

## The Bible and Science.

An Address delivered before the societies of Iowa College, Grinnell, Iowa, June 21, 1881, by James F. Wilson.

(Continued.)

Not human remains alone are found under the stalagmite floors, but stone implements are discovered in company therewith, and we are at once told that not only is man of great antiquity, but that civilization is recent; and that this is a scientific determination in contradiction of record of the Bible, which represents man at his first appearance on earth as in a high state of intelligence. We are introduced to man in the Stone Age. Well, what of the Stone Age? Why, we are told that it was man's first estate, and that it covered periods of time in the history of the human race that can be determined with so great definiteness as to be divided into two sections—the old, palæolithic, and the new, neolithic. The former being indicated by the rude character of the stone implements employed by man, and the latter by the greater perfection attained in their manufacture. There are two or three difficulties confronting this theory. The first is that the Stone Age exists to-day, in the same state that it did ages ago. On the island of New Guinea, the largest on the globe, the inhabitants are now living in the Stone Age. There the Papuan wields his stone axe, uses his stone chisel and brings down his game with his flint arrow-head, as did the barbarian of Europe, in the remote age indicated by the discoveries made in the oldest palæolithic station into which scientific research has been prosecuted in that now civilized continent. And while this is true, there stands to-day on an eminence in Central Park, New York, that majestic witness of an historic civilization of more than 3000 years ago, the Obelisk, now twice removed from the place of its original erection. There it stands looking down upon a wondrous civilization which has conquered a continent where barbarism was supreme when it, our latest and greatest immigrant from the long gone centuries, took position on its base at Heliopolis, about 1500 B. C. What do these two facts indicate? Why, that civilization and barbarism have co-existed all through historic and pre-historic times, and, doubtless, ever since the confusion of tongues dispersed the human race, and subjected its several sections to the effects of different conditions.

Another difficulty with which this theory has to contend is that the division of the Stone Age into palæolithic and neolithic periods is purely speculative. Implements ascribed to the former and those assigned to the latter are found mingled in common deposits in many, if not a majority, of the stations that have been examined. It has been attempted to explain away this feature of the case by ascribing it to a lap of the two periods. This explanation is unsatisfactory from the frequency of its happening; and it is far more rational to say that instead of difference in the character of the implements being an indication of two distinct periods, each covering a great stretch of time, they simply evidence a variety of conditions established in the communities which existed where these remains are found. But suppose we admit that the difference in the character of the implements mark two eras in the history of the human race, the fact that they are found together establishes the other, which is that there was at least an over-lap. How far back this over-lap may extend no one can tell. It may cover the greater part of the palæolithic period, and it cannot be determined that it does not cover it all. This uncertainty destroys the theory. Where the rude and perfect implements are found together this may simply indicate the different degrees of skill in the workman that made them. They may show even less than this. The same

workman may have made both, and the difference in the character of the product of his skill may prove no more than that men in those days purchased in accordance with their ability to pay, just as they do now. Undoubtedly, then as now, degrees of wealth existed in society. Doubtless there were rich men and poor men, and others between these extremes, not, of course, as we have them in civilized communities, but still corresponding distinctions prevailed. The cost of an article then, as now, doubtless, represented the amount and value of labor involved in its production. The perfect implement cost the greater sum, and was bought and used by the man of most abundant means. The ruder article was purchased by the person of more moderate means. This is what we see going on every day, and our experience in this regard is most likely but a repetition of that of other men in all ages. It marks a difference in conditions and does not indicate divisions of time, much less of great periods of time. Every person in this audience has marched abreast of greater changes in the character of the implements used in the industries of men than can be found in the entire range of the Stone Age, and from these several considerations it is not difficult to understand that the conclusions, called facts, presented by the investigators in this department of science are exceedingly unreliable. Nor is it an improbable thing that the specialist, who delights in efforts at cutting away the foundations of the Bible with a stone axe, has undertaken a task which he cannot accomplish. A written language is pretty conclusive evidence of an advanced civilization. The Bible has come down to us in that form. It could have been transmitted in no other way. Every day of its existence stands as a witness against the deductions attempted to be established by the theory of the Stone Age.

The time which I may consume on this occasion will not allow me to enter upon a discussion of the errors and uncertainties involved in the claims advanced relative to the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age. They do not mark distinctive periods. In fact the Three Ages have co-existed as did the supposed two periods of the Stone Age, and as all have with the conditions of civilization; and Dr. Schlieman's excavations at Troy and Mycenæ seem to have made a sort of conglomerate of them all. Nor have I time now to notice that other system of assault upon the Mosaic account of the creation of man, which operates through the preposterous lines of the theory of evolution. When you accompany the advocates of that theory from the perfectly developed man of the present back through the ages of human existence on earth, and on down to the lowest order and appearance of life, you but come to a fact quite as mysterious as the one from which you started. Life itself is the mystery, not the man. The power which put life upon the earth could have ordered it in the form of man in the state ascribed to him by the Bible, as well as in the protoplasm. The latter is the supreme wonder, not the former. It is the thing called life which confounds us, not the organisms through which it acts. The development theory is curious and interesting, but it is a record of assumptions and mistakes. What a dreary hunt there has been for a connecting link! What persistent and constantly disappointed search has been made for that ape which was something more than an ape, and yet not quite a man. But on the long line from protoplasm to most perfect man, no such existence has been found. Apes reproduce apes, and man reproduces man, and whoever writes to the contrary records a mistake. This is science, because it is a fact. Science is nothing but fact, and whatever is not fact, is not science, and so we must not be surprised when theorists record mistakes in the name

of science; for speculation is not science. Nor need we be alarmed when speculators advance in the garb of science and attack the Bible. They will do no harm. Every one who reads and thinks will soon ascertain that the so-called "mistakes of Moses" will stand when others fall.

True science is entitled to our reverence. It is like the voice of God speaking to us out of the depths of the mysteries of his creation. It acts as his hand, turning leaf by leaf the wondrous records which he has written. The men who conscientiously pursue it are benefactors of our race. Whosoever adds to its gathered treasures is worthy of highest commendation. Without it how bewildering would be our situation, and how little we should know, and yet how comparatively insignificant is its knowledge. No one has a keener appreciation of this than the profoundest scientist. He may rightly challenge our admiration as he steps from planet to planet, and passes from star to star in the severe blackness of uttermost space, touching each object with his mathematical wand as he goes, reducing to orderly record its weight, its motion, its importance in the maintenance of the exact and preservative action of the illimitable universe. If we are confounded by the result which he places before us, how much more so is he. The scientist who knows the most is apt to be the humblest. It is the pretender who assumes not to be bewildered. The man who has closest communion with the works and ways of Omnipotence, is the one who most clearly understands that there is a limit to human knowledge, and that there is a point where all men fall at the feet of Faith. When he deals with the awful power which we call the force of gravitation, he feels the hand of God upon him. He does not come back to us from that majestic presence and say that he knows that the Bible is false, and that it cannot be the word of him whose hand has been upon him. But with his hand on that Book, and his mind contemplating the inexpressible grandeur and confusing magnitude of the works of the Creator, and dwelling upon the intricacy, the power and the exact operations of the laws which preserve them, he utters that prayer most appropriate for us all, of whatever estate or condition: "Guide me, Oh thou great Jehovah!"

## The Wife.

A judicious wife is always nipping off from her husband's moral nature little twigs that are growing in the wrong directions. She keeps him in shape by continual pruning. If you declare that you will do some absurd thing, she will find some means of preventing you from doing it. And by far the chief part of all the common sense there is in this world belongs unquestionably to women. The wisest thing a man commonly does are those which his wife counsels him to do. A wife is a grand wielder of the moral pruning-knife.

If Johnson's wife had lived, there would have been no hoarding up of orange-peel, no touching all the posts in walking along the streets, no eating and drinking with disgusting voracity. If Oliver Goldsmith had been married he never would have worn that memorable and ridiculous coat. Whenever you find a man whom you know little about, oddly dressed, or talking absurdly, or exhibiting eccentricity of manner, you may be sure that he is not a married man, for the corners are rounded off—the little shoots pared away—in married men. Wives have generally much more sense than their husbands, even though they may be clever men. The wife's advice is like the ballast that keeps the ship steady.—*Ruskin.*

—A Mississippi man puts it thus: "At the earnest solicitation of those to whom I owe money I have consented to become a candidate for county treasurer."

## Unceasing Prayer.

ROBERT T. MATHE.

Not a few persons have stumbled at that sweeping injunction of Paul's, "Pray without ceasing." It cannot be understood by mere exegesis. Only by experience can it be understood. That is the way Paul himself had learned it; and so he impressively enjoins it on others out of the heat of his own great apostolic life. One, in reading Paul, can always see how Paul invariably preaches through himself. His doctrine is bathed in the atmosphere of a vital personality. He speaks from the insight of experience, with throbs of sympathy, in the strength of an over-mastering conviction.

The apostle had learned to pray without ceasing. Down there at Corinth the fate of his Thessalonian converts was on his mind. With what exquisite tenderness he speaks, "remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope." His heart yearns for an acquaintance with the church in Rome—"without ceasing I make mention of you in my prayers." In Rome, imprisoned, he forgets not a certain church—the church at Philippi—which had taken such a strong hold on his heart; and Rome, and Philippi, and heaven are joined in the intensity of his prayers—"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you."

Still later, in the last days of his earthly life, he wants the presence of his beloved Timothy—"without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day." I think we can afford to listen to such a preceptor whose precepts are backed up by the solidities of his obedience.

Well, unceasing prayer is an outgrowth of stated prayer. It cannot come out of anything else but the habit of regularly praying in the fixedness of a daily morning and evening hour. It is the hardest lesson to learn, that the spiritual life from beginning to end, is a development; that it cannot be forced under a hot-house process that it must have its own way; and take its own time, from weakness to strength, from infancy to manhood, from seed-time to fruitage. A great many people wish to be good, but they wish to be good too quick. All of us have a certain impatience of slow and careful spiritual culture. Some of us who, perhaps have got a clear idea of the need of such growth day by day, are yet swept along with the popular notions and practices of hurrah religious meetings and periodical pool-stirrings. We must learn that the pioneer ranter is not the true type of a Christian; that a fervency overflowing in the bad taste of religious slang is necessarily hurtful to itself and others; that in short, the only spiritual experiences worth noting or talking about are the experiences that arise from pure, deep purposes of duty, and flow in healthful currents through the channels of conduct. Such a true experience, I think, is impossible unless one has the habit of stated prayer at certain daily hours. Such a season can never be safely neglected. No hurry of business, no convenience of appointment, no excitements of society, no limitations of companionship, should keep the followers of Jesus Christ from going apart daily to the restful realm of stated prayer. Everybody needs to do just this—the babe in Christ and apostolic saints. The mature Christian will be the last one to forego such a privilege. All the better is it if you began the habit long ago, in childhood, on a mother's breast, at a mother's knee, and if it has been so maintained through every change of life that now—

Strictest law is gladness to the sense, And all desire bends towards obedience.

Here, then, is the way to unceasing prayer, through the idea and reality of growth and goodness, punctuated with the recurrences of stated daily

prayer. Out of this one may come to understand what Paul means by unceasing prayer. For unceasing prayer is not so much praying as prayerfulness. It is not so much an act as a mood; not so much a petition as an inspiration. There can be prayer where no knee is bent, nor hand lifted nor eyes raised—where no supplication is framed, no word uttered, no syllable breathed. The soul, by faith, can look at God in the deep, unspeakable silence of persuasive trust: God may so become the familiar thought of one's life that living is a constant spiritual sacrifice. A growing right into all that is true and beautiful and good, a thirsting for righteousness, a patient endeavor in right doing, strong desire to help our fellow-man and to please God—the union of God and duty in clearness of thought and patience of effort—this is what is to pray without ceasing. Unceasing prayer is unceasing prayerfulness. Through the gateway of stated prayer, up the broadening paths of obedience, do we come to this fine atmosphere in which life is an inspiration, duty a joy, and service a sacrifice.—*Standard.*

## Answering a Fool According to His Folly.

Let me tell a Dutch story right here, because it comes from a Dutchman in the eastern part of Pennsylvania, and must be a true story. This Dutchman was never ashamed of his religion. In his neighborhood there was a sceptic who said: "You can't believe any thing you can't understand," and so some of the better class of people asked the Dutchman if he would not have a conversation with him.

He said, "Yes, if you tink best." "Have you any objections to the neighbors coming in?"

"No, shust as you tink best."

So they made an appointment and everybody was there. The old gentleman came in and laid by his hat, and was introduced to the sceptic, and he began suddenly by saying:

"Vell, now, look here, I pleefs the Bible—what you pleefs?"

Said he: "I don't believe any thing I can't understand."

"O, you must be one very smart man. I was mighty glad I meet you. I ask you some questions. The odder day I was riding along the road and I meet von dog, and that dog he had von of his ears stand up in this way and the odder von he stand down so. Now, vy was dat?"

Now, that was very unhandy just then, very unhandy. He either had to prove that the dog did not have one ear standing up and the other standing down, or else say he did not believe it. So he said, "I don't know."

"O, then you are not so very smart, after all. I ask you anoder question. I saw in John Smith's clover patch, the clover come up so nice, and I looked over into the fields and dere was John Smith's pigs; and dere come out hair on deir packs; and in the very same clover patch vas his sheep, and dere came out vool on deir backs. Now vy vas dat?"

Now, that was as bad as the other, because the same perplexity arose. He had to prove there was wool on the back of the pig, or hair on the back of the sheep; and he couldn't tell why, and therefore he had no business to believe it. Finally he said: "I don't know."

"Vell," he said, "you are not half so smart as you tink you are. Now I asks you anoder question. Do you pleeve dere is a God?"

"No, I don't believe any such nonsense."

"O yes, I hear about you long ago. I know all about you. My Bible knows about you, for in my Bible he says: 'The fool says in his heart there is no God,' but you big fool, you blab it right out."—*Dr. G. P. Hayes.*