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UNDESIGNED COINCIDENCES.

These, it has been said, "involve a test of truth which is acknowledged almost instinctively, by the human mind, and which every day's experience serves to strengthen and to impress; a test which advocates are always glad to seize upon and to urge whenever they have it in their power, and judges and juries are not less ready to acknowledge; and no one who observes the state of his own mind, or that of others, in the reception of evidence, can shut his eyes to the fact, how much more strongly coincidences, which come out accidentally, and are free from all suspicion of collusion, prevail in the establishment of a fact, than the most exact agreement in the points, which would naturally have presented themselves beforehand as prominent features of the story, and necessary to be fitted and shaped by those who were fabricating a falsehood."

A few of these coincidences, gleaned from the numerous collection made by Paley and Blunt, will be sufficient to show that the Bible is its own witness.

Thus, in his account of the crucifixion, St. Matthew tells us that "the soldiers smote Jesus with the palms of their hands," saying, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?" And in this challenge there seems nothing very difficult. There is apparently neither force or meaning in the insult, if Christ had the offender before his eyes. But when we learn from St. Luke, (xii: 64,) "the mob that held Jesus blindfolded him," before they asked him to prophesy who it was that smote him, we discover what St. Matthew intended to communicate, namely, that they proposed this test of his divine mission, whether, without the use of sight, he could tell who it was that struck him.

All the evangelists agree in telling that when the high priest's officers came out to arrest Jesus, Peter drew a sword and smote off a servant's ear. And yet both St. Matthew and St. Mark agree in relating that Christ's persecutors sought all sorts of evidence against him, so as to make out a case before the Roman Governor, they could procure none. But is it not very strange that when the high priest had within his own palace such a striking proof of the violent character and dangerous designs of these Galileans, he should not have called as a witness his own wounded servant? Had we possessed no information beyond the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Mark, this would have been a flagrant difficulty. You say that the whole effort of the priests was to prejudice against Jesus, as a seditious and turbulent character; but they could substantiate nothing. Why was not this recent and conclusive witness forthcoming? Especially, when Jesus said to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, they would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews," why did none of his accusers reply, "Yes, but your servants did fight, and

one of them has inflicted a wound on the sacred person of the high priest's servant?" Because, as we are informed in St. Luke's Gospel, this wound was healed by Jesus immediately after being made, and to have produced this witness would only defeat their own plans, the instantaneous healing of the ear being direct and positive proof of Christ's power to perform miracles.

In St. Matthew (viii: 16,) we read that when the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick. But why was it evening when they brought to Jesus these demoniacs and sick persons? From St. Mark (i: 21-33,) we find it was the Sabbath day, and from St. Luke (xiii: 14,) we find that the Jews thought it sinful for "men to come out and be healed on the Sabbath day." But we also know that the Jewish Sabbath ceased at sunset; so that when the evening was come, the people would feel no scruple in bringing their afflicted friends to Jesus to be healed. But observe how far we have to travel before we can complete Matthew's simple statement. He merely mentions that it was in the evening Jesus wrought these cures; and had we possessed Matthew's narrative alone we might have laid no particular stress upon the time of day. But we go on to Mark, and find that it was the Sabbath evening, "when the sun was set." And we go on to Luke, and find, though in a totally different connection, that these Jews would have thought it very wicked to carry the sick, or accept to cure on the Sabbath.

Again, the Evangelist, St. John, tells us, (vi: 5,) that on one occasion, when surrounded by a weary multitude, Jesus said, "whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" and in putting this question, he addressed himself to Philip. But John hints no reason why he should have put this inquiry to Philip, rather than to any other Apostle. Luke, however, mentions (ix: 10,) that the place was a desert, near to Bethsaida; and John himself happens to have mentioned, in the opening of his Gospel, (1: 44,) that Bethsaida was the city of Philip. And laying these three isolated passages together, we see how natural it was to put the question, "Where is bread to be bought?" to one acquainted with the neighborhood. Had we not possessed St. John's Gospel, we should never have known that such a question was asked; and had we not possessed St. Luke's Gospel, we should never have seen the special propriety of asking it of Philip.

Of these latent harmonies of Holy Scriptures, Dr. James Hamilton has unanswerably said: "It is just because the particulars are so minute that the coincidence is so valuable. They are just such trifles as a true historian is apt to omit; and just such trifles that a fabricator would never think of applying. These delicate agreements of one evangelist with another, show that their story is an extract from the Book of Truth;

a leaf from the volume of actual occurrences—a derivation from a counterpart original. And though all coeval literature had perished—though all the external confirmations were destroyed, though all the monuments of antiquity were annihilated, strong in its intrinsic truthfulness, the New Testament will still hold its lofty place—a tower of self-sustaining integrity. And though the efforts of enmity were to succeed as they have signally failed—though learned hostility were to undermine its documentary foundations, and blow up that evidence of manuscripts and early versions on which it securely reposes, so finely do its facts fit into one another, so strongly are its several portions clamped together, and in the penetration and interfusion through all its parts of ultimate inspiring Authorship, into such a homogeneous structure has it consolidated, that it would come down again on its own basis, shifted, but in no wise scattered.

Such a book God has made the Bible, that whatever theories wax popular, or whatever systems explode, "the Scriptures cannot be broken."—*Rev. H. Tullidge.*

Good Enough for Home.

BY AUNT MARJORY.

When I met Mattie Simmons at her cousin's in Philadelphia, last winter, I thought her one of the neatest, prettiest, brightest girls I had ever seen. She would come into the breakfast-room in a nicely fitting dress, a jaunty white apron with pockets in it, and a primrose tie, with a smiling face to set them off. Whenever you met her, her toilet was *comme il faut*, and her manners were lovely.

But lately I paid a visit at Mattie's own home. What witch-work had wrought a change in my darling? She wore the most slipshod shoes, the dingiest wrap-pers, and the most soiled and twisted collars. She hardly took the trouble to say good-morning when she came down stairs.

"Has there been a fire?" I inquired.

"No," was the astonished reply. "Has Mattie's trunk been lost, or have burglars got into her closet?"

"Why, certainly not."

"Then, Mattie dear, where are all your pretty clothes gone?"

"O, they are all in the house, I think old things are good enough for home, Aunt Marjory." A great many young ladies are of Mattie's opinion. They consider anything fit for father and mother to see. They take no pains to be beautiful and attractive in the household. And then they are surprised when their brothers think other boys' sisters nicer than themselves.

A girl's dress and a girl's behaviour at home can hardly be too carefully designed. There is a brusque candor about home-folks too often, that makes it harder to be good there than to be good on a visit. But the daughter is the silver clasp of the family circle, and she should never forget that it is her privilege to look pretty, as well as her duty.

WASHINGTON AT HAVERHILL, MASS.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" exclaimed President Washington, in 1789, as riding into the town of Haverhill, his eyes caught an extended view of the Merrimack. It was Autumn. The trees seemed jeweled with rubies and gold, and the stream went winding away, like a ribbon, amid the unnumbered gems. "Haverhill, said Washington, is the pleasantest village I ever passed through."

His eye was feasted with a continuous picture of forest-crowned hills, dreamy valleys, shadowy woods, and sparkling waters.

It was in Haverhill, that Washington made himself so delightfully loving and familiar with the children. It is a pretty story to tell in these centennial times.

All was excitement in this old Revolutionary town. Down the mill had galloped a horseman, bare-headed and at full speed, sounding a trumpet, and calling, "Washington is coming! Washington is coming!" The tones of the village bell confirmed the great news. School was dismissed; the people filled the street with hearts beating for joy.

The children, especially, hailed the "Great Washington" with delight, and gazed upon him with awe as he passed. Among the children who called upon the president were two little misses about eight years of age, named Mary White and Betsy Shaw.

"And how do the little misses do?" said the president, pleasantly taking one upon his knee; which of you will mend a glove for me?"

Each was eager for the honor and the glove was neatly repaired. In payment for the service, Washington gave them both a kiss. The delightful children told their companions, who were immediately inspired to seek similar favors. So two more came to Washington's door, and knocked timidly.

"Will you let us kiss your hand?" asked they.

"I will exchange kisses with you," said the smiling president to the joyful little beggars.

After Washington retired he heard the loud cries of a boy below. He inquired what the boy wanted, and was informed that he wanted to see General Washington.

"Bring him up to the room," said the general.

The boy was brought, but seemed quite disappointed at the sight of the president, whom he had regarded as a sort of a Hercules. He stood for a few minutes in bewilderment, when Washington took him to his side, affectionately, and said:

"I am George Washington, my little lad, but I am only a man."

The Best Time.

A very dear only daughter lay dying. She had been a thoughtful, praying child, having professed religion at twelve years of age and lived a devoted and useful life. Now she was only waiting a few hours to go home. Severe pain at times almost took away the power of thought. Between

these severe attacks of suffering she looked back on her childhood's experiences, and forward into the blessed future, with equal clearness and joy as she said: "There's a delightful clearness now." As I sat by her bed, we talked as her strength would permit. Among the many things never to be forgotten she said: "Father, you know I professed religion when I was young, very young—some thought too young—but oh, how I wish I could tell everybody, what a comfort it is to me now to think of it." Reaching out her hand—the fingers a realy cold—and grasping mine, she said with great earnestness: "Father, you are at work for the young. Do all you can for them while they are young. It is the best time—the best time. Oh, I see it now as I never did before. It is the best time—while they are young—the younger the better. Do all you can for them—while they are very young."—*Exchange.*

Contentment.

We do wrong when we despise our work on account of its lowliness. Imagine a grumbling coral insect in the far distant Pacific; if endowed with speech and discontented with his obscurity, he might complain as he toiled, "What is the good of my activity? My diminutive form is lost in the infinity of ocean; I am buried deep beneath the wave; and my work is of the feeblest character and of the small bulk. I give it up." But he knows not that, in concert with millions of his species, he is creating an impassable barrier in mid ocean, and, by the formation of islands, is recasting the surface of the globe. Our work may be veiled by the waters of obscurity, and we may sometimes be discouraged by the little we can do; but this thought shall cheer us, that with our band of brother-workers we shall, by the blessing of God, recast the moral condition of the world. Contentment with whatever position the Master gives us is not only a guarantee of effective service therein, but one of the best preparatives for the higher and broader departments of work.—*Rev. W. Norris.*

When Philip Henry, the father of the celebrated Commentator, sought the hand of the only daughter and heiress of Mrs. Matthews in marriage, an object was made by her father, who admitted that he was a gentleman, a scholar and an excellent preacher; but he was a stranger and "they did not even know where he came from." True, said the daughter, who had well weighed the excellent qualities and graces of the stranger, "but I know where he is going, and I should like to go with him; and they walked life's pilgrimage together.

How honored would that reluctant father have been, could he have foreseen that his daughter would be the mother of Matthew Henry! And how different would be the world's estimate of men, if they were Judge less by their origin; and more by their destiny! There is one pride of family highly commendable, there is another pride of family, ineffably contemptible.