrong; for he said, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Olympas. So we still think; and the Lord thinks so too, and therefore he will "make a difference between him that serveth him and him that serveth him not." Observe that the Lord to whom Abraham spoke is here regarded by Abraham as "*the Judge of all the earth.*" After this long and wonderful intercession on the part of Abraham, in which it appears that Abraham became ashamed to ask, before the Lord refused to listen, we are told "the Lord went his way, and Abraham returned to his place." This intercession then, not only took place on earth, both the Lord and Abraham standing upon the soil; but the Lord walked on the earth in visible form as a man, and as the sequel shows, directed his course toward Sodom, whither the two other men-like celestials had gone before him. Do we again hear, Edward, of the former two angels?

Edward. I presume it is of these we read in the next chapter: "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom, and seeing them rose up to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face to the ground."

Olympas. Doubtless you are right, Edward. These are the two; and a faithful day's journey it was, as it seems to me, to reach Sodom by sun-

down from the vicinity of Abraham's dwelling. How did Lot view these two angels, Henry?

Henry. He seems to have viewed them as *men*, just as Abraham had viewed them. He invited them to his house, and prepared for them a repast, as he would have done for his uncle Abraham had he visited him. But what could have induced Lot to go and sit at the gate of Sodom?

Olympas. How do you answer, Thomas?

Thomas. There were no taverns in Sodom in those days, as all ancient tradition intimates. And towards evening sometimes the more hospitable and benevolent used to go to the gate of the city to invite the more respectable strangers home with them. Generally strangers pitched their tents in the streets, and lived in the city as they were wont to do while on their journey. In those mild climates there were no taverns. Travellers carried their tents and their provisions and lived as at home. So some ancient history, which I read at school, represents the custom.

Olympas. Very good. This does honour to Lot as much as the actual fact of his inviting them home with them. They were respectable looking strangers without any travelling apparatus; and who can tell but the Omnipresent Spirit so moved the mind of Lot as to direct his steps to the gate of the city just at the moment that he might have the honour of entertaining angels unawares, and that the Lord's angels might be carried home to the Lord's people.

Edward. It seems that the wicked men of Sodom assaulted the house, and desired to have the angels whom they regarded as men. For what purpose did they want them?

Olympas. These were the vilest of the vile,

who envied Lot of these distinguished, and, no doubt, beautiful looking angel-men; and who were addicted to a crime which yet bears the name of the accursed city, and which, as you advance in the study of Leviticus, eighteenth and twentieth chapters, you may some day more fully understand. You will observe that the two angelic men proposed staying in the street all night; but Lot, probably anticipating such an affray, more perseveringly invited them to share the protection of his house.

Reuben. Lot ought not to have lived in such a wicked place.

Eliza. So one of the Apostles intimates when he says, "that righteous man, while dwelling among the Sodomites, had his soul vexed from day to day by their unrighteous deeds."

Olympas. Cupidity or inordinate selfishness had led him astray: for when Abraham gave him the choice of pasturage, instead of saying, "Uncle Abraham, you have been my protector and my superior, and I would rather you would choose first. Take the hill or the plains, as seems good in your sight." But no; he accepted the preference, "and choose all the plain of Jordan," for its pastures were rich and well watered: and so Abraham returned to the high grounds and pitched his tent from oak to oak, and from hill to hill, as the exigencies of his flocks and herds required. But, observe, Lot suffers for his inordinate self-love, as the event fully and awfully demonstrates. So that good men are not ever or very long perfect! After this rude assault of these vile wretches, what next occupies the historian's attention?

Edward. The men (angels, I presume,) commanded Lot to assemble his sons-in-law, sons and daughters, and whatever he had, and to depart: for, said they, "We will destroy this place; for the Lord has sent us to destroy it."

Olympas. Did the sons-in-law of Lot obey their father?

Edward. No: he seemed to them as one that mocked.

Olympas. What family had Lot at this time?

Thomas. He seems to have had only a wife and two daughters; for his daughters seem to have been betrothed rather than married.

Olympas. So it might seem. But does Lot promptly obey the command of the two angels?

Edward. No: he lingered till "the men took hold of him and of the hands of his wife and daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him forth and set him without the city."

Olympas. What a lesson! How stupid and lingering is man—the best of men! How merciful and longsuffering is God! Who would have thought that so good a man as Lot could have been so attached to so wicked a society, as that angels must lay hands on him and drag him out of the city of destruction! And even when he is out of the walls and gates the angels add, "Escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed!" Yet listen to Lot: "Oh! not so, my Lord—Oh! let me escape to Zoar. Is it not a little city! I cannot escape to the mountain!" It was well for Lot that Abraham had interceded for the righteous in Sodom. The

Lord in mercy for the affrighted and un-nerved Lot, said, "See I have accepted thee in this thing: I will not overthrow this city for which thou hast spoken! Haste, haste thee; escape thither; for "I cannot do any thing till thou be come hither." The Lord it seems by this time appeared to Lot, and it was to him that Lot prayed. What time of the morning was this Eliza?

Eliza. The sun was just risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.

Olympas Why, William, was it called Zoar?

William. Zoar, you said, means *little*; and, I suppose, as this was a very small city, it was called *Zoar*.

Olympas. What was its former name?

William. Thomas says it was first called Bela; but I do not know how he knows that.

Olympas. Explain, Thomas.

Thomas. Gen. xiv. 5. The king of Bela is mentioned as the last of the five kings of the five Cities of the Plain; and here we are told by anticipation that *Bela* is the same as *Zoar*!

Olympas. Read again the next verse, William?

William. "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven."

Olympas. This verse is peculiarly important. Here are two Lord's spoken of. Who are they, Reuben?

Reuben. The former is the Lord on earth—"the Judge of all the earth"—the visible Lord, who communed with Abraham, Lot, and all the patriarchs. The other is the Lord in heaven—the invisible God, "whom no man has seen or can

see." I presume the former is God the Father, and the second is the Lord afterwards incarnate.

Olympas. They are both called *Yehovah*. The *Yehovah* rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from *Yehovah*. It is certain that it is so written; but your inferences from these words may not be so certain. It is indeed plain that the Lord to whom Abraham and Lot spake, rained vengeance down from the Lord in heaven; and it is probable, very probable, the Lord, the Judge of all the earth, who spoke to Abraham, was indeed the *Word* that was in the beginning with God, and that was God, who became incarnate and dwelt with men in a human body, whose similitude he so often seems to have assumed when he communed with the ancients. This is the more probable also from the declaration that the Divinity is invisible — that God the Father is the invisible God, of whom the Lord, who punished Sodom, is the express image; and who, therefore, of right both as respects nature and image, wears his name *Jehovah*. Still I would have you clearly draw the line between what is inferential merely, and what is expressly affirmed in so many precise words. What next ensued, William, in the narrative?

William. The Lord rained fire and brimstone on those cities, and overthrew them, and all the plains with them, with all the inhabitants, and every thing standing or growing upon the ground. I read the other day that the plain about seventy miles long, and eighteen broad, abounding in ashpales, or bitumen, of which there were many pits, highly inflammable, was ignited by the lightning, and that the ground was burned out like a

large saucer, into which the Jordan poured its sluggish waters, and that it became a sea, now called the Salt Sea, or the Dead Sea, anciently Asphaltites. Also, that the water is so thick that a stone will swim in it ; that it emits an effluvia fatal to the fowls of heaven ; and that its waters are mortal even to the fish that swim in them ; that the winds cannot ruffle its dark and pitchy waters ; and that the very fruit that grows upon the surrounding trees, though so beautiful to the eye, are filled with ashes.

Olympas. So the love of the marvellous embraces every opportunity of developing itself. It adds fictitious items—exaggerates the true, and new colours all. It is, indeed, true that the Jordan has made a sea, called the Dead Sea, of nearly such dimensions, on the ground once deluged with fire ; and it is probable that much of that bituminous earth was consumed. Even in the ordinary processes of nature sometimes not only nitrous particles exhaled from the earth, but sulphurous also ; and these in large volumes coming into contact with the electric spark, are instantly ignited ; and by an accumulation of such materials the most terrific scenes sometimes transpire. It is therefore certain that fire and brimstone were rained down on these cities, and that, with all their inhabitants, they were consumed. Jude says, “They are set forth an example of the doom of ungodly men, suffering the vengeance of an eternal fire.” What came of Lot’s wife, Susan ?

Susan. She was converted into a pillar of salt.

Reuben. Struck dead with lightning and petrified into salt rock, as some traveller, Mr. Shaw or Mr. Poccoke, says.

Thomas. Josephus says she was still standing in his day, a monument of Heaven's indignation against those that look back with wishful and rebellious eyes at the city of destruction professedly forsaken.

William. Our Teacher of the Sunday School said that Lot's wife was killed by lightning, and a sheet of sulphur and nitre falling upon her, she was indurated and encased in it; so that being protected from the action of the atmosphere and the rains, she remained for ages.

Olympas. There are many ways of speculating upon these curious matters; but it is always foolish to explain a miracle by showing how it might, in harmony with the regular operations of nature have been performed. I wish you could all learn to put the proper emphasis on the right word in that admirable question which one Paul, a very great orator, once propounded to a very splendid king—"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" How would you read that verse, William?

William. I would say, *raise* the dead.

Olympas. Reuben?

Reuben. Raise the *dead*.

Olympas. Thomas?

Thomas. I would read it, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible that *God* should raise the dead?"

Olympas. You are undoubtedly correct. If you had *seen* as well as *heard* Paul pronounce the word *God* on that occasion, you never would have forgotten. I opine, that Agrippa remembers it to this hour.

Well, now, it was a miracle, or it was not. I opine, indeed, that no more is intended than to say, she was suddenly killed and thus made a perpetual monument of the crime of looking back under certain circumstances; for as "a covenant of salt" certainly means a perpetual covenant, a pillar of salt would only indicate metaphorically that she was made a perpetual monument of impious disobedience. We pass over for the present all that is written of the origin of the two nations of Moab and Ammon. Their incestuous origin it is important to know, to account for some things in their history.

CONVERSATION XXI.

GENESIS XX, XXI.

Olympas. ABRAHAM, we learn from this section of ancient history, went south after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Why, think you, Edward?

Edward. I presume he was desirous of getting out of sight of the Heaven-stricken city: for it would seem that Abraham's residence was but a short distance from the plains of the Jordan.

Olympas. It is not improbable. Whither went he, James?

James. To Gerar.

Olympas. What people, Reuben, inhabited Gerar?

Reuben. Philistines. This Gerar being a city of the Rocky Arabia, and having a Palestine king, it is likely the inhabitants were chiefly Philistines.

Thomas. It seems that Abraham was still as timid as before he had the vision of angels. He fears for his life, and repeats the former *equivocation*, saying, "Sarah is my sister."

Olympas. Sarah's great beauty, it appears, was a great trouble to Abraham in that age of polygamy. What sort of character, William, was the king of Gerar?

William. Abimelech, king of the city of Gerar, was a very just and righteous man: for he could lay his hand upon his heart and say, "In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands have I done this."

Edward. And the Lord attests his character by saying, "Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart."

Olympas. It would then appear that Abimelech's intention of making Sarah a second wife was, in that age, quite honourable. It seems not to have impaired his character with God or man. Yet to prevent the completion of his designs, a special affliction had befallen him.

Eliza. Was it not cowardice that occasioned this equivocation?

Olympas. It would, indeed, be a very natural inference. It seems that Abraham and Sarah had made a covenant before this time that they were to pass off each other in all strange cities as brother and sister. It certainly, however, had its origin in a conviction and anticipation of detriment or danger to Abraham's person. But was it not the truth, Eliza?

Eliza. Yes, Abraham explained the matter to Abimelech as though it were perfectly true and correct—"She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother." Still it was only a part of the truth; and, according to Mrs. Opie's volume on lying, being calculated to suppress a part of the truth, and to make a false impression, it constituted a sinful equivocation.

Olympas. So Abimelech seems to have regarded it. He said to Abraham, "There have been done deeds to me that ought not to be done." Yet when we hear Abraham again, we cannot but sympathize with his weakness—"Because," says he, "I thought that the fear of God is not in this place, and they will slay me for my wife's sake." "And yet, indeed," adds he, "she is my sister,"

&c. Now as this seems to have satisfied Abimelech, it ought to satisfy us; yet I would not have you think that Abraham acted in the matter as he ought to have done, believing in God as he did. I would also have you notice the peculiar acceptation of the word *prophet* as intimated by the Lord on this occasion. Read verse seventh, Susan.

Susan. “Now, therefore, restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.”

Olympas. What seems to be the meaning of the word *prophet* here?

Thomas. You formerly taught us that the primary acceptation of the original word was to pray, intercede, or speak to God for men; and that in process of time it means to speak out by impulse, extemporaneously; and ultimately it meant to foretell—because those who conversed most with God could best interpret his will to men.

Olympas. True; and this being the first time the word *prophet* is found in the sacred writings, we may expect its primitive meaning to be more apparent here than afterwards. But is it not worthy of notice that God in a vision prompts Abimelech to engage Abraham to pray for him, and to use the argument—Abraham is a man of prayer—a prophet—one who intercedes with God? This admirably suits his character, as appears from his importunity for Sodom and Gomorrah. It is a hard thing for God to deny the prayer of such a man as Abraham. Had Abraham, Eliza, formed a just opinion of the inhabitants of Gerar?

Eliza. Very far from it, as the sequel shows;

for not only king Abimelech was a good man, but he so represents his nation; saying, "Wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?"

Olympas. Good men sometimes think the elect are very few. Elijah thought on one occasion that he was left alone. And here Abraham said, "Surely the fear of God is not in this place." Yet here was a righteous nation, and there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal. How did Abimelech requite and reprove Abraham and Sarah, Reuben?

Reuben. He gave him a thousand shekels to buy a veil for Sarah: so I heard you once interpret these words.

Olympas. Not exactly, my son; yet that is substantially the meaning. The Hebrew *hoo* is itself ambiguous, and may be rendered *he* or *it*. The Chaldee, it is agreed, favours the translation by *it* instead of *he*. And then the whole passage might read as follows: speaking somewhat sarcastically, Abimelech said to Sarah, "Behold I have given thy *brother* (Abraham) a thousand shekels. Behold *it* is for thee a veil of the eyes, for thee and thy attendants, that all may know that thou art married." Thus was she reproved. I have sometimes illustrated another passage of doubtful interpretation by this one: 1 Cor. xi. 10, "For this cause ought the wife to have a veil [power] upon her head"—a token of her husband's authority. But of this in its own place. Thus, however, did Abimelech reprove Sarah and Abraham.

Thomas. But there is some difficulty here. Sarah was now ninety years old, and how could Abimelech desire to have her for a wife?

Olympas. Sarah was in her youth one of the most beautiful women in the world; and even yet, for her years, she seems to have been a very interesting female. Abimelech, moreover, may have sought an alliance with Abraham, who was a very great prince, and very rich; and regarding her as his sister, and an excellent and amiable lady, it was perfectly in good taste with the spirit of that age, that he should have sought such a wife, especially as he must have heard of Abraham's conquest of the allied kings. But you have not told us how Abraham reciprocated these reproofs and tokens of respect from the king of Gerar.

Reuben. He prayed to the Lord for the king and the queen, and all the royal household; and the Lord hearkened to his prayer, and removed the affliction superinduced by this unfortunate affair.

Olympas. You have now arrived at a very instructive incident in the Abrahamic family, and before we attempt an examination of this twenty-first chapter we must have it read a second time.

The chapter being read, and the incidents of Isaac's birth and circumcision being noted, the historian hastens to the rivalry that arose between Hagar and Sarah. Having in a late conversation anticipated much of what is written here, we shall only interrogate you on a few of the more important items. What, Susan, seems to have occasioned this disturbance in Abraham's family?

Susan. Ishmael *mocked* Sarah and Isaac.

Olympas. What account does Paul make of this mocking, William?

William. Persecution. "He that was born *after the flesh* persecuted him that was born *after the Spirit.*"

Olympas. Explain these phrases—"born after the flesh," "born after the Spirit"—Edward.

Edward. Ishmael was born according to nature, in the common course of things; but Isaac was born not by virtue of nature, but above nature, by the promise and Spirit of God.

Olympas. By faith Sarah received strength: so that Isaac's birth was supernatural. *Flesh* and *spirit* are here for the first time placed in contrast. Hagar, as aforesaid, represented the Sinai marriage covenant, and Ishmael the offspring of nature and the law. Human nature and divine law can produce no better offspring than the mocking Ishmael, a slave. But Sarah represented the new and better marriage covenant, and Isaac the offspring of nature and the gospel. Human nature, quickened by the Spirit, and under the new covenant, can produce a better offspring than Ishmael—the persecuted Isaac, a free-man. What was the inheritance of the son of the flesh, Reuben?

Reuben. "A loaf of bread and a bottle of water." Sarah said to Abraham, "Cast out this bond-woman and her son: for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."

Olympas. Did Abraham accede to this demand?

Reuben. "The thing was very grievous to Abraham because Ishmael was his son." But God said to Abraham, "Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bond-woman: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken to her voice; for *in Isaac shall thy seed be called*; and also of the son of the bond-woman I will make a nation, because he is thy son." So Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away next morning, putting his provisions of bread and water upon her shoulders.

Olympas. And whither went they, Susan?

Susan. She departed and wandered through the wilderness of Beersheba. And when the water was spent that was in her bottle, she cast the child under a shrub, and placed herself at some distance over against the lad that she might not see him die; and there she lifted up her voice and wept.

Poor Hagar and the mocking Ishmael! What a mournful spectacle! Exiled from the social hearth and the rich provisions of Abraham's house, parched with thirst, bewildered in the desert, and in despair of life, the unfortunate woman and her son are about to perish! Her son is lying faint and exhausted under a shrub; the mother not liking to witness the last struggle of expiring nature, retires from the scene; and giving scope to her sorrows, she breaks the dead silence of the solitary wilderness with her unavailing repinings and heart-rending lamentations! The lad, too, mingles his wailings with those of his mother, and bitterly repents of the insolence he had shown to his mistress and her son! But it is the repentance of a criminal—without any change of heart. The Lord, indeed, who hears the young lions when they cry for food, heard the voice of the lad, and an angel from heaven addresses Hagar and commands her to rise and take care of the lad; for God intended not that they should perish there. She was directed to a well, at which she replenished her bottle and relieved the lad. How old, William, was Ishmael at this time?

William. He was fourteen years old when Isaac was born; and now that Isaac was weaned, he must have been some sixteen or seventeen years old.

Olympas. Upon the whole, then, we see pictured out in this scene the two covenants—the two churches, the Jewish and the Christian—and the peculiar fortunes and inheritance of each. It is worthy of note, too, that as the Sinai covenant gendered to bondage, and was represented by Hagar and her son, that these transactions should have occurred in Arabia Petrea, and in the wilderness of Paran, not far from the very mount whence was promulged the law, even the national covenant made with Isaac by Moses the Moderator. In the wilderness of Paran, Ishmael became an expert archer, and his mother it seems went down into Egypt to her own people and took a wife for him. Thus commenced the Ishmaelitish nation; and thus early were pictured out the peculiar genius of the two institutions, and the character and fortunes of those who walk after the flesh, and of those who walk after the Spirit.

We have next an interesting incident indicative of the simple manners and customs of those primitive times, and of the pains which good men, like Abimelech and Abraham, took to preserve peace and a good understanding among their friends and servants. The celebrated well which gave to the whole region the name of Beersheba, or *The Well of the Oath*, was made famous from the covenant of amity confirmed by an oath, entered into between these two princes. A controversy about a well on the part of Abimelech's servants on some recent occasion, called forth from Abraham at this time an arrangement to prevent similar occurrences. He obliged Abimelech to accept of a pledge of seven lambs, and thereby to establish a witness that the well of Beersheba

belonged to Abraham, having been dug by his servants. Wells, in those dry and parched lands, were, to those great herdsmen and shepherds, matters of great importance; and, therefore, we need not wonder at the frequent allusions to them in these ancient records.

What other incident occurs in this chapter, Susan?

Susan. The planting of a grove at Beersheba by Abraham.

Olympas. Whether a grove or an oak, has been long debated by some of the learned. The presumption is in favour of an oak, if we suppose that the sacred oaks among the Greeks and Romans originated from the patriarchal custom. Oaks and groves were anciently celebrated places of resort for the pious. The silence and shade of groves are favourable to devotion; and hence we are told that Abraham called, or was wont to call there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

Good and great men, my dear children, always love communion with God, and therefore they seek for favourable places—closets, mountain tops, deep vales, the margin of streams and rivers, are the favoured spots, the retreats and the *proseuches*, or places of prayer, where the good and pious delight to pour out their hearts to God. Our Saviour himself spent nights in these sequestered spots, and sometimes retired for days into solitary places for the sake of a fast of the body and a feast of the soul in delightful communion with God. For any great and eminent undertaking there is no preparation like this.

Would you, then, desire to have power with God and to enjoy the delights of an intimate

communion with him? You must early cultivate this habit. You must acquire the art of meditation and abstraction, and learn to reflect much upon the works and ways of God to man, as displayed in nature, in his providence, and especially in the greatest of all his works—the redemption of men from sin, and death, and ruin.

CONVERSATION XXII.

GENESIS XXII.

ABRAHAM'S TEMPTATION.

Olympas. THE Lord tempted Abraham; yet, saith James, "God tempteth no man to evil." How then, Thomas, did God tempt Abraham?

Thomas. He tempted him by trying him—by trying how far he would obey God.

Olympas. God uses strong arguments, and therefore strong temptations. To what points in Abraham's character was the temptation addressed?

Reuben. To his parental affection. Abraham loved Isaac, and he loved God: and God seems to have designed to test which of the two he loved most.

Olympas. True; Abraham had great parental affection for Isaac, and much filial affection for God. Now the question was, Which of the two were the stronger—his parental or his filial affection? But was there nothing more in it than this, William?

William. Abraham was a great man, and his example would be influential, and the Lord took this way of making it so.

Olympas. We had better take up the incidents in order. Let us have the commandment of God to Abraham in this case.

William. "And God said, Take now thy son, thy only son Isaac whom thou lovest, and get thee to the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a

burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

Olympas. Now observe how strong the trial is made by the very words of the precept—"Take thy son, thine *only* son, *whom thou lovest.*"

Olympas. How old was this only son at this time, Eliza?

Eliza. According to the margin he must have been about twenty-four years old. This happened in the year of the world 2132, one hundred and twenty-four years after Abraham's birth. Now as Isaac was born in the hundredth year of his age, Isaac must have been in his twenty-fourth.

Olympas. This, then, shows how long children were subject to their parents in the Abrahamic family and in the East in those ancient times. Was he his *only* son, Reuben?

Reuben. He was his only son by Sarah his proper wife; and, since the exile of Hagar and Ishmael, he was his only son and heir at home.

Olympas. To what place was he sent, James, to offer this burnt-offering?

James. To Mount Moriah in the East.

Reuben. Did not Abraham live in the East? What means "the East" in this place?

Thomas. Abraham's home at this time was Beersheba, which was West of the land of Moriah some fifty miles.

Olympas. Describe this land of Moriah, Thomas.

Thomas. It is in the Septuagint called "*the High Lands*"—the high lands of Canaan. In Judea it must have been because the high lands East of Beersheba were there. It is also called "the Land of Vision" in my Latin Vulgate, and that farther indicates its height; for persons

ascend mountains when they desire to extend their vision.

Olympas. It is also in the Chaldee called "*the Land of Worship*," not only because worship was usually performed on hills and mountains, rather than in plains and valleys; but because it was afterwards made the place of worship. Indeed, we know that the land of Moriah included Jerusalem and the hills around it, and that the spot where the Lord appeared to David, and where Solomon built the Temple, is called Moriah by high authority. By whom, can any of you tell?

All silent! James, read the first verse of the third chapter of second Chronicles.

James. "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, *on Mount Moriah*, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite."

Olympas. The place is certainly identified; and as Mount Moriah included the whole eminence, Mount Zion, Mount Calvary, and the Mount of Olives were all parts of Mount Moriah. The spot selected for this burnt-offering was either where the Temple stood and the altar of burnt-offerings, or Mount Calvary.

Thomas. I have heard vague references to this place before; but I know not on what authority. It does, indeed, seem that the question must stand between Calvary and the Temple Mount for the site of this mysterious and sublime event.

Olympas. Our notions of congruity prefer Calvary; but there is room for a doubt which of the two; and we ought not to suffer our notions of congruity to supply the place of divine testimony.

Either spot is apposite enough for this symbolic scene, and sufficiently connects it with New Testament incidents and developments. Did any one, Susan, accompany Abraham and Isaac on this occasion?

Susan. Yes; Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up and went to the place appointed.

Olympas. When did he arrive, Susan?

Susan. On the third day.

Olympas. How, William, did Abraham proceed after the Lord signified to him the spot?

William. He left his ass and his servants; and, taking his son, departed to the spot preordained for this solemn and significant event.

Olympas. Who carried the wood, now the ass and the servants both being left behind, Susan?

Susan. Abraham laid it upon Isaac; and, taking fire and a knife, they went both of them together.

Olympas. What an awful and solemn scene! Abraham with a knife in one hand and a torch in the other; Isaac, the son of many promises, the darling of his hoary hairs, with a bundle of cleft dry wood upon his shoulder, climbing the hill by his side; and, in mute astonishment and contemplation, slowly ascending to its summit, to the identical spot marked out by the finger of God. At last, breaking silence, Isaac said, "My father, behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" Abraham not fully comprehending his own words, as a relief to his own soul and the solicitude of his beloved son, said, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb

for a burnt-offering." At length they arrive at the spot which God had told him of, and there Abraham with his own hands erects the altar, lays the wood in order, binds his son, and lays him in full length upon the altar and upon the wood, and, stretching forth his hand, seizes the knife to slay his son. Just as he lifted up his hand to heaven to strike the fatal blow, the angel of Jehovah calls to him out of heaven, saying with great energy of voice, "Abraham! Abraham! lay not thine hand upon thy son, neither hurt him in the least; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only son, from me." And what next occurred in this soul-subduing scene? Tell us, Reuben.

Reuben. The venerable patriarch, lifting up his eyes, descried a ram caught in a thicket by his horns, which he took and offered for a burnt-offering *in the stead* of his son.

Olympas. And what afterwards became the name of that memorable spot where this mystical transaction occurred?

Thomas. Abraham called it JEHOVAH-JIREH, which continued to be its name till the time of Moses—till Israel obtained the Land of Promise.

Olympas. And what, Eliza, means the words *Jehovah-jireh*?

Eliza. The margin says, "The Lord will provide," "In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Olympas. "In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen." What a singular, and apparently dislocated phrase! Can any of you explain it?

All silent again! It is, indeed, a singular phrase; and very great and learned critics have debated its meaning, both as respects "the Mount

of God," and the phrase, "It shall be seen." Houbigant and other interpreters and critics read it, "In this Mount the Lord shall be seen." According to the Septuagint which I now hold in my hand, it reads, "And Abraham called the name of that place, 'The Lord hath seen,' that at this day they might say, on this mountain, 'the Lord was seen.'" The difference between Houbigant and the Seventy is not so easily decided. The latter, indeed, is more consonant to the general construction and idiom of the Hebrew, and certainly with the New Testament allusion to this passage.

Abraham both heard and saw the Lord on that Mount; and as certain was the Lord Jesus both heard and seen on the same Mount. God provided for Abraham on that Mount a lamb for a whole burnt-offering, *instead* of his son; and on the same Mount, in after times, in the seed of that same Isaac, God provided a whole burnt-offering in the sacrifice of his Son, *instead of the seed of Abraham*. Abraham's son was ransomed by a lamb which God provided, and Abraham's seed by faith are now ransomed by the Lamb of God, whom most emphatically God did provide—who suffered *in their stead*, as Mount Moriah's Lamb suffered *in the stead* of Isaac. The type is all fulfilled in the antitype.

Thomas. We wish to know what portion of the New Testament authorises the translation, "In this Mount the Lord was seen;" and we desire to understand why Isaac submitted so voluntarily to the hand of his father. Indeed, there are several questions we desire to ask on this most interesting narrative.

Olympas. Say on. But in regard to the allusion to the New Testament, which seems to me to justify the view that I have expressed of the Mount of Vision, our Lord's own words, following the Septuagint, seem to authorise the opinion, and to explain the difficulties which I expected to rise, and which I now see are rising in your minds. Abraham believed that God would bless the world in his son Isaac in some way. He greatly desired to understand in what way. Though not comprehending it at its first intimation, he rejoiced that one day he would understand it. To this transaction he alludes in a conversation with the infidel Jews in Jerusalem, saying, "Abraham rejoiced that he should see my day, and he did see it and was glad." This doubtless is the true and natural version of the passage. He saw it on this occasion: for it was in this trial of his faith, and in this Mount Moriah, that the Lord revealed to Abraham what he desired to understand,—first, in the silent voluntary resignation and submission of his son to death; then, in his figurative resurrection to life; for Paul is here our guide, when he says, "By faith Abraham offered up" his only begotten son Isaac, concerning whom it was said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called;" accounting in his own mind that "God was able to raise him from the dead, from which indeed he received him in a figure." Thus the Lord was seen in the person of Isaac, in at least nine very essential points. 1st. Isaac and Jesus were both the children of promises preceding their birth. 2nd. They were both born supernaturally, or by miracle. 3rd. They were the only offspring of the same parentage; and consequently, 4th. the only heirs

of their inheritance. 5th. They were both in the prime of life doomed to die; but neither of them on his own account—Isaac, as a proof of his father's faith in God and love to him; Jesus, as a proof of God's faithfulness and of his love to us. 6th. Each of them carried the wood of his own offering, and voluntarily submitted to the will of his father without the least resistance. 7th. They were both respited and raised from the dead—the one in figure and the other in fact. In the 8th place, not a little remarkable, each rose on the third day from the pronouncement of the sentence of death upon him. And in the 9th place, each after he rose from the dead returned to the place where he was before, to his father's house, and afterwards became the father of many nations. Do you, Reuben, now comprehend these nine capital points of typical coincidence between Isaac and Jesus our Saviour?

Reuben. I do not know that I can repeat them, but I will try—1st. They were both the children of prophecy and promises. 2nd. They were both of supernatural birth. 3rd. They were only begotten sons. 4th. They were only heirs. 5th. They were, though both innocent and unoffending in any one point, in the prime of life doomed to die, not for their own sake, but for the sake of others. 6th. Each of them voluntarily resigned his life. 7th. They were both released from death, and raised from the dead. 8th. They rose on the third day from the time of the sentence of death. And 9th. After they returned to their father's house, they each became the father of nations—Isaac, of the Jewish people; and Jesus, of the nation of the elect, gathered out of all nations,

kindreds, tongues, and people. But I do not see the proof that Isaac voluntarily offered himself.

Thomas. It must have been so : for Abraham being one hundred and twenty-five years old, and Isaac twenty-five, in the prime and vigour of life, he could have escaped either by violence or flight. And had there been any resistance in the case, it would doubtless have been recorded, inasmuch as it would have been a still more illustrious display of Abraham's obedience, as it would have called for a greater effort to have compelled the death of his son.

Olympas. It is certainly fairly deducible from all the premises, from the whole narrative, that Isaac acquiesced in the matter ; and hence in this transaction was exhibited as perfect obedience to the will of an earthly father as Abraham displayed to his heavenly Father.

Eliza. What was meant by his leaving his servants and his ass at the foot of the hill ?

Olympas. As no creature can effect any thing in the great work of redemption, neither angels nor ministering spirits, the Father and the Son by themselves alone accomplished this great work, the Father resigned and spared not his own Son, and the Son gave his life in obedience to the will of his Father ; for, said he, " I have power to lay down my life, and power to resume it ; therefore no one forces it away from me."

As human reason is both stupid and blunt in the things of redemption till irradiated from above, as it cannot ascend to the Mount of God, there have not been wanting some who imagined that they saw this portrayed in the ass on which Abraham rode to the foot of the hill, but no

farther. Abraham by faith and on foot ascended to the appointed place. Can you tell me, Susan, any incident in the life of Christ that exactly resembles Isaac's carrying the wood of his own burnt-offering upon his shoulder?

Susan. It is written that Jesus was compelled to carry his own cross up the Hill of Calvary; but it was much heavier than the wood which Isaac bore; for he almost fainted under the load.

Olympas. In what year of the world did this event transpire?

Eliza. As Abraham was born in 2008, and as this was in the one hundred and twenty-fifth year of his life, it must have been in the year of the world 2132 or 3.

Olympas. Then it greatly antedates all the human sacrifices found in the profane and mythological histories of the world. The idea of human sacrifice and self-immolation seems to have originated from an apprehension that because of the blessings pronounced on Abraham in consequence of this display of obedience, the Divinity was better pleased with human sacrifices than any other. Hence arose the practice in the Pagan world, as may be gathered from the most ancient facts on record, as to the place of its commencement and progress through the East. But what think you, Thomas, is the most useful lesson taught us in this whole transaction?

Thomas. That the faith which triumphs is a working, active, and efficient principle—indeed, that John spoke the whole truth when he said, "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith."

Olympas. The triumph of faith over self in the

way of obedience—over the temptation of this world, is, my good children, I would have you all learn, the only guarantee and pledge that it will overcome death. When you see any one's faith triumphing over the lusts of the flesh, and of the eye, and of the pride of life, rest assured that man's faith will triumph over death and the grave. You must, then, early learn to walk by faith, and thus you will walk with God and overcome the world.

CONVERSATION XXIII.

NEW TESTAMENT.

Olympas. NOT merely for the sake of variety, but for your farther improvement in the first principles of the Christian institution, I have thought it expedient to intermit for a few lessons the book of Genesis, and to take a few readings in the New Testament. You will, therefore, turn over to the evangelical history, and read this morning the first chapter of Luke.

Thomas. Why not begin with Matthew, seeing he is placed at the beginning of the book?

Olympas. Matthew, indeed, it is agreed is the oldest of the four Evangelists. He wrote first; but he is not so full, nor so methodical as Luke, especially in the early incidents of the Christian history. Now, as we wish to trace every thing with accuracy belonging to our holy religion, and to arrange in order and harmony the incidents, facts, and events found in the sacred biographers, and his views of the New Institution, I desire you to read Luke's preface, and to observe the reason which he offers by way of apology for his attempting the matter.

[Thomas having read the Preface, *Olympas* proceeded.]

You will observe from this apology and dedication to Theophilus, that the Christian Religion, its Author, and its propagators had even at this early period attracted much attention; and that the demand for information on the whole subject

was so great as to call for numerous accounts and narratives from the hands of those who were first converted to the faith. From Luke's account both of these contemporaries and himself, we would expect from him a more copious and methodical history of the whole affairs of that day, than from any of his predecessors in the work. And as to his competence to the task, and fidelity in executing it, the work itself and the concurring voice of all antiquity fully and satisfactorily avouch. Writing in Greece, and being better educated in that language, as well as more conversant with the characters of history among foreign nations, than any of the other three elect writers, his narrative has always been regarded, so far as the human character of the work is considered, as the most finished and instructive of them all, though in various particulars not so full as the testimonies of either Matthew or John.

It has another excellence that gives it superior claims to our attention at this time. Besides its being together with the Acts of the Apostles, a concise and perspicuous narrative of all the great facts and events of the first sixty-three years of the gospel history, it affords us the greatest variety of facts and documents from which to deduce the doctrine of Christ in the inductive manner, which is a capital object of the examination which we are now about to undertake. The spirit and tendency of the age is in favour of the inductive mode of communicating and acquiring knowledge on all subjects. In the Christian religion it has scarcely, if at all, been introduced. We purpose, then, making an effort to acquire the knowledge of the doctrine of Christ by a strictly inductive method

of considering the voluminous facts, precepts, and promises of the sacred writings of this Book of Life.

We shall, for the time being, seem to ourselves, as far as possible, mere learners, ignorant of all that we already know, and as seeking to acquire for the first time in our lives an understanding of Christ's religion. In attempting this we shall use all the terms, and only the terms found in the Book, indicative of new facts, ideas, or institutions. A most minute analysis of the whole narrative may then be expected, and such allusions and references to the other memoirs of Jesus Christ and the Apostles as will make out in our minds a congruous, orderly, and comprehensive view of the whole matters of fact and of faith reported to us by the original witnesses and Apostles of Christ.

We shall endeavour to cultivate a very intimate acquaintance with every name of place or person however remotely introduced, or connected with the subject of these writings—of course always noting those of the most interest and importance to the clear intelligence of the doctrine of Christ's religion.

These things premised, we shall now farther hear you read, Thomas, the first twenty-five verses of the first chapter of Luke; and then we shall attend to the preamble.

[The verses being read, *Olympas* farther proceeded.]

Tell me, William of what does Luke propose to write?

William. "A declaration or narrative of the things most surely believed" among the Christians.

Olympas. From whom had he this information of the things *most surely believed*, Reuben?

Reuben. "From those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word."

Olympas. What then is the difference between the information received from Luke and the Apostles, Eliza?

Eliza. Luke did not first see and hear from the lips of the Messiah and others the things here reported, while the ear-witnesses and first ministers of the word did.

Olympas. In what attitude, Thomas, does this place Luke before us?

Thomas. In the same attitude as that which Moses held in the book of Genesis. Moses reported what he had learned from indubitable authority. So does Luke.

Olympas. The Prophet, then, utters new and original ideas directly from inspiration; whereas the historian faithfully records what he has learned. The sacred historians are, however, said to be divinely assisted in the matter of the fidelity of their work, as we shall hereafter enforce.

Thomas. We are at a loss to know who Theophilus was, to whom Luke addressed himself in this narrative.

Olympas. So have been our most learned expositors. Many have thought him to be a fictitious character, because the word literally indicates *a friend of God*. But others more rationally suppose him to have been a real person, because of the epithet of nobility accompanying the name—*Kratiste*, (Most Excellent,) being prefixed by Paul to the Roman Governor Felix on two occasions, and once to Festus, as Luke himself

narrates, Acts xxiii., xxiv., xxv. All disciples are *theophiloï*, and to attach "*Most Excellent*" to one of them as indicative of his profession, would be a solecism in the New Testament. Theophilus was, then, some dignified personage in Greece, most probably converted by Luke, to whom he addresses both this book and that of the Acts of the Apostles. What appears to have been the design of this historian in this narrative, William?

William. That Theophilus might know the certainty of those things in which he had been instructed.

Olympas. We may then expect a clear, full, and well documented narrative of the things believed so confidently by the first Christians. Where does the narrative commence, Eliza?

Eliza. In the fifth verse, with the reign of Herod.

Olympas. What Herod was this, Thomas?

Thomas. Herod the Great, as Josephus calls him; or Herod the King of Judea.

Olympas. How many Herods are mentioned in the New Testament history?

Thomas. I am not sure that I know them all; but in reading Josephus I observe several persons of the same designations with those mentioned in the New Testament. Herod *the Great*, a proselyte to the Jews' religion, but an Idumean by birth, obtained from the Roman people the government of Judea about thirty-six years before the birth of the Messiah. He is called Herod the Great by way of contrast with the other Herods. He was the father of Herod Philip, and Herod Antipas, who married his brother Philip's wife during his life-time. By his son Aristobulus he had the

grandson Herod Agrippa, the same who murdered the Apostle James, the brother of John. This Herod Agrippa was the father of that King Agrippa, brother of Queen Bernice, before whom Paul made his defence, as written Acts xxvi.

Olympas. Can you, Eliza, enumerate all the Herods mentioned in the New Testament?

Eliza. I will try, sir. Herod the Great, and his two sons, Herod Philip, and Herod Antipas, his grandson Herod Agrippa, and his great grandson Herod Agrippa the King. In all, five.

Olympas. I once told you from Calmet, Josephus, and others, Reuben, the superlative vices of this family of Herods. Can you recite them?

Reuben. Herod the Great, you said, was a great monster. He married ten wives—murdered his oldest son Antipater—murdered his second wife, Ariamne, and her two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus—murdered the innocents at Bethlehem, for the sake of murdering the Messiah. His son Herod Antipas murdered John the Baptist. His grandson Herod Agrippa murdered James the Apostle, machinated the destruction of Peter, but fortunately died suddenly at Cesarea.

Olympas. They were certainly a bloody race. How long did Herod the Great reign over Judea, and who succeeded him, William?

William. He reigned seven and thirty years, and was succeeded by Archelaus his son, who reigned only nine years.

Olympas. After your introduction to the family of the Herods, we shall proceed to other matters in the passage, after a single remark on the pre-

diction of Jacob—"The sceptre," said he, "was not to depart from Judah till Shiloh came." Herod the Idumean was the first prince of foreign blood that sat on the throne of David. Though a proselyte to the Jews' religion, he had nothing in common with the royal family of Judah. Still, under his reign, one year before its close, the Shiloh appeared and verified the prediction of his father Jacob—"Unto Shiloh the gathering of the people has been." What other historical facts are related in the portion read, James, Susan, and William?

James. Zacharias was a Priest in the days of Herod, and Elizabeth his wife was also a Levite, of the daughters of Aaron. He was of Abijah.

William. But they had no child and were both far advanced in years.

Susan. They were both righteous persons.

Thomas. According to this representation a "righteous man" is one that walks in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.

James. While ministering in the Priest's office it became his lot to burn incense, and he did it.

Susan. "And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing at the right side of the altar of incense."

William. His appearance, however, much disconcerted the good man. The angel perceiving this, bade him lay aside his fear, and intimated to him that he should have a son in his old days who was to be "*great in the sight of the Lord.*"

Olympas. Notice, my dear children, this phrase, "*great in the sight of the Lord.*" This is a very different sort of greatness from that which is called by that name in the common acceptation of

mankind. Many men have been great in the sight of men, who have been exceedingly little in the sight of God.

William. He was to be to his parents a source of joy and gladness, and many were to rejoice at his birth. He was to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb.

James. What is this Holy Spirit?

Olympas. It is called "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of Holiness." It is the author of our holiness.

Susan. What is holiness?

Olympas. It is sanctification—separation to God—or piety. Any thing devoted or set apart to God, is, in Scripture language, holy. God himself is *holy*; therefore his Spirit is the Spirit of Holiness.

William. I know not how any one could be filled with it. The infant John was filled with it. What does that mean?

Olympas. When a person is said to be full of life, full of love, full of joy, or joyful, he is known to be replete with the effects of life, love, joy, &c. Now where the Spirit of God is felt or is present, it is by such manifestations as these. His gracious effects are there. They are intelligence or light, love, joy, peace, holiness. The Holy Spirit thus replenished the infant harbinger.

Reuben. But was it not extraordinary that an infant child should be so?

Olympas. It was, indeed, extraordinary; and therefore John was an extraordinary person all his life.

Susan. Are any children now filled with the Holy Spirit?

Olympas. Not as John was. But all those children who believe in the Lord, and who obey him, do enjoy in their hearts the Spirit of God. And sometimes they may be said to be filled with the Holy Spirit, because they have peace with God, and the love of God is in them, and rejoice in his salvation. Then they sing, and pray, and rejoice in the Lord.

What proofs are given of John's inspiration and sanctification, William?

William. I am not sure that I understand this word *inspiration*. It is indeed said of John that he should turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord, and go before him in the spirit of Elias.

Eliza. What means this spirit and power of Elias?

Olympas. What say you, Thomas?

Thomas. Elias, or Elijah, was a bold, zealous, and holy Prophet, who preached righteousness and reprov'd iniquity with great promptness and decision.

Olympas. When did he flourish?

Thomas. In the days of Ahab king of Israel, about nine hundred and ten years before Christ. He reprov'd Ahab for his impiety and idolatry, and boldly opposed, and exterminated the false prophets of his day. He was finally translated to heaven, and was in this signal manner approved of God.

Olympas. The return of Elijah from heaven to earth was promised through Malachi to the Jewish people, and that prediction is verified in sending one of his spirit and power.

William. But did not Elijah literally visit Judea before the last end of that nation?

Olympas. Yes, he appeared on Mount Tabor, at the transfiguration, in company with Moses, when Peter, James, and John had a glimpse of these two greatest of men.

Susan. What means the word *inspiration*?

Olympas. Adam was literally inspired by the breath of the Almighty. This is the origin of the term. Every one who received the Spirit of God as the Spirit of Revelation, was said to be inspired in the figurative sense of the word. But this is not said of any but the holy men of God, who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Thomas. Might not those who now receive the Spirit be said to be inspired as well as they?

Olympas. They might, indeed; but not with the Spirit as the Spirit of a new revelation; but as furnishing them with the principles of divine life. God has promised the influences and consolations of his Spirit to those believers who ask him for this splendid gift. Christians need it as much as they need breath. A man can as readily live without breath as a Christian without God's Holy Spirit, animating and sustaining him with his continual aids and comforts. What a mercy it is then, that, as without the Spirit of Christ we can do nothing, this unspeakable gift is tendered to all his disciples who ask for it sincerely and in faith. But hear we must pause for the present.

CONVERSATION XXIV.

THE first chapter of Luke, from the twenty-sixth verse to the end, being read, *Olympas* thus began:

In our last conversation definitions, rather than deductions, occupied our attention. Some questions of fact now come before us. Who was *Gabriel*, William?

William. He is called "an angel of the Lord."

Olympas. How old was he at this time, Eliza?

Eliza. I know not how old he was. I only know that having been sent to Daniel once or twice, he must have been at least some five hundred years old at this time.

Olympas. How often is he introduced, or how often does his name occur, Thomas, in sacred history?

Thomas. Only four times—twice in Daniel and twice in Luke.

Reuben. He is called "the *man* Gabriel" in Daniel; and as men are sometimes called *angels*, why may he not have been a man as much as Elijah, who is called an angel? I have thought that the spirits of good men are sometimes made ministering spirits; and why not, then, Gabriel one of these?

Olympas. He is distinguished as one of the heavenly host; and especially he says of himself that he stands in the presence of God. It is a pleasure for us to know that angels have assumed

the appearance of men, and like men have their personal names.

Reuben. But their names end all in *El*. Their names, you say, are all *personal*: how comes it, that they end all in *el*?

Olympas. That is a new idea, indeed. Well, I will change my opinion, and say that *El* is their family name, and that all before that is their personal name. But how many celestial names have we on earth, Thomas?

Thomas. With the help of the poets we have some four in common use. In the Scriptures we have *Gabriel* and *Michael*, and they have added *Raphael* and *Uriel*.

James. What does *El* mean?

Susan. God, you know, is called *El*.

Olympas. Then the family name is *God*; and *Gabriel* denotes "*God is my excellency*," and *Michael* denotes "*One who has all*," and so they are all functionaries of God.

Reuben. Then, as in earth, so in heaven, names are significant of relations and offices.

Olympas. To what town was *Gabriel* sent, James?

James. To Nazareth of Galilee.

Olympas. Show me that place on your map.

James. There is no map in my Testament.

Olympas. You have not got the Family Testament, then.

Susan. I have. See here is Nazareth, a town in Galilee, about fifty miles north of Jerusalem.

Olympas. And how many inhabitants are said to be in it at this day, Susan?

Susan. In the Appendix to the Family Testament it is said that there are some two or three

thousand inhabitants, and the place is often visited by pilgrims, and is memorable for having been the residence of our Saviour some thirty years.

Olympas. Why did Gabriel visit Nazareth, Susan?

Susan. There was a virgin named Mary there, who was betrothed to one Joseph, a carpenter, and the angel went there to intimate to her that she should be the mother of our Lord and Saviour.

Olympas. State the names and offices which this wonderful child was to assume.

William. His personal name was to be *Jesus*. He is also called "the Son of the Highest." He was to inherit the throne of his father David, to reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and to have an everlasting kingdom.

Olympas. You will observe, then, that "*the throne of David*" and "*the house of Jacob*" comprehend more than the literal throne of David and the fleshy offspring of Jacob; for these are no more the peculiar people of God. But I will reserve this for a future lesson. I only wish at this time to mark the fact that Jesus inherits the sceptre of David, and is to govern the house of Jacob for ever. To whose personal influence is the creation of the body of Jesus assigned?

Thomas. The Holy Spirit, the Power of the Highest, or God himself.

Olympas. The body of Jesus is a creation of God, but the material is human flesh. God made but one human being out of the earth—our father Adam. The Holy Spirit came upon him, and the power of the Highest overshadowed him. He fell into a deep sleep, and from a rib taken out of his side God created a *woman*. And now we have

the third display of the same power on the body of Mary. The Holy Spirit descends, and by a similar omnipotence fashions out of the body of Mary the body of Jesus. Adam was made out of the dust, therefore he is called *human*; Eve is made out of a rib, therefore she is called *woman*; and Jesus is made out of the flesh of Mary, therefore is he called EMANUEL, *God with us*, the SON OF GOD, and the SON OF MAN. *Therefore*, said the angel, shall he be called the Son of God. He never had this name before, unless *prospectively*. He was called by other names, and amongst which was THE WORD. THE WORD became *incarnate*. Reuben, relate what ensued after this visit of Gabriel to the Virgin Mary.

Reuben. She burst forth into a rapturous eulogy on the mysterious and benignant promises of the Lord, especially his faithfulness in keeping his engagement with his people. Her words are, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; because he has not disdained the low condition of his handmaid; for, henceforth all posterity will pronounce me happy. For the Almighty, whose name is venerable, has done wonders for me. His mercy on them who fear him, extends to generations of generations. He displays the strength of his arm, and dispels the vain imaginations of the proud. He pulls down potentates from their thrones, and exalts the lowly. The needy he loads with benefits; but the rich he spoils of every thing. He supports Israel his servant, (as he promised to our fathers,) ever inclined to mercy towards Abraham and his race."

Eliza. I do not understand how the names

Gabriel and *Michael* denote offices. *Gabriel* imports *God is my excellency*, and *Michael* *One who has all*.

Olympas. The office of *Gabriel* was, then, to represent the excellency and glory of God in the affairs of his providence. Hence he was employed to reveal to *Daniel* the scheme of Providence in reference to the glory of God in the great work of man's redemption. So it comes to pass that he is always employed in affairs connected with providence and redemption; and with the former only in reference to the latter. *Michael* denotes *God's President*—*one who has all* entrusted to him as a steward or president of affairs. He was the president angel of the Abrahamic race. There is not, said *Gabriel*, any that counsels with me in these affairs, but *Michael* your prince. *Gabriel* calls him the chief or the head of the princes. He is also called *the Archangel*. Concerning the person called *Michael* we have something more to say at another time. But to the history:—What are the circumstances of the birth of the son of *Zacharias*?

William. On the eighth day he was circumcised and *named*. His relations would have him called after his father, but his mother would have him called *John*.

Thomas. There must have been something in this name, as it seems there was some controversy about it. I should like to understand what mystery was in it.

Olympas. It simply means *the favour*, or *the favour of God*. This is not the first time the name is found: it is the first of the New Testament occurrences of the word. Observe how

ancient the custom of giving names at circumcision.

Thomas. Is this the reason why names are given at baptism ?

Olympas. It is the reason. Hence the personal name of an individual is commonly called his *Christian* name. Thus, you may remember in the Catholic and Episcopalian Catechism, after the question, "*What is your name?*" comes, "*Who gave you that name?*" This question is usually answered, "*My godfather at my baptism.*" Baptism, then, like circumcision, was the time of naming persons. The personal name was solemnly imposed when the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were employed in the ritual of baptism. The cause of this I presume to be was the fact that the person with whom the covenant of circumcision was made had his name changed from Abram to Abraham; and as a new name was given to him at the time of circumcision, the Jews, and after them the Greek Christians, the Romanists, and some Protestants, reserved the imposition of a name on the child till the day of circumcision. Hence both John and Jesus received their names on the eighth day, at their circumcision. Why, Susan, did Zacharias ask for a writing table to write the name of his son ?

Susan. Because he was dumb, not being able to speak since the angel Gabriel reproved him for his doubting his word.

Olympas. Was he also deaf as well as dumb, William ?

William. We are not told that he was deaf.

Reuben. But we may infer it.

Olympas. From what circumstances ?

Reuben. Because they made *signs* to him to

know what he would have him called. Now if he could have heard them, why not have asked him?

Olympas. This is, indeed, a strong presumptive evidence that he was deaf as well as dumb. It is an example of a fact that occasionally happens—viz., that inferential reasonings are sometimes as conclusive as express declarations. What remarks have you to make on the opening speech of Zacharias, Thomas?

Thomas. You call it the opening speech, because the first speech after a dumbness of nine months, and the commencement of a new era in the life of this distinguished priest. His thoughts and musings on this great event in his life, and its connexions with another child six months younger than his son John, seem, like waters dammed up, to burst forth in a mighty torrent. His ecstasy is beautifully expressed in the text—“Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people; and (as anciently he promised by his holy Prophets) has raised a Prince for our deliverance in the house of David his servant; for our deliverance from our enemies, and from the hands of all who hate us; in kindness to our fathers, and remembrance of his holy appointment; the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, to grant to us, that, being rescued out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him boldly, in piety and uprightness, all the days of our life. And you, child, shall be called a Prophet of the Most High; for you shall go before the Lord, to prepare his way, by giving the knowledge of salvation to his people, in the remission of their sins, through the tender compassion of our God, who has caused a day-spring from on high to visit

us, to enlighten those who abide in darkness and in the shades of death, to direct our feet in the way of peace." The Holy Spirit speaks through Zacharias as through any of the Prophets. Hence the conclusion of his speech is prophetic of John and of Jesus. Is there not some peculiar views of salvation expressed in the speech of Zacharias, William?

William. "Salvation by the remission of sins" is the peculiar salvation to be preached by John and Jesus.—not from the Roman yoke—not from their political enemies. I am, indeed, at a loss to know whether the phrase "*the day spring from on high*" refers to John or to Jesus.

Olympas. John I understand to be *a* day-spring, not *the* day-spring from on high: so reads the original, as you see in the new version. Jesus is not "*a day-spring,*" but the "*Sun of Righteousness*" himself. John was "a burning and a shining light" to the Gentiles and to Israel. He did, indeed, enlighten the world and prepare a people for the Lord. The salvation which he preached was from sin—from the guilt, power, and punishment of sin. Therefore his preaching had to do with confessing sin, repenting of sin, and the remission of sin—of which, in its proper place. But now we must attend to the time and circumstances of the birth of our Lord. Read, William, the first fourteen verses of the next chapter, and then state to us the public fact that dates his nativity.

William. The decree of Cesar Augustus for the taxing, or, as you have taught us, the enrolment of the land of Judea, it seems occasioned our Lord's birth at Bethlehem. But for the decree,

it would appear, he had not been born in that royal city.

Olympas. True: In what year was this decree, Thomas?

Thomas. I cannot so reconcile the various accounts of it I have read as to make it quite certain to my mind.

Olympas. Our Lord was born four years before the present Anno Domini—certainly in the fourth year before; and therefore his birth ought to be set down in the year of the world 4000. This would be the twenty-sixth year of the empire of Augustus, counting from the battle of Actium. The most accurate looking calculation I have met with of the precise date of the nativity of the Messiah, places it about the close of the fourth year *before* the present *Anno Domini*, which is the year of the world 4004. Cyrenius, or Quirinius, had been deputy governor of Syria before the reign of Archelaus, as well as governor of that province after his reign. This fact reconciles all difficulties, and fixes our Lord's birth in the year of the world 4000, after the founding of Rome seven hundred and forty-nine years. That would make the world at present five thousand eight hundred and forty-six years old, and that brings the end of Daniel's days next year, or the year of the world 5847. You will therefore in all your readings of Anno Domini remember that it commences four years after the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Of this, however, we may have occasion to speak more particularly hereafter.

CONVERSATION XXV.

LUKE II.

Thomas. BUT for the decree of Augustus Cesar, you informed us in our morning lesson, that the Messiah had not been born in Bethlehem. We desire to have this fact more fully illustrated.

Olympas. Neither Joseph nor Mary resided there. They both resided in Nazareth, a city of Galilee; consequently, but for some urgent reason, at that peculiar time Mary could not have consented to travel so far from home, a distance of some fifty-six miles.

William. But could not Mary have staid at home and suffered her husband to go to Bethlehem, if indeed Bethlehem must be the place of enrolment.

Edward. Bethlehem *must* be the place of His nativity; for so reads the Prophet Micah: "And thou Bethlehem, of the land of Judah, art not the least of the cities of Judah; for *out of thee* shall come a *governor* that shall rule my people Israel."

Olympas. There is another *must be* in the case: for according to the laws of enrolment, every man must be present in his *own city*; and Joseph being of the house and lineage of David, must go to the city of David. But why also must Mary be present? This is not quite so obvious to those unacquainted with the Jewish history of that day. Eli, the father of Mary, having no son to keep up his name, required of Joseph as a condition of obtaining his eldest daughter, that he be enrolled

as his son in the Family Register, a custom long established among the Jews in such cases. On such occasions the wife must always appear in person with her husband in order to the legality of the transfer of lineage. This fact, growing out of the peculiarity of Eli's family, together with the edict of Cesar, compelled the attendance of Mary at Bethlehem, and occasioned the literal accomplishment of a prediction seven hundred years old; which but for these apparent contingencies, could not have been so exactly fulfilled.

Reuben. I have read of Bethlehem in Zebulun. Were there two Bethlehems?

Olympas. This is called Bethlehem, and Bethlehem of Judah, to distinguish it from the city of Zebulun, called by the same name. It is worthy of remark that king David was born in this city a thousand years before his Son our Lord. It was the town of Jesse and its name indicates a place of hospitality: for its name in English is "THE HOUSE OF BREAD." It still stands upon the same hill, the city of three thousand years.

Eliza. In what sort of place was our Saviour born?

Olympas. The Inn was in all probability, a *Caravansary*, where guests were furnished only with room *gratis*, and was situate on an eminence. Volney, in his travels through Syria, says that "Bethlehem is situated two leagues east of Jerusalem, on an eminence, in a country abounding in hills and valleys, and might be rendered very agreeable. The soil is the best in all these districts: fruits, vines, olives, and sesanum succeed here extremely well; but, as is the case everywhere, cultivation is wanting."

William. I read that Jesus Christ had brothers and sisters : but I do not comprehend this. Will you please explain it ?

Olympas. Eli had no son. Mary married Joseph, and her sister married Cleophas. She had four sons and some daughters. These are called the brethren and sisters of Jesus. They were, indeed, only his cousins ; but because in marrying the elder sister he renounced his own lineage and adopted that of his wife, he becomes the head of the family ; and as a token of superior attachment and nearness of feeling the issue of such marriage is supposed nearer to the descendants of the sisters, and are called brethren rather than cousins.

Eliza. I am more anxious to know in what time of the year our Saviour was born, than the particular geography of the place of his nativity.

Susan. Oh ! he was born at Christmas, as our school-mistress told us last Christmas.

Olympas. Your school-mistress and the Romanists, though worthy of respect on various accounts, are neither infallible nor even always accurate in some of their most common traditions. I will read you a passage from one of our Harmonies of the Four Testimonies, in which I have more faith than in all the evidence that Greeks and Romans offer for their traditions :—

“The time of the year in which our Lord Jesus was born, not being particularly mentioned, became, in the fourth century, a subject of dispute between the Greek and Latin churches ; the former fixing it to the 6th of January, and the latter to the 25th of December. Both supported their hypotheses by calculations grounded on the time of the angel’s appearing to Zacharias : but as the time contended for by the one and by the other, does by no

means accord with the account which travellers give us of the climate, and particularly with the shepherds lying out at night to watch their flocks, nor with Herod's calling the people together at that inclement season to be enrolled: doubts have arisen whether the time contended for, by either of the parties, is right. We have seen before that the Levites who attended the service of the temple were divided into twenty-four courses: that every course attended regularly one after another, a week at a time, and that Zacharias was the head or chief of the course of Abia, which was the eighth course. Now, suppose the first course began its tour of duty at the Passover on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the beginning of the third week of the first month of the ecclesiastic year, the eighth course, namely, the course of Abia, would enter upon duty on the first day of the Pentecost, and would continue on duty till the end of that festival. The circumstance of Zacharias being struck deaf and dumb on the occasion seems strongly to intimate that the angel appeared to him on that day. It is then said, that when the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house, and after these days his wife Elizabeth conceived: this might be about the end of the thirteenth week, or first quarter of the ecclesiastic year and consequently, John's birth would be at the beginning, of the ensuing year, or vernal equinox.

“Now with respect to Jesus, it is said that after Elizabeth conceived, she kept herself concealed five months, and in the sixth month the angel appeared to Mary, and informed her of Elizabeth's conception, and that she herself should conceive miraculously, and bear a Son whose name she should call JESUS. This appears to have then taken place; for Mary, we are informed, arose in those days and went with speed to the hill country, and saluted Elizabeth; and, by Elizabeth's answer, it is evident that what was promised Mary had taken effect. This was the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy. Mary stays with her about three months, and returns home. John is born in the beginning of the ecclesiastic year, that is, at the vernal equinox, when Mary was three months with child; consequently, Jesus is born in the beginning of the civil year, that is, the autumnal equinox—a season remarkably typical. It was introduced with the sounding of trumpets through all the land; and

on the first day of the first month of that year, were proclaimed the sabbatical years, the years of jubilee, a release of debt to the debtor, and liberty to those who were sold for servants. Now at this season, it is presumed, JESUS CHRIST was born, in whom all the types were fulfilled, and with which all the circumstances of the shepherds watching their flocks at night in the open fields, and of Herod's assembling the people to be enrolled, will perfectly agree."

After the birth of our Saviour and circumcision we are informed of his dedication to the Lord, not in circumcision, but according to the tenor of another ordinance, verse 22. What was this rite, Thomas, and where was it performed?

Thomas. The first born were consecrated to the Lord by various rites, and the ceremony was performed in Jerusalem. The Lord claimed the firstborn as his from the redemption of Israel out of Egypt. Hence it is written in the law, "Every male, the firstborn of his mother, is consecrated to the Lord." The sacrifice enjoined in the law on this occasion was a pair of turtle doves and two young pigeons.

Olympas. Who were present at this dedication, Eliza?

Eliza. Both the parents of the child, and the good old Simeon, to whom it had been revealed by the Holy Spirit that he should see the Messiah before he died. He came in at the dedication of the infant Jesus; and, taking the babe up into his arms, blessed God, and said, "Now, Lord, thou dost dismiss thy servant in peace; for mine eyes have seen the Saviour whom thou hast provided in the sight of all the world—a LUMINARY to enlighten the nations, and to be the glory of thy people Israel." And looking into the face of

his mother Mary, he said, "This child is set for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to serve as a mark of contradiction, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Anna the prophetess at this moment came into the temple, a pious widow of eighty-four years old, who served God in fasting and prayer night and day. She also glorified God, and spake of the child Jesus to all in Jerusalem who expected redemption.

Olympas. What next do we learn, William, concerning the child Jesus?

William. Nothing more till he was about twelve years old, when, having delayed in Jerusalem after the return of his parents from the observance of the feast of the Passover, he was found by them sitting among the Doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions. His parents sought for him three days, during which time he had been thus engaged; and when asked by them why he had left them, he asked the mysterious question, "Did you not know," said he, "that I should be at my Father's house?"

Olympas. Father's *business*, is it not, William?

William. In the common Testament it is *business*, but it is marked as a supplement; and as the question was about place, and not business, I heard you say that the supplement ought to be *house*; for that was implied in the form of the sentence. His parents, however, not being able to comprehend his answer, we may be allowed to hesitate about its meaning.

Olympas. That does not follow. The style is plain enough. He certainly spoke of the temple as his Father's house. This was what they did

not then comprehend. Tell us, Susan, what is the next event or incident recorded of Jesus?

Susan. We read next of his baptism.

Olympas. Where, James, did this happen?

James. At the Jordan.

Olympas. Can you tell us the position and character of this river, Susan?

Susan. In my sacred geography I read a good deal about it, but I cannot relate it all.

Olympas. I see your geography is at hand: read the description of it that we may all hear it.

Susan. "The river Jordan is a stream about ninety feet broad. The head of it, as Josephus informs us, is a round lake at Lebanon, called Phiale, which is always full, never increasing nor diminishing. From thence it runs underground about fifteen miles, and comes out in a deep stream from a cave at a place formerly called Panium, afterwards Cesaria; and passing about fifteen miles through marshes and a dirty lake called Semechonites, it falls into the lake Genezaret, a little below the city Julias. The lake Genezaret is about fifteen miles long and five or six miles broad. It has several names, being sometimes called Genezeret; sometimes the Sea of Galilee; sometimes the Lake or Sea of Tiberias, from the city Tiberias, the capital of Galilee, which is situate on the western border of the lake. In like manner it gets a name from other cities, and from the countries or regions around it. It lies in a direction nearly north and south. From the south end of it the Jordan rushes out, and entering what is called The Great Plain, it runs from north to south, in a channel about thirty yards or ninety feet wide, at a rate of about two

miles in an hour, till it meets and loses itself in the lake Asphaltites; *alias*, the Dead Sea or Sea of Sodom.

“The great plain between the two lakes is about thirty miles in length, and about fifteen miles wide. Formerly the Jordan overflowed its banks annually, near forty perches on each side. This was overgrown with bushes, and was a harbour for lions and wild beasts, which were forced out when the river rose.

“Modern travellers inform us that the case is now different: by the rapidity of the current the channel is now deepened to at least nine feet; so that it contains all the water at the swelling, without overflowing the banks as it formerly did.

“The great plain is bounded by huge barren mountains, both on the east and west side. Those on the east begin at the city of Julias, where the Jordan enters the lake Genezeret, and stretch southward to the lake Asphaltites. Those on the west side form a continued ridge from Bethsan, or Scythopolis, to the south end of the lake Asphaltites, which is about seventy-two miles long and about twenty miles wide. This ridge on the west side of the great plain and the Asphaltic lake, is what is called the wilderness; by which term they did not mean a tract absolutely uninhabited and desert, but only in general uncultivated and thinly peopled, such as pasture grounds generally are. The southern part of this ridge is what Matthew calls the hill country of Judea.

“Bethabara, or House of Passage, was near that part of the Jordan where the Israelites, under Joshua, miraculously crossed it into the land of Canaan.”

Olympas. Who baptized Jesus in the Jordan, Susan?

Susan. John the Baptist.

Olympas. How many rites were performed on Jesus, William?

William. Three—circumcision, dedication, and baptism. But our school-master tells some of our class that baptism now stands in room of them all;—that in baptism we are circumcised and dedicated both. I cannot comprehend how baptism can be three times as much to us as it was to Jesus. Had he so understood it, I think he would not have deceived the people by keeping up three ordinances as though really different, while in truth they are all one and the same.

Olympas. Circumcision, dedication, and baptism are three distinct ordinances. They indicate and signify very different ideas; and no sacred writer has ever regarded them as occupying the same ground or filling the same place in any institution. But we have in the fact of the circumcision, dedication, and baptism of Jesus, an insurmountable argument against those who teach that the last is a substitute for the first two. Circumcision was a patriarchal institution; dedication, a Jewish, and baptism a Christian institution. Things that are as distinct as three dispensations should never be confounded, nor identified with one another. Our Lord honoured every divine institution in existence at his time, and these three were all in being then, and of divine authority. Let us learn to imitate him in his devotion to the honour of our Father and our God.

CONVERSATION XXVI.

LUKE III.

Olympas. IN the conclusion of chapter ii. we learn that Jesus went down with his parents from Jerusalem to Nazareth, and was *subject* to them. What precept of the Jews' law required this, Susan?

Susan. The fifth says, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Olympas. He honoured this precept, and was *subject* to them. How long was he subject to them, William?

William. During *thirty years*; for such is the age assigned to him when he commenced his own work.

Olympas. Then he worked for his earthly parents and honoured them till he was thirty, and to his heavenly Father he exclusively devoted the remainder of his life. True, he glorified God in honouring his parents; but a portion of that time he laboured for the family, as the phrase "being subject" intimates; and, therefore, the fair presumption is that he wrought at the carpenter's trade. The Jews required their children to assist them, if need required, till they were thirty, and sometimes longer. Besides, they all taught their sons a useful trade, whatever their future prospects might be. All the presumptions are in favour of the idea that our Saviour actually submitted to work with his hands for the support of the family

till he was of the appointed age of majority, or freedom from the parental yoke. What think you, Eliza, is intimated by the saying, "His mother kept all these sayings in her heart?"

Eliza. Such as the saying which he uttered when he was twelve years old, alluded to last evening—"Know you not that I should be about my Father's business," or "at my Father's house." Your remark on his being subject to his parents, would commend the propriety of reading "Father's house" rather than "Father's business."

Olympas. You mean, then, that the phrase, "kept all these sayings" imports all such mysterious and unusual things said by him, or concerning him by others; and what, then, means her "keeping them in her heart," William?

William. Memory, I suppose; for in looking over the Scriptures I see "heart" often means memory and understanding: and so our teacher in the Academy commands us to "get our lessons by heart"—meaning to memorize them.

Olympas. "To memorize" is scarcely good English. Within my memory this phrase has been gaining a new currency. It is growing into use like the words *resurrect* and *resurrected*, which are gross innovations upon our good old English language. "To memorize" is to record *in writing*, or, according to Shakspeare, who is of high authority with one class of lexicographers, it means "to cause others to remember." But this new acceptation of the word is, upon the whole, an act of violence upon the legitimate province of the ancient *memorize*, as much as the outlandish "*resurrected*" is upon the dominions of the verb *to resuscitate*. I would, indeed, have you to observe

that “to keep a thing in the heart” in Jewish idiom, is *to remember it*, and *to ponder upon it*. Jesus, we are informed by Luke, “increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man.” What think you of this expression, Thomas?

Thomas. It would indicate that Jesus was a child like other children—at first imperfect in wisdom and stature; and that as he increased in both, so he also grew in public favour—in favour both with God and man, because of his early and vigorous virtues and excellencies. “The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and a divine gracefulness was upon him,” would seem to convey the same idea.

Olympas. We shall now hear you read, William, the third chapter of Luke, so far as the eighteenth verse, with a special reference to the chronology of the Messiah’s birth and times.

[William reads.]

Olympas. What date is fixed in this passage, Thomas?

Thomas. The commencement of John the Baptist’s ministry. The word of the Lord came to John in the fifteenth year of Tiberias Cesar.

Olympas. How many Cesars in all reigned over Rome, William?

William. They are said to have been twelve, and arranged in some histories as follows:—Julius Cesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellus, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian.

Olympas. But does the true line of descent continue to Domitian?

William. I think it terminated in Nero, the

sixth of that blood. Other six assumed the title of Augustus, or Cesar, of different families. In the New Testament I think you told us that Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero are simply addressed or spoken of under the general name of Cesar.

Olympas. "I appeal unto Cesar," says Paul; that was to Nero, then Emperor of Rome. "Render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's," says the Messiah speaking of Tiberius. When, Eliza, was the first of the twelve Cesars born?

Eliza. The tenth day of the fifth month, called *Quintilis* by the Romans; that is with us the tenth day of July, one hundred years before the Christian era.

Olympas. Did not the fifth month receive the name of July, and the sixth month receive the name of August from the two first of this Julian family?

William. So the Roman historians say; but after these two they resumed the Latin names for the *seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth* months, called *September, October, November, December.*

Olympas. The Roman year began with March, so called from *Mars* the god of battles, because in this month the Romans generally commenced their military campaigns. The Jewish ecclesiastical year began in the latter half of that month called *ABIB*, which occupied about the last half of March and the first half of April, so far as their *lunations* permitted. But to return to the Cesars: How long did Julius reign as Emperor?

Thomas. Born July tenth, Ante-Christo one hundred years, and being assassinated in the Senate House, died in the fifty-sixth year of his age, at the ides of March, being the fifteenth day

of that month. He, Crassus, and Pompey his son-in-law, formed the first *triumvirate*, and by degrees, after the death of these two illustrious men, he ascended to the title of *Pontifex, Maximus*, and *Imperator*, having been appointed Consul for five years, Dictator one year, and Tribune for life; and again Dictator for ten years, Censor for life, with his statue placed in the Capital; but he only enjoyed the sovereignty expressed by Emperor a few months. His nephew, the son of his sister Julia, called CAIUS OCTAVIUS CESAR AUGUSTUS, succeeded him, being appointed in Julius' *Will* his heir, and declared to be his adopted son. He was finally seated on the imperial throne, and lived to the advanced age of seventy-six. He died August nineteenth, A.D. 14, having under various titles, commanded the destinies of Rome for almost fifty years. Tiberius succeeded him. In the fifteenth year of his reign John the Baptist commenced his ministry, as Luke informs us. These three Cesars, Julius, Augustus, and Tiberius, were monsters of iniquity; and though of high intellectual character, wanted all the attributes and elements of moral dignity and real worth. He died march sixteenth, A.D. 37, aged seventy-eight years, having reigned twenty-three years.

Olympas. Susan, can you tell us who was governor of Judea and the Syrian provinces of those days?

Susan. Pontius Pilate governed Judea, Herod ruled over Galilee, Philip was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene.

Olympas. William, explain these officers and the countries over which they presided.

William. Pilate was *procurator* of Judea, a sort of president governor, appointed by the Roman Emperor. Herod Antipas and his brother Philip, together with Lysanias, were tetrarchs, or governors of the fourth part of an old estate or territory once under one governor. Thus Galilee, Itruria, Trachonites, and Abilene were four provinces, three of them provinces of Syria, willed by Herod the great to his sons Herod Antipas and Philip. His Will was confirmed by Augustus, and the estates were continued to the family.

Olympas. Who, James, were high priests in those days?

James. Annas and Caiaphas.

Olympas. Could there be, Thomas, two high priests at once, according to the law of the priesthood?

Thomas. Annas being father-in-law of Caiaphas, was principal high priest, and Caiaphas was a sort of deputy or assistant high priest. That they officiated in turns is supposed by some; but I think you taught us that although the law of Moses recognised but one high priest for life, after the subjugation of Judea by the Romans it appears that they appointed high priests as they could. According to Josephus Annanias or Annas had been high priest eleven years, but had been deposed by the Roman governor before the time here mentioned by Luke; and we are expressly informed that Caiaphas was high priest the year in which our Lord was crucified. The Jews, in all probability disregarding the deposition of Annas by a pagan governor, still regarded him as a legitimate high priest according to their law, but

were content that either of them should officiate under that jurisdiction.

Olympas. Luke intended to challenge the scrutiny of the whole world as to the events he narrates. He gives them persons, places, and dates in profusion. Here is Tiberius Cesar in the fifteenth year of his reign over the Roman world, and here are four governors of Roman provinces, and two high priests connected with the nation of the Messiah and the theatre of the great drama of Christianity in its grand introduction into the world. And such is the preamble to the introduction of John the Baptist's mission and dispensation as the harbinger of the Messiah.

What new and strange doctrine did John preach, Reuben? Give us a full statement of his doctrine, place of ministration, manner of life, &c.

Reuben. John came as the harbinger of the Messiah, and in that capacity proclaimed a deep and thorough reformation of both principle and practice. He proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. It was not mere mental regret, or sorrow for the past; but, superadded to that, and emanating from it, he enforced a reformation in all persons and in all things. Soldiers, publicans, and all the people came to him, asking what they should do. He commanded a genuine and universal reformation, which was signified by a peculiar immersion in the Jordan.

Olympas. For what were John's proselytes immersed?

Reuben. Matthew says that they were immersed into reformation, or that they might reform, professing reformation, and with a special reference to the remission of sins. Hence the confession

of sins made in baptism was indicative of a forsaking of them, and a remission of them. The points in John's preaching were repentance, remission, and the immediate appearance of the Messiah—the new era and its accompaniments of judgment and mercy. All that sincerely repented were baptized and turned to the Lord escaped the impending vengeance then threatened as just to be poured out upon the ungrateful nation.

Olympas. Did he not exalt the person and character of the Messiah, and develop some attributes of the coming reign?

Reuben. He spoke of the superiority of the Messiah in very bold and decisive terms, and of the searching and discriminating character of his dispensation, and also of a baptism of the Holy Spirit and of fire, to one of which all that heard him should be subjected.

Olympas. Can you give an instance of a similar phrase in the evangelical history?

Reuben. The Apostles were "a sweet savour of Christ to the saved and to the lost;" but not in the same sense all that heard Jesus were to be baptized, but not in the same manner—one class in the Holy Spirit, another in fire: for so the context, as you allege, would intimate. The Spirit of God is frequently in its influences and effects compared to *water*, but never to *fire*, so far as I recollect. All that hearkened to Jesus were participants of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and those who did not obey were subjected to the fire of divine indignation. Jesus gathered the wheat of the people into his garner, but he burned up the chaff in a fire unquenchable. The verdant

trees he made fruitful, but the dry and withered he converted into fuel.

Olympas. What means the phrase "wrath to come," as used by the Harbinger, William?

William. The vengeance promised to the wicked Jews in Malachi, last chapter, and afterwards explained by our Saviour. I presume reference is had to the final destruction of the nation of Israel. This was the impending judgment from which baptism alone could save them.

Susan. But if John baptized to save men from impending vengeance, why was Jesus baptized?

William. To honour every institution of God; for so he expressed himself when John at first declined the honour of baptizing him.

Thomas. Have we any intimation that John spake on any other topics than those enumerated by the Evangelists?

Olympas. Yes: Luke adds, "and many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people." And hence it came to pass that he reprov'd Herod the tetrarch of Galilee for having taken the wife of his half brother Philip while he yet lived. This caused his imprisonment, and finally cost him his head. In consummation of the crimes of Herod, he added this above all, that "he shut up John in prison." And in this unfortunate predicament we are sorry to leave him for the present.

You will study the genealogy of Jesus, as given by Luke, for the next lesson.

CONVERSATION XXVII.

THE GENEALOGY OF THE MESSIAH.

LUKE and Matthew's account of the genealogy being read, the conversation commenced on Matthew's account of the descent of the Messiah.

Olympas. Through whom, William, does Matthew trace our Lord's connexion with David and Abraham?

William. Through Joseph, his mother's husband.

Thomas. But as our Lord had no lineal connexion with Joseph, why should the relationship between Joseph and David be traced with so much accuracy?

Olympas. There is both a legal and a natural relation and right where thrones and governments are in question. Matthew, therefore, chooses that which primarily affected the Messiah as heir of the throne of David in virtue of his law established father.

Thomas. I have found difficulties in making out the forty-two generations.

Olympas. Let us hear your difficulties.

Thomas. I have none in the first fourteen: they are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Pharez, Hezrom, Ram, Aminadab, Naashon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David. These I can make out variously, but very satisfactorily from the first and second chapters of the first book of Chronicles. There is some difficulty in the second fourteen. They are as follows: Solomon, Rehoboam, Abia,

Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joram, (Azariah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Ammon, Josiah, Jehoiakim.

But here are *seventeen* persons, beginning with Solomon and ending with Jehoiakim, or the King of the Captivity. This line I collect from 2 Chron. ix. 10—15.

William. It has two defects—first, there are seventeen generations; and, in the second place, you want one mentioned by Matthew—viz. Uzziah.

Thomas. As to Uzziah I find no difficulty. In the fourteenth chapter of 2 Kings, and other Scriptures, I find that Azarias and Uzziah are two names for the same king. But I cannot so easily dispose of the three supernumeraries. I confess myself unequal to the task of a satisfactory solution.

Olympas. Many commentators fail here. Some admit the fact of seventeen generations as to persons, but contend that the generations mean ages—*i. e.* in counting so many years for a generation. But that is forced and unnatural. The most satisfactory exposition is, that three of these kings, marked in the parenthesis, were by the mother's side of the house of Ahab, which house in all its branches was denounced by a curse, 1 Kings xxi. 21, 22, and again repeated 2 Kings ix. 9—11. While, then, there were seventeen generations in fact, three being erased from the roll of Messiah's ancestry, as Dan is from the twelve tribes in the Apocalypse, and five descents from Meraioth (Ezra vii., 1 Chron. vi.) there are fourteen in the register accredited by all the Jews. Now as none of the opponents of the pretensions of Jesus ever raised an objection against the lineage given either

in Matthew or Luke, evident it is that this arrangement had been accredited by the nation.

Charles Thompson, in his way, solves this difficulty by asserting that the elder branch of Joram's family having become extinct at the death of Amaziah, the line of succession passed from Joram to Azarias, *alias* Ozias — making the regular generations fourteen. The reason of this is not, however, quite so apparent. There is no difficulty in the third fourteen as given by Matthew.

Reuben. But why divide these generations from David into fourteen each?

Olympas. There is reason for this besides aiding the memory. The ancestors of our Lord in the first fourteen were not kings, but judges, prophets, and subordinate rulers; under the second fourteen they were all princes of a royal line; under the last fourteen they were degraded and served under the Asmonean priests and inferior officers of the Roman Empire.

Thomas. I find a difficulty in the last fourteen. Josiah was not the father of Jechonias, as stated Matt. i. 11., but the grandfather. Again Jechonias had no brethren mentioned in the Bible. Josias, moreover, died twenty years before the Captivity, and consequently his brethren could not have been begotten about that time, as reported.

Olympas. Well, I am glad you have called this up. *Son* is frequently equivalent to *descendant*; and, therefore, includes grandsons. But this fact is not necessary here. There is a reading of this verse in Griesbach of much authority, which removes all these difficulties at once—“*Josias begat Jehoiakim, or Joakim, and Joakim begat Jechonias.*” Jehoiakim is sometimes called Elia-

kim and Joakim. His brethren were Johanan, Zedekiah, and Shallum, 1 Chron. iii. 15. These were the sons of Josiah. The fourteen of the last series were, Jechonias, Salathiel, Zerubbabel, Ahiud, Eliakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eliezer, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph, and Jesus.

On the whole narrative of Matthew it may be observed that—the rolls of lineage being carefully kept in all the tribes, as is evident from the case of Zacharias and Elizabeth, Paul, Anna the saint, and various others whose families or tribes are mentioned; and also being public property, and much depending on the strict conformity of the genealogy of Jesus with the family register, and no one appearing against the details of the Evangelists as far back as all history reaches, we have every reason to be satisfied with its accuracy and strict agreement with the registers of that day.—Which branch of the family of Jesus is traced in Luke's genealogy, Reuben?

Reuben. His mother Mary. She, his natural and blood ancestor, is traced to David through a more numerous ancestry, though not a longer line in point of time. Nay, Luke gives us seventy three names from Adam to Jesus, making the Messiah the seventy-fifth of human kind.

Olympas. How does he make out this list?

Reuben. In the first place he goes up to the son of Jesse by another family register. He traces Mary up to David, in the line of Nathan the full brother of Solomon by Bathsheba. His whole line is from Adam to Abraham, twenty; from Abraham to David, thirteen; from David to Zerubbabel, twenty-two; and from Zerubbabel, where the regal line of Solomon ends, to Mary the

daughter of Eli, he gives nineteen generations—in all seventy-four to Mary the mother of Jesus. Jesus is, then, the seventy-fifth in a direct line from God through Adam the first terrestrial son of God; provided only, that in transferring the issue of second marriages by those who took the wives of deceased brothers, according to the law of Moses, transcribers have not sometimes confounded the legal with the natural progenitors, and have made the chain some three or four links longer than the actual number of true and proper ancestors. To say that this has never happened, would be rather a marvellous affair; and yet there is no clear and authentic evidence that it has.

How curious and interesting the contemplation of the ancestry of our Lord! Of earth's ancestral lines his is the only one faithfully preserved through the long series of four thousand years, and whose particular character in all its prominent elements may still be ascertained. Amongst his progenitors are found some of almost every cast, condition, and character of human kind. Before the flood there are Seth, Enoch, and Noah, the most renowned of all the antediluvians; Methuselah, the oldest of mankind; and Lamech, the Prophet. After the flood Shem takes the precedence of all mankind, the high priest of the New World, the oracle of twelve postdiluvian generations, with whom he conversed face to face, as well as with Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah, before the flood. Then we have Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the most illustrious three princes of our race; their renowned descendants Boaz, Jesse, David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Joisah, Zerubbabel,

are amongst earth's noblest princes. But amongst his ancestors were all the mixtures of our race, in all senses of the word. Phares, of incestuous birth ; Ruth, of Moabitish blood ; Solomon, from the adulterous Bathsheba ; Rehoboam, from Naamah, of Ammonitish extraction ; and by the wives of Israelitish kings, some of whose offspring intermarried with the kings of Judah, he partook of almost all the varieties of race and nation in the Asiatic world. We also find some of the worst of mankind as well as of the best in his family. There is Rehoboam, Abijah, Amaziah, Manasseh, and the monstrous Athaliah, who, but for a singular providence, would by one fell effort have annihilated the whole seed royal of David, but for the apparently accidental interference of a king's daughter and a priest's wife. Tell me who was this, William ?

William. I suppose you allude to Joash, then an infant seized by the daughter of Jehoram, called Jehoshabath, and the solitary remnant of David's progeny in that line and by her hid for six years, in the house of the Lord.

Olympas. The moral of the whole matter of the genealogical tables and roll of Christ's lineage is, that he partook with the sons of men in every sense of the word. He was of noble and ignoble blood, as respected family, nation, and character ; but he ennobled humanity by assuming it into such intimate union with the Divinity, and that too under all the conditions of poverty, imbecility, and degradation, to which it had been most justly subjected because of its apostacy from God.

A few questions on the chronology of the world relative to the age of the Messiah : How do you make it out, Reuben, down to Abraham's time ?

Reuben. The birth and age of the Patriarchs from Adam to Noah, make the world 1656 years old at the flood; and the postdiluvian register places Abraham's birth in the year 2008. When he was called out of Ur of Chaldea he was seventy-five years old, at which time the covenant confirmed of God concerning the Messiah was given to him. That covenant, Paul says, was just four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law; which sums of seventy-five and four hundred and thirty, or five hundred and five added to 2008, makes the world 2513 years old at the giving of the law. Forty years after the law they entered Canaan; that was in the year of the world 2553. They were under Judges four hundred and fifty years. Saul and David reigned each forty years: and that makes the world 3083 years old, when David died. Thence to the seventh of Artaxerxes it was four hundred and seventy years; and thence to Messiah's birth, four hundred and fifty-seven—in all, four thousand years.

Olympas. I cannot question you farther on this subject at present; but we shall hear you again on this chronology. Thomas, does the Septuagint age of the world coincide with the Jews' Bible and our common text?

Thomas. No, sir. According to the Greek version of *the Seventy* the world was 5872 years old when Jesus Christ was born, and is now 7719 years old.

William. And the Samaritan age of the world at Christ's birth was 4700, making the world now 6546 years old.

Eliza. How comes it to pass that the Septuagint differs so much from the Hebrew?

Olympas. From the creation to the flood the Septuagint gives two thousand nine hundred and sixty-two years, and from the flood to Abraham's birth, ten hundred and seventy-two. These two discrepancies make a great difference. Indeed, the matter is not susceptible of a full and satisfactory development so far as we have yet seen. The Protestants take the Hebrew text, according to which we make the interval from the first to the second Adam four thousand years only. Repeat, William, the six ages of the world, of which I have sometimes spoken to you.

William. 1st. From Adam to the deluge, 1556.

2nd. From the deluge to Abraham's entrance into Canaan, four hundred and twenty-seven years, 2083.

3rd. From Abraham's induction to the Promised Land to the Exodus, four hundred and thirty years, 2513.

4th. From the Exodus to the founding of the Temple, four hundred and eighty years, 2993.

5th. From the foundation of the Temple to the Babylonish captivity, four hundred and twenty-four years, A. M. 3416.

6th. Thence to the birth of Christ, five hundred and eighty-four years, 4000.

Olympas. We must reserve something on chronology for another lesson. Meanwhile, as time had a beginning it must have an end; and that is infinitely more interesting to us than its commencement.

CONVERSATION XXVIII.

Thomas. I have been thinking much upon the age of the world since our last meeting. Having to choose amongst three I am at a loss to decide. According to the Septuagint it is now seven thousand seven hundred and fourteen years old. According to the Samaritan it is six thousand five hundred and forty-two. According to the Hebrew, five thousand eight hundred and forty-six.

Reuben. And I am as much perplexed with the common era as you are with the three; for according to the common Bible, I can only make the world three thousand nine hundred and forty-six years old at the Christian era.

Olympas. Let us have your date.

Reuben. Abraham was born in 2008, called in 2083; thence to the law, four hundred and thirty; thence to the building of the temple, four hundred and eighty; thence to the captivity, four hundred and twenty-six; captivity, seventy; thence to the Messiah, four hundred and fifty-seven—in all, three thousand nine hundred and forty-six. I find from 1 Kings vi. 1, the temple was builded in the four hundred and eightieth year from the exodus from Egypt. And we are certain that the exodus was, according to our common Bible, in the year 2513. To which add four hundred and eighty, and we have 2993, to the fourth year of king Solomon. Now all the reigns from the fourth of Solomon to the Captivity are as follows:—Solomon thirty-six; Rehoboam, seventeen;

Abiram, three; Asa, forty-one; Jehoshaphat, twenty-five; Jehoram, five; Ahaziah, one; his mother, six; Joash, forty; Amaziah, twenty-nine; interregnum, eleven; Azariah, fifty-two; Jotham, sixteen; Ahaz, sixteen; Hezekiah, twenty-nine; Manasseh, fifty-five; Ammon, two; Josiah, thirty-one; Jehoahaz, three months; Jehoiakim, eleven years—in all, four hundred and twenty-six years and three months, when the Captivity commenced. This continued seventy years. Thus we are brought down to 3489. From the going forth of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah, four hundred and fifty seven—in all, 3946.

Olympas. But this falls short of the time usually adopted as the Christian era, fifty-four years. We Protestants arrange the times as follows:—The giving of the law, as agreed on all hands, was in A. M. 2513; thence to the founding of the temple, four hundred and eighty years, 1 Kings vi. 1; thence to the end of the Kings, four hundred and twenty-four years; and thence to the Messiah, five hundred and eighth-four years—in all four thousand years. As a general view this is according to the Hebrew Bible and the common text, the most correct chronology. There are some difficulties, it is true, on every view of the chronology of the world that is derived from the Hebrew text; but fewer in this than any other of which I have any knowledge.

Our Saviour on this representation of the matter, was born at the close of the fourth day, or Millennium of the world, which more exactly corresponds with the order of the creation week. Light was created on the first day; but the sun, or radiating

centre of the system, was not perfected till the fourth day. Until a more apposite season, we reserve what yet remains on the subject of sacred chronology as compared with other systems, and proceed to the temptation.

Eliza will read the fourth chapter of Luke.

[The chapter being read, the subject of the temptation was first propounded.]

Eliza. It was not until after the Saviour's baptism that Satan sought to turn him aside.

Olympas. Place in order all the items which you have of the Saviour's previous history, Reuben.

Reuben. He was circumcised on the eighth day. He was afterwards dedicated to the Lord in the temple as the law enjoined in reference to the first-born. He is next seen at the age of twelve in the temple, sitting among the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. He continues subject to his parents to the age of thirty, and then proceeds to the Jordan to the Baptist John, and is immersed by him in that river in honour of God's institution. Then he is publicly declared the Son of God by the voice of his Father speaking from heaven. The Spirit next in a bodily form descends upon him and takes possession of him; and after this he is envied by Satan, who, finding him in the wilderness fasting and communing with God for full forty days, assailed him with all his power in the form of three subtle and powerful temptations.

Olympas. How beautiful and instructive this order! Birth, circumcision, dedication, instruction, submission to his parents, baptism, adoption,

inspiration, and temptation. What was the first temptation, James?

James. "Command the stones to become loaves."

Olympas. Why, Susan?

Susan. Because he was hungry and needed something to eat?

Olympas. What was the answer, William?

William. The Lord quoted a passage from Moses which says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by whatever God may appoint, or by every word or precept which he may pronounce," as you sometimes explain it.

Olympas. Wherein lay the force of this temptation?

Reuben. It was addressed to him in a case of extreme hunger; and to preserve life in any way is generally regarded as a duty not to be neglected.

Olympas. And where the crime or error, in a compliance with it?

Thomas. It was calling upon him as a "Son of God" to distrust the providence of his Divine Father, and to pervert a power which it was presumed by the tempter he might possess. Are we to suppose that Satan knew he was the Son of God?

Olympas. Indeed the common version would indicate that Satan knew him to be one who already pretended to be *the* Son of God, or the Messiah. But this seems to be a presumption upon a previous knowledge which we have no right to suppose him in the possession of. There is much more against, than in favour of such a supposition. Satan knew well that distinguished persons had been called sons of God; and perhaps

he may have designed to find out his pretensions under that title. To have yielded to his temptation would not only have indicated a want of confidence in God, and would have misapplied a power given him for other uses, but it would have appeared as though he either doubted his relation, or gave an unnecessary demonstration of it to gratify a vain curiosity on the part of the querist; or knowing him to be a foe, would have been encouraging his advances in relation to more serious matters, and therefore he promptly and wisely repelled it at once by a proper application of the sacred Scriptures. Is there any analogy, Thomas, between this first temptation addressed to the second Adam and that offered to the first Adam in the person of his wife?

Thomas. A natural appetite and the same appetite was embraced in the temptation addressed to both. The temptation was to *eat*, and to eat something prohibited. An expression to the divine will, in the form of a positive precept, forbade the fruit to Adam the first, and the law of God forbids compliance with any suggestion not warranted by the licence of his own permission.

Reuben. I see in this also another point of excellence in the Messiah. Eve, not impelled by hunger, and prohibited by a positive and express law, did take and eat; while Jesus, impelled by hunger, and not enjoined by a positive law, would not eat in the mere absence of a full and explicit licence.

Olympas. That is true. Still there is something else in this matter more declarative of his divine wisdom and power. He had been declared to be "*the Son of God.*" Satan did not com-

prehend that title, and was doubtless in the first temptation prying into it. To have, then, only gratified this impudent curiosity, or to have shown any desire to display his power, would have been yielding one point, and Heaven's wisdom has always been never to yield the first point. But to have taken the power given him for another purpose to support himself, would have been disreputable to him that sent him, and would have argued a want of confidence in the providence and benignity of his Father that would have been highly disreputable; and therefore he disdained the temptation; and, in allusion to the people of God anciently living in the wilderness upon the manna, replied that man lived not alone or always on bread alone, but on any thing God himself was pleased to appoint.

State the second temptation, Eliza.

Eliza. Satan induced the Lord to ascend to the pinnacle of the temple, or violently seizing him, (I do not know which,) transported him from the wilderness to Jerusalem, and suddenly placed him upon it, saying to him, "Cast thyself down from that place; you cannot be hurt if you are God's Son, for he gives his angels charge concerning you."

Olympas. And what, William, was the response?

William. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Eliza. Did you not say that it was better translated by the words, "Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the proof."

Olympas. Certainly. The Lord indicated this view of the matter. Thou shalt not jeopardize your life, or Thou shalt not rush into danger to

prove whether the Lord will keep his word, or protect you. And is not this a seasonable admonition to James and Susan, whom I observed the other day walking upon the river, the ice being very thin; and to you, William, whom I have seen fording the river, standing upon your horse, when he was almost swimming in a strong current. All such things are presuming too far upon the divine protection, although they may not come up to the full measure of putting the veracity of the Lord to the test.

What passion in human nature, think you, Reuben, was addressed in the second temptation?

Reuben. If my recollection be correct, you once told us that vanity, or the love of applause and admiration was the chief point in this temptation.

Olympas. True, indeed, I have said that men are generally wont to cherish an exaggerated view of themselves; to imagine that they occupy a very large space in the eyes of heaven and earth. This is sometimes called vanity, sometimes self conceit, presumption, &c. It is, indeed, a generic feeling, impulse, or passion in man, from which spring many, very many of his aberrations and follies in life. Satan well knew its force, and by suddenly placing the Saviour in a predicament that would add force to the suggestion by rendering escape from it dangerous, doubtful, and difficult any other way, cunningly machinated his yielding and fall—not, indeed, aware as yet of all that was implied in the tittle “*Son of God.*”

The third and last temptation, William.

William. He showed him from a very high mountain all the kingdoms of the world in a sort

of grand panorama, and offered them to him on the single condition of one act of obedience.

James. Had the devil all the kingdoms of the world, father?

Olympas. No, my son; but he usurps them, and is still striving for them; and having possession of the hearts of almost all the princes of the earth, he claims their empires and possessions as his own.

William. I do not understand how the devil could either see all round the world himself, or show any one more than the half of it, provided only it be a globe: for our books say that the one half of the world is always baptized in night, while the other is immersed in day.

Olympas. True, very true. Hence there are not wanting critics who say that "the kingdoms of the world" here spoken of are only the divisions of the old inheritance of the twelve tribes, partitioned as it then was, amongst governors, tetrarchs, and kings. The Abbe Mariti, in speaking of a mountain in the environs of the temptation, represents it as overlooking the Arabian mountains, Gilead, the land of the Ammonites, Moabites, and much of the land of Canaan. Still from no spot on earth could human eye distinctly command an area of more than one hundred and twenty miles in diameter. It was, then, a representation from a very high mountain of not only what might have been seen, but of a great deal more beyond all that could be seen by the physical vision. From all which our Saviour turned away with infinite disgust when he heard the price at which the lying murderer offered them to him. What did he say to that, Susan?

Susan. "Begone Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Olympas. And what did the devil do, James?

James. He had to obey the Lord. He left, and angels came to minister to the Saviour.

Olympas. 'To what principle, Thomas, or to what passion was this addressed?

Thomas. If I could distinguish this by any name, I would call it *ambition*.

Olympas. Can you tell me any principle, passion, or appetite in man not included in these three temptations?

Thomas. There are indeed, innumerable passions, propensities, and principles of action in man. But it occurs to me that they might all be reduced to three—the animal propensities, pride, and ambition. And if these three categories include the whole, then, indeed, Satan might well retire from the unequal contest.

Olympas. You are almost, if not altogether, right. The impulses of our animal nature are sometimes called propensities, appetites, and desires. Of all these the supreme is the appetite for food in time of great or protracted want of sustenance, as in the case of our Lord, having fasted to the fortieth day before the temptation began. Where there is no fuel the fire goeth out. All the passions animal are perfectly tame and governable when the appetite for food is in full vigour. An overweening conceit of oneself, or pride, is the capital sin of all the passions; and ambition, sustained by avarice, consummates the whole train. Our Lord's triumph was indeed

complete, and the victory glorious. Jesus kept the field, and Satan fled.

What was the armour worn and the weapons used in this conflict of the great Captain, Eliza?

Eliza. The sharp two-edged sword proceeded out of his mouth, usually called the Sword of the Spirit. The helmet of Salvation, the shield of Faith, the breastplate of Righteousness, the girdle of Truth, the greaves of the Gospel of Peace, and the Sword of the Spirit, completed his panoply. Thus armed our Hero stood, and Satan fled.

Olympas. And what next, James?

James. Angels came; but they came after the battle was over!

Susan. They wait upon him now almost too late.

William. Not too late: for he needed not their help.

Olympas. And what ministry did he now need?

Thomas. Bread, I suppose.

Olympas. Food was certainly wanting; and a seasonable supply was brought by those who ministered to Elijah and others in distress. Rejoice we not, then, that our Lord resisted the arch apostate in his impudent, malicious, and murderous assault to seduce him to one of the three great sins—distrust, or unbelief, presumption, and idolatrous ambition. The would-be "*prince of this world,*" the rebel usurper, found nothing animal, intellectual, or moral in him that could be perverted, seduced, or alienated from the supreme admiration, service, and love of God.

The moral of this memorable temptation, in part, at least, is,—Satan comes when we are weakest, and always assails us in the weakest

point. He is to be conquered by one sword, and by one only. On the broad shield of faith we may quench his fiery darts; but when we attack him we must use the Jerusalem blade; for, like the sword that beheaded Goliath, there is none like it. "IT IS WRITTEN" constitutes the omnipotent argument—the sharpest arrow in the Christian's quiver; and by the dexterous use of this cherubic sword, we need not fear the world, the flesh, and Satan, that triumvirate of ruin which has tyrannized over mankind times and ways without number, converted Eden into a wilderness, earth into a Golgotha, and superinduced on our race the untold curses of indignant Heaven here, with the dread and dismal forebodings of a misery to come, enduring as the days of eternity.

CONVERSATION XXIX.

Olympas. HAVING had the lineage, birth, circumcision, education, and early circumstances of the Messiah under consideration, as also his early visit to the temple at twelve, his baptism, reception of the Spirit, temptation and victory, we shall now inquire into the theatre and nature of his employment after this time. Read, William, to the close of the fourth chapter from the fourteenth verse.

[The chapter being read, William went on to say that]—

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and began to “teach in their *synagogues*, being glorified by all.” The cities of Galilee were then the theatre of his public instructions.

Reuben. I wonder that they let him preach in the Jewish *synagogues*. What were these *synagogues*?

Olympas. Places of meeting or holding public assemblies for the edification of the Jews.

Reuben. What was the order of worship in these *synagogues*?

Olympas. You can explain it, Thomas.

Thomas. I had better first, perchance, describe the places of worship among the Jews as I have gathered them from Josephus, the Bible, and the books I have read on the Jewish Antiquities.

Olympas. You may state all their places of meeting for religious uses.

Thomas. Their houses of worship and places of edification were the *tabernacle*, the *temple*, the *colleges*, the *proseuchas*, or oratories, and *synagogues*. The Tabernacle and Temple are fully described in the Bible: the Colleges, Proseuchas, and Synagogues are not fully described in the Bible. The schools of the Prophets and Colleges, if they were not the same, were very nearly related. I think you told me they were two names for the same institutions.

Reuben. I have never read one word of *Colleges* in the Bible.

Thomas. You have forgotten the books of Kings and Chronicles; for in one of each they are mentioned. So early as the time of Huldah the Prophetess, who flourished in the reign of the good Josiah, about six hundred and twenty years before Christ, we find them named in 2 Kings xxii. 14, and again in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 22. And that persons of much divine learning were in those institutions—(that in Jerusalem occupied the *inner wall*, whence, perhaps, came “*Esquires of the Inner Temple*”)—is evident from the fact that when the long-lost copy of the Law was found, it was expedient to send to the College for an interpreter. Thus Huldah, a Prophetess, connected with the institution, is brought into notice as an expounder of the volume.

Next to those in antiquity were the Oratories or places of prayer. They were located on the tops of mountains and on the banks of rivers, and in such sequestered spots. They had open tops through which to look up to heaven. Our Saviour spent a whole night in one of them, and the pious were wont to assemble there in the early dawn

and at the close of even for meditation and prayer. They were built not only in Palestine, but sometimes in foreign countries. Paul found one near Philippi where Lydia was converted.

The Tabernacles were another class of buildings commenced before, but greatly multiplied after the Captivity. With regard to the Synagogues, villages were distinguished by two names—the *Koomai* and the *Koomopolis*. The latter had synagogues, and the former none. It required ten families at the least number to constitute a synagogue. When less than ten resided, they had no synagogue; and when more, they had synagogues according to the number of inhabitants.

Olympas. Do you recollect how many were in Jerusalem and some other large places at or near the time of the Messiah?

Thomas. The city of Tiberias had twelve, and Jerusalem four hundred and sixty-five. They were located over the whole country, and were essential to every Jewish settlement abroad as well as in their own country.

Olympas. State their architectural peculiarities.

Thomas. They were very uniform, although of varying dimensions. They always consisted of two parts. The western end was used as a sort of sacred temple, called *the Icel*. There was kept the Book of the Law in a small chest. Its title was THE HOUSE OF THE BOOK. The body of the building, or east part of it, was seated for the congregation, separated in the midst down to the pulpit (for they had each a pulpit of wood) by a wire lattice from five to six feet high. On one side sat the men, on the other the women.

Olympas. Repeat the names of the officers, and give us a brief view of the services.

Thomas. Rash Eceneseth was the Hebrew name of the ruler of the synagogue, usually called in Greek *Archisunagoogos*. Of this class there were three in every synagogue. They were, because of their frequent adjudications of small civil offences, called THE COUNCIL OF THREE. They prevented all disorders in the congregation. They commanded the public readers how much to read every Sabbath, and the people when to say *Amen*. They had considerable power in the settlement of all questions of moral wrong. They were to decide on the admission of proselytes, and on the ordination of all public functionaries.

The second officer *Shelih Hetsebur*, or minister of the congregation, frequently called *The Angel of the Assembly*, laboured among them in word and teaching. He prayed and preached. He sometimes appointed the readers, and stood beside them to see that they read right. Hence he got the name of *the Episcopos*, or Overseer.

The Deacon, or Almoner of the Poor, was the next officer. Of these there were generally three. To prevent the suspicion of embezzlement, they generally officiated in concert, at least two of them always had charge of the collections and of the synagogue *lekupe*, or chest that stood in the house.

To these there were sometimes added *interpreters* of the readings into the languages of those who were in attendance. Besides these they sometimes had Doctors of Divinity Schools, who instructed even the interpreters; and these also had their own interpreters. But the three Rulers, the Angel of the Church, or chief Bishop, and the three Almoners constituted the regular officers. To which, if we allow all classes to be in attend-

ance, the office-bearers were in all ten—the Bishop, the three Rulers, the three Deacons, the Doctor of the Divinity School, his Interpreter, and the Interpreter of the readings of the Law.

They attended many hours during the day, commencing about sun-rise and continuing till nine or ten. They always returned at half-past four, and sat till sunset. They were not only exempted from all civil liabilities, but had salaries assigned them, according to some Rabbies; but according to others, their services were devotional and without charge. But as the glory departed the synagogue officers were diminished in number; and finally, in the fourteenth century they became few and inconsiderable in rank and standing.

Olympas. Tell us now of their worship.

Thomas. The officers, ten in number, sat with their backs to the West, and the congregation having their backs to the East, had their faces towards the Elders. Between them stood the pulpit, in which the services of the day were performed.

In the morning the Angel of the Church ascended the pulpit, while the people rose from their seats and stood in the most devotional attention. He offered up their public prayers, some of which were written down. We have in Buxtorf many of these prayers still preserved. The eighteen said to have been composed by Ezra, and the great Synagogue, which were read in our Saviour's time, are still extant; but I cannot read them now. At the end of these prayers the whole congregation said *Amen*.

After the prayers of the morning came the repetition of their phylacteries, as a guard from

evil thoughts and evil spirits. These scraps were extracts from the Law, especially these three: Exodus xiii. 3—16; Deut. vi. 5—9; Deut. xi. 13—21. Then came the reading of the Law and Prophets, which they had divided into fifty-four sections. Because in their intercalated years, by a month being added, there were fifty-four Sabbaths. In other years of fifty-two, they read two of these sections in one day, and thus the whole Law and the Prophets were read through once every year.

In the Sabbath readings seven persons were selected, and the work divided among them. Of these the first was a Priest, the second a Levite, and five were Israelites. In the absence of the first two, seven Israelites performed all the reading. The first reader presented a short prayer just as he commenced "blessing God that he had chosen them to be his people and given them his law." The readers stood while they read, the minister standing by their side to oversee their reading that it was all right. The interpreter stood next to the reader, and after the Captivity the Syriac language was the mother tongue, the interpretation of many words became necessary to make them "perceive the sense and understand the reading." Hence arose the office of an interpreter in every synagogue. The usual manner was to read a sentence at a time. The reader gives the sentence in the original Hebrew, and the interpreter pronounced it in the living tongue.

These readings were mingled with expositions of the law and exhortations. These teachings and exhortations were not done in a standing, but in a sitting posture. The minister of the congre-

gation, interpreter, reader, or some distinguished person who happened to be present in the synagogue, usually employed a portion of the day in such exercises. These things being fully attended to, the meeting was closed with a short prayer rather in the form of a benediction.

Little is said of their psalm singing, though it occupied much of their worship in the Temple and on the great anniversaries. But we do not find any laws or arrangements for its systematic observance in their stated meetings in the synagogues.

Olympas. How often did they meet for worship and edification in their synagogues?

Thomas. They had three synagogue meetings every week—one on the second, one on the fifth, and one on the seventh day. These meetings were distinct from, and independent of, their holidays, their grand feasts, and fasts. They met three times on each of these days—once for reading the law and prayer, and twice for prayer. They read the same section of the Law and Prophets on the second and fifth days which they read on the seventh. Thus the whole Bible was twice read through in the synagogues every year—once on Sabbath days in the audience of all, and once during the week, half on Tuesday and half on Thursday mornings, to all the pious who attended.

Olympas. How often did the pious Jews pray every day?

Thomas. They prayed at the third hour, or nine o'clock; at the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock; and at the ninth hour, or three in the afternoon; and some prayed a fourth time, about the twilight of

the evening. These prayers on the synagogue days were made in all the synagogues at the same hour, and also in the Temple at Jerusalem. The morning and evening sacrifices being presented at the third and ninth hours, gave a peculiar solemnity and significance to these hours of prayer, and more than any other period in the day were consecrated by all true Israelites.

Reuben. When did these Synagogues and the Colleges commence? I never read of any command or precept for their erection.

Thomas. Many great men deny to them any great antiquity. Prideaux, Vitringa, and Reland, with many Rabbies, affirm them to have commenced after the Babylonian Captivity. They pretend not any divine precept for their erection; but admit that they were the offspring of a pious necessity, and were owned by the Lord.

Olympas. I admit much may be said on both sides of the question concerning their great antiquity. Still I must give to them a higher antiquity than the Captivity.

In the seventy-fourth psalm, which was written concerning the Captivity, it is said that the enemies of Israel had "burned up all the synagogues in the land." Now had there been no synagogues scattered over the land, how could they have been burned at the time of the Captivity? And does not James say in Jerusalem, Moses has had readers in the synagogues of old time? Finally, was not the observance of the Sabbath, and the keeping of holy convocations or assemblies, impossible without some places of meeting?

Brown imagines that the dispute may be compromised by affirming the antiquity of public

meetings in the open air or in tents, and allowing the erection of permanent houses, and the giving of them their name, to have been of a date more recent. To which I would add, that as the word *college* occurs but twice in the Old Testament, and *synagogue* but once, we must not deny the existence of the things so designated because of the infrequency of the name. Schools of Prophets and holy convocations are of very high antiquity; and for my part I can see no more need for the production of a precept for their erection than for an oracle on building houses for families or conveniencies for the discharge of the family and domestic duties.

Our Saviour always visited the synagogues; and it seems from the lesson of the morning, that he was one of the readers in his own synagogue at Nazareth. Would you not infer from the reading, Eliza, that he was accustomed to officiate in the synagogue in this capacity?

Eliza. The words are, "As his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read." Although I never heard it before, I think the words fairly represent the Saviour to have been wont in his youth not only to visit the synagogue every Sabbath, but also to *stand up* to read.

Olympas. Any thing peculiar on this occasion, William?

William. I presume to read the usual lesson of the morning; and on this occasion, because it was so suitable to himself, after having taken his seat, he began to comment upon it in such acceptable words as to call forth the admiration of the whole synagogue. The audience admired the gracious

and seasonable words which he spoke. But in applying it to himself, some captious and insinuating spirit asked, "Is not this Joseph's son?" And what could that question mean?

William. It might mean no more than the fact that he was Joseph's son; and then the wonder grew, Whence derived he all this wisdom and knowledge? Or it might indicate disdain of him because of his humble birth and station.

Olympas. Or it might intimate that being one of their city, their neighbour, and intimate, they felt themselves slighted because he had given them no special token of his regard for them, seeing they had heard of his generous and mighty deeds in other places. His reply to the question would indicate something of this sort. "You may say," responded he, "Physician, heal thyself. Do for us, *in thine own country*, what we have heard you have done at Capernaum and other cities." He saw this temper clearly indicated, and understood this feeling to have prompted the question. And being based on a mistaken view both of himself and them, he rejected their claims in terms of great severity. "No Prophet," said he, "is accepted in his own country." God had not confined his favours to the limits of human prudence, nor regarded the proud conceptions of those who imagined themselves the elect of God in the dispensation of his bounties, continued he; for the Prophet Elijah dwelt not with an Israelitish widow, though many such there were; nor was a single leper cleansed in the days of Eliseus, while a Syrian leper was healed in the Jordan. From the fortune of a Sidonian widow and a Syrian leper, they might have learned that Israel according

to the flesh had no exclusive right to Heaven's favours. Thus he repudiated their presumptuous claims; for which they indignantly drove him out to the precipice of the hill on which the synagogue stood, that they might thrust him down; but he miraculously escaped out of their hands.

This ebullition of passion and madness justified his cause, and demonstrated that he knew their hearts—that they were wholly unworthy of even witnessing, much less of participating in any demonstration of his marvellous power and goodness; and that they presumed too much upon their being his townsmen, and Israelites according to the flesh and not according to the spirit.

Eliza. I would desire to hear some of the prayers that were usually offered up in the synagogues by the Jews in ancient times, that I might learn how much they resembled the prayers of Christians.

Olympas. Thomas, you can repeat a few specimens from the nineteen celebrated prayers that all the Jews were accustomed not only to hear in the synagogues, but which they were themselves accustomed to repeat two or three times every day.

Thomas. I will try.

1. "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the Great God: powerful and tremendous; the High God, bountifully dispensing benefits; the creator and possessor of the universe, who rememberest the good deeds of our fathers, and, in thy love, sendest a redeemer to those who are descended from them, for thy name's sake, O king, our helper, our saviour, and our shield: blessed art thou, O Lord, who art the shield of Abraham!"

2. "Thou, O Lord, art powerful for ever. Thou raisest the dead to life, and art mighty to save; thou sendest

down the dew; stillest the winds; and makest the rain to come down upon the earth; and sustainest with thy beneficence all that live thereon; and, of thy abundant mercy, makest the dead again to live. Thou helpest up those that fall; thou curest the sick; thou loosest them that are bound; and makest good thy word of truth to those that sleep in the dust. Who is to be compared with thee, O thou Lord of might? And who is like unto thee, O our king, who killest and makest alive, and makest salvation to spring up as the herb in the field? Thou art faithful to make the dead arise again to life. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who raisest the dead again to life."

15. "Make the offspring of David, thy servant, speedily to grow up and flourish, and let our horn be exalted in thy salvation, for we hope for thy salvation every day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who makes the horn of our salvation to flourish!"

17. "Be thou well pleased, O Lord our God, with thy people Israel, and have regard unto their prayers. Restore thy worship to the inner part of thy house, and make haste with favour and love to accept of the burnt sacrifices of Israel and their prayers; and let the worship of Israel, thy people, be continually well pleasing unto thee. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who restorest thy divine presence to Zion!"

18. "We will give thanks unto thee with praise, for thou art the Lord our God, the God of our fathers for ever and ever. Thou art our rock, and the rock of our life, and the shield of our salvation. To all generations will we give thanks unto thee, and declare thy praise, because of our life, which is always in thy hands; and because of our souls, which are ever depending upon thee; and because of thy signs, which are every day with us; and because of thy wonders and marvellous loving-kindness, which are morning and evening and night continually before us. Thou art good, for thy mercies are not consumed; thou art merciful, for thy loving-kindness fails not. For ever we will hope in thee; and for all these mercies be thy name, O king, blessed and exalted, and lifted up on high for ever and ever; and let all that live give thanks unto thee. Selah. And let them in truth and sincerity praise thy name, O God of our salvation and our help. Selah. Blessed art thou, O Lord, whose name is good, and unto whom it is fitting always to give thanks!"

19. "Give peace, beneficence and benediction, grace, benignity and mercy unto us, and to Israel thy people. Bless us, O our father, even all of us together as one man, with the light of thy countenance. For in the light of thy countenance hast thou given unto us, O Lord our God, the law of life and love, and benignity and righteousness, and blessing and mercy, and life and peace. And let it seem good in thine eyes to bless thy people Israel with thy peace at all times and in every moment. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who blessest thy people Israel with peace! Amen."

Eliza. Excellent sentiments and desires, truly. I wonder that a people whose prayers were so good, could act so badly as did those Jews of Nazareth, who so wickedly treated the Messiah.

Olympas. Orthodox creeds, forms, prayers, and observances, my dear children, are poor substitutes for new and pure hearts.

CONVERSATION XXX.

Olympas. OUR Lord stood up to read, and sat down to teach. He returned the book to the minister of the synagogue, and tendered his comments to the audience. All seem delighted with his comments; but the question, “*Is not this Joseph’s son,*” seems to change the topic and lead to a serious issue. Why, Thomas, did our Lord stand up to read, and sit down to teach?

Thomas. Men rise in honour of each other, and standing up to read God’s Book is in good keeping with that idea. No greater honour can be done the Bible in a public assembly than to stand up and read it.

Eliza. And why not stand up and listen to it?

Robert. I heard of one congregation who always stood up while the regular readings of the Scriptures was going on; and they were the most pious congregation in all the country.

Olympas. It was a very striking proof of their piety. I have no doubt it would promote the piety of every congregation to stand up, as the Jews did to hear Ezra the Scribe read from noon to even the words of God’s law. What sort of reader and teacher was Jesus, think you, Reuben?

Reuben. He was the most popular reader and speaker in all Judea.

Olympas. Where is your proof?

Reuben. God’s Spirit is the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, and eloquence. Now this being admitted, my conclusion is evident: for we are

told that "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee." The consequence was, there went out a fame of him all round about. We are told that "he taught in their synagogues with universal applause," or, as in our common Testament, "And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all." Could it be otherwise when he returned into Galilee from his baptism in the power of the Spirit?

Eliza. His temptation, fasting, prayer, as well as his baptism, prepared the way of his fame.

Olympas. His mature age also helped much. Men always gain power at the expense of time, and lose power by gaining time. He was thirty years old, well educated by a pious mother, taught to read early, early taken to the temple and the synagogue, was baptized, received the Holy Spirit, and had spent much time in meditation, self-discipline and government, and was in his peculiar manner an orator and teacher never equalled. His enemies were constrained to say, "Never man spake like this man."

Thomas. But in Nazareth he had not the proper honour. A Prophet never had equal honour in his own vicinity or amongst his relations. They implied something very unacceptable to the Saviour in these words—"Is not this Joseph's son?" What could it mean?

Olympas. What think you, Reuben?

Reuben. It was disparaging his humble birth. The carpenter's son! Whence has he all this learning and eloquence?

Thomas. Might it not indicate that as he lived amongst them, they thought that they had claims upon his gifts and services above other cities?

Olympas. In either case there was an error of heart implied in the question. He was not to be despised or humbled because he was a carpenter's son; nor had they from mere propinquity or neighbourhood relation, any good reason to expect from him spiritual or special favours. Envy, prejudice, or inordinate selfishness prompted the inquiry, and he disdained it. Which of them seem to be struck at William, in the response of the Saviour?

William. His answer was, "You will surely say to me this proverb, *Physician, heal thyself*. What we heard you did in Capernaum, do here in thy own country." This, then, imports that they felt a liberty from citizenship to demand of him some display of his benignant power.

Olympas. He, however, repudiates the claim. Other qualifications than natural birth, or mere local residence, are necessary to qualify and prepare for spiritual blessings. He cites two striking cases from their own Scriptures that taught a very different lesson—"Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah during the protracted drought of three years and six months, yet the Prophet was sent to a foreigner, a widow of Sarepta, to communicate his favours. Also, many lepers were in Israel in the days of Naaman the Syrian, but not one Israelite was cured, while the Syrian participated in the powers of the Prophet."

Olympas. What, Eliza, was the effect of his speech?

Eliza. It was revealed what manner of spirit they were of; for instantly they were filled with wrath.

William. Their anger proved that they expected something in which they were disappointed.

Thomas. Their pride was mortified, and they evinced a total want of faith in him, else they could not have thrust him out of the city to a precipice with the intention of killing him.

William. In examining the map, as well as in reading the travels of some who have visited the Holy Land and Galilee, I find no trace of a precipice immediately adjoining Nazareth?

Thomas. Modern travellers say that one mile and a half from the present city of Nazareth there is a very abrupt precipice; and it is most likely the town has been built more in the rear than formerly. From the narrative, however, I would rather conclude that Jesus was led out some distance from the synagogue, which itself was rather on an eminence, and probably a little out of town. Still the hill or upland on which the city now stands has on one side of it a very dangerous precipice.

Susan. The Saviour was not hurt by this violence, for he passed through the midst of the crowd, and marvellously escaped out of their hands.

Olympas. Which way then did he go, James?

James. To Capernaum, a town in Galilee.

Olympas. Did he work any miracles there, Susan?

Susan. Yes, there was in the synagogue a man tormented by a very foul spirit, crying with a very vehement voice, which Jesus cast out.

Olympas. And what was the effect of this display of beneficent power, Susan?

Susan. "They were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with power."

Olympas. Any other miracles, James, at Capernaum?

James. Peter's mother was instantly cured of a

fever and from the imposition of his hands many sick persons of all manner of diseases were healed; many devils were cast out, crying out and saying, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God; but he rebuked them, saying that they should not speak who he was; for he knew that he was the Messiah."

Thomas. These evil spirits could not be human maladies, for I never read of human maladies knowing that Jesus was the Christ.

Olympas. The Neologists of Germany, France, and England, have converted them into eastern metaphors, but by a most violent outrage on all the rules of interpretation. "Demons came out of many, crying out and saying, "Thou art Christ the Son of God." "Jesus rebuked them, and suffered them not to speak; for they knew that he was Christ." Could any rhetorician or grammarian, not infatuated with some extravagant fancy or theory, suppose that any physical malady could not only be gifted with speech, but with more intelligence than the person himself who was the subject of the disease. What epilepsy ever came out of a man saying the Doctor was a person of divine science, and when rebuked by the Physician became dumb as a stone!! Or, to allegorize the whole passage:—Diseases came out of many persons intimating by their manner of departure that the person under whose practice they migrated was a great Doctor. But when the Doctor's life became endangered by his rivals because of his excessive fame among the people, he inhibited these diseases from proving that he was possessed of more than common skill.

Thomas. Really, that would be rather a ridiculous version of the matter I wonder that any

person of common sense could read Luke iv. 41, and then affirm that demon is only another name for palsy, epilepsy, or some physical malady.

William. What were those demons, father?

Olympas. They are called "unclean spirits," and is not that enough?

William. What kind of spirits, father?

Olympas. We know of only two classes of spirits—human spirits and angelic spirits; but as to the properties or personal attributes of the one or the other, we know nothing positive and clear. They can think, reason, and speak; but they have neither flesh, blood, nor bones. They have great strength, and evil spirits are fond of using it malignantly. All those legions of evil spirits or demons spoken of in the Testament appear to be the unclean spirits of dead men. But if any one imagine them to be fallen angels, he has as good a right, political and ecclesiastical, to cherish and express that opinion when called upon as I have to give mine. It is not with me absolute faith, but plausible opinion; and I think there is more reason and historic evidence, and less difficulty in the way of this opinion, than of any other of which I have heard. But we may have a better opportunity of dilating on this subject hereafter.

CONVERSATION XXXI.

Father Olympas. My family will now prepare for a close and minute examination of the apostolic family; and preparatory to this, we shall read Matthew x. in connexion with our present lesson in Luke, as well as some general readings in the sequel. William, read again the first seven verses of Matthew x. new version.

William. “And having called to him his twelve disciples, he gave them power to expel unclean spirits, and to cure diseases and maladies of every kind. Now these are the names of the twelve Apostles. The first Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James, son of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, surnamed Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, he who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus commissioned, instructing them; and saying, Go not away to the Gentiles, nor enter a Samaritan city; but go directly to the lost sheep of the stock of Israel. And as you go, proclaim, saying, The reign of heaven approaches.”

Olympas. Observe that those who became *Apostles* were first called *disciples*.

William. Are they not afterwards called *Disciples* as well as *Apostles*?

Olympas. Very frequently. That was a generic name, while that of *Apostle* was special.

Thomas. Are they not called *heralds* too?

Olympas. Paul calls himself a *herald*, a *keerux*, and Peter calls Noah the *keerux* or *herald* of righteousness to the antediluvians. But their peculiar and divinely appointed name is *Apostles*—persons sent forth; *Shilohs*, messengers sent from the Lord; sometimes called Ambassadors.

Thomas. Is not Jesus called an *Apostle* by Paul, and a *Shiloh* by Jacob; and do not these two names indicate the same office?

Olympas. The Vulgate has *qui mittendus est*—he that is to be sent—the ambassador, for *Shiloh*. So the ancient Rabbis say that the Messiah is called *the sent*. The proper arrangement and sacred use of these are:—Jesus was himself first named the *Shiloh*, or Ambassador, and is afterwards called by Paul “*the Apostle and High Priest of our religion.*” He calls himself the Apostle of God—“As,” said he in his intercessory prayer, “as thou hast made me thy Apostle, so have I made them my Apostles to the world.” [New Version.] Jesus is God’s Apostle, or Ambassador and Herald to the world; and the twelve already named are called the Apostles not of God, but of Christ.

Thomas. God, then, has but one Ambassador, or Chief Apostle to the world, and Jesus our Saviour has twelve.

Olympas. Just so: they are his Apostles, and he is God’s. Let us then attend to their history.

At the head of these stands Simon Peter, a son of Jonas, a citizen of Bethsaida, situate on the western coast of the lake Gennesareth. He was a householder in Capernaum at the time of his calling, and a fisherman by trade. His name was afterwards changed into *Cephas*, a Syriac word

meaning *petra*, or rock. But though he was first in standing, he was not the first called of the twelve. His own brother Andrew having been a disciple of the Baptist, was first introduced to the Messiah, and became his disciple, and he introduced his brother Peter to the Lord. He also became his disciple, but went back for some time to his calling. It was the thirtieth year of Jesus that these two brothers enlisted in his cause. Next to the first pair were James and John, sons of Zebedee and Salome, natives, or, at least, citizens of Bethsaida in Galilee. This James is sometimes called the Greater or Senior to distinguish him from another James called the Less or Junior. He and John his brother were intimate with the Lord, and were amongst his most confidential friends. They were present on the Holy Mount of transfiguration. They were also present at his ascension. James was exposed to martyrdom by Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, about A. D. 42. The next in order are the sons of Cleopas and Mary, the sister of the mother of Jesus. Of these sons three were Apostles—James the Less, Judas, and Simon. Two of these wrote epistles—James the Less, sometimes called James the Just, and Jude. This is that James, son of Alpheus or Cleopas, who was in Jerusalem regarded as a pillar, and who presided at the council of Jerusalem. This Simon is called the Canaanite, identical in our language with the Zealous, to distinguish him from Simon Peter; and the other is called Judas the Traitor, in contrast with Judas who wrote the epistle. There yet remain other five, of which we know but little. These are Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas,

and Matthew the Publican, and Iscariot who betrayed him. Bartholomew and Nathaniel of John i. 46, are supposed to be the same person, because in the apostolic rolls, John never mentions Bartholomew, and the other Apostles never mention Nathaniel. Again, as Philip and Bartholomew are associated in this, so Nathaniel and Philip came together to see Jesus. This is rendered more probable from the fact that among the Apostles to whom Christ appeared at the sea of Tiberias, Nathaniel is mentioned. Philip was a native of Bethsaida, but of his life and labours little is recorded in the sacred Scriptures. Matthew the Publican is well known both as an Apostle and an Evangelist of Jesus Christ—a man of some learning, having been a public officer of the revenue.

Eliza. To whom were the names Thaddeus and Lebbeus applied?

Olympas. To Jude.

William. Of the twelve Apostles three were cousins of our Lord; viz., James, Jude, and Simon Zelotes; two were sons of Zebedee and Salome; and two others were brothers. Five of them seem to have no relationship to the others. They are Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, and Judas Iscariot.

James. What means *Iscariot*?

Thomas. *Aishkerioth* in Hebrew means the city of Kerioth, a city of Judah.

Olympas. *Iscariot* means *strangulation* also. Hence Lightfoot and some others think that he was afterwards called by this name because he hung himself; of which there is as much at least to be doubted as to be believed.

Such was the apostolic family. These were

chosen, called, and sent to introduce and establish Christianity.

Can you state to us the peculiarities that were the essential attributes of the Apostles?

Thomas. There seems to me to have been at least five essential qualifications, without which they could not have answered the high ends of their destiny:—

1st. They must have been both eye and ear-witnesses of the Lord, and especially of his resurrection; that is, they must have had clear sensible signs and demonstrations of his resurrection from the dead.

2nd. They must be called, commissioned, and sent by Jesus in person.

3rd. They must have the power of working miracles in attestation of their mission.

4th. They must have, in contradistinction from all other workers of miracles, the power of imparting spiritual gifts to others.

5th. They must also be infallibly inspired with the perfect and complete knowledge of the Christian doctrine, and be able to speak fluently, definitely, and boldly in all the languages of all nations to whom they were sent.

Of all these points there are many proofs in the New Testament: hence they never had, and, in the nature of the case, could have no successors.

ADDENDA.

FAMILY EDUCATION.

THE NURSERY.

“THE man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up; for she said to her husband, I will not go up till the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. And when she weaned him, she took him up with her—and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh; and the child was young. And the child did minister to the Lord before Eli the priest. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.” 1 Sam. i. 21—24, and 2 Sam. xi. 21. “To Timothy, dearly beloved son;—without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee.—when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee,—which dwelt first in my grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise to salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus;—thoroughly furnished to all good works.” 2 Tim. i. 2—5. and 2 Tim. iii. 15, 17. See also Eph. vi. 4.

THOUGH the foregoing pages have furnished the readers with many useful suggestions upon the all-important subject of family education, in the Conversations of the Carlton Family, yet the particular duties of the primary department—that of the nursery, do not appear to have been distinctly considered. Now it is in the plastic subjects of this department, that the formative impressions of human character are inlaid. The infant sees, feels, and retains the impressions thus

made upon its perception, long before it can think for itself; yea, indeed, these constitute the very elements of its thoughts and desires; or of its aversions. It should then be handled and treated; dressed, fed, and amused, with all that propriety and sobriety of treatment, which is naturally calculated to make just impressions of what is comely, decent, and proper, in the elementary *contour* of human character; being entirely unaccustomed to any thing foolish, whimsical, or ridiculous, but to the very contrary. And why should not this be universally the case? Is not every mother's son naturally the same with Samuel and Timothy, and equally near and dear to his mother?—a sensitive, rational creature, destined for eternity?—capable of being trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?—of being thus prepared for the high destiny of eternally glorifying and enjoying its almighty Creator? Why, then, not receive and treat this high privileged creature, as Hannah and Eunice did their sons? who as far as mother's interest and agency could go, devoted them to the Lord; always considering and treating them accordingly; and thus training them up for God.

In the course of some twelve or sixteen months, the beloved little creatures not only understand looks and gestures, but begin also to understand words. The endearing epithets of father and mother soon convey to the infant mind the most pleasing impressions and recollections. It also gets early acquainted with the common literal acceptation of the terms good and bad, pretty and ugly, love and hate, sweet and bitter, make, break, &c. &c.; and thus soon become the capable subject

of oral instructions. Now as soon as this capability by being exercised for some time upon common sensible objects, its attention should be interestingly and incessantly called to a realizing grateful acknowledgement of its Creator. This, we presume, may be successfully attempted in the following manner:—

Mother.—My dear child, where is your father? He is ploughing the corn to make cakes for you. Do you not love father for that? Who bought you this pretty coat, my dear? Do you not know it was father? Do you not love father for buying you this pretty coat to keep you warm? Do you know who made it, my dear? It was mother made it. Do you not love me for making you this pretty coat? Give me a kiss, if you love me; my sweet son. Do you know who made you, my dear? It was heavenly Father. Do you not know, my dear son, that you have a heavenly Father, who lives away up in heaven, above the sun, moon, and stars; who made you, and me, and your father, and gave you to us, to be our son? Do you not love heavenly father, my dear, for making you, and me, and your father; and for giving you to us to be our son? 'Tis heavenly Father that keeps us alive, and takes care of us; that makes all the good things grow in the fields, in the garden, in the orchard; all the good berries, and apples, and fruits of every kind, that we eat; and all the beautiful buds, and blossoms, and flowers, that smell so sweet. Do you not love heavenly Father, my dear, for making you all these good things? &c. &c.

Thus most infants, from twelve to eighteen

months old, are capable of being instructed; so that at the age of two years, they would mostly be able to connect the idea of the heavenly Father, with every object of delight and enjoyment; and, thus, not only become duly acquainted with the divine existence, but also with the delightful attributes of his nature,—his power, wisdom, goodness, and love.

To accomplish this blissful attainment would, however, in the mean time, require the incessant attention of the parents; especially of the mother, whose special province it is to form the infant mind. It would have to be the constant business of every day, as far as opportunity would permit. Yes, indeed, suitable opportunities should be sought for presenting to the child's consideration the various objects, both terrestrial and celestial, with which Heaven has graciously favoured us, for the blissful purpose of acquiring and communicating the knowledge of our bountiful Creator. Thus, by the time the child had completed its third year, it would have become a practical deist or theist: it would recognize God in every thing; and every thing in its relation to God, as his creature; and so be prepared, in due time, for the enjoyment of our holy religion; which is founded upon a realizing persuasion of the being and perfections of our heavenly Father.

Moreover, while the child is thus training, in the arms, and under the tender care of its maternal guardian, it should be kept out of the way of corrupting examples, as much as possible. Its associates, if it have any, should be pupils of the same school, that have received the same maternal

training. "For evil communications corrupt good manners;" especially in infancy and early youth; for, at this period, "custom becomes indeed, a second nature." Nor will it unfrequently happen, that, after all the care that can be taken to train the infant mind, and to preserve it from the contagion of bad example, there will still be need for coercive measures; for—"Folly is bound up in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction will drive it far from him." Prov. xxii. 15. "Withhold not correction from thy child; for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. Hence it necessarily follows, that—"He that spareth his rod, hateth his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes." Prov. xiii. 24. However, we should not correct to gratify passion; nor should we ever threaten or inflict chastisement, till it appear indispensably necessary; and then it should be done, not in wrath, lest we provoke our children to wrathful resentment, and they be discouraged; but in the name of the Lord; that is, upon principle of obedience. See Eph. vi. 4, and Col. iii. 17—21. "Whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, even the Father, by him." And—"Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. x. 31. Wherefore, upon the whole, it should be done with prayers; if it be done to "save a soul from hell—to the glory of God;" "For salvation is of the Lord." And this way of administering correction is divinely calculated to have the proper effect, both upon the

parent and upon the child. Upon the latter, as expressive of the heinous nature, ruinous effects, and terrible consequences of sin; for a child ought not to be seriously corrected, till it can be made sensible of the evil of disobedience; which, for the most part, it may be, if duly instructed, by the time it is three years old; for, by that time, it might be made equally acquainted with its obligations both to its heavenly and earthly father; for it has its parents' word alike for both; and, beyond that, for the first five or six years, it can know nothing of either. This solemn prayerful way of correcting is also equally calculated to have the proper effect upon the mind of the parent, by filling it with deep impressions of its sacred responsibilities both to God and the child, and also with the blissful assurance that the chastisement, thus administered, shall not be in vain in the Lord; for it is written, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii. 6. But the training here intended is not confined to correction for incidental faults; it covers the whole area of a Christian education, both with respect to sentiment, speech, and behaviour—to food, raiment, and exercise. Hence the necessity of first commencing with the mind, in the nursery; next, of adverting to the use made of speech, when the child has acquired it; and lastly to its actions, when it understands right and wrong.

Also, its food and raiment should be plain, simple, and suitable; to answer the natural and necessary purposes of health and convenience;—not for pampering appetite, luxury, and pride.

All its promised rewards—gratifications and indulgences for good behaviour—should be of a pious and virtuous character and tendency; such as visiting and relieving the poor—the sick; and contributing to the instruction of the ignorant, by supplying them with books and teachers, &c.; and that by so doing, they might have the gratification of pleasing their heavenly Father, and of doing good to their fellow-creatures; and thus become pious, sympathizing, and fruitful in good works. And, would all this be any thing more than training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; by thus teaching them, from early infancy, his gracious character, as their heavenly Father; and thus inducing them to make it their continual and delightful study—in all things to please *him* who made *them*; and *all things* for *their* gratification and delight? And can any thing, short of this, rationally and scripturally answer this high and blissful purpose? Let parents consider this. But, alas! How seldom do we see children thus treated—thus educated? Rather, do we not generally see them treated as puppets—toys—mere play things? As dolls and dandies—epicures and gluttons—mere sensualists—without any principle superior to other animals. Yes, indeed, many parents, (I had almost said *most*) take more care in training the inferior animals—such as favourite birds, dogs, horses, and oxen, than they do in the moral and religious culture of their children; at least, for the first three, four, or five years: by which time, for the most part, not only the radical principles, but even the prominent outline of their character

is formed : for, by this time, all their faculties, sensitive and intellectual, are wholly occupied with sensible customs and objects ; which, of course, must occupy their whole attention, having no conception of any thing else. And who knows not ? that moral and religious ideas, (which are sometimes called spiritual) are the most difficult both to obtain, and retain. Wherefore they should be exhibited as early as possible to the plastic mind ; and impressed upon it, while disengaged ; whilst of all impressions it is alike susceptible. A tailor's child of eighteen months old, being duly taught as above, would acknowledge, with the same easy confidence, that its heavenly Father *made it* ; as it would that its earthly father *made its coat* ; and express, with the same apparent gratitude, its love to both : the reality of which, if any one should doubt it, could be very easily tested. Upon the whole ; these things being evidently so, there must be pious spiritually-minded Christian parents, before there can be pious obedient children ; pious families. The old saying,—“ Can any good thing come out of Nazareth : ” is full of meaning. Man, especially during his childhood, is a creature of circumstances. He must necessarily receive his impressions from what he daily sees and hears. If these be altogether, or for the most part, about what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed : if the conversation and objects constantly presented to the infant mind, be addressed to our sensual appetites—to the gratification of “ the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ” what can a

creature of such circumstances be, but a mere sensualist, absorbed in the desire and pursuit of such things? Hence appears most demonstrably the indispensable necessity of family reformation *towards* God; in order to family education *for* God. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.” It required a *Hannah* to train a Samuel: a *Eunice* to train a Timothy.

May the good Lord hasten family reformation! For till that take place, “Zion must remain a wilderness; Jerusalem a desolation.”

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

