

shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

In the evolution of life the body keeps pace with the soul. Nature has been constantly lifting life from lower to higher types, from the microbe to the vertebrate, from the gill-breathing water animal to the lung-breathing air animal, and so on up to man. This line of ascent points on up to still higher forms, and therefore the heavenly body will correspond with the glorified soul. It may be endowed with new senses through which life will pour in upon us in new streams of knowledge and beauty. Our senses are so many windows opening out upon the world, and our present bodies are

transparent or sensitive at only five points; but the spiritual body may be transparent through and through, clear as crystal, through which we can look out upon every aspect of the world and touch it with sensitive feelers at every point. It may also be armed with as yet unknown powers by which we can pass with incredible swiftness from place to place and even from world to world. We do not know what we shall be, but we may well believe that as the slow-crawling, shaggy caterpillar is to the swift-winged, gorgeously-arrayed butterfly, so is this present 'muddy vesture of decay' to that glorified body with which we shall be clothed upon. 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. H. Snowden, *A Wonderful Morning*.

## A Note on the Kingdom of God.

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR WOTHERSPOON, M.A., GLASGOW.

THAT in the mind of Christ the Church of God and the Kingdom of God are two things distinct and differing widely in extent and nature, is the thought informing this paper. The paper suggests a possible answer to the question urged lately—'What is the Kingdom of Heaven?'<sup>1</sup> Its line of thought leads toward a conception of the Christ, *Salvator Mundi*, as a Saviour of all human men. The field of 'the Kingdom' is the world, and God's largest harvest is from the world outside the Church.

1. Our Lord, whose direct legacy in concrete things was small, left us the prayer, 'Our Father—Thy kingdom come.' From that as a sure word, illuminative and determinative, one can begin. The Kingdom of which Christ spoke is the Kingdom of our Father who is in heaven, and its consummation in earth is of the future. Again, Christ being come, the Kingdom is 'in earth,' but not yet 'in earth as in heaven': it is among men—the place proper to it is within men = it is not yet come, but, like the City of God ever descending, the Kingdom is ever coming, still increasing. And, once more, the hallowing of the name of our heavenly Father precedes the consummation of

His Kingdom—precedes and, we may think, conditions and prepares the way of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom was first present on earth in the heart of Jesus 'of Nazareth': in the earth one hill-village, and in that village one human life in which God the Father reigned. Jordan saw our Lord's anointing as God's King for men, and so the Kingdom gained a foothold in earth. Where the King is, there is the Kingdom.

The law of it was given when Christ spoke. All its ten words are positive—yea and amen, life-bearing, spirit-bearing words. The nature and manner of His reign were fully made known in His passion—His crown, of thorns—His throne, the cross. Therein He took His power to reign. His Kingdom is not of this world.

The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy—in the Holy Spirit. It is revealed through the Holy Spirit. He sees it who is twice-born = he enters it who is lowly of heart and whose will is to be with God as the little child. The little child is not taken up with himself or with things too high for him, but stands between Christ's knees looking up into His face, or is quiet under His hand, listening a little and receiving impressions ineffaceable. He who accepts this place

<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Clutton-Brock and others.

with God, at rest from all disquiet and from himself, is given revelations, not of flesh and blood but of the Father who is in heaven. He sees the Kingdom from within; he has listened to God and has seen God before seeing the Kingdom. The childlike single-minded man, moved by one clear aim and will, sees God and so sees the Kingdom. All roads lead to Rome: there may be, doubtless are, wise men, illuminati, who reach God by way of the Kingdom. But for one such there are a thousand plain people, mere babes and *βρέφη* by comparison, who come at the Kingdom by finding God.

The heavenly Kingdom came first in Bethlehem and at Nazareth. Later the Beloved was anointed King of it. Later still He was infieled and crowned, on Calvary and in heaven itself. In like manner, for us one by one, the Kingdom comes when Christ is formed in us—when the Holy Ghost is come upon us and the power of the Highest overshadows us. Then, later in his path, a man comes upon his cross: takes up the Lord's yoke and learns of Him, reads the meaning of Gethsemane and Golgotha, and of what these show us of Immanuel and of the Kingdom that now is. Where the King is, there is the Kingdom = so much we know, and little more. But we know that the Kingdom is within us if Christ dwell in our heart, for where Christ is He reigns.

Christ is the truth of the Kingdom of heaven—Christ is the life of it—Christ is the way into it. Men ask how it was that the apostles came to drop mention of the Kingdom from their gospel; but St. Paul preached the Kingdom in preaching its King, Christ and Him crucified.

To as many as receive Christ He gives a right to become children of God, and they are born of the will of God into the Kingdom—begotten, born into the family and household, put among the children of God. The King's children are made free of the Kingdom, but more than this is theirs—the heavenly City also, and their Father's House; because they are of the Son, of His flesh and of His bones: Christ Himself is theirs: all things are theirs. God has a Kingdom and a people, but, first, God has His Son and them that are in His Son, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones: of one Body, of one Spirit, with His Son. The King's people and the King's children—the Kingdom and the Church—are not one thing. And the Kingdom is only coming. It is,

in fullness, no one's possession as yet on earth. It is ours to seek, and to seek first: hardly as yet, to possess. But the Church, such as it is, is a present thing.

2. 'The Kingdom of God' must include all things in which God has epiphany, as, for example, the true, the good, the beautiful, and an order of beings in whom the Divine is manifest, so ordered that as a whole and in its ordering the mind of God and His reign are visibly expressed. His presence fills it—He is all, and in all.

'Heaven' is the presence and reign of God in these gathered ordered beings to whom God is all, in whom He can dwell, in whom He is manifested, and whose chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him.

We conceive that such the Kingdom is in heaven above and that such the Kingdom will be here, when it is 'come' in earth as it is in heaven. The Kingdom of God is the reign of God, that reign embodied and expressed and perfected, with all lives gathered into it—in the end a literal 'all' gathered into it; except only what 'cannot' have a place there because, like these tares of the parable, not of or from God but contrary to Him and evil.

The reign of God is (so far as is known to us) universal except in earth; and in earth a presence and a reign of God are visible, discernible, in almost all things that show change and have movement, growth, life: for example, well-nigh fully in young children. It is not only in hours when we are thrilled and carried out of ourselves by the rare experience, but any day, in common daylight, that the Kingdom may shine out for eyes that see—in a schoolroom, in a sickroom, in the car where two men talk. 'Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush on fire with God': humanity no less is crammed with heaven—those natures specially in which the hidden leaven of the Kingdom is at work. The War showed us this of our men, Christless so many, but not Godless.

The Kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened. The Holy Spirit is this woman.

The Kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. The Sower is Christ—the field is the world. The field is not the Church but the world.

The Kingdom of heaven is a sphere in which

the Holy Spirit operates in a living way, as leaven in dough, as seed in soil. The Kingdom is for man a matter of righteousness (and joy and peace) in the Holy Spirit. From the earth the Holy Spirit can only produce a flower or a wheatfield, but from human hearts He can bring love, joy, peace, and, more slowly, other fruits besides. In nature the Spirit of God moves and works certainly, freely, but in humanity laboriously, uncertainly: none the less the Spirit has now a lodgment within human nature, and works therein by a slow ferment as of leaven, to change this dough and make it wholesome. That also was shown us in our citizen soldiers; for the *graces* are evident tokens of the Holy Spirit. On both sides in the War the ancient virtues were plainly to be seen, but, on our side, the *graces* were as visible as the virtues, and two of the three *graces* were as generally manifest. It was this that captivated Donald Hankey and others with a good surprise; not, alas, 'righteousness and joy and peace' in the Holy Ghost, but yet 'love, joy, peace,' the first fruit of the Holy Ghost. For the men of whom we think were rather of the Kingdom than in it: 'other sheep' than they of the very flock of Jesus, whom yet He will bring, and in that Day will set, as His, on His right hand; and He will say, 'Inherit the Kingdom, ye blessed of my Father.'

The Kingdom of heaven is our despair so long as we think of it as the Church or as co-extensive with the Church—sowing, as we do, live seed to see it snatched up or its life choked or withered three times out of four. But in truth the whole world is a field for the Kingdom and no seed is altogether wasted: no sowing, no husbandry. One is always seeing among the stones and thorns some sickly twisted growth of wheat. God's word at no time returns to Him void—some work it always does, and some accomplishment comes of its working.

'Christ being come,' we see in operation among men two new works, both of a living effect. The first of these is personal to our Lord, and gives to our eyes the vision of the mystical Christ on whom angels ascend and descend, the Head in heaven, feet (tired feet) in earth. It is the one body of the one Spirit, with Him who is the Head of this body the Church—it is the vision of Christ and His 'glory,' 'the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.' And all of this is personal to the Christ of God.

In the other work—which is general, world-

wide—less is effected, but over a larger superficies: in kind as in degree this work differs from that other, and it works slowly, gradually, and without observation, but its range is unlimited. The prince of this world, the strong one armed, is no longer now in power, nor are his goods in peace: now much rather he raises local insurrections or plays the part of an incendiary. There are still kingdoms to subdue for God, powers and authorities to put down, and Christ must still ride forward conquering and to conquer; but now there is no other on earth's throne, and, because men know that there is no other, Christ's Kingdom waxes. Though He be to them the unknown God, men set up His altars: things new are being written on their hearts, and they, without the Gospel, do according to the Gospel. All through the world Christ sees good seed growing—'children of the Kingdom,' to themselves unknown as such. Deep in mankind as a whole the leaven of the Kingdom ferments, and what was sodden dough is changing toward wholesomeness. 'A woman' who is the Church, the Holy Spirit in the Church, is responsible for the hiding of that leaven and for what comes of it. Such is this other work—secondary, derivative, on a lower plane: yet, for its vastness, as blessed as the first and not less a joy in heaven.

There is a salvation in the passing of men out of vegetative life to movement of thought, movement of heart—any movement out of self and the automatic occupation of suction and digestion. 'The longest step to heaven is out of one's own door.' There is some passing out of Death into Life wherever brotherly love is showing itself, as it showed in the comrades of the war. 'I know, for I have felt': the dead do not feel. God is love, and love is of God. To love the brother is half-way to sight of God, and it takes a man to that place where our Saviour met the scribe, 'not far from the Kingdom of heaven.'

3. One knows so little. Yet, in spite of commentators that work round to the exposition they desire, He who gave us parables of the Kingdom Himself interpreted some of them and put into our hands a clue to His thought of the Kingdom. In the Parable of the Leaven He said of the woman, that she hid it in the meal 'till it was all leavened'—'all.' And concerning the Parable of the Tares He said in plainest words, 'The field is the world': not the Church but the large world of mankind. And this is striking: the field brings forth whole-

some grain as you would expect God's world to do, and what else it grows is not of God and is poisonous. As our Lord interprets the field, so too He interprets the good seed and the 'tares'—and the contrast is not between believer and unbeliever, between faithful servant and unfaithful, between children of God, beloved and His imitators, and other men lukewarm and careless with the world in their heart. *The field is the world*, and you have, there, on the one hand the sons of the Kingdom, doing righteous things and comparable with a Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah (as named, He 11<sup>32</sup>)—and you have on the other hand sons of the Evil One; Satan sowed them—men not human, 'wicked.'

To reach any clear view of our Lord's teaching here it seems necessary to distinguish, clearly and definitely, between the Church of God and the Kingdom of God.

The Church as a society is the discipleship of Christ; in the world, not of it—called out from the world, and separate to God; and our Lord's relation to the society is that of a lord and master to his servants and of a shepherd to his flock. Again, the Church as an organic unity, 'one thing,' alive through the indwelling, informing spirit—is a vine of which Christ is root and vine-stock, is a body of which Christ is both the Soul, the vital principle, and, in relation to the organism, its Head. The Church is Christ's fullness, that which Christ fills and which fulfils Him. The parables of the Church are then such as those of the Good Shepherd, of the Virgins wise and foolish, of the Servants good and not good, of the Vine with its branches not all fruit-bearing. In the hour of His return Christ will reckon with the men identified with Him, not according to their works but according to what they are or are not—and they that are found His and in Him will be openly acknowledged, *οἱ τοῦ χριστοῦ*, and shall not come into judgment: ideally, they are set with Him in that day on His judgment-throne.

The *Church* would say to Christ—'Thou, Lord, hast made us a Kingdom and priests to God and Thy Father = Thou hast brought us within, through the veil, as priests to the Ark of the Testimony and to the Mercy Seat and the Presence of God—and within the Father's House thou hast brought us, as very children of God, to the bosom of the Father.' But the children of the *Kingdom* would say to Christ—'Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered or

athirst or a stranger or sick or in prison? when saw we Thee?' Christ is with these men as their neighbour through the wall, or across the landing = Christ looks forth on them through eyes dim with illness, tears, age; and every street and stair has His footprints—without recognizing Him they meet Him often. Often too they minister to Him, but it is all in sheer goodness of heart, not from religion—that is to say, not in conscious personal devotion and religion. They only see the brother their fellow, and are moved by the wish to help—'you to-day, me perhaps to-morrow, and anyhow for certain you to-day—so here is help': they act thus without a thought of Christ, but Christ's hand is out taking everything as done to Him or given to Him. 'I will repay, saith the Lord.' He loves these men and their honest good hearts: the Father's they are, and in the end the Father will give them to their Saviour—all these, all such—'our brothers for whom Christ died.'

That is what our Lord seems to tell us when, leaving parable for allegoric prediction, He speaks of the non-Christians, of the nations, of the pagan world; and speaks of their judgment-day and of Himself as set on the throne—a throne which, however, He does not call a judgment-throne but, as it is in truth, 'the throne of His glory': for, listen—This is He who on the Mount declared the blessedness of the merciful, for that they would obtain mercy, and now from His throne, as He who died for *men*, He fulfils that word—they obtain mercy. So too with the poor and with them also who, whether rich or poor—in flocks and herds or money, are 'poor in spirit'—caring not for it, ready to give everything away, brothers in their spirit to the poor—'blessed are they, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' In the sermon on the mount seven good and honest hearts were blessed—not, as some take it, only one the 'pure' heart. The pure, the single-hearted, see God and pass straight into the Kingdom; but (though not in the same manner) others also are blessed of the Father, and are heirs of the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

These 'boys' of ours in the War, for example, believed in God, prayed to God, loved one another. Many of them did not know Christ, but Christ (we dare to say) knew them. They did not know, but they shall know—they are of these sheep which the King in that Day will separate to Himself as His; for when men that know not Christ do

Christ-like things (and at least as lovingly, and at cost as great, as any noblest pagan of them all) they show 'where they belong,' though in this life they be not following with us. I could wish to be as sure of entering into the joy of my Lord as they are of inheriting the Kingdom.

(4) One knows so little and nothing yet as one ought to know it. There would seem to be men proud, hard and wicked—tares for whom the Husbandman accepts no responsibility—it is a mystery unsolved, insoluble, the mystery of the bad, the unacknowledged, the enemy's progeny (since his children they are to whom they are like and whose works they do). But all human men are our brothers 'for whom Christ died.' Too often with us the Gospel is reduced and enfeebled, to make forgiveness conditional on faith and repentance; whereas, according to the Gospel of the first days, man is forgiven absolutely, freely. By the sacrifice of Himself, by one sacrifice for sins for ever, Christ put sin away. That is the primitive Gospel, and it covers all men, and is 'the word of the Kingdom' which He likened to life-bearing seed: which being sown will grow, a man knows not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself—first the blade, and then (sometime, somewhere) the ear and the full corn in the ear. One thinks once more of the War and our fallen, of whom a

great number died in faith, but a number perhaps greater belonged less to the Church than to that field which is the world; but then, also from the world, God's angels are to reap Him a harvest. The field of the Kingdom is 'the world.' God has multitudes more besides them that have God—many, many souls besides those of the one household of faith—many 'cities' (our Lord seemed to say) besides the City of God, new Jerusalem. And Christ, besides His chivalry who ride with Him in white and follow whithersoever He goeth, has the rank and file of armies yet to be; children of the Kingdom, inheritors of the Kingdom. He is the inward light of every man that comes into the world; He is the glory of His people Israel; He is a light to lighten the Gentiles: He is *the Light of the world* and *the Saviour of the world*.

All flows from the altar of His sacrifice, all the hope for man, all the power of life to make man's hope come true. It is as in that vision of Ezekiel: life-giving waters which are not for the sanctuary alone, go down into the wilderness and seek the bitter sea, bearing with them the virtue of the altar; and lo, the waters of the sea shall be healed, and 'everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh . . . because the waters thereof issue from the sanctuary.'

## Contributions and Comments.

### A Note on Revelation xiv. 1, 5.

IN Dr. Rendel Harris' interesting article, in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for May, on 'Targumism in the N.T.,' he suggests that *ἄμωμος* in Rev 14<sup>5</sup> and elsewhere may perhaps be due to Gn 17<sup>1</sup>, 'walk before me, and be thou perfect,' *ἄμωμος*. In Alford's Gk. Test. the word in Rev. is taken to be a quotation from Ps 14 (Heb. 15)<sup>2</sup>, 'Lord, who shall sojourn in thy Tabernacle? and who shall dwell in τῷ ὄρει τῷ ἁγίῳ σου?' to which question the answer is, that it is the person 'who walks blamelessly, πορευόμενος ἄμωμος.' And it seems to me that this is the more probable origin of the language in the Apocalypse, since in Rev 14<sup>1</sup> the Lamb is standing on τὸ ὄρος Σιών, and the *ἄμωμοι* with him, so that the passage in Rev. may be

taken as a fulfilment of that in the Psalm. Then the preceding words in Rev., 'in their mouth was found no lie,' would answer to 'speaking truth in his heart.' We may now put the two passages side by side.

Ps 14 (15)<sup>1, 2</sup>.

Who shall dwell in thy *holy mount*?  
He who walks *blameless*,  
*speaking truth* in his heart.

Rev 14<sup>1, 5</sup>.

The Lamb standing *on Mount Zion*, and with him those who are *blameless*, in whose mouth *was found no lie*.

It is certainly strange that neither Nestle nor W.-H. have made the foregoing reference. Nor is there any suspicion of it in Dr. Charles' recent work.

R. M'CORMACK.

Liverpool.