

WHAT THE STONES SAY

by C.H. Spurgeon

Spurgeon's sermons teaching spiritual truth found in nature and creation, with an introduction by his son Thomas Spurgeon, showing how the natural world declares God's glory.

34 Chapters

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BOOK: What the Stones Say

What the Stones Say Or Sermons in Stones by

C. H. Spurgeon with notes by

J. L. Keys For 25 Years Secretary and Literary Assistant to the late C. H. Spurgeon.

Introduction by Pastor Thomas Spurgeon

Introduction

Introduction by Pastor Thomas Spurgeon

One of the "best gifts," to be earnestly coveted by all teachers and preachers, is that of being able to find "Books in the running brooks, Sermons in stones, And good in everything."

Happy he whose eyes and ears can catch sight and sound of truth divine in things that others reckon common and unclean. And happy are the people who not only hear the joyful sound of the gospel, but who have its truths forced home to their hearts and fastened in their memories by emblems and parables from things with which they meet each day. The power thus to use ordinary circumstances and common things was possessed in a remarkable degree by my late beloved father. He culled the great majority of his illustrations from the field rather than from the hothouse. There are more buttercups and daisies in his sermons than there are rare orchids and choice exotics. Being a master of metaphor, he gathered from every source. Land and sea, art and science, peace and war, history and biography, stars and stones, were all laid under contribution; but, as a rule, his emblems were of the simplest sort. The "windows" of his discourses were not of deep-stained glass for the cultured to admire, but of the clearest crystal, that darkened minds might thereby be illuminated. Farmers have told me that they have often marvelled at his insight into agricultural affairs, and that this was in part the secret of his hold on the country folk; and sailors have expressed their surprise that one who never took a long voyage knew so much of nautical matters, and was so well versed in the somewhat remarkable vocabulary of "those who go down to the sea in ships." He had an overflowing store of information, and as he knew nothing of "saving up" this or that for another occasion, each discourse was bright with fresh-cut flowers of speech, and new-found gems of thought.

He was ever anxious, too, to aid others in their search for similes. He had "feathers" enough for his own "arrows," and to spare. Although he constantly insisted that ready-made types and emblems were not the best, he recognized that some have neither the faculty nor the opportunity for manufacturing them on their own premises; he therefore issued several volumes of illustrations, and his published "Sermon Notes" are enriched with types and tropes, and brightened with "windows of agates," in marvellous variety. In his preface to "Illustrations and Meditations," he expressed his intention to produce a set of books to help preachers by supplying them with parables and comparisons. Although this volume cannot be reckoned in that series, there is no doubt that it will serve the same good end. Smooth stones from the brook are here in goodly number for the Lord's Davids. May they be used to the bringing down of many a giant Philistine. A simple illustration will sometimes do grand execution where an elaborate argument miscarries. Here are stones ready quarried for the builders; may many a wall be strengthened and many a gap be stopped by their timely and efficient aid.

It is not for me to criticise my father's lecture. I could not find fault, and I must not praise. Approval of his words from such as I seems little more appropriate than censure. Nor is an introduction really required. I will content myself with recording the fact, that the delight with which I heard it

delivered long years ago is fresh and fragrant still. Even the dissolving views were not more welcome than the cheery, chatty lecture. It seemed to us, his hearers, that there was upon the platform a skilled musician, whose instrument was composed of "musical stones," which, rough and ungainly though they appeared, emitted as he struck them sweetest melody. We were sorry enough when the concert was over. To read the discourse, it must be admitted, is not to hear it. We see now how much of the music depended upon "the touch." And oh, for a thousand reasons, that he could have revised it himself!

Alas! that "the last use to which a stone can be put" has been exemplified in his case. What pathos there is now in these his closing remarks:—"If any one puts a gravestone over us, the Jess said about us the better: our name, our birth, our death, and a godly text; but no fulsome flattery." It is satisfactory to know that, if this wish has not been carried out in strict accord with its letter, its spirit has certainly been respected. At Norwood stands a substantial sepulchre, with appropriate Scripture passages and emblems. But there is no fulsome flattery, and, thanks be to God, there is no possibility of tomb, or "Life," or memory of him to be marred with any such "Biographical Buts" as he referred to at the end of the lecture. We glorify God in him.

Mr. J. L. Keys, who may well be proud that he was for a quarter of a century associated with C. H. Spurgeon in his literary labours, and that the author wrote so appreciatively in several of his works concerning the services of his amanuensis, has added valuable appendices to this lecture. If I may so say, he has hewn from many quarries, and has then built up the blocks into a goodly arch. Is he not himself the Key-stone of it? By this time the reader is more than ready to hear "What the Stones Say." God grant that they may not cry out against any of us because we cease to bless the name of the Lord!

"No; I must my praises bring, Though they worthless are and weak: For should I refuse to sing, Sure the very stones would speak."

From a Photograph by Willis Bros., Scarborough. Frontispiece. See page 50. The Dropping Well, Knaresborough.

Sermons In Stones

Sermons in Stones

There is a great deal of difficulty in treating a subject like this, and turning stones into "bread," for a lecture, on account of the vast number of stones there are. Everywhere we meet with stones: stones in the streets, which are paved with them; stones in the fields, which are strewn with them; stones on the seashore; stones deep down in the earth; everywhere stones, stones, stones. Sermons in stones? Why, there are volumes of sermons in stones. Nobody knows where to begin to quarry; and he who is dexterous may bring forth stones enough to build a temple as glorious as that of Solomon, and yet only use a very small portion of the available material.

The Great Stone Book

The Great Stone Book

You have the whole history of the world in stones. Long before there were human eyes to read it, God had written it in a great stone book. Even now we can only, as it were, guess at the meaning, rather than read with absolute certainty the real history of the old world ere Adam fell in Paradise.

We turn to the great stone book of the history of the world, and we find that once this earth must have been under the influence of mighty fires. We find rock entirely devoid of all signs of life, where everything seems to have passed through a great furnace. Here we find granite that must have been in a liquid state, such was the intense heat. Some have supposed that the world was once all gas, which gradually cooled down and became condensed. The stone book tells us that in the course of time there came a great change, when water dominated over fire. Then the great seas began their deposits, and new rocks were formed. At first we find only minute traces of life; then traces of life so uncertain that we can scarcely distinguish the animal from the vegetable. So the growth went on, until by-and-by we meet with reptiles, a state in which huge saurians paddled or waded in the oozy waters, and creatures now quite extinct and unknown lived on the earth. This world must have been a strange place then, and very different from what it is now; for everything was below the feet; there were no trees upon its surface.

Next comes the period of ferns and all kinds of plants, which was followed after a time by the period of quadrupeds, when animals like the mammoth and other immense creatures lived upon the earth. The stone book has preserved traces of all these things, and a very wonderful book it is, and marvellously illustrated too; for in it you have the great teeth of elephants, and side by side with them the tiniest ferns and fishes; and what is even more remarkable, the very raindrops have been recorded on its pages. He who carefully and thoughtfully studies the history of our world as it is written in the stone book, will be a wiser man and a better man for what he has read therein.

Stones In Bible Story

Stones in Bible Story

It is not my intention, however, to take you into the depths of geology, but to take up another book by the same Author as the stone history of the material world, and ask you to run through with me the Biblical History of Stones.

Death of Abel.

Although the Book does not tell us how early in his life's history Adam felt the need of angels to bear him up in their hands lest he should dash his foot against a stone; nevertheless, I doubt not, the necessity very soon arose.

Tower of Babel. Was Abel killed with a stone, or did his brother brain him with a club? Doubtless both Cain and Abel worked with stone, and their father too; and "builded altars of stones:" it was these altars that first led these brothers to differ. Certain it is that the sons of Cain have been great handlers of stones ever since they "took up stones to stone Him" whose blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Stones are mentioned in connection with that very venturesome building speculation, the Tower of Babel. The builders planned their city and tower that they might not be scattered; but how easily did the Lord bring their scheme to nought! Their big building was such a mere trifle that it is written, "The Lord came down to see it." It seemed emblematic of the frailty of their work, that they did not build with stones; but "they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." They who seek to reach heaven by their own works may well build roughly; for all their work will certainly totter to its fall.

Stones must have been very familiar things to Abraham. You remember the account of the Lord appearing unto him at Sichem, and that "there builded he an altar unto the Lord." And again, in the plain of Mamre he dwelt, "and built there an altar unto the Lord." We may fairly conclude that these altars were of great stones.

There was one stone towards which, we may be sure, the patriarch turned with many a lingering look as he left the relics of his beloved Sarah in the cave of Machpelah.

Gustave Doré represents Isaac and Ishmael urging him to leave the place where he had buried the wife of his bosom. O ye who have known what it is to be led from the couch of some beloved one, remember that those who are gone before are not lost: they are only housed in the treasury of God, and you shall soon see them again. That was a memorable stone which Jacob found the first night after leaving his father's house. Jacob knew something of that feeling of desolation and sadness which you and I experienced when first we went away from home, to take our places as servants or apprentices wherever our lot was cast. Jacob wanted to sleep, but there was no covering for him; yet he found a tent, and, as some old preacher has put it, "he had the heavens for his canopy, the clouds for his curtains" (though I doubt whether there were any clouds), "and a

stone for a pillow," which stone he also set up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and vowed a vow unto God, who had appeared unto him in that place, and made it Bethel, "the house of God."

Oh, young men! the place of your early difficulties, where obstacles seemed to be all around you, shall, if you put those difficulties into God's hands, become in very truth a Bethel to you.

Quarles, in his "Divine Fancies," thus quaintly versifies the wonderful story:—"On Jacob's Pillow."

"The bed, was earth; the raised pillow, stones, Whereon poor Jacob rests his head, his bones;

Heav'n was his canopy; the shades of night Were his drawn curtains, to exclude the light.

Poor state for Isaac's heir! It seems to me, His cattle found as soft a bed, as he:

Yet God appeared there, his Joy, his crown;

God is not always seen in beds of down:

Oh, if that God shall please to make my bed, I care not where I rest my bones, my head: With Thee, my wants can never prove extreme; With Jacob's pillow, give me Jacob's dream."

There was another stone very precious to Jacob, the stone which he set up over his beloved Rachel's grave, the first record, if I mistake not, of a tombstone. How often would his thoughts turn to that place, and his heart go up in thankfulness to Heaven, that he had had her company through life for so many years.

Kubbit Râhîl—Rachel's Tomb.

From "The Land and the Book" by W. M. Thomson, D.D., published by Messrs. T. Nelson & Sons, to

whose kindness the Editor is indebted for the above illustration, and also the one on page 17. That was a memorable expression which good old Jacob used when he lay a-dying. In blessing Joseph he said, "From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel," as his prophetic eye looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer. When Israel passed through the Red Sea, and the returning waters engulfed the Egyptians, we are told that "They sank into the bottom as a stone." And again: "By the greatness of Thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till Thy people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased." And so may it be with us when we come to die: let us hope that we shall find the enemy "as still as a stone," as we sing the praises of our God who triumphs gloriously.

I shall have to show you some very remarkable stones in connection with the wanderings of the children of Israel. It is believed that these stones mark the place where the people ate the quails. It is noteworthy that, as the Holy Land is more carefully explored and its history investigated, we continue to disinter records which prove the truth of Holy Scripture. A man who, living in the present day, avows himself an infidel, must also be a fool; for how can he dare to deny the truth of the Holy Word with such testimony before him? From the Red Sea and the triumphant song of Moses and the children of Israel, we pass on to Rephidim, where Joshua fought with Amalek in the valley, while Moses stood on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand. We read that "it

came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy, and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword."

We may say what we will, but it is true that God does bless all by one. But every man, however much God may have helped him in the past, will grow weary, unless he be upheld by the loving sympathies and earnest prayers of those around him. I thank God for my Aarons and Hurs. I have heard of a minister, some of the members of whose congregation complained to him that his sermons of late had not been so good as aforetime. "Well," said the good man, 'there's but too much truth in the charge; but this is how it is, I've lost my prayerbook.'" "But," said they, "we did not know you used a book for prayers." "No," said the minister, "but my prayerbook is in your hearts, and I've lost your prayers." I am sure the quality of a sermon often depends upon the prayers of the congregation.

Stones of Memorial.

Passing on to the Book of Joshua, those were memorable stones which Joshua set up "in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood," until "all the people were clean passed over." And even more notable were those other twelve stones, which were taken by the twelve chosen representatives of the tribes out of the midst of Jordan, from the same spot where the priests' feet stood firm, and carried to the place on the other side where they lodged that night. "Those twelve stones... did Joshua pitch in Gilgal," to show where the Israelites entered the promised land.

I shall never forget the memorials I set up when passing through conviction of sin; and I know that all of you remember the twelve stones you set up on the "happy day" when you found the Saviour.

Stones were used to slay Achan the traitor in the camp, who took of the spoils of Jericho, "a goodly Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold," and hid them in the earth, and caused the anger of the Lord to be kindled against all the children of Israel. God grant that we may none of us be Achans, and "commit a trespass in the accursed thing." In the tenth chapter of this same Book of Joshua, we have the account of Joshua and the men of Israel going to the help of the Gibeonites against the five kings of the Amorites, and how "the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them," as they fled from before Israel. Well, the five kings were "found hid in a cave at Makkedah." And Joshua commanded the people to "roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them" until his return.

Let us take example from this. Perhaps your failing is a bad, hasty temper. You cannot, maybe, quite get rid of it. You try hard to overcome it, but you have not as yet been able to "hang it up before the Lord." Well, roll a great stone upon the mouth of the cave. I have heard it said that when you are angry the best thing to do is to "repeat at least a hundred words before you speak." Another very good way is to hold hot water in your mouth until it gets cold. These are but different ways of rolling great stones upon the mouth of the cave.

About a year or so before his death, Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and reminded them of all the Lord's goodness that He had made to pass before them; and he made a

covenant with the people in the name of the Lord; "and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which He spake unto us: it shall be, therefore, a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." Thus, even the beam out of the timber, and the stone out of the wall will be witnesses against us if we sin.

I pass on to notice how Abimelech, the wicked son of Gideon, met his death by a stone. Upon the death of his father, he persuaded the men of Shechem to make him king. He immediately put to death all his seventy brothers "upon one stone," except Jotham, the youngest, who had hidden himself. His subjects very soon revolted; and in the warfare that followed, he took the city of Thebez. "But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all they of the city, and shut it to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower. And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it. And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to break his skull" The inspired record goes on to tell that "he called hastily "to his armourbearer to draw his sword and slay him, that it might not be said a woman slew him. Thus his wickedness returned upon his own head, and his violent dealing upon his own pate.

Women Grinding. The pair of millstones which I have here is said to be the only pair ever brought from the East. The women sit down, as you know, on either side of the stones, and grind away by turning the upper stone by means of a wooden peg or handle. I am afraid you would have to wait a long time for your breakfast if I were the grinder.

You remember Samuel setting up the stone of Ebenezer, "the stone of help," recording the goodness of God. You have, perhaps, heard of the old woman who said she had so many Ebenezers, that they formed a wall on both sides of her all her journey through life. Each of us should be able to say the same. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us": it is indeed a great wall of memorials of the lovingkindness of God.

Shepherd Using Sling.

Then there is the stone with which David slew Goliath. I have here a smooth stone, just such an one as was sent at the head of the giant. I do not say that this is the stone; though I might say so with as much truth as some people employ when they speak of a Church possessing "a feather from the wing of the angel Gabriel," or say that such "a relic" is "a lock of the Virgin Mary's hair"; for this stone in my hand was taken out of the same brook from which David took his famous stone.

I would have you note that David used a smooth stone. Why? Because it would fly further and better. We should always use a smooth stone, though at the same time we must put our trust in God. When one of his followers said to Mahomet, "I am going to let loose my camel in the desert, and trust in God that I shall find him again," Mahomet replied, "You should first tie up your camel, and then trust in God." Yes; so it is: we must trust in God, but we must be careful to "keep our powder dry."

David was a wise man, I think, to use a sling. Humanly speaking, the giant would have settled him off before David could have got near enough to touch him. He certainly must have been accustomed to the use of a sling [holding up a sling], and herein he showed his wisdom in choosing those weapons in the use of which he was expert. In this let us take pattern from David, and always go to work in a commonsense way, trusting in Providence, who will surely take care of

those who walk uprightly.

Elijah at Carmel.

We must not omit mention of the memorable scene at Mount Carmel, where "Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord." Nor must we forget the repulse of the Moabites by the Israelites, when "they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and stopped all the wells of water." Of quite another sort were the stones of which Solomon's Temple was built. They are called "great stones," and "costly stones," and "hewn stones." Those of which the walls were composed were of enormous size. Josephus mentions a length of 40 cubits, or about 60 feet. I believe it is still a problem how they could have been transported from the distant quarries to their place on the summit of Mount Moriah. That stone "cutout of the mountain without hands," which "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth," which troubled Nebuchadnezzar so much, is another Biblical stone; as is also the stone that had seven eyes, indicating that all eyes are fixed on Christ.

Then there is "the stone which the builders refused." but which became "the head stone of the corner." In connection with this there is a legend which, at any rate, ought to be true, whether it is or not; for it exemplifies Scripture in a remarkable manner. It is said that when the Temple was being built, every stone was sent from the quarries to the builders accurately marked; so that all they had to do was to put each one into its place. But there was one stone of such a peculiar shape, that the builders could find no place for it. They tried to fit it in everywhere, but always failed. It was often hoisted to the wall, and as often lowered; for no suitable position could be found for it. At last it was cast aside among the rubbish, and it became a byword among the builders. When anything was useless or unsuitable, the workmen used to say that it was "just like that stone among the rubbish." But it came to pass, when Solomon's Temple was finished, and the last stone, "the head stone," was to be brought forth and hoisted to its place, with shoutings of "Grace, grace, unto it!" for gratias were to be given to the workmen, the corner stone could nowhere be found; and the workmen had almost made up their minds that it had been forgotten, and not sent with the rest. At last it was suggested that perhaps it was that odd stone which could not be made to fit in anywhere. So the stone was taken out from among the rubbish, and, lo! "the stone which the builders refused" and rejected, the same became "the head of the corner." Our Lord Jesus Christ certainly is to us and to His Church "the head stone of the corner." "All hail the power of Jesus' name!"

Some make of our Lord "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence:" such "shall stumble, and fall, and be broken." But woe unto the man on whom this stone shall fall, for "it will grind him to powder"; as sometimes a rock falls upon the unwary traveller, crushing him to death. Let the man who provokes Christ to anger remember these words: "On whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

Frequently in the Evangelists' accounts of our Lord's life, and in other parts of the New Testament, we meet with mention of stones. The Devil said unto our Lord, in the wilderness, "Command that these stones be made bread." There were stones in that part like cakes of bread; and I think that our Lord referred to just such stones when He said, "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" The stones might be like bread, but they would be no good to

a hungry child.

You will remember that when on one occasion His disciples called His attention to the buildings of the Temple, He said unto them, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." That saying of our Lord,—"God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham," is a very beautiful picture of the power of God, spoken by One who saw the pebbles in the bed of the river, and immediately turned them into an illustration.

The Stone at the Sepulchre.

Then there was that memorable stone that lay so heavy on the heart of the women on that early morn as they were nearing the sepulchre, and said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away. So with us: our difficulties loom large and insurmountable in the distance, but they vanish as we come nearer to them. The day cometh when "every man's work shall be made manifest... it shall be revealed by fire." If it be wood, hay, or stubble, it shall be burned; for only gold, silver, and precious stones will stand the test. The New Jerusalem hath foundations of all manner of precious stones, and is all glorious with the riches of God and the splendour of His presence; "and her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

Stones In English History

Stones in English History A lecture might be made out of stones in connection with English history; but I have not the time to do this.

Cromlech at Chywoone, Cornwall.

Stones lead us back to the days of old, when our countrymen worshipped all kinds of idols and false gods. Their earliest sacrifices seem to have been presented upon altars made of large unhewn stones. The cromlechs or dolmens which are to be seen in Devon, Cornwall, and other parts, are supposed to be such Druidical altars. We know that stones, and series of stones, were set up and set apart by our forefathers for what was to our Pagan progenitors sacred service. At Kingston-on-Thames you may see the stone on which seven of our Saxon kings were crowned. Then there is the stone in the New Forest near the spot where King Rufus was shot, and the stone taken from Scone in Scotland, whereon the kings were crowned. There are stone steps in Canterbury Cathedral worn in hollows by the knees of pilgrims going up and down for penance. Speaking of Canterbury, I always think they must have been very hard up for saints when they made a man like Thomas a Becket one. Innumerable stone relics of the monastery may be picked up here.

I should be delighted to make "ducks and drakes" of the finest carvings of the finest monastery in the world; for I think we shall never get rid of the crows till we pull down their nests. It was a proud day for us when, all over England, the crosses were pulled down: they set it down to Oliver Cromwell, as usual. I was once taken into a church where, it was said, Oliver Cromwell had knocked off the heads of all the statues. The best way to deal with these things, when they are defiled by superstition, is to touch them with Cromwell's hammer. When he saw the twelve Apostles in solid silver, every one said, "Surely, you will reverence these statues: you would not spoil these beautiful things!" Cromwell said, "Yes, I'll melt them down, and send them about the country doing good."

People talk about "the good old times." Well, those "old times" may have been all very well; but how would they like to go back to those "good old times"? In those "good old days," if people could not pay their rent, or committed some trivial offence, they were made "a foot shorter," or sometimes even "a head shorter." I don't believe in "the good old times," for Time was never so old as he is now; so let us rejoice in "the good old times" in which we are now living. When we come to the dissolving views, I shall have to show you quite a series of stone memorials of English history.

Precious Stones--Diamonds

Precious Stones—Diamonds

Great Diamonds In the forefront of all stones is the diamond, an exceedingly precious stone. There are only six very large diamonds known in the world: these are called the paragons. I have here some of the largest diamonds—in model, not in reality, I am happy to say; for I am afraid my house would not be very secure if I had the real diamonds in this case. I cannot make them visible to you all, but I will briefly describe each one as I show it. The Regent or Pitt diamond, is said to be one of the most beautiful gems ever found. It was brought from India by an English gentleman of the name of Pitt, and sold by him to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, who placed it among the crown jewels of France. It is now [1870] set in the hilt of the sword of state of the Emperor Napoleon. The Koh-i-Noor is not nearly so large as the Regent, but it is of a much more beautiful shape. The Orloff diamond comes next, and a very beautiful one it is.

I have said that there are only six paragons, six of the finest diamonds, and I fear that the Church of God has not many paragons in it. There are many stones in the Church, and they are all "precious." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." It will be a great mercy if you and I can be paragons in the Church. There were seventy disciples elected by Christ; twelve were chosen out of the seventy to follow Him; three out of the twelve were taken apart to be shown the glory of God; but there was only one who was called "that disciple whom Jesus loved." Let us, therefore, strive to be useful followers of Christ, and let us pray that He may have many paragon jewels who shall shine brightly in His crown for ever. My next illustration I draw from the hardness of the diamond. The only way to cut a diamond is by a diamond: diamond dust must be used if the gem is to be cut. In like manner, the best way to understand Scripture is by Scripture itself. One of the best commentaries in the world is that which is "wholly biblical." Students of the Word, I pray you, study the Bible by the Bible; cut the diamond with the diamond; use the light of God in God's light: "In Thy light shall we see light."

Diamonds are not all of one shape; in a natural state the crystals are of various forms, and are further altered in the process of cutting: their colours, too, vary greatly. Each stone has its own peculiar character and consequent value: some are more precious, others less so. So is it with the people of God: they are not all alike; but each has his or her particular character, as diamonds have their colour, form, and value.

It is commonly believed that in Heaven we shall all see alike, because it is written, "They shall see eye to eye;" but this does not mean "all alike." It means that, as in a great walled city, with so many watchmen on guard, that they would be able to see one another, and on the approach of a foe spread the alarm all around; so in Heaven we shall "see eye to eye." It is not possible that we should be all alike in Heaven; for we can never become infinite, and without that there must be diversity.

One believer rejoices in one view of the Word of God, and another in another. Perhaps you, my dear friend, are a ruby, while another is an emerald; this Christian is an opal, and that one a jasper. This diversity will tend to make Heaven more glorious, and the breastplate of our Great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, more resplendent.

Diamond dust is very precious: you might very soon make a fortune if you were allowed only the sweepings from the lapidary's wheel in large workshops. The Koh-i-Noor was originally much larger than it now is, but was reduced in cutting. The odds and ends of time are precious: little spaces of time, like the intervals between dinner and class, or when waiting at a railway station, are, like the dust of the diamond, all precious. How many chances have been wasted of doing good service for our Lord and Master because we have not seized the passing moments, "gathering up the fragments, that nothing be lost."

Diamond dust is like truth: no matter how small the truth is, it is worth dying for. Everything that is true is essential. True, every truth is not essential to salvation; but all truth is essential to something. Sweep up the diamond dust, then; treasure it, for it is very precious.

Now what is a diamond? Suppose it is one worth two hundred thousand pounds—and some of those I have mentioned are said to be worth more than that—yet it is nothing but a little solidified gas. This diamond may fitly represent the whole world, with all its pomps, and vanities, and pleasures, and glories. Puff! it's gone into thin air; death turns it all to gas. Set your affections on those things which time cannot destroy, which eternity cannot impair.

There is a very beautiful story connected with the "Sancy" or "De Sancy" diamond, which is said to be worth about eighty thousand pounds. It is a comparatively small stone; and if I were stupid enough to wear such ornaments, I could wear it on my finger, if set in a ring. This stone was sent on one occasion by the Baron de Sancy, to whom it belonged, to his king, who was in want of cash, and had proposed getting a loan of £40,000. The diamond was to be the security; in fact, to put it plainly, it was "to be left at the pawnbroker's." The Baron gave the stone to a trusty servant to take to the king. The servant disappeared, and people suspected that he had gone off with the diamond; but his master declared that he knew his servant too well to believe such a thing possible.

After some time the servant's body was found, a little way from the road: he had been murdered and robbed. The Baron commanded that his clothes should be carefully searched for the missing diamond; but it could not be found. He then ordered that he should be cut open, and the diamond was found in his body. He had swallowed the gem, which he had been unable in any other way to conceal from the robbers.

We should carry the truth of God within ourselves, in our hearts; so that if we were dissected, there would be found the truth of God in our innermost being. You remember that the Psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." As I have already said, the "Regent" diamond was in the hilt of the sword of that unregretted gentleman, Napoleon I. I am sure a greater blessing than his departure from this life could scarcely be conceived. He forgot to take his sword with him when he was defeated at Waterloo, and the sword was taken by the Prussians, and now belongs to the Prussians, who are, no doubt, at this very time [1870] looking after a descendant of that gentleman who first handled it. Give me the treasure that my foeman can never

take from me.

State Crown of England. Our Queen's crown is a beautiful emblem of the stability and pureness of her reign. From almost all the crowns of the potentates of Europe stones have from time to time been taken out, and counterfeits inserted in their place, the original stones being turned into cash. But in Her Majesty's crown there is not one false gem. It is so with the King of kings: not one false professor will be found among the elect on the last great day of account, but only those who are really precious in His sight.

Crown of England. Of all the projects of modern engineers, the most wonderful, in my judgment, is that of the tunnel through the heart of Mont Cenis. To bore through an Alp for a distance of more than seven and a half English miles is a labour far exceeding the fabled exploits of Hercules. Hannibal and Napoleon rendered themselves famous by crossing the Alps; but what shall be said of the genius which forced a passage through them? One great achievement was the invention of the perforating machinery; for it requires to be powerful enough to make its way through rocks harder than granite: iron and steel are ineffectual in this case. A thousand years might have been spent in vain attempts to bore and blast this rock with the ordinary means; but the difficulty has been overcome; the tooth which can eat into the mountain has been discovered. For the ordinary boring machinery, engines are employed in which the steel teeth are replaced by diamonds. Black diamonds set in a ring bite into the rocks and open the way for the blasting powder. Hardness does the work. The diamonds, of course, are small, but they are hard, and therefore they will not yield; the mountain is compelled to give way before them. Resolution wins the battle.

The Boring Machine Employed in Making the Mont Cenis Tunnel. This is like a well-instructed, persevering Christian man, who finds difficulties lie thick in his path. He has learned that however hard a thing may be, a hard resolution will cut through it. He therefore keeps on, and on, and on, till at last he overcomes the difficulty. I believe it was the President of the United States, when he was at the head of the army, who, in reply to the inquiry, "How are you getting on in the war?" said, "Well, we are keeping on, pegging away." And so the Christian should keep on "pegging away." The "peggers-away" are the men who do the work, after all; a little bit today, and tomorrow, and so on, and on, and on; "never say die," but keep at it, and you will bore through a difficulty as hard as Mont Cenis.

I should have said, there are two sets of these diamond drills at work, one on each side of the mountain, working towards each other. It puzzles one somewhat to make out how they are going to meet after all. If they do so, it will be a mark of great skill on the part of the engineers.

It is a grand thing when two Christians are engaged in the same good work, one at one end, and the other at the other; for they will surely meet soon, and celebrate their victory over every obstacle. To the earnest Christian nothing is impossible, God being his helper. If his work be difficult, he only becomes the more resolute. With a diviner ardour, and a more concentrated mind, enterprises are accomplished which before baffled every effort. The more severe the self-denial, the more intense must be our love to Christ; the more obdurate the hearts of men, the greater our zeal for their salvation. "There is nothing so hard," said Bernard, "but it may be cut by a harder." May our faith and love be the diamonds with which rocks shall be pierced, and a highway made through the mountains and hills for the Lord our God.

Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones

You have seen a brook with stepping stones across. There is one stone here, and another there, and a third farther on near the other side. If you are not careful how you step from one to the other, it is very likely you may get wet-footed and even splashed with mud in crossing.

Stepping Stones.

There was once a row of stepping stones in a brook, and one dull day in November one of them was heard to murmur,—“We are very unfortunate to be in this spot, all in the water, wet and miserable.” “Ah, well,” said his neighbour, “there’s one consolation; we always manage to keep our heads above water, and that’s a great deal more than many can do this bad weather.” “But,” said the first speaker, “I should like to be great in the world.” “Why so?” replied the other. “For my part, I’m glad to think that we’ve made many folks happy when they have crossed the brook by our help: they’re always glad that they have got over without getting their feet wet.” So the stepping stone complained no more, and the water went merrily rippling on, sending up for them a song of gratitude to God.

Boundary Stones

Boundary Stones

Stones, again, are used as boundary marks of countries, towns, and parishes. Have you ever been present at the "beating of the bounds," and were you one of the small boys whose services were in request on that occasion? If so, you will remember it to this present moment. It used to be the custom to bump the small boys of the local charity-school against each and every boundary-stone and post in the parish. Then if any doubt or question should arise in after-years as to the boundaries of the parish, any one of the bumped bound-beaters would be able to bear witness and say, "I speak from experience, and am certain that so-and-so is the boundary."

It is a good old custom to teach children the Catechism: bump them against it again and again. Never mind whether it is interesting or not; bump them so that they may never forget it.

Farmer Jones has a field on his farm which joins Farmer Smith's "twenty acres" on one side. If the one grows peas on his side, and the other grows wheat, they will know the bounds by the cultivation of the ground. It seems to me that the boundaries of theology will be better marked by practical working than by anything else.

Stone Breakers

Stone-Breakers

Stone-breaking often furnishes us with illustrations. A minister once stopped by the roadside where a man was breaking stones. "Ah, my friend," said the minister "you get through your work more quickly than I do with mine; for, you must know, I'm in the same line of business that you are." The man looked up and said, "I see what you mean, sir. You are trying and trying to break stony hearts, and I am breaking these stones one after another. I think the reason you don't succeed is because you don't go to work as I do." "How's that?" asked the minister. "Why," said the man, "you see, sir, I go down on my knees to break these stones." Yes, the poor stone-breaker was right: the only way to break hard hearts is to go down on our knees, and intercede with God for them.

Some stone-breakers are of a very different kind. I mean those gentlemen who go out with a little hammer and a bag, searching for geological specimens. They climb about among the rocks, and chip away at them, knocking off little bits here and there, quite enjoying the work; and, at the same time, the man from the workhouse sits breaking his heap of stones, and doesn't think it at all an enjoyable occupation. There is all the difference in the world between doing what you are obliged to do, and doing what you choose to do. Some persons engage in Christian work because if they did not do so, "Mrs. Grundy" would talk; others do it because it is to them delightful work to serve the Lord.

What different opinions people have about things! I have heard a story of a geologist travelling in Scotland, hunting for specimens. He was quite an enthusiast; and as he explored and examined the various strata, he would knock off a piece here and a piece there, and then examine it, and put it into his bag, saying, "I believe that's just such a specimen as is described in 'Lyell's Principles of Geology.'" Well, he had filled his bag after a good deal of pleasant toil; and as it was rather heavy, he got a Highlander to carry it on for him to the station. Sandy was lazy and the bag was heavy; so he opened the bag and looked inside. Seeing they were only a few bits of stones and lumps of rock, he shot them all out by the roadside, and walked on with the empty bag. He knew there was a newly-macadamized piece of road near the station, and when he got there he just filled up the bag with road-stones. The geologist's state of mind, when he looked into the bag, "may be better imagined than described." To turn to serious matters: how easy some people think it is to imitate a Christian character, and indeed it may appear so; but in the end nothing will be hid: the mask will be torn off.

Slings and Slingers

Slings and Slingers

Now I take up the sling and the stone again, for a very different illustration. It is said that slings were first used in the Balearic Isles. The little boys in the Majorcas—I suppose they were Minorcas then—used to have their breakfasts put up on a beam, and they had a sling and a stone given them; and if they could not knock over their food, they had to go without. You do not need to be told that this capital practice soon made them very expert in the use of the sling. The best way to make your boys men is not to cuddle and coddle them, but to make them work. That is a grand old rule in the Bible,—“that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.” 2 Thessalonians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:11.

Flint and Steel

Flint and Steel

Tinderbox.

I have a little implement here which the juniors ought to regard with veneration. This is a tinderbox, a rather complicated apparatus, used by our ancestors to produce a light. You have to scorch or burn some rag, which is then tinder; this is to be the nidus of the spark to be developed into flame. Now strike the steel with the flint, till you get a spark, and then gently blow upon it till you get a good lot of sparks. Then apply your brimstone match, and there you have your light.

Many a young man looks as dull as that flint when he comes to the College; but by rubbing against the steel of tutors, he emits beautiful sparks. When you get a spark of grace, encourage it; blow on it gently, following the example of Him

"Who'll never quench the smoking flax, But raise it to a flame."

The Dropping Well

The "Dropping Well" A few years ago, having to pass near Knaresborough, I went to see the celebrated "Dropping Well." [Here the lecturer held up what was to all appearance a solid piece of limestone.] This stone in the shape of a bird's nest illustrates what is going on every day at Knaresborough and other places. I asked the persons in attendance to put a bird's nest under the drip of the water at one of these places, and there it is, turned into solid stone. Drip, drip, drip; the water of the petrifying well fell upon it, and turned it to stone.

I was shown a great number and variety of petrified articles. Not only birds' nests, but birds, and shoes, and hats, and even stockings, have been turned to stone under the continual dropping of the water.

Even so have I known men get under the drip of the "dropping well" of the world, and they have become quite changed characters: they do no good; they are turned to stone. The only way of preventing the action of this terrible "dropping well," is to live near to God, and have much communion with Him.

Asbestos

Asbestos

Here is a piece of asbestos. This substance, as you know, may be put in the fire, but can never be consumed. The Romans used to make tablecloths of this singular mineral; and then all they had to do, after using them, was to throw them into the fire, and they came out beautifully white and clean. So, the Christian shall not be consumed, but only purified, by the fires of affliction.

Milestones and the Coach--A Fable

The Milestone and the Coach—a Fable We have all seen milestones set up by the roadside in the country to mark the distances.

Once upon a time, a coach which very often passed a certain milestone stopped and said, "Aren't you tired of standing there so long?" The milestone retorted, "Aren't you tired of running about so much?" "But," said the coach, "you see nothing of life, while I run about and see all that's going on." "Well," said the other, "you couldn't move unless you were drawn. All your movements are owing to a power stronger than your own. Besides, I have heard that coaches get robbed sometimes, or overturned. I am quite content to be a milestone, usefully employed in pointing out to travellers their whereabouts, and how far they are from their journey's end."

Mosaics

Mosaics

Here is a piece of mosaic; made up of very many minute pieces of differently-coloured stones. There are divers sorts of Christians, and very various are their gifts, graces, and spheres of service: if they were only ranged as they should be, what glorious mosaics they would make!

The Whetstone

The Whetstone

Here is a whetstone, used, as you know, to sharpen scythes. In the olden times they used to present a whetstone to a man who was reputed a great liar. "Why?" say you. It was supposed that he must have used his wits so much in the last lie he told, that they would require sharpening up a little. May we always keep to the truth, and never want a whetstone for our wits.

Whetstone and Scythe.

I never heard but one lie that I liked. "Now, Pat," said a man of very doubtful character, to an Irishman, "if you can tell me the very biggest lie you ever told in your life, I'll give you sixpence." "Sir," replied Pat, "you're a gentleman and a Christian!" I think that this whetstone is very like Mr. Rogers. The scythes that come into the College often get blunt, because they have a deal of mowing to do; and I like to hear Mr. Rogers sharpening them up. Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink: you know the sound of the scythe against the stone.

The School Slate

The School Slate

We are most of us familiar with this friend of our youth [holding up an ordinary school slate]. It reminds me that in childhood I used it for various purposes; sometimes for drawing upon. Alas! the people of that time were very obtuse; my talent was not appreciated: so it was necessary for me after drawing an object to write its name underneath, thus, "This is a horse," "This is a house," and so on; a fact not without suggestiveness.

I have met some good people who, refusing to be called Baptists, or Methodists, or Episcopalians, label themselves "Christians." This would seem to cast a reflection upon other denominations to whom the name "Christian" is common. Moreover, it does not inspire confidence in those so styling themselves. If I were to see a man approaching me labelled conspicuously, "This is an honest man," I should at once button up my pockets.

Stumbling Blocks

Stumbling Blocks A very foolish man had at his doorstep an awkward stone that people were always falling over. So, being grieved at this, he set a lantern on the stone to draw attention to the obstacle. Do you see any connection between that stone and the Church Catechism? The Catechism tells us that people are "born again" in baptism, and a great many other things that are not true; but the Evangelical clergy put a lantern upon the stone, and say, "Yes, it does say that white's black; but it does not mean quite that; there's a different construction to be put on the words." That is how they talk. If the man had used a little commonsense, and digged the stone up, and cast the stumbling block out of the way, he could have used the lantern to far better purpose, And so these Evangelical clergymen could better employ their time in rooting out the evil than in apologizing for it. An illustration might be drawn from the use of plaster all over London. I am always glad to see the stucco come off; for then it shows that, after all, the house was only built of brick, though it was a good imitation of stone. This age is an age of stucco; everywhere men are trying to make things look like what they are not.

Stones are often a blessing to the land. I have heard that in one of our English counties some of the farmers cleared all the stones from their land, and they had worse crops that year in consequence. A very small stone is not a small thing when it is in your boot; and so a very small evil may injure our travelling to heaven.

There are stones on the Alps which contain gold; but in such minute quantities that it would not be worth the labour needed to turn it to account.

The Stone and the Chisel--a Fable

The Stone and the Chisel—a Fable

You have, perhaps, heard the story of the block of stone that had a friend called the chisel. The stone complained, "You use me very badly, my friend." "No," said the chisel, "I only do as I am bid." "Ah!" sighed the stone, "I do wish you would leave me alone." The chisel began, by the aid of the hammer, to cut away at the stone, which again complained. "Why," said the chisel, "don't you know what's to become of you?" "I wish," said the stone, "I was like that beautiful statue over there in the corner; it is beautifully carved, and rests there quite quiet and peaceful, while I am being constantly ill-used." "True," replied the chisel; "but you should know that it has passed through the same process that you are now undergoing. You cannot be at rest like that statue until you are properly prepared; and the very kindest thing I can do for you is to be unkind, and cut and carve you about as much as possible." When the chisel had done its work, and the block of stone had thus become transformed into a beautiful statue, it was very grateful to its friend the chisel for all it had done. I do not think this fable needs any comment.

The Diamond and the Ruby--a Fable

The Diamond and the Ruby—a Fable

Once upon a time there lay side by side, in a jeweller's window, a diamond and a ruby. The ruby said to the diamond, "How lovely you are! You seem to flash light like the sun." "Ah," said the diamond, "but it is the art that is spent upon me that causes all these beauties." "Well," said the ruby, "I cannot see any beauty in myself; I cannot reflect light as you do." "Brother," replied the diamond, "I have been looking at you with admiration and envy, and wishing that I had your beautiful colour, and lamenting how pale I seemed beside you." In the jeweller's mind there had been some doubts whether these were valuable stones; but there was no doubt about the matter after hearing that conversation.

Tombstones and Epitaphs

Tombstones and Epitaphs The last use to which a stone can be put is as a tombstone. If any one puts a gravestone over us, the less said about us the better: our name, our birth, our death, and a godly text; but no fulsome flattery. Some gravestones have very much flattery on them, and the sooner the epitaphs are illegible the better. "Where do they bury all the bad people, father?" asked the boy in the churchyard; "they are all good people here." In the churchyard of Horsleydown, Cumberland, there is a monument to a man and his wife, "which is an instance," says Mrs. Stone, in her "God's Acre," of the extent to which irreverence may be carried. It is a shocking production, certainly; but though shocking for a man's wife, it might be put over some of us in spirit if not in letter. I'll read it to you.

Here lie the bodies Of THOMAS BOND & MARY his Wife.

She was temperate, chaste, and charitable, BUT She was proud, peevish, and passionate.

She was an affectionate wife and a tender mother, BUT Her husband and child whom she loved Seldom saw her countenance without a disgusting frown, Whilst she received visitors whom she despised with an endearing smile.

Her behaviour was discreet towards strangers, BUT Imprudent in her family.

Abroad her conduct was influenced by good breeding; BUT At home by ill-temper.

She was a professed enemy to flattery, And was seldom known to praise or commend; BUT The talents in which she principally excelled Were difference of opinion, and discovering flaws and imperfections.

She was an admirable economist, And without prodigality Dispensed plenty to every person in her family; BUT Would sacrifice their eyes to a farthing candle.

She sometimes made her husband happy with her good qualities; BUT Much more frequently miserable with her many failings;

Insomuch that in thirty years' cohabitation he often lamented That, maugre all her virtues, He had not on the whole enjoyed two years of Matrimonial Comfort.

At length, Finding that she had lost the affection of her husband, As well as the regard of her neighbours, Family disputes having been divulged by servants,

She died of vexation, July 26, 1768,

Aged 48 years.

Her worn-out husband survived her four months and two days,

And departed this life Nov. 28, 1768,

In the 54th year of his age.

William Bond, brother to the deceased, erected this stone, As a weekly monitor to the surviving wives of the parish, That they may avoid the infamy Of having their memories handed to posterity With a patchwork character.

Metropolitan Tabernacle,

Newington Butts.

I think that Mr. William Bond ought to be ashamed of himself. At the same time, I think a good many of us might have "buts" in our memorials. It should be our effort to get rid of the "buts." Nevertheless, I wish all blessing to "Newington Butts."

Dissolving Views

Dissolving Views

Referring (on page 10) to the stone witnesses to the truth of Holy Scripture, Mr. Spurgeon gave his audience to understand that he would again refer to these "remarkable stones," when, later on, he described the Dissolving Views. Time, however, failed, and the views were rapidly thrown on the screen with little more than the announcement of the names of the subjects represented. We have, therefore, ventured to insert in the Appendices the illustrative extracts at command, and to indicate the sources of information easily accessible to the Lecturer.

The Mountain Cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem.

The Moabite Stone.

El Khasne`, Petra.

The Rock of Behistun.

The Rosetta Stone.

Stonehenge.

Kit's Cotty (or Coity) House.

Carnac.

The London Stone.

The Kings' Stone.

The Rufus' Stone, in The New Forest.

The Coronation Stone and Chair.

The Martyrs' Stone, Lollards' Tower.

The Broad Stone, East Retford.

The Idol Rock, Brunham, Yorkshire.

The Pivot Rock, Brunham.

The Mushroom Rock, Brunham.

The Cheesewring, near Liskeard.

Coal Forest.

Coral Reefs.

Fingal's Cave.

Perforated Rocks.

Natural Bridge.

Freshwater Cove.

Glacier Table.

Gibraltar.

Greek Ruins.

Appendix A. The Tomb of Rachel

Appendix A.

The Tomb of Rachel From the late Dr. Samuel Manning's beautifully illustrated work, entitled "Those Holy Fields," we take the following interesting particulars of Rachel's grave:—"An hour and a quarter after leaving Jerusalem, we approach a square whitewashed building surmounted by a dome. Except for its greater size, it differs in no respect from the ordinary tombs of Moslem saints, so numerous throughout Egypt and Syria. It is the birthplace of Benjamin, and the Tomb of Rachel. The present edifice is modern, but the identity of the site is undoubted, being clearly marked out by the inspired narrative. 'And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni [i.e., the son of my sorrow]: but his father called him Benjamin [i.e., the son of my right hand]. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.' Genesis 35:16-20.

"How deeply and permanently this event, with all its details, was impressed on the mind of the bereaved patriarch, may be gathered from the fact, that on his deathbed he recalled all the circumstances: 'As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath.'

"It has been said that the roads in the East never vary, but continue to follow precisely the same course age after age. It will be noticed that in both accounts of the death of Rachel, stress is laid upon the fact that she died and was buried 'in the way.' The tomb of Rachel still stands on the roadside."

Dr. William M. Thomson has the following very interesting and suggestive passage in his larger work on The Holy Land, under the heading—

"The Patriarchs' Wives Not all Buried at Machpelah"

"There is something strange in this burial of Jacob's best-beloved wife by the roadside in such an exposed and unprotected locality. Why did he not have her body taken to Machpelah, and placed in the sepulchre of his ancestors at Hebron, only a few miles distant, and to which he was himself going? Genesis 35:27.

"Even more remarkable, perhaps, is the fact that Joseph, when he came to Hebron to bury his father, did not transfer the remains of his mother to the family sepulchre, as is stated in the record. There is probably more in this matter than appears on the surface. He was then lord of Egypt, and could have easily accomplished the removal. Only three women were buried there: Sarah, Abraham's first and legal wife; Rebekah, the wife of Isaac; and Leah, the first wife of Jacob. Abraham had two other wives, and Jacob three, all of whom were excluded from that patriarchal

burying-place. This could scarcely have been accidental.

"May there not be found in these exclusions a tacit but impressive protest against polygamous marriages, even such as were tolerated in the households of the patriarchs?" From *The Land and the Book* (Vol. II. "Central Palestine and Phoenicia," p. 27). T. Nelson & Sons. 1883.

Appendix B. "Ancient Monuments and Holy Writ"

Appendix B.

"Ancient Monuments and Holy Writ" The Mountain Cemetery of Sarbut-El-Khadem The account of the discovery and identification of the place called Kibroth-hattaavah (i.e., The Graves of Lust), by Professor E. H. Palmer, while engaged in "The Sinai Survey," is given in his valuable work, "The Desert of the Exodus," and also in Mr. Walter Besant's "Life and Achievements of E. H. Palmer." The following extract from the former work is to be found in Lange's Commentary on Numbers.

"A little further on, and upon the watershed of Wadyel Hebeibeh, we came to some remains which, although they had hitherto escaped even a passing notice from previous travellers, proved to be among the most interesting in the country. The piece of elevated ground which forms this watershed is called by the Arabs Erweis el Ebeirig, and is covered with small enclosures of stones. These are evidently the remains of a large encampment; but they differ essentially in their arrangement from any others which I have seen in Sinai or elsewhere in Arabia; and on the summit of a small hill on the right is an erection of rough stones surmounted by a conspicuous white block of pyramidal shape. These remains extend for miles around, and, on examining them more closely during a second visit to the Peninsula with Mr. Drake, we found our first impressions fully confirmed, and collected abundant proofs that it was in reality a deserted camp. The small stones which formerly served, as they do in the present day, for hearths, in many places still showed signs of the action of fire; and on digging beneath the surface we found pieces of charcoal in great abundance.

"Here and there were larger enclosures marking the encampment of some person more important than the rest, and just outside the camp were a number of stone heaps, which, from their shape and position could be nothing else but graves. The site is a most convenient one, and admirably suited for the assembling of a large concourse of people. Arab tradition declares these curious remains to be 'the relics of a large Pilgrim or Hajj caravan, who, in remote ages, pitched their tents at this spot on their way to 'Ain Hudherah, and who were soon afterwards lost in the desert of the Tih[or "Wilderness of the Wanderings"], and never heard of again.' "For various reasons I am inclined to believe that this legend is authentic, that it refers to the Israelites, and that we have in the scattered stones of Erweis el Ebeirig real traces of the Exodus.... These considerations... and these mysterious graves outside of the camp, to my mind prove conclusively the identity of the spot with the scene of the awful plague by which the Lord punished the greed and discontent of His people." In Mr. Spurgeon's "Treasury of David," vol. iii., in the "Explanatory Notes" on Psalms 78:27; Psalms 78:31 (p. 462), there is a long quotation from a writer who has devoted much time and pains to the subject of Sinai and its Israelite monuments, namely, the Rev. Charles Forster, B.D., author of "The Voice of Israel from the Rocks of Sinai," "Sinai Photographed," and "Israel in the Wilderness." In the latter there are engravings of hieroglyphic tablets from the mountain cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem, and "decipherments" of them. We note, in passing, that "the only difference between the Scriptural and Arabic names of the locality is, that Moses named it from the

graves, the Arabs from the plague stroke.... In a word: the Hebrew, Kibroth-Hattaavah, signifies 'the graves of lust:' the Arabic, Sarbut-el-Khadem signifies, 'the heaven-sent plague-stroke of the ancients.'"

"If," says Mr. Forster, "the cemetery on Sarbut-el-Khadem, what all the antecedent evidences combine to indicate, the workmanship of the Israelites (a chief burial ground of their fatal encampment at Kibroth-Hattaavah), it may most reasonably be expected that its monuments shall contain symbolic representations of the miracle of the "feathered fowls, "and of the awful plague which followed it. Now Niebuhr happily enables us to meet this just expectation, by his copies of the hieroglyphics on three of those tombstones, published in the XLVth and XLVIth Plates of his first volume, and prefaced plate XLIV, by a plan of the Cemetery itself, which is of more value than any or all subsequent descriptions....

Hieroglyphics From the "Graves of Lust."

"It was discovered by the present writer (as stated in his 'Voice of Israel,' pp. 98-100) on the evidence of no less than four Sinaitic inscriptions, that the birds of the miracle, named by Moses, generically, ■■■■■, salu, and by the psalmist, still more generally, ■■■■ ■■■■, 'winged fowls,' or more correctly, 'long-winged fowls' (Psalms 78:27), were not (as rendered by all our versions, ancient and modern) 'quails,' but a crane-like red bird resembling a goose, named in the Arabic nuham. The discovery.... received subsequently a singular and signal corroboration from the further discovery, by Dean Stanley, and previously by Schubert, of immense flocks of these very nuhams on the reputed scene of the miracle at Kibroth-Hattaavah. With these antecedents in his mind, the reader will now turn to the three monuments copied by Niebuhr in the cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem. He will at once see that a crane-like bird resembling a goose, with slender body and long legs, is the leading hieroglyphic symbol in all the three tablets. No fewer than twenty-five of these symbolic birds occur in the first, ten in the second, and fifteen in the third tablet. The goose appears occasionally, but the principal specimens have the air of the goose, but the form of the crane. In a word, they are the very species of bird seen by Dean Stanley, both at this point of Sinai, and at the first cataract of the Nile; and which constantly occur also in Egyptian monuments: as though the very food of Egypt, after which the Israelites lusted, was sent to be at once their prey and their plague.

"The reader has here before him the irrefragable fact that the very birds which by every kind of evidence stand identified with the salus, or long-legged and long-winged fowls of the miracle, are the very birds depicted on the tombstones of Sarbut-el-Khadem, both standing, flying, and apparently even trussed and cooked. In a word, they are so depicted as to make them conspicuously the leading symbol on those stones. The impartial reader might safely be left to draw his own inference; for the inevitable inference is, that if symbolic writing be meant to convey any meaning at all, and if its meaning can ever be deduced from the collation of the symbols with a known event of Scripture history in a known locality, these tombstones record the miracle of the 'feathered fowls,' and stand over the graves of the gluttons who consumed them!" In the "Treasury of David," the selection of the deciphered hieroglyphics is from Niebuhr's XLVIth plate, of which a portion is reproduced on p. 73. The following is the "decipherment" thereof:—

"The sleepy owl, emblem of death, God sends destruction among them.

"The bow arrests the birds on the wing congregated.

"They make ready cooking the flying prey, nourished and sustained by it 'for a whole month,' spreading it out.

"Arrest the prey, the messengers of death swift flying."

We subjoin a few lines from plate XLV:—

"With throats diseased and loaded stomachs, sink down kneeling on both knees, 'the mixed multitude,' depraved doomed.

"The owl ill-omened, sudden death, the marrow corrupted from greedily devouring the cranes. By the fat cranes visits with punishment God, causing ulcerations plaguing to madness. The sepulchre entombs the fugitives. The cranes, sea-brought, black and white, prepare for flight, spreading their wings."

Works of reference The Moabite Stone.—The Rock of Behistun.—The Rosetta Stone

Since the lecture was delivered, many books have been issued—some in a cheap and popular form—containing the most complete information respecting the Moabite Stone and other buried and forgotten witnesses who have come forth from their silent graves to attest the truth of Holy Scripture. Therefore it is not necessary that we should furnish extracts from works accessible to all. The following list may be useful to some of our readers:—

Graven in the Rock; or, the Historical Accuracy of the Bible Confirmed by Reference to the Assyrian and Egyptian Sculptures in the British Museum and elsewhere. By the Rev. Dr. Samuel Kinns, F.R.A.S., &c. With Numerous Engravings. Cassell & Company.

New Light on the Bible and The Holy Land. By B. T. A. Evetts. Illustrated. Cassell & Company. The Moabite Stone. Although it does not come under the head of "cheap" or "popular," the work to which the first place must be given as a monograph upon this remarkable monument is the thin 4to. work of the learned Dr. Ginsburg, entitled, "The Moabite Stone. A Facsimile of the Original Inscription, with an English Translation, and a Historical and Critical Commentary." Longmans. 1870. The Moabite Stone. The Substance of Two Lectures. By W. Pakenham Walsh, D.D., Bishop of Ossory. Illustrated. Nisbet & Co. 1883. One Shilling.

Ancient Monuments and Holy Writ. Same Author, Publishers, and price. This little book embraces particulars of the Rosetta and Moabite slabs, and other equally interesting monuments.

Echoes of Bible History is another book by Bishop Walsh, containing not a little of the information in his smaller books, with additional matter. Crown 8vo. Three Shillings and Sixpence. Published by the Church of England Sunday School Institute.

Bypaths of Bible Knowledge. In this admirable series, published by the Religious Tract Society, there are several works devoted to the elucidation and confirmation of the Word of God from the ancient stone monuments. We cannot too highly recommend the following, among others:—

Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments, by Professor Sayce, M.A., and Babylonian Life and History, by E. A. Wallis Budge, M.A. The Witnesses of Ancient Monuments to the Old Testament

Scriptures (Present Day Tracts, No. 32), by Professor Sayce, is a marvel of condensation. Price Fourpence. The Oxford Helps to the Study of the Bible, published by Mr. Frowde, must have a place in this list, although too well known to need a lengthy notice.

The Moabite Stone.

Appendix C. The Stones of the Temple

Appendix C.

The Stones of the Temple Great Stones.—Costly Stones.—Hewed Stones

Within the last twenty years much valuable knowledge has been acquired as to the "Holy City," and its wondrous Temple, or rather Temples of Solomon and Herod, especially as to the questions of locality of the quarries whence the "great stones" were brought, and the difficulty of transporting them to their destination. The valuable labours of the Engineers of the Palestine Exploration Fund have done much towards determining the location of the quarries; indeed, it may safely be said that the long-existing doubt is solved. The Rev. J. King, in "Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill at Jerusalem," devotes a chapter to "The Royal Quarries," from which we extract a few sentences, and advise our readers to procure the book; it is published by the Religious Tract Society.

"Every traveller who makes a sojourn in Jerusalem should visit the Royal Quarries. They are vast caverns, reaching far beneath Bezetha, the northern hill on which the Holy City is built; and not only do they throw light upon the stonework of the Temple, but their vastness at once impresses the mind with some adequate idea of the gigantic character of the sacred edifices that once crowned the summit of Moriah."

"When it is remembered that nearly the whole city of Edinburgh has been built out of Craig Leith Quarry, and that many a town in England has been built of stone taken from one rock-cut excavation; when, moreover, we reflect upon the immense size of the Jerusalem quarries, we are led to the conclusion that all the stonework of the Holy City, including the Temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod, the gigantic walls of the Haram, as well as the walls encompassing the city, have been excavated from one and the same spot, namely, from the Royal Quarries underneath the north part of the Holy City."

"There is a prevailing notion that the polished blocks of Solomon's Temple were sent by Hiram from Lebanon or Tyre, but such a notion receives no proof either from Josephus or the Bible.... Hiram sent cunning masons and stone-squarers to help Solomon's cunning workmen to cut, square, hew, and polish the stones for the sacred edifice; but nowhere is it stated that the blocks were forwarded to Jerusalem... Indeed, the limestone around Jerusalem is so abundant, and so excellent in quality, that it would have been folly to send stones from a distance, as well as an immense labour to have transmitted blocks, such as now appear in the Haram wall, from Phoenicia to Jerusalem." The Great Corner Stone

"The foundation stone at the bottom of the southeast angle [of the east wall of the Temple area] is the most interesting stone in the world, for it is the chief corner stone of the Temple's massive wall. Among the ancient Jews, the foundation corner stone of their great sanctuary on Moriah was regarded as the emblem of moral and spiritual truths. It had two functions to perform; first, like the other foundation stones, it was a support to the masonry above; but it had also to face both ways, and was thus a bond of union between two walls. The Bible abounds in interesting allusions to this

corner stone."

"Seeing, therefore, that the corner stone is a symbol of Christ Himself, it ought to be regarded as the most interesting stone in the whole world." The Engineers, in order to ascertain the dimensions of this foundation stone, worked round it, and report that it is three feet eight inches high and fourteen feet in length. At the angle it is let down into the rock to a depth of fourteen inches, while the northern end seems entirely embedded in the rock. The block is further described as squared and polished, with a finely-dressed face. It does not appear to have any marginal draft at the bottom, and indeed this was not necessary, as the lower part being sunk in the rock, would always be hidden from view; but the absence of the lower draft indicates that the block was dressed in the quarry in a somewhat peculiar style, with a view to its being the foundation corner stone. The draft or the upper margin of the stone is four inches wide. Fixed in its abiding position three thousand years ago, it still stands sure and steadfast, a fitting emblem of the 'Rock of Ages,' that cannot be removed, but abideth fast for ever."—From "Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill."

Appendix D. Rude Stone Monuments

Appendix D.

Rude Stone Monuments

Several learned works have appeared of late years upon the subject of those mysterious stone monuments, the dolmens, or cromlechs, and the stone circles, their ages and uses. The perusal of the most recent authorities is not a little disappointing, as will be seen from the extracts we subjoin, which are fair examples of the opposite conclusions to which archaeologists have arrived.

"Amidst all the triumphs of well-directed archaeological research, there still remain a great group of monuments at our own doors, regarding whose uses or dates opinions are nearly as much divided as they were in the days of rampant empiricism in the last century. It is true that men of science do not now pretend to see Druids sacrificing their bleeding victims on the altar at Stonehenge, nor to be able to trace the folds of the divine serpent through miles of upright stones at Carnac or at Avebury, but all they have yet achieved is simple unbelief in the popular fallacies, nor have they hitherto ventured to supply anything better to take their places. They still call the circles temples, but without being able to suggest to what god they were dedicated, or for what rites they were appropriated, and, when asked as to the age in which they were erected, can only reply in the words of the song, that it was 'long, long ago.'"

"There is no passage in any classical authors which connects the Druids, either directly or indirectly, with any stone temples, or any stones of any sort."

"No writer of any age or country suggested their being prehistoric or even pre-Roman before the age of Stukeley—say 1700."

"If, however, the pen has been reticent and hesitating in its testimony, the spade has been not only prolific but distinct. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that three-fourths of the megalithic monuments—including the dolmens, of course—have yielded sepulchral deposits to the explorer, and, including the tumuli, probably nine-tenths have been proved to be burial-places." The foregoing extracts are from the exhaustive work of James Fergusson, Esqre., D.C.L., F.R.S., &c, entitled "Rude Stone Monuments in all Countries: their Age and Uses: with 234 illustrations." 1872.

Kit's Coity House, or Cotty House, the celebrated cromlech, near Aylesford, in Kent, is by far the largest monument of its class in this part of England. It forms a small chamber open in front, and consists of four blocks, three of which are uprights, and the fourth laid on them as a covering-stone. Of the two side stones, one measures 7 feet by 7½, and is 2 feet thick, the weight about 8½ tons. The other is 8 feet by 8½, weighing about 8 tons. The capstone is 12 feet by 9½, 2½ feet thick, and weighs about 10½ tons. The sandstone of which they consist belongs to the geological formation of the district.

Like others of its class, Kit's Coity House was no doubt originally a sepulchral monument, though the legend which makes it the tomb of the British chief Katigern, killed here in a battle with the

Saxons, must probably be discarded. Kitt's Hill on Hingstone Down, Cornwall, and Kites House on Dartmoor, are names also given to ancient tombs; perhaps from the Celtic kêd, a hollow. Kit's Coity may thus be kêd-coit—the tomb in the wood (Brit), which once spread over the hillside, and of which the venerable yews are relics. It has been suggested that the battle was traditionally fixed here from ancient recollections connected with the site, which recent research has proved to be that of a great British cemetery—the "Carnac" of Kent.—From Murray's "Handbook for Travellers in Kent." 1892.

"Stonehenge is a circular group of gigantic standing stones on Salisbury Plain.... situated in the midst of an extensive group of prehistoric barrows of the bronze age. The circle of stones, which is about 100 feet in diameter, occupies the central portion of an area of about 360 feet in diameter, enclosed within an earthen rampart and ditch." Here follows a lengthy description of the relative positions, sizes, &c., of the various stones, for which we have not space. The article proceeds to state "the many and various theories propounded as to the purpose or uses of the structure. It has been attributed to the Phœnicians, the Belgæ, the Druids, the Saxons, and the Danes. It has been called a temple of the sun, and of serpent worship, a shrine of Buddha, a planetarium, a gigantic gallows on which defeated British leaders were solemnly hung in honour of Woden, a Gilgal where the national army met and leaders were buried, and a calendar in stone for measurement of the solar year.

Stonehenge.

"The opinion of Sir John Lubbock, expressed in his 'Prehistoric Times,' is that there are satisfactory reasons for assigning it to the bronze age, though apparently it was not all erected at one time, the inner circle of small unwrought 'bluestone,' being probably older than the rest. By most archaeologists it seems to be accepted as an exceptional development from the ordinary type of stone circles, used as burial-places by the bronze age people of Britain, though some regard its exceptional development as due rather to a religious influence than to the mere idea of the common commemoration of simple burial. But whatever may have been its origin or purpose, it is sufficiently interesting as the grandest megalithic monument in Britain."—Condensed from Chambers's Encyclopedia.

We must let a later writer (Rev. Lewis Gidley, M.A.), have the last word, as he may be referring to Mr. Fergusson, among others, when he says:—"There are so many proofs of Stonehenge being a Druidical temple, that it seems remarkable that any antiquarians are not satisfied that this was the case. He is also as pronounced in his opinion that it was not "erected to commemorate a battle fought there"; nor was it "a kind of superior cromlech, or sepulchral monument." The title of his book is, "Stonehenge viewed by the Light of Ancient History and Modern Observation." 1873. 8vo.

Appendix E. The Kings' Stone

Appendix E.

The Kings' Stone The town of Kingston, in Surrey, or Kingston-on-Thames, as it is usually named, is said by archaeologists to derive its name from the Anglo-Saxon cyning-stun, a royal demesne; but the townsmen of the present day find a ready derivation from "The Kings' Stone," a venerable relic of the Heptarchy which stood for centuries in an ancient chapel (situate on the south side of All Saints' Church), which, having fallen into decay, was demolished about 1731. "This stone," says one writer, "on which the monarchs sat during the ceremony of coronation, has been preserved with almost religious veneration."

The Kings' Stone. For some years subsequent to its removal from the ruined chapel, it was located at the Town Hall, or "suffered to lie in the New Court Yard until 1850, when it was removed to its present conspicuous position in the open air at the point where the High Street widens into the marketplace. Surrounded by a suitable iron railing, the stone is partially sunk into a heptagonal pyramid, on whose faces are the names of seven kings, crowned in the town; and, through the liberality of the curator of the British Museum, a coin of each sovereign is inserted in the face of the pyramid above the sovereign's name." The number of kings crowned here, as recorded by Speed, is nine, two of which, however, are doubtful, and the names of those only who indisputably received their inauguration on it are inscribed upon the pedestal beneath. They are—

A.D.

924.

Athelstan, by Archbishop Aldhelm.

940.

Edmund, } by Archbishop Otto

946.

Edred, } by Archbishop Otto

All three sons of Edward the Elder.

959.

Edgar.

975.

Edward the Martyr, by Archbishops Dunstan

and Oswald.

978.

Ethelred II., brother of Edward.

1016.

Edmund II.

The two kings less certain are:—

900.

Edward the Elder, son of Alfred.

955.

Edwy, the son of Edmund.

The foregoing jottings are taken from Biden, Murray, and Chapman's "Handbook of Kingston"; but for learned antiquarian research, the "Surrey Archæological Collections," vol. i., pp. 27-56, must be consulted.

Appendix F. The Rufus' Stone

Appendix F.

The Rufus' Stone The Rufus' Stone.

In Malwood Walk, about a quarter of a mile from Stoney Cross, in the New Forest, surrounded by picturesque oaks, stands Rufus' Stone. It marks the place where, as the legend runs, formerly stood the oak against which the arrow glanced that caused the death of King William Rufus. The stone was erected by Lord Delaware more than a century ago. It having become much mutilated by the "British vandal and relic-monger," a Mr. Bourne had it capped over with what Mr. J. R. Wise, in his beautifully illustrated book, styles "a hideous cast-iron case." The spot is visited by thousands of persons during the summer months.

Appendix G. The Coronation Stone and Chair

Appendix G.

The Coronation Stone and Chair

Coronation Stone and Chair.

"The Scottish Coronation Stone, the Lia Fail, or 'Stone of Destiny,' was said by tradition to have been the stone which Jacob used for a pillow, and to have been brought to Ireland, and from Tara to Scotland, where it had a resting-place at Scone till, in 1296, Edward I. carried it to Westminster. It now forms part of the Coronation Chair, occupying the space beneath the seat. Skene, in his monograph, asserts it to have been originally quarried from the rocks near Scone."—Chambers's Encyclopedia. The following is from "The Coronation Stone," by Mr. F. Skene [1869, 4to.], referred to above:—"The popularly-received account of the stone may be shortly stated in the words of Pennant:—'In the church of the Abbey (of Scone) was preserved the famous chair, whose bottom was the fatal stone, the palladium of the Scottish monarchy; the stone which had first served Jacob for his pillow was afterwards transported into Spain, where it was used as a seat of justice by Gethalus, contemporary with Moses. It afterwards found its way to Dunstaffnage in Argyllshire, continued there as the coronation chair till the reign of Kenneth II., who, to secure his empire, removed it to Scone. There it remained, and in it every Scottish monarch was inaugurated till the year 1296, when Edward II., to the mortification of North Britain, translated it to Westminster Abbey, and with it, according to ancient prophecy, the empire of Scotland. The latter part of this account is unquestionably true.'"

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to add that the most complete and interesting account of this historic stone is to be found in the late Dean Stanley's "Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey." See fifth edition, 1882, pp. 49-56.

Two London Landmarks

More than once in his brief but bright and pleasant table-talks, we have heard Mr. Spurgeon refer to two stones well-known to those Londoners who are "something in the city," and know its highways and byways. If the lecture had had the advantage of his revision, he would certainly have built these two stones, among many others, into the structure. This is our apology for inserting a short account of "The London Stone," and "The Boy and Panyer."

London Stone

London Stone. In Cannon Street, opposite the railway-station, is the Church of St. Swithin, rebuilt by Wren, and since modernized. Fixed in the outer wall of the church, and protected by an iron grille, is the London Stone. According to Stowe, it formerly stood on the south side of the street, but being regarded as an obstruction, it was removed in 1798. London Stone was the Milliarium, or central milestone, of Roman London, whence as from a centre the miles were reckoned throughout Britain, even as the Milliarium in the Forum was the centre from which all Roman roads

were radiated.—From Pascoes "London of Today." The account given of the story by Noorthonck, in his "History of London," 1773 (4to.), though almost identical with the foregoing, may be of interest. He says:—"Close under the wall of St. Swithin's Church is placed a stone, more remarkable by its name than by its appearance. In Stowe's time this stone was, as he informs us, fixed upright in the ground on the south side of the street, near the channel, and was so well fastened with bars of iron as to secure it effectually from being damaged by carriages. This stone is of unknown antiquity, and it is worthy of admiration that more care has been taken to preserve the stone itself than the history of it.

"The most remarkable conjectures have given this stone a Roman origin; for as the antient Roman colony extended from the river no higher than Cheapside, and Watling Street was the principal street or Praetorian Way, it has been supposed, with great probability, that this stone was the centre from which they began to compute their distances to their several stations throughout England. Another supposition framed upon this is, that from this stone public proclamations and notices might have been antiently given to the citizens; for in 1450, when Jack Cade, the Kentish rebel, came through Southwark into London, he marched to this stone amidst a great confluence of people, and the Lord Mayor among the rest; and striking his sword upon it, said, 'Now is Mortimer lord of this City.'" Of the original form and size of this relic all record is, of course, lost; and it would doubtless ere now have disappeared altogether but for the pains taken to preserve its "remains" by a worthy citizen, one Thomas Maiden, printer, of Sherbourne Lane. It is said that "when St. Swithin's Church was about to undergo repair in 1798, Mr. Maiden prevailed on the parish officers to consent that the stone should be placed where it still remains, after it had been doomed to destruction as a nuisance." At that period of its history it was described as "reduced to a fragment not much larger than a bombshell"; and more recently, in Charles Knight's "London," as "not a great deal larger than a man's head." Bombs and heads must have been somewhat larger then than now; but certainly the aforesaid "British vandal and relic-monger" was doing his utmost to chip it away to nothing until the iron grating was interposed.

Engraven on the stone wall of the church, above the monument, are two inscriptions, the one in Latin, the other a free translation thereof, followed by the names of the then Rector and Churchwardens. The English inscription is as under:—

London Stone.

COMMONLY BELIEVED TO BE A ROMAN WORK,
LONG PLACED ABOUT XXXV FEET HENCE
TOWARDS THE SOVTH WEST
AND AFTERWARDS BVILT INTO THE WALL OF THIS CHVRCH
WAS FOR MORE CAREFVL PROTECTION
AND TRANSMISSION TO FVTVRE AGES
BETTER SECVRED BY THE CHVRCHWARDENS
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD MDCCCLXIX.

Panyer Alley Stone "The Boy and Panyer"

Boy and Panyer. From a handsome volume of Mr. Elliot Stock's Camden Library Series, entitled "London Signs and Inscriptions," by Philip Norman, F.S.A., we give a few particulars about the sculptured sign from which Panyer Alley, the narrow passage leading from Newgate Street into "The Row," takes its name. "It represents a naked boy resting on a pannier or basket, and holding what, in Strype's time, appeared to be a bunch of grapes between his hand and foot, 'in token perhaps of plenty,' as he suggests. Within an ornamental border, apparently on a separate stone below, is the following inscription:

'When ye have sought the City round, Yet still this is the highest ground.

August the 27, 1688."

When Mr. Norman was writing his book, he had to note not only that the stone was "much dilapidated," but that it was "in danger of destruction," as the houses on the side of the alley where it stood were about to be demolished. These have since been rebuilt, and the stone (or stones) replaced, or rather placed several feet above the ground (on which it used to rest), so that the inscription is in less danger of obliteration than in the past. That this interesting curio was "in danger," not so much of "destruction" as of being "improved away," and very far away too, is clear, if there be any truth in the following paragraph which appeared in the Echo of January 21, 1893:—"A remarkable conspiracy was detected by the authorities of the City a few days ago, when an attempt was made to steal the celebrated Panyer stone in Panyer Alley, Newgate Street, which has for the last two hundred years marked the highest point of the City of London. It appears that a rich American bribed one of the workmen engaged in pulling down the old warehouse in which the stone is fixed, asking him to exchange the old relic for a modern stone, and promising to pay £50 for the deception. The workman conveyed notice of this to the City authorities, and a guard has now been placed upon the original stone, which is a cherished heirloom of the City." The stone, no doubt, took the place of a previous one, according to Stowe. Mr. Norman's diligent research may be thus summarized:—In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the sale of bread was not allowed to take place in the bakers' houses, but only in the King's markets. It was sold in breadbaskets or "panyers," and the coarser kinds, at any rate, occasionally in boxes or hutches. One writer gives it as his opinion that "the child is handing out a loaf, and that at a period somewhat later than the date of the 'Liber Albus' (1419), Panyer Alley was noted as a standing-place for bakers' boys with their panniers." Another idea is that the pannier is a fruit-basket. Fruit and vegetables were doubtless landed from the river near St. Paul's, and porters carrying such produce may have passed through and rested themselves in this short passage on their way to Newgate Market, which, originally for corn and meal, became, as many of us well remember, a meat market, until happily it was improved away, and the unsavoury site appropriated to enlarge the ever-growing Book Market of the World.

Appendix H. The "Regent" or "Pitt" Diamond

Appendix H.

The "Regent" or "Pitt" Diamond

Face.Edge. The "Regent" or "Pitt" Diamond.

First known as the "Pitt," then as the "Regent," this perfect diamond has a remarkable history. Its adventures began very much on the lines of several other great stones. Cupidity, murder, remorse, are factors in the opening chapter. Troubles, political, social, and personal, accompany the gem to its last resting-place. It was found by a slave in the Partea mines, forty-five leagues south of Golconda, in the year 1701. The story goes that, to secure his treasure, he cut a hole in the calf of his leg, and concealed it, one account says, in the wound itself, another in the bandages. As the stone weighed 410 carats before it was cut, the last version is, no doubt, the correct one. The slave escaped to Madras, where he met with an English skipper, to whom he offered to give the diamond in return for his liberty, which was to be secured by the skipper carrying him to a free country. Another account states that the skipper promised to find him a purchaser for the stone, and to halve the profits; wherein lay the motive for the atrocious crime of luring the poor fellow on board, securing possession of the diamond, and then flinging him into the sea. The captain then offered it to Jamchund (or Jamelchund), one of the most eminent diamond merchants in those parts, obtaining a thousand pounds, which he speedily ran through, and then hanged himself. Jamchund sold it to Mr. Thomas Pitt, governor of Fort St. George, for £20,400: this was in the year 1710. The diamond was very skilfully cut in London at great cost, and its weight reduced to 136¾ carats. In 1717, Mr. Pitt sold it to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, for £135,000: it has since been valued at more than three times that sum. Mr. Pitt probably netted £100,000 by his venture. With this he restored the fortunes of the ancient house of Pitt, which was destined later on to give to England two of her greatest statesmen and orators; for the governor of Fort St. George was grandfather of the great Earl of Chatham, father of the illustrious William Pitt.

During the French Revolution, in 1792, robbers entered the Garde-Meuble, or Treasury, and carried off the whole of the French Regalia, including the famous "Regent" diamond. Twelve years afterwards one of the robbers, when on his trial for another crime, informed the court that it was he who made known the hiding place of the "Regent" and other valuables upon the promise that he should be pardoned, which promise, he added, was faithfully kept. He reminded the court that "this magnificent diamond was pledged by the First Consul to the Dutch Government, in order to raise the money, of which he stood in the greatest need after the 18th Brumaire." It was redeemed from the Dutch Government, and the first emperor is known to have worn it in the pommel of his sword. It was shown at the French Exhibition of 1855. The reader may possibly have noticed some discrepancy between the two references in the lecture (pages 32 and 37) to the sword of state of the Emperor. We will endeavour to make it clear by the aid of Mr. Streeter's ably-written work, "The Great Diamonds of the World," to which we are indebted for most of our information. Mr. Streeter's "accounts of the 'Pitt' and the 'Eugenie' were revised by Her Majesty the Empress

Eugenie," so that we may accept his statements as conclusive. He says that the story about the sword referred to having been found in the Emperor's state carriage after the battle of Waterloo by the Prussians, is "highly improbable." Even if it really was taken to Berlin on that occasion, it was subsequently restored; for it was known to be "the most conspicuous gem in the now disused crown of France. It was among the crown jewels when, in 1881, Parliament discussed a bill relative to their sale, and resolved to retain those that were of the greatest historic or intrinsic value; the peerless "Regent," therefore, was retained.

Appendix I. The "Koh-I-Noor"

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The "Koh-I-Noor"

The "Koh-I-Noor" Diamond.

Mr. Streeter says that this is preeminently the "Great Diamond of History and Romance," and he devotes a chapter of nearly twenty pages to it, "which chapter Her Majesty the Queen graciously read in manuscript, without requesting any correction or alteration in the leading parts of the story." We can only give a few jottings from this and other works.

"The history of this gem has this peculiarity, that it can be authenticated at every step, from the time of Ala-ad-din, who in 1304 obtained possession of it when he defeated the Rajah of Malwa. Tradition, among other wild legends, carries back its existence in the memory of India to the year 57 b.c." This, however, is certain, namely, that in 1526 it was in the possession of Sultan Baber, of the Mogul dynasty, "who esteemed it at the sum of the daily maintenance of the world." "It remained in the possession of the Mogul dynasty until Nadir Shah's invasion of India, during the reign of Mohammed Shah in 1739." Nadir obtained possession of it by means of an artful trick. "When he seized the Delhi treasury, he missed this stone, and for a long time all his efforts to obtain it were baffled. At last a woman from Mohammed's harem informed Nadir that the Emperor wore it concealed in his turban, which he never on any occasion laid aside...." Nadir, who had concluded a treaty with Mohammed, and had no pretext for quarrelling, bethought him of the time-honoured oriental custom of exchanging turbans in token of amity. At a grand ceremony held for the purpose of reinstating Mohammed on the throne of Delhi, Nadir suddenly asked him to change turbans, and suiting the action to the word, ere his victim had time to think, Nadir removed his own national sheepskin headdress, glittering with costly gems, and replaced it with the emperor's turban. He hastily dismissed the durbar, and in his tent examined the turban, found the coveted treasure, and exclaimed, "Koh-i-Noor!" signifying in English, "Mountain of Light." From Nadir's descendants "the baleful jewel" passed through several hands, always he innocent cause of deceit and violence, and sometimes torture, until Runjeet Singh, of Lahore, got possession of it in 1813. Ten years after his death the Sikh mutiny broke out, which resulted in the capture of Lahore and the confiscation of the property of the State to the East India Company, in whose name Lord Dalhousie presented the "Koh-i-Noor" to Queen Victoria. "It is preserved in Windsor Castle. A model of the gem is kept in the jewel room of the Tower of London, to satisfy the laudable curiosity of Her Majesty's faithful lieges." When the diamond came into the possession of our Empress-Queen, its weight was 186 carats; but as the result of its re-cutting by Mr. Coster of Amsterdam, its weight is now 106 1/16 carats.

Appendix J. The "Orloff"

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The "Orloff"

The "Orloff." This diamond, which is the chief ornament in the sceptre of the Czars of Russia, ranks first among European gems in size; in beauty it yields only to the "Regent," while for romantic interest it rivals the "Koh-i-Noor" itself. Its true name is said to be the "Koh-i-Tur," or, Mountain of Sinai; its weight is 193 carats. Of its early history little that is reliable has been preserved. Mr. Streeter, however, has carefully collated the various accounts, and we give an outline of his revised version. On a fortified island in Mysore, not far from Trichinopoly, stands a magnificent Pagoda, or Hindu temple, with seven distinct enclosures, lofty towers, and numerous dwellings for Brahmins, the whole enclosed within an outer wall four miles in circumference. A French grenadier, having deserted the Indian service, found employment in the neighbourhood of the temple, and learnt that it contained a celebrated idol of the Hindu god Sri-Ranga, whose eyes were formed by two large diamonds of inestimable value. These he determined to seize. By assuming the character of a native devotee, and affecting great reverence for this particular divinity, he so imposed upon the Brahmins that they appointed him guardian of its shrine. Taking advantage of a stormy night, he wrenched one of the eyes from its socket, escaped through the raging tempest to Trichinopoly, and thence to Madras, where he sold the gem to an English sea captain for £2,000, who disposed of it to a Jew in London for £12,000. The latter sold it to a Persian merchant, Khojeh Raphael, who took it to Amsterdam. There he met Prince Orloff, whom he persuaded to purchase it for the Czarina, Catherine II., under whose displeasure he had fallen. Orloff paid the merchant £90,000 in cash, besides procuring for him an annuity of £4,000.

Appendix K. The "Great Sancy"

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The "Great Sancy"

According to Mr. Streeter, "this is the very Sphinx of diamonds"; for its history "seems to be wrapped up in a dense cloud of mystery." By some writers this gem, which weighs 53½ carats, has been confounded with one of only 34 carats in the Prussian Royal Treasury, known as the "Little Sancy." The name originated from the circumstance of the gem having been brought from the East by Nicholas Harlai, Seigneur de Sancy, about the year 1570. "Harlai was attached to the Courts of Henry III. and Henry IV., having been ambassador for the former in Turkey, for the latter in England during the reign of Elizabeth." Of the romantic story of the loss of the diamond referred to in the lecture (page 36), we subjoin the version given in "Great Diamonds:"—

The "Great Sancy."

"Henry IV. of Navarre, being desirous of strengthening his army by a body of Swiss recruits, is reported to have borrowed the diamond of Nicholas, now superintendent of finance, intending to raise money on its security. But the messenger charged with the responsibility of conveying the gem either to the king from Harlai, or from the king to the Swiss (for the story is here somewhat confused), disappeared on the way. A long interval elapsed before it became known that he had been waylaid and assassinated. Full of confidence in the loyalty and inventive faculty of his servant, Harlai proceeded to the forest where the murder had been committed. After a long search the body was found, disinterred, and opened. In the stomach was found the diamond, which, as suspected by his master, the faithful valet had swallowed to prevent its falling into the hands of the thieves."

Somewhere between 1590 and 1600 Harlai sold it to the British Crown. Then there is good reason to believe that the Queen Dowager Henrietta Maria, when in exile, sent the "Sancy," with other valuables, to Somerset, Earl of Worcester, "in return for the sacrifices he had made in the cause of the house of Stewart." It passed into the hands of James II., who sold it to Louis XIV. for £25,000. Like the "Regent," it disappeared in the French Revolution. About the year 1830 it was the property of a French merchant, and since then of the Russian Prince Demidoff, Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, and the Maharajah of Puttiala, who wore it in his turban at a Grand Durbar when the Prince of Wales visited India. Mr. Streeter finishes up the interesting story of the "Sancy's" vicissitudes by stating that owing to the death of the Maharajah the gem is once more on sale.

Works on Precious Stones, Regalia, Etc.

Although we have in the foregoing extracts acknowledged our indebtedness more or less distinctly to the several authors, we here give the titles of their works in full, together with three smaller works, which may be of service to those who are desirous of information on this interesting subject.

Precious Stones and Gems. By Edwin W. Streeter, F.R.G.S. Fifth edition, revised and largely re-written, with chapters on the Ruby Mines of Burma. George Bell & Sons. 1892.

"An exhaustive and practical work for the merchant, the connoisseur, or the private buyer." The Great Diamonds of the World: their History and Romance. Collected from official, private, and other sources, during many years of correspondence and inquiry. Same Author and Publishers. 1882.

Diamonds and Precious Stones: their History, Value, and Distinguishing Characteristics; with Simple Tests for their Identification. By Harry Emanuel, F.R.G.S. Small 8vo. Illustrated. 1867. In relation to the subject of the lecture, two of the early chapters of this able work are noticeable. The first is "On the Precious Stones mentioned in the Bible," and is followed by a description of the "Stones in the Breastplate of the High Priest," extracted from the Talmud and several Rabbinical commentators. We believe that the Author is of the Hebrew persuasion, and therefore makes no mention in his book to New Testament references to Precious Stones. It contains a most comprehensive Bibliography of Precious Stones.

Gems and Jewels: their History, Geography, Chemistry, and Area. From the earliest ages down to the present time. By Madame De Barrera. 8vo. R. Bentley. 1860.

History and Mystery of Precious Stones. By William Jones, F.S.A. Thick 8vo. R. Bentley & Sons. 1880.

Crowns and Coronations. A History of Regalia. By William Jones, F.S.A. With ninety-one illustrations. 8vo. Chatto & Windus. 1883. The following smaller books are of an entirely different character, but will interest Bible students and teachers:— The Precious Stones of the Bible: Descriptive and Symbolical. Being a Treatise on the Breastplate of the High Priest, and the foundations of the New Jerusalem; with a brief History of each Tribe and each Apostle. By a Physician. Nisbet & Co. 1878. Crown 8vo.

God's Jewels; or, a Mineralogical Illustration of Scripture. By Thomas A. G. Balfour, M.D. Nisbet & Co. 1873. Crown 8vo.

God's Jewels: their Dignity and Destiny. B W. Y. Fullerton. Passmore & Alabaster. 1891

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