

want to usurp authority, but I have felt sometimes that if I had authority I would like to stop so much quarreling in our churches and papers, and I would have more love manifested by those who are proclaiming the love of God. I am ashamed sometimes for our young Christians to read our papers and see the cutting things that brethren say about one another. I suppose you have the right to dislike Sunday-school addresses, missionary gatherings and the organ, but let us all love peace and one another more than we hate these. But to return, Why did Paul want authority to bind the women if they were doing nothing publicly to spread Christ's kingdom here on earth? he committed them to prison, but when he was converted to Christianity he allowed them to labor with him. Romans 16. I commend unto you Phebe, etc., What for Paul? What has she done? Ah! she is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. How could she be a servant of the church and not do any thing? Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus; some think they were part of the 70; their names are often spoken of in the Epistolary writings and they are always laboring together. Paul said help these women who labored with me in the gospel. He mentions a number of names—speaks of Tryphena, Tryphosa and the "beloved Persis which labored much in the Lord." Paul does not say these women performed different work in the gospel from what men did. Are we living under another gospel dispensation? Should not women labor in the gospel and be helped now? Or did Paul mean help them to pray in secret, sing in the churches and administer to the temporal wants? I love to cook a good dinner for a preacher and I like to see him sit down and enjoy it, but I don't want him to think that is all I am fit to do. It is my exalted privilege to meet every Lord's day afternoon with young sisters and to hear them read God's word, sing songs of praise to his Holy name, speak words of encouragement and breathe his precious name in prayer, and I have truly felt that if I ever met with saints it has been at such times. May we all grow in grace and do good to all. D. W. V.

I have learned more of experimental religion since my little boy died than in all my life before.—
Bushnell.

THE SLIGHTED COMMISSION.

The Christian Faith can renew itself only at its fountain-head. The documentary fountain-head of the faith is the New Testament. Hence every well-directed effort to bring back Christianity to its pristine purity and force must maintain an earnest and constant study of its original documents—neglecting nothing, but paying especial heed to controlling facts, and to red-letter passages. Possessed by this conviction we have several times lately expressed our astonishment and regret that *the Day of Pentecost* should have been so much disregarded, and that modern evangelization should have been so reluctant to place its methods alongside of those adopted by inspired Apostles when they commenced their magnificent work of aggression upon the world.

We would now push our way still higher up the stream, by asking how it comes to pass that the Great Commission of the Master addressed to his disciples Matt. 28: 16-20 should have come to be so generally ignored. For we believe we are right in concluding that it is little appealed to, and very seldom expounded. "The baptismal formula" contained therein is, no doubt, pretty generally used on baptismal occasions; though even then merely in a fragmentary way and rather as an oral talisman than as a beam of light on the intention of the ordinance in course of being administered; and even this formula has generally been used hitherto in the incorrect wording in which it appears in King James' Version, and which gives scarcely a glimpse of the profound meaning conveyed by the original. We are thinking, however, of the passage as a whole, and, thus considering it, we do not suppose we exaggerate in the least the amount of neglect generally manifested with regard to it. Such neglect is not a little surprising, for reasons which we will now proceed to specify.

In the first place, the authenticity of this account of our Lord's Great Commission lies under no sort of doubt. It is contained in the oldest Greek copies, appears in the most venerable versions, and is presented by all modern editors of the Greek text without a note of suspicion and with no more than one or two minute and unimportant variations. In this respect, of course, it differs from the last 12 verses of the gospel, according to Mark.

Here, in the first gospel whatever may be said of the second, the Lord's final words stand upon a solid critical foundation. In the next place, the occasion of the utterance of the Commission as set forth by Matthew, invests the words of the Master with an especial interest. This meeting, held in Galilee, was held by previous arrangement between Christ and his disciples, and hence was a set and solemn reunion; a formal, public manifestation, witnessed probably by the "500 brethren at once," mentioned by the Apostle Paul. In the third place, the words of the Commission as here preserved are not a little remarkable for their method and their majesty, their tenderness and sublimity. Just think for a moment what they embrace. They contain an assumption by our Master of all authority in heaven and on earth; a calm, imperial issue of mandate after mandate to guide evangelizing work among all nations of the earth; a rapid sweep through all the days of the age of evil until the Speaker's return, in the form of an encouraging promise that just so long as he should be away in person he would, nevertheless, be present in spirit with his faithful adherents. If you want faultless logic—authority first, command next, promise last—it is here. If you wish for an epitome of Divinity—for one of the two most express and compact disclosures of Triunity in the Godhead contained in the New Testament—it is here. If you desire a programme for converting the masses, it is here. If you would have a fruitful hint as to the place and intent of the initiatory rite of Christianity, it is here. The passage is, indeed, a red-letter passage, fit to be emblazoned everywhere, to be quoted on all occasions, to be appealed to in everything: to be consulted as a guide, unfurled as a flag, adduced as a warrant. And yet we seldom hear it so much as seriously quoted by the Christian preachers and teachers of the present day. How is this? Is it not surprising? Must there not be some widespread and insidious cause for such a remarkable slight cast on the Lord's Last Words? We are firmly persuaded the cause must be serious, and purpose hereafter instituting an inquiry as to what that cause may be.—*Christian Commonwealth.*

He who receives a good turn should never forget it; he who does one should never remember it.

RETRIBUTION AS SEEN IN ITS BIBLICAL ATMOSPHERE.

It is instructive, therefore, as a help to our conception of the Biblical idea of Retribution to observe how it looks through its Biblical atmosphere. And, in the first place, what is the look of it as it appears in the historic records of the Old Testament?

The first thing that strikes the reader is that the principle of retributive justice is made to pervade the whole history by means of signal and appalling examples. So far as the character of the divine government is there disclosed, the impression is made with ineffaceable distinctness that sin and suffering are inseparable. Law in the natural world is more uniform, but not a whit more severe in the infliction of pain on the transgressor than the law of the moral world is, as represented in certain phenomenal events which mark epochs in Biblical history. These occur with sufficient frequency to act as memorials of God as a righteous governor who will not clear the guilty. The moral impression to this effect is even more vivid for their occasional occurrence. They seem to emanate from the secret reserves of a force whose limitations no man can define, and whose disclosures of itself no man can foresee. God comes out for the moment from the seclusion in which commonly his power hides itself, and strikes a blow, the echo of which reverberates through ages. Nations quake at the sound.

When we come to note the *animus* of the writer who puts the facts on record, we observe farther that he tells the story with the most absolute equanimity. Although his mission is to declare that "it shall come to pass that the ears of every one that heareth shall tingle," yet he is not shocked or offended by the severity of the inflictions. He does not stand aghast at penal suffering as an unnatural phenomenon. He does not treat it as an interpolation which disturbs the equipoise of events, or as a strange thing which needs to be explained. Not a syllable is recorded in apology for it, or in defense of God's government. Nothing in the bearing of the historian suggests that facts need explanation or apology. Penalty under given conditions is treated as the most natural thing to happen. The probabilities of history seem to demand it. Noth-