

**THE STUDENT'S HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN
THEOLOGY.**

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ATTENTION READER

This book has been scanned as carefully as possible in 2007. The integrity of each page was very important. We preserved the content and page numbers except for the below mentioned reasons. There are no editorial changes to the text. NONE! Only three changes were made, spelling, Roman numerals, and page numbering. An example of spelling changes are, *Saviour* to Savor and *recognised* to recognized. Also changed were the Roman Numerals to regular numbers. The page numbers now appear at the bottom of the page instead of the top left and right corners. These were done to assist the modern reader. However, there was some difficulty with the formatting of the index, “texts referred to and explained,” “systems referred to, and their tents described in this volume,” and finally “authors referred to, and their character and works described” at the end of the book. These pages were very difficult to maintain. Nevertheless, except for an extra page or two, the information was not change nor edited. It simply was expanded to another page when needed. As you can see, these were formatting changes and not textual changes. Except for the above, there were no attempts to change or edit grammar or anything that Rev. Fields said. NONE!

THE
STUDENT'S HANDBOOK
OF
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

BY THE
REV. BENJAMIN FIELD.

NEW EDITION.

*EDITED, WITH EXTENSIVE ADDITIONS,
BY THE REV. JOHN C. SYMONS,
OF THE AUSTRALASIAN CONFERENCE.*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE REV. L. TYERMAN.

*NEW YORK: PHILLIPS & HUNT.
CINCINNATI: CRANSTON & STOWE.*

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW EDITION.

MR. FIELD'S "HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY" needs no commendation. For eighteen years it has been before the public; and twenty-three thousand copies of it have been sold. There is no better compendium of Divine truths, as expounded by John Wesley, than this. Mr. Field takes Methodism's first two theological tutors as his guides; and, in doing this, he has acted wisely and well; for, as teachers of *Methodist* doctrines, none of their successors have excelled them. Mr. Field's doctrinal definitions are comprehensive and yet pointed. They are singularly free from what is superfluous, and yet always intelligible; while the Scripture texts adduced in proof of them are irrefutable. From first to last, the author exhibits great calmness of mind and soundness of judgment. The book evinces, very extensive and well-chosen reading. Its style is simple, terse, and lucid. Taken altogether, it is an exceedingly valuable production, and worthy of the clear head and Christian heart of its writer; and has been of great service to a large number of class-leaders, local preachers, candidates for the Methodist ministry, and others.

My business, however, is not to write a critique on the book of Mr. Field, but to make a few remarks respecting the emendations and additional notes of the Editor of the new edition now introduced to the reader's notice. The Rev. John C. Symons has no more need of a puff than has the

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Rev. Benjamin Field. His literary ability is well known, especially in the colonies of Australia; but a brief statement of what he has done in this new edition of the "Handbook of Christian Theology" can do no harm, if it does no good.

The book consists of twenty chapters; Mr. Symons' emendations, with the exception of a few useful footnotes in subsequent pages, are wholly confined to the first five chapters.

Mr. Field's excellent chapter on "The Existence of God" has been omitted, and another on the same subject, and also an "Introductory" one, on the sceptical theories of the age, both by Mr. Symons, have been inserted in substitution. Regret may be felt at the loss of Mr. Field's chapter; but since his book was first published, in 1868, there have been such mischievous developments of the various forms of Rationalism as to make it, perhaps, desirable, if not important, to deal with them more fully than was done by Mr. Field nearly twenty years ago. In the present edition, Pantheism, Agnosticism, Positivism, Secularism, Materialism, Deism, and Atheism are all carefully defined by Mr. Symons; and in Chapters I. and V. are very ably refuted.

Chapter II., on "Divine Revelation," has been greatly enriched by Mr. Symons' really learned notes, which indicate a course of reading, on this important subject, that Biblical students cannot follow without immense advantage to themselves.

Mr. Symons' added notes on "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures," though not numerous, are valuable.

In the chapter on "The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity," there are nearly five pages of new matter, on "The Nature and Attributes of God," which Mr. Field's book greatly needed; and there are also an equal number of pages introduced on the Resurrection of Christ, as the "crowning proof of the Divinity of His Person and Mission." All this new matter is important, and displays great ability.

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In Chapter V., on "The Creation of the World," about six pages of new matter are introduced on the "Modern Theory of Evolution." In these pages Mr. Symons presents a careful statement of the pernicious errors now so prevalent. I have nothing more to say, or, at least, nothing more need be said. Mr. Symons greatly loved his friend Mr. Field, and has taken no unwarrantable liberties with the book he has newly edited. When the two friends meet in the kingdom of heaven, Mr. Field, we incline to think, will thank Mr. Symons for improving his "Handbook of Christian Theology."

L. TYERMAN.

STANHOPE HOUSE,
CLAPHAM PARK, S.W.
January 6th, 1887.

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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE REVISED EDITION.

AT the earnest request of the proprietors and publishers of Field's "Handbook of Christian Theology," I have undertaken to prepare a new and revised edition. This work has been performed amid the pressure of duties which could not be put aside, and under, conditions which it is due to myself to state.

These were, 1st, That any additions or changes should be homologous in style and character with the work as published by Mr. Field;

2nd, That such additions as I might make should be limited so as not to increase the price of the volume.

By the use of smaller type for the notes than in the previous edition, and thirty-six additional pages, the quantity of matter in this revised edition has been considerably increased.

I have done my best to comply with these conditions. How far I have succeeded I must leave others to judge. Yet no one can be so sensible as myself, that I have not been able to realize the ideal which I had set before me.

The circumstances under which the late lamented author prepared the first edition in 1868, he has told in the introduction (p. 27). The work met a distinctly-felt want, and has been received with well-deserved favor. The first edition in Melbourne, of two thousand copies; was exhausted in less than a year. Of the English edition twenty-three thousand copies have been sold; and the sale regularly keeps up. Commercially, therefore, there is no reason for a new and revised edition, and its publication will involve a considerable financial sacrifice. It is, however, felt that the great changes in biblical and scientific criticism, which have taken place since the publication of the previous edition, eighteen years ago, render it most desirable that these new phases and arguments should be considered and discussed. This has involved the rewriting of some portions, and additions--mostly in the form of notes-in other parts.

The following will indicate the alterations and additions which have been made; viz.:

1. An entirely new introductory chapter, relating to Theology, Religion, and the various theories of modern Rationalism and Scepticism.
2. A new chapter has been substituted for Chapter I., "On the Existence of God." This has been deemed necessary not because the arguments in the previous editions were weak or defective, but because the attack having shifted the defence must also be shifted. Modern scientific theories, under the guise of Positivism, Agnosticism, Materialism, questioning the existence of a personal Intelligent First Cause, necessarily called for a different treatment of the question from that adopted by Mr. Field.
3. Chapter II., "Divine Revelation," is substantially unchanged in the text, but has considerable addition in notes.
4. Chapter III., "The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures," is slightly abridged in the description of the principal theories opposed to plenary inspiration. What appears at first to be a somewhat important change, has been made in the use of the term "plenary," instead of "verbal," inspiration, in the closing pages of the chapter. But the change is more apparent than real. Mr. Field, though holding to the word "verbal," nevertheless inserted the following note:- "The reader should be apprised that there are divines who fully coincide with the views above given, but prefer the word 'plenary' as comprehending all that is involved in the term 'verbal,' and as being free from certain objections which they regard as attaching to the latter word." This note now disappears, together with one or two paragraphs in the text; and while the word "plenary" is substituted for "verbal," yet the views maintained remain substantially unchanged. Considerable additions have been made in notes to this chapter.
5. Chapter IV., "The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity," has received some additions on the Nature and Attributes of God; a subject which was only very briefly referred to in the previous edition's.
6. Chapter V., "The Creation of the World," has of necessity, received considerable additions and some alterations, arising from the objections to the Scripture record which modern scientific speculations have raised, and which required to be dealt with.
7. In the remaining chapters no change has been made, except the occasional omission or alteration of a sentence, not in any way affecting the sense. A few notes have been added.

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8. The Hebrew and Greek words are printed in Roman letters.

9. A copious Index replaces one which was-altogether too brief for practical purposes.

In the brief notice of Mr. Field, prefixed to the previous editions, I remarked: "It is hoped that from the sale of this volume some assistance maybe rendered towards the support of his orphan children." I am happy to say that this hope has been realized to a very gratifying extent. I trust I shall be pardoned if I add that I hope by the increased sale of this revised edition additional "assistance" will be rendered to Mr. Field's family.

I close my work in connection with this volume with the earnest prayer, that by God's blessing it may be increasingly useful to those for whose benefit it has been specially prepared.

JOHN C. SYMONS.

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA,
November 25th, 1886.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
THE REV. BENJAMIN FIELD.

WHILE this edition of the "Handbook of Christian Theology" was in the press, the mournful tidings reached us that its estimable author had been called to his reward. This event occurred in Melbourne, Australia, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health.

A very general, and certainly a very natural desire has been expressed to have some particulars of the life and character of Mr. Field prefixed to his work. The following brief and imperfect sketch is compiled, with a view of meeting-so far as time and opportunity enable me-this desire. *As I am on the eve of returning to Melbourne, it is impossible that I can prepare a memoir of any length of my friend; nor can I now engage with any one to do so.

Benjamin Field was born at Sevenoaks, Kent, of pious Methodist parents. He was their first-born son, and on the day of his birth was solemnly dedicated to the service of God by his father; who, for a long series of years, had been a useful and honored local preacher.

At five years of age he was sent to the Sabbath school, and, as his mind expanded, it was evident that he was under the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit. He was never addicted to the follies and vices which are so often associated with youth, but delighted in the means of grace: and when his father-as was his wont-retired, at midday, for private devotion, his son would noiselessly creep into the room, kneel down, and join in the half-heard expressions of praise and prayer. When left at home on a Sunday evening, he was in the habit of standing on a chair, to conduct a service with his brothers and sisters; and,

* I am indebted for most of the information to a paper in the Melbourne *Wesleyan Chronicle*, from the pen of the Rev. G. Daniel; and also some particulars furnished by Miss Field, of Sevenoaks.

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according to the testimony of the servant, would preach as good a sermon as a minister. "When scarcely twelve years old," he says, "the Spirit that I had so often grieved came upon me in all His enlightening, alluring, subduing, and almost constraining influences, and, with His light beaming on my soul, the world presented nothing but one scene of emptiness and vanity, and the religion of the cross was all-attractive. I heard the whisper of the Savior's voice, 'Seek ye My face;' and my heart replied, 'Thy, face, Lord, will I seek.' Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat; and among all the temptations incident to a young professor in that stage of his career, I was especially terrified by temptations to the follies and absurdities of infidelity and atheism; and had not my mind at that time been fortified with religious principles, and kept by the power of God, I should have been ruined-for ever ruined! But, supported by an unseen arm, I was shielded. I sought salvation with my whole heart. The first feeling of the morning was one of longing for Christ, and the last feeling at night was one of restlessness to obtain the hidden treasure. I could truthfully adopt the language, 'Mine eye runneth down with water; because the Comforter that should relieve my soul is, far from me.' But so great was the loving kindness of the Lord, that soon the cloud dispersed, and I saw His smile; and then, oh, then!

"Of my Savior possessed,
I was perfectly blessed,
As if filled with the fulness of God."

It is believed that his conversion took place in connection with the ministry of the Rev. T. Collins. From that period he became a diligent student of God's Word. From a very early age, and even before his conversion, he had the impression that he should become a preacher of the Gospel.

Now, he says that "thought was heightened to conviction, and I seemed to have a confident assurance that the Lord would make me an ambassador of His; and often, when the miseries of the heathen world were detailed, ... my heart burned to be there." This yearning desire soon declared itself, and was recognized by the elders of the Church, who, seeing the grace of God in the young disciple, recognized in him those mental qualities necessary for the efficient discharge of the important office. After his having been usefully employed as a Sunday School teacher, he began to preach-under the direction of the superintendent minister-amongst the cottagers in the villages surrounding his native town. He was then sixteen and a half years of age; and as his early efforts were approved, he became an accredited local preacher. Having been blessed with fruit of his labors, and those qualifications expected by the Church-viz., grace, gifts, and fruit-been thus seen as belonging to him, he was recommended for the work of the ministry by

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the March quarterly meeting of 1843, and was accepted as a candidate by the Conference. In June he was employed in the Guildford circuit as a hired local preacher; after which he entered the Theological Institution, Richmond. There he laboured assiduously, was a diligent student, and his "profiting appeared unto all." For the venerable men—the Rev. Thomas Jackson and John Farrar—then at the head of the institution, he ever entertained profound respect and regard; cherishing towards them the feelings of affection due to fathers, to whom in any circumstances of perplexity he could ever apply with fullest confidence. "How thankful," he says, "I feel for three years" residence in our institution, under the kind and efficient tuition with which we are there favored! I have been more fully satisfied of the infallible truth of the Bible, have received more enlarged perceptions of the doctrines it reveals, and see more clearly the consistency of the doctrines and discipline which, as a Methodist preacher, I—am called to enforce, with the leading principles which it embodies. And, above all, I am more deeply and permanently impressed with the need of a right state of heart, in order to bring men to the enjoyment of its glorious blessings."

At the close of his term at the institution he was appointed as a missionary to India. I am informed by one of his fellow-students that his appointment to India did not accord with his judgment or his wishes; these led him to believe that he should be employed in the home work. He was solemnly set apart, by the imposition of hands, to the work of the Christian ministry, at Richmond, July 2nd, 1846. None acquainted with the habitually reverent and thoughtful frame of his mind would suppose that he could pass through so solemn an ordinance but with a spirit deeply chastened, subdued, and prayerful. "I feel," he says, "the circumstances to be the most solemn and momentous which I have ever seen. I remember that I stand as one who into receive an appointment and ordination to an office, than which none bears so close a relation to the glory of God, the honor of the savior, the salvation of the saints, the prosperity of the Church, and the welfare of the world. And this causes my spirit to sink within me; and I can only propose the question, which I have often proposed in anticipation of this period, 'Lord, who is sufficient for these things? . . . I left the chapel, deeply feeling the responsibility of my position as one who had, before heaven and earth, made an avowal of consecration that was to be complete and lasting."

One short week in London, in preparation for the voyage, and then he says, "I went to Sevenoaks to take final farewell of friends, many of whom had known me from my infancy, and with many more of whom I had often been blessed in seasons of private intercourse, and in the services of the sanctuary. We had often spoken of the final separation, and had often been told of the 'pang of parting,' but not the half had

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been told."Referring to this, when afterwards recording in his journal, he says, "While I write, my heart bleeds afresh, retaining, as I do, a vivid impression of a father's looks, of a sister's tears, and, above all, of a loving mother's cries; from all these, with a broken heart, I was obliged to tear myself away." He preached his last sermon before leaving home, and parents, and family, from "None of these things move me," etc.

July 31st; 1846, in company with the Revs. T. Glanville and J. Morris, on board the ship *Macedon*, he sailed for Madras. The new and untried life on board ship was, as usual, somewhat irksome, and he records, "Never before did I so fully comprehend the meaning of the psalmist's cry, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord."... Yet,"he says, "there are pleasures in worshiping God on shipboard...; The thought that, in this way, we have communion with the 'whole family in heaven and *in* earth,' is peculiarly pleasing." With his characteristic method and earnestness he applied himself to self- improvement, devoting the mornings to the study of the Canarese language, and the afternoon to reading the Greek Testament, with Bloomfield's Notes; Paley's Works, and such biographies as M'Cheyne's, Mrs. Cryer's, and others. Notwithstanding that, he records, "I find a seafaring life is to me so irregular and unpleasant,... producing great weakness of body and depression of mind." Yet such was the ardor of his attachment to reading and study, that he writes, "I have just finished Mosheim's History in 6 vols.," which is followed by three pages of closely written critique and reflection. His' earnest longings for growth in the Divine life are manifest by the setting apart of the hours of nine and five for devotional reading of the Scriptures and prayer, in connection with which exercises he observes, "How much of blessing do I daily realize through having praying friends at home. Lord, bless them! ...want more of the power of godliness. 'Indulge me, Lord, in this request.'" For the souls of those who were voyaging with him he evidenced a yearning love. At the commencement of the voyage we find him laying down rules for his own governance, that his "walk may be so circumspect" that he "may be" able at any time to speak with any about salvation, without a blush." The effect of the Word preached upon the minds of the sailors was carefully watched, and when he is able to record, "One of the sailors came to me to-day, to say how much he and his companions had felt under my sermon," he exultingly adds, "Glory be to God!"

The voyage to Madras occupied four months, and at its close Mr. Field thus comments:- "Reviewing the seventeen weeks, the most prominent feeling of my soul is gratitude. All lives have been red.... To myself the voyage has been a positive blessing. During the whole time I have retained a lively and sometimes a depress-

ing sense of the high responsibility of my position, and of my utter unfitness, apart from the grace of God, for the fulfilment of the ministry among heathen people. I have had opportunities for reading, which I greatly needed.... We have had opportunity, whenever the weather permitted, of collecting the sailors together on Sundays, and offering to them the salvation of God, but it is a humiliating thought that three Wesleyan missionaries should have spent four months among men ignorant of God and of a Savior, without having evidence' of one being' enlightened and saved. If I have been deficient in duty, can only say, as the time is gone for ever, Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation."

His entrance upon the scene of his future mission labors excited all the ardor, sympathy, and devotedness of his spirit. "I felt," he says, "as though I could weep my life away: it seemed such an overwhelming consideration that one so unworthy, who had desired and prayed from infancy to be employed in distant lands, should now be entering on a scene and country which has been an intolerable burden on the hearts of the pious for a succession of ages! Now (thought I) I have to live, labor, perhaps to die, here! The entire future is hid in dark obscurity except as it is enlightened by the promises of a covenant-keeping God. The Lord shall have me, body, soul, and spirit ; and if He can employ me in any way to accomplish the purposes of His mercy, I will say, Amen: do with me as seemeth Thee good."

His first station was Goobbee, in the Mysore country, at which he arrived some three months after reaching India. In a few months he had acquired sufficient knowledge of Canarese to enable him to commence holding short services with the natives, and was looking forward to a period of earnest and successful toil, when, in the order of the 'mysterious providence of God, he was suddenly stricken down;' in a few days the raging fever had completely prostrated him,' and no doubt his constitution received a shock from which it never recovered. At first his medical attendants predicted a speedy recovery, and regarded the attack as merely the ordinary seasoning; but attack succeeded attack, and it quickly became apparent that he was soon to swell the number who are sent to mission stations with every qualification except the primary one of physical adaptability to the climate, and who either succumb at once, and fill an early grave, or, at great expense and suffering, have to return to more temperate climes. The Neilgherries (Indian Blue Mountains) were tried, and a residence of some weeks brought partial restoration; but a return to the lowlands was followed by immediate attacks of fever. Madras was reached, and by the advice of his friends, medical and ministerial, a voyage was undertaken to Cape Town; and this was ultimately extended to his native land.

At no period of his life was he robust, but his Indian sickness gave a

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shock to his constitution which it never recovered. Having been partially restored to health by the long sea voyage, and by partial rest at the home of his youth, he was directed by the missionary committee in London to proceed to Paris, where he labored until the ensuing Conference, under the superintendence of the late Dr. Charles Cook, whose paternal counsels and kindness deeply impressed him. Returning to England, he was appointed to his first English circuit, Chatteris, in Cambridgeshire, in 1850; to Luton, 1853; Bradford, 1856; but his health was unequal to the climate, and in 1858 he removed to Hackney; from thence to City Road in 1861; and finally to Penzance in 1864, in the hope that its milder climate would be beneficial. During those years he was becoming increasingly known and respected as an able expositor of the Truth, an eloquent platform speaker, a diligent, kind hearted pastor, a painstaking friend of youth, a man of literary taste and ability, and, above all, as a devout and humble Christian. Many passages in his carefully kept diary, through all these years, indicate the progress made in the Divine life his constant growth in grace. Through much weakness he labored on with diligence and perseverance, his aim was high, his purpose unfaltering, and his success great; often appearing before large and crowded audiences when his strength was scarcely equal to the task of carrying him to the pulpit, and returning to spend a restless, feverish night from sheer exhaustion. In connection with such circumstances we find such records as this: "How a Sabbath seems lost when affliction prevents the full outburst of the soul! "In these various circuits many were the tokens of Divine and human favor with which he was blessed; and many the recorded instances of extensive awakenings and genuine conversions in connection with his ministry. During his residence in the Bradford circuit, in 1857, he became so seriously ill that for some months the general impression was that his active labors were at an end. During this time he writes: "Still moving on in full work, but consciously unfit for it. Most of all I sorrow that in time of health I have been so unfaithful to God to Whom -I had plighted my vows. No language can describe the deep depression of mind with which this time of affliction was attended... Another Sabbath of quietness! When I saw Mr. Nye go into the I pulpit, I could not refrain from tears! But why should I weep? I know the Lord hath done it, and that it was all ordered for my good,; but God only knows how I love His work, and though I will not murmur at the arrangement which lays me aside, I cannot fail to regard it as a deep and heavy trial." A residence at a hydropathic establishment for some weeks was productive of so much benefit that he was enabled to return again to his circuit and fulfil his appointments to some extent. At the ensuing Conference, to the great grief of the officers and people connected with that circuit, he made up his mind to be directed by his medial advisers, and

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go towards the south. The next six years were spent in London in much weakness, but with very marked success; and then, still acting under advice, he removed to Cornwall, and entered upon that which proved to be his last English circuit Penzance. Here the Lord appears to have ordered his labors almost immediately upon his entry upon the work of the circuit; and, with exultancy of spirit, he records the first token for good in a remarkable ease of conversion at Mousehole, "where, it is said, there has not been a single case of conversion for three years past." Dark and inscrutable are the movements of Divine Providence, however! Months elapsed, and then the entry was concerning another removal in search of health, this time to Australia. His last public act, which closed his ministry in England, was a sermon on improvement of the death of the late Rev. Robert Young. At the close of the sermon and the account of Mr. Young, he records, "I addressed the large congregation thus: "Brethren, I close my sermon, and with it my ministry amongst you.... When fifteen months ago I came amongst you, it was with a deep and sincere desire to promote the work of God: and I will not suppose that what I have done has been all in vain. I rejoice to be assured that the Lord has been working amongst: us, I hope that the arrangement which takes me away from the midst of you is of God. I have earnestly prayed for Divine direction. I would not for the world go in any path which the finger of God does not point out; but if He appoints me to go even to the farthest verge of the green earth, I am willing to go and bear the cross of separation from much loved friends and even much loved children. Whether my health is to be perfectly restored, as some predict, or whether I am still to suffer, I know not; I am glad to know my times are in His hands Who doeth all things kindly and well.... My earnest desire is that my supply may be far more useful than I could have been, and that my colleagues, with you, may have a year of blessing. Brethren, pray for us."

The kindness shown him by friends when thus called to lay down his charge, and leave his native land, is recorded with evidence of deep feeling, and, with earnest prayers that the Lord would reward them abundantly.

Monday, December 11th, 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Field, leaving their dear children behind them, embarked on board the *Highflyer*, at Gravesend, bound for Melbourne, where, after a rather tedious voyage, they, arrived on Friday, March 16th, 1866. The Rev: John Eggleston and myself were the first to welcome them; we boarded the ship before she anchored, and this little attention deeply impressed them: it was on their part altogether unexpected. For the friends who received them and showed them kindness in the land of the stranger, Field records his high esteem and his earnest prayers: and, surely, seldom has kind attention been more needed or better bestowed. Seldom does the Lord permit any

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of His children to exemplify the power and sufficiency of His grace amidst fires so fierce as those which kindled around this devoted servant. Seldom does He call, even as an example for the Church, His suffering children to exhibit the "blessedness of the man that endureth" under such scenes of reiterated and severe trial and discipline. Stroke fell upon stroke. It is a remarkable coincidence that on the very day upon which he entered Hobson's Bay, and almost the first news which fell upon his ear, was the appalling intelligence of the loss of the *London!* -that the first public service he ever attended in Australia was that one at which the sorrowing Church publicly acknowledged the chastening hand of God in the removal of the lamented D. J. Draper! and the first intelligence he received from England was the death of one of the dear children he had to leave behind him! No wonder that he records, "It seemed as though God had deserted us-as' though He were leaving us to wander in the world without a comfort; but," he immediately adds, "we rouse try to cast away these desponding thoughts, we know that they are wrong! Blinded by our tears, heartstricken with our loss, and unable to penetrate the mystery of the dispensation, we would take up the psalmist's words ' I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it.'" Referring to the service just alluded to, he says, "Never did the doctrine of a Divine and special providence fall more pleasantly upon the heart than on this occasion. . . . I shall not soon forget the impression made upon my heart by the singing of that beautiful hymn

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

It is not surprising that Mr. Field should at this time have been the subject of considerable depression. He felt that he was useless, because he could not preach. He had a passion for preaching, and this, for the time at least, made him overlook any other mode of usefulness. I suggested to him the preparation of a Handbook of Theology, expressing my conviction of the great need of such a volume, and that the author of such a work would lay the Wesleyan Church under great obligation. I urged him to undertake the task, promising him all the aid in my power, and engaging to take the responsibility of its publication. After some consideration and consultation with other ministers he commenced the work. How well he performed it I need not say. In the pursuit of health, and in accordance with the wishes of some old and dear friends, he removed, shortly after his arrival, to Sandhurst, and, to the pleasure and profit of the friends in that circuit, was able to enter into an arrangement with their Quarterly Meeting to take appointment per week in one or other of the churches. Referring to

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This engagement, he says: "What pleasure it would be to me if I could at least take two services each Sunday! then I should feel that I was doing something to purpose; but I scarcely dare hope that I shall ever again have strength for that, and must feel thankful if I can for a little longer preach once" This foreboding seems not to have been realized; yet with much weakness, often to the amazement of those who witnessed it, he continued to fulfil his engagement. Finding a residence at Sandhurst was not productive of the benefit he had hoped, he returned to Melbourne, where he shortly after received the intelligence of the death of his sainted father. Of him, he writes: "So closes the earthly career of my father! Few men have had a more quiet, monotonous life. He had been a local preacher for fifty years, and maintained in every relation of life the most unflinching integrity."

At the commencement of 1867, Mr. Field accompanied the ministers attending the Conference to Tasmania. Whilst enjoying the opportunity of meeting some whom he had known in years gone by, and of association with the leaders of our Israel, the passage to and fro was productive of great misery, and he returned thoroughly prostrate. The first sermon that he heard after his return was upon the thorn in the flesh. He says: "It was to me a time of many tears. I could not but feel how I carried about a thorn—a piercing thorn in my flesh; but oh, I can bear it without a murmur, if God vouchsafe the sufficient grace."

Subsequently he visited Geelong and Colac, and of the kindness and hospitality experienced from the friends at both places he speaks in the highest terms. Whilst at the latter place, his mind was much exercised in reference to a projected arrangement by which he seemed likely to be separated for a season from his beloved wife. It had been partly arranged that he should spend the ensuing winter at Sandhurst, leaving Mrs. Field for a season with kind friends in Melbourne. This, he says, was presenting itself very painfully, ... and I was greatly drawn out in prayer that the God Who careth for us would provide, for us a suitable home, ... when an invitation came from the Richmond Quarterly Meeting for me to spend the winter in Hawthorn, taking one service on the Sabbath, and leading a class during the week. ... I was satisfied it was provided by the Lord.... To-day we have arrived at our house, and I anticipate great comfort in it." Little did he think of the dreadful trial that was shortly to befall him there !

Thursday, July 4th, 1867, thus he writes: "This morning, at quarter past ten, my precious Catherine passed away for ever! I could not help indulging the secret hope that, even at the last, when skill and care had done their utmost, God would interpose and have mercy upon her, and not upon her only, but upon me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. If tender sympathy of friends, and earnest prayers from the Church, could have kept her alive, she had not died I But the decree had gone

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forth, from which there was no appeal, I am a widower once more—a lonely, desolate widower, with two infant, motherless babies the last only twenty-one days old! Qh, this is an awful day! Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as—a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upwards. O Lord, I am oppressed : undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my days in the bitterness of my soul.... Map God sanctify the dispensation! Oh, I do hope I shall be holier for this heavy trial! Dear Kate once said, "Let us, both; get better, and live to God as we have never done. Her opportunities are past! Surely I shall fulfil her desire."

Though thus crushed in spirit and broken in health, he continued to labour on. He had now taken the charge of a candidate for the ministry, whose studies he directed, making it matter of earnest prayer that he might be able to direct him aright; and finding a kind of melancholy pleasure in an undertaking by which his "painful solitude was relieved." He was likewise busily engaged, completing the work, "Handbook of Theology," upon which he had been employed through all his trials and sufferings during the past twelve months. He evinced a lively interest in everything which concerned the welfare of the circuit with which he was now identified, and many there remember with gratitude and pleasure, not only his valuable pulpit exercises, but his visits to their homes, and the kindly sympathetic advices there tendered. Ofttimes he mourns over his want of devotedness to God and His cause; complains of him self for allowing his troubles so to depress him; and stirs himself up by the remembrance of the many mercies still continued. But there is no moroseness, no peevishness, no stoical indifference, no cynical complaining. Thursday, September 24th, 1868, he writes: "My fear is realized at length. I have been struggling on with my preaching engagements, hoping that my voice would improve. But last night, while preaching at Hawthorn, I resolved that I would try no more till I could get through a service with something like comfort. No one can tell what I have suffered in my few last efforts, and instead of gaining attention foamy subject, the minds of the hearers have been drawn away in pity for me. After trying to preach last night from Gal. 2:20, I left with a strong conviction that my public work was done. God knows whether it is so or not. But oh, how thankful I should be if I could see a way of getting bread without attempting that for which I have now become so unfit!" Again the providence of God undertook for His poor suffering servant. An arrangement was entered into by which he removed to the occupancy of the "Home Cottage," and took charge of the Wesleyan Chronicle during my absence to visit England for a year.

On Sunday evening, May 30th, 1869, he writes: "Can it be possible—that so many months have elapsed since I made an entry here? I have

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only attempt to preach four times since September 24th, 1868, and I have now no hope that I shall ever resume my public work. But great changes have occurred since last I wrote. Then I was at Hawthorn; but in the March we came to take possession of Home Cottage, Carlton, while Mr. Symons was in England, whose visit may probably extend over twelve months. I also undertook the editorship of the *Wesleyan Chronicle*, and was truly thankful at having such a means of employing my solitary hours, and of extending an influence for good throughout the colony, My heart burns with anxious desire to make this paper, so long as it is in my hands, a religious power amongst us. But my coming here has not been unattended by suffering. On the 15th of April I attended a breakfast meeting given in the Albert Street Baptist Church schoolroom in honor of the Rev. Mr. Clarke who had just arrived from England to take the pastorate of that church; and I took a violent cold which kept me shivering all the time I was there. This resulted in a low fever, and though I kept about for a week, everything I did was with great difficulty; and on April 22nd, a walk to Dr. Guntz's house in Collins Street brought on a slight attack of pleurisy. At once I was perfectly prostrate. I went to bed, and remained there: several days, not in the least expecting ever to rally. I never felt so sure of death's being at hand as then; and I was led to inquire, 'Is all well? Are my feet upon the Rock?' For two days there was a kind of inward struggle. 'May I,' I inquired, 'commit my soul to the great atonement just as I am, without any more deep feeling than I now possess?' But in the middle, of one wakeful night the Blessed Spirit came forth to glorify Christ by revealing to me the fulness and sufficiency of the Savior's merit. I saw, as I scarcely ever saw before, that the propitiation He offered was full, perfect, and sufficient; that it could not be otherwise as presented by Him. But, in connection with that, I saw that the Eternal Father was so well pleased with the oblation of His Son, that He had set Him forth-yes, Him bath God set forth' in the holy Gospel as a ground of hope, a way of access, a source of salvation to the whole race of sinful man; and all that was required of me was that I should accept of Jesus as my Savior-take 'Him as revealed in the Gospel-and commit the keeping of my soul to Him as one who was' faithful and just' to forgive, sanctify, and lift up to heaven. Oh, what light and power accompanied these revelations to my heart! How I did rejoice to have' such a Savior, and to cast myself in humble faith upon His infinite merits! During, the night my brain reeled, and I thought I saw devils pass out of the room saying, with a smile of satisfaction, 'We will come for you again.' I replied, 'Not-while Jesus is near. In fact, from that glad hour Jesus became my all in all. I wanted to hear of nothing and to talk of nothing but Him. And I pray God that I may retain the blessed influences of glorious revelation till the hour of death. I am getting better now, but

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the shortness of my breath, the cough, the expectoration, etc., tell me it is not for long. But I am not troubled. If I may but live to God, and glorify Jesus by my pen, and be the means of good to all that call upon me, and then pass peacefully to heaven-that will be a glorious finish to an unworthy life."

His last entry in his diary was made Sunday evening, June 13th, 1869. "My Willie's birthday! It seems utterly inconceivable that two years can have elapsed since I was in the midst of my great trouble, and that after all that I have passed through I can be so happily circumstanced with my children about me. I do feel devoutly thankful, and upon my bended knees I have been telling my God and Father that I will praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that is to come."

Writing to his father-in-law, June 18th, Mr. Field says: "I here with post you another number of the Chronicle. I forget whether I have told you that the minister who is the responsible editor of it is in England for a few months, and has left his editorial duties with me. And this is a specimen of my work in my new capacity. Now that Providence has deprived me of all power to preach, or speak in public, I am thankful to have means by my pen of doing good through these columns. And I pray most earnestly that the articles which I write or select may be the means of blessing to hundreds who read the paper.

"I have been very ill since I last wrote to you. I took a serious cold which settled upon me in the form of low fever, and brought me very near eternity. I had no thought of recovering. But I had such a glorious manifestation of Divine mercy to my heart. The great atonement was unveiled before me in all the fulness of its merits, and I felt that I could without a fear commit my everlasting all to the hands of Him Who loved me and gave Himself for me. Oh, what happy hours were those as I lay prostrate with weakness, but 'looking to Jesus'! I sincerely hope that in your last hours, if you are favored with reason and memory, you may have a similar blessing. For five weeks I have been gradually improving, and now when quiet at home am scarcely conscious of anything wrong.... I am very jealous over myself, less with returning strength I should lose any measure of that blessing which I enjoyed in my illness. Even in my quiet, solitary life, where the greater portion of every day is spent quite alone, I find the need of constant watchfulness and prayer to keep up the fervor of spiritual life. I would be always walking with God, maintaining the faith of the heart in pure and uninterrupted exercise. All my sympathies, afflictions, and desires are with things spiritual and Divine. And I trust that through Him Who 'liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore,' I shall find an entrance through the gates into the city."

One night, shortly before his death, he was awakened by a violent fit of coughing, which was followed by considerable haemorrhage. His

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faithful attendant was soon with him, and found him bathed in blood. Looking at her he faintly murmured, "It is come at last!" Medical aid was sought, and again death seemed to ungrasp his fainting prey. A few days of perfect quiet, and he was again able to rise from his bed, and engaged in what had now become an interesting employment to him, preparing for the next number of the Chronicle. On the evening of Wednesday, September 1st, he assembled his little ones around him for the last time. After tea, as they were retiring, one observed, "We will have tea together again to-morrow night, won't we, papa?" He briefly but significantly replied, "We must only live one day at the time." With a friend who called to see him he conversed cheerfully and hopefully during the evening, and 'then shortly after ten o'clock requested that a portion of Scripture might be read to him, and the 335th and 336th hymns in the Wesleyan collection. He then retired to his room, and had been in bed about half an hour when he was heard to knock for assistance. His housekeeper and son were immediately with him. The haemorrhage had returned. There was a minute or so of apparent consciousness, and then the freed spirit, liberated from his frail suffering companion, bid a final farewell to trials, disappointments, and distresses, to weakness and weariness, to anguish and tears, for ever.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors."

The funeral took place on Saturday, September 4th. At two o'clock the procession accompanying the body moved from the "Home Cottage," Carlton, to Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, where, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, a large congregation, sufficient to fill the body of the spacious church, had assembled, anxious to testify their respect for the lamented deceased. The Rev. J. Bickford, superintendent of the circuit, read portions of Scripture from Psalm 90 and I Cor. 15., after which the Rev. J. S. Waugh, chairman of the district, gave out a portion of the fifty-first hymn, delivered a short address, and offered prayer. The body was then removed to the hearse, and the funeral cortège, which was a very large one, again formed, and moved to the general cemetery. Upon arrival at the cemetery, the Rev. John Eggleston read portions of the burial service, and the body was lowered into the grave in which repose the remains of the late Mrs. Field; after which the Rev. George Daniel gave out two verses of the forty-first hymn, and engaged in prayer. After a sorrowful glance at the adjoining grave, in which lie the remains of the lately martyred Rev. W. Hill, silently and sadly the company dispersed, with thoughts in many cases, doubtless, raised to those scenes

"Where glorified spirits, by sight,
Converse in their holy abode;

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As stars in the firmament bright,
And pure as the angels of God."

On Friday evening, September 10th, a funeral sermon was preached in Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, by the Rev. J. Bickford. The church was well filled, most of the Melbourne Wesleyan ministers being present, and many of the friends by whom Mr. Field had been known having come in from miles around the city. During the reading of the obituary notice many a breast heaved with deep emotion, and the tears of genuine sympathy bedewed many cheeks.

Mr. Field was a man who by his piety and earnestness was very successful in winning souls to Christ, and was greatly beloved. I have received numerous testimonies to this in various parts which I have visited in England. I never met with any one who, coming an entire stranger as he did into a strange land, so fully and so quickly gained the affection and love of the people; and surely, no one was ever so kindly and affectionately treated as he was by the Victorian Methodists. His unmistakable piety, his love for the cause of God, and yearning for souls, his superior pulpit abilities, his physical weakness, his accumulated sorrows, all conspired to draw towards him the warmest sympathy and Christian benevolence of all who knew him. Before the publication of the Handbook he had written a memoir of his sister, Mrs. Martin, of Sevenoaks; and also an admirable little tractate, "The Penitent's Enquiry," which has had a large circulation both in England and Australia.

Mr. Field was married twice. One son, about eighteen years of age, of the first, and a daughter and son, both very young, by the second wife, are left orphans. By the care and aid of their relatives, and the contributions of their colonial friends, they will be provided for. It is also hoped that from the sale of this volume some assistance may be rendered towards the support of the orphan children.

JOHN C. SYMONS.

LONDON,

December 24th, 1868

INTRODUCTION

THE present work owes its existence to the following circumstances. The writer, under the pressure of physical weakness, was' laid aside from the work of the itinerancy, in which for twenty years he had enjoyed many blessings, and, as he would humbly hope, had led many a soul to the enjoyment of the great salvation. On arriving in Australia; in search of health, it was suggested to him by the Rev. J. C. Symons that a pleasing and profitable occupation of his leisure hours would be the preparation of a work especially designed to benefit young students, whether Sunday School teachers, local preachers, or candidates for the ministry, who have few books and little time for reading, but who yet are anxiously desirous to understand "those things which are most surely believed among us," and to see the scriptural proofs by which they are sustained. On the subject being mentioned to other ministerial brethren, it was agreed by them all that such a work was greatly needed, nothing having yet appeared that seemed exactly to meet the requirements of the class above indicated.

To this task, therefore, the writer has devoted himself. His aim has been to give, in the simplest language, a summary of those grand and essential verities which are comprised in the Theology of the Wesleyan Methodists. All our standard authors have been consulted, and their definitions and arguments quoted, or their teachings summarized, as seemed desirable for the elucidation of the subjects in hand. And as no one can fully appreciate the proofs upon which our Theology is based, unless he has an acquaintance with the heresies that have sprung up in the Church, a brief account of those heresies and their advocates has been presented in connection with the doctrines which they have aimed to subvert. The form of question and answer has been adopted for the purpose of simplifying and bringing into prominence each particular point that is deserving of attention.

Some who peruse the book may, perhaps, regret that the passages of Scripture referred to are not given at length. It is conceded that in that case the book could have been read much more quickly, but whether

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with greater benefit is very doubtful. It is an indescribable advantage to one who is beginning the study of Theology to have his own Bible at hand, to search out every passage for himself, and to ponder its bearing upon the doctrine for the confirmation of which it is quoted. The time lost by this method is far more than compensated by the deep impression which the truth has made upon the mind; besides which, the memory soon becomes a Scripture "concordance," furnishing in an instant the chapter and verse of any particular passage that may be discussed. The writer would earnestly advise every young student to try this method for himself, and he ventures to predict that in less than twelve months he will be surprised at the amount of Biblical truth that is indelibly written upon his mind.

It is probable that some of the readers of this book may be looking forward with anxiety to an examination before a Church Court, preparatory to their being admitted into the ranks of local preachers or ministers of the Wesleyan Church, and the writer would gladly afford them a brother's helping hand. What is to be done that such an examination may be passed creditably and with success? Most earnestly would he recommend that no pains be spared in order that every subject be thoroughly understood. It is humiliating to see the memory "crammed," while the understanding is dormant. Employ the memory to its utmost extent for the correct quotation of God's Holy Word; but rest not satisfied without the clearest apprehension of every doctrine discussed, and of every definition given. He would also advise that the present work should be regarded as but introductory to the perusal of our great standard authors. As time and opportunity allow, read with all possible diligence the works of Wesley, Fletcher, Watson, Bishop Pearson, etc., and thus lay up a good foundation against the time to come.

Every superintendent of a circuit and chairman of a district has his own particular mode of presenting the questions for the examination of young men. But there is little variety as to the subjects introduced. And if the candidate be prepared to give prompt, brief, intelligent answers to the following questions, supporting them with appropriate Scripture proofs, all things being equal, the result need not be feared

1. Define Inspiration.
2. Quote those passages in which the Bible declares itself to be inspired.
3. What are the direct evidences in authentication of the Bible as a Divine revelation?
4. What are the presumptive evidences?
5. What are the collateral evidences?
6. Define the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. How does this differ from Tritheism?

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How does it differ from Sabellianism?

How does it differ from Arianism? Who was Sabellius?

Who was Arius ?

7. Quote a few passages which clearly teach the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.

8. What is the outline of evidence to prove the Divinity of Christ?

9. Quote a few of the most striking passages that teach this doctrine.

10. What is meant by the Divine Sonship of Christ

11. How is this doctrine proved from Scripture?

12. What is the meaning of the word "Person"?

13. What is the outline of evidence to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit?

14. Quote a few of the most striking passages that teach this doctrine.

15. What is the outline of evidence to prove the Divinity of the Spirit?

16. Quote a few of the passages that teach this doctrine.

17. What was the image of God in Man?

18. What do you understand by "Original Sin"?

19. What do you understand by hereditary guilt?

20. Prove from Scripture that guilt is transmitted from Adam to his posterity.

21. Prove from Scripture that man has a depraved nature.

22. Prove that this depravity is universal.

23. Prove that this depravity is total.

24. Prove that it is transmitted from Adam.

25. What is redemption?

26. Prove that the death of Christ was strictly a sacrifice for sin.

27. Prove that the death of Christ was universal in its provisions.

28. What is repentance?

29. How is your definition supported by Scripture?

30. Is repentance the gift of God ?

Is it the act and duty of man?

31. What is saving faith?

How does Mr. Wesley define it? What is Dr. Bunting's definition?

32: Prove that faith is the gift of God and the act of man.

33. What is justification?

How does Mr. Wesley define it?

34: Prove from Scripture that it is substantially the same as pardon.

35. Does it not signify more than pardon?

36. What is adoption

37. Under what aspect is God regarded in the blessings of pardon, justification, and adoption?

38. What is the witness of the Spirit?

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What is Mr. Wesley's definition?

39. What is regeneration?

How does it differ from justification?

40. Justification, the witness of the Spirit, and regeneration are received at the same moment; but is there not, in the order of thinking, a succession of one to the other? and between the two latter is there not a relation resembling that of cause and effect ?

41. What is the witness, of our own spirit?

42. What is entire sanctification ?

43. Is this attainable by all believers in the present life?

44. May a Christian believer fall from grace, and be lost?

45. In the general resurrection, will the same body, in the popular sense of the term, be raised again?

46. Will the punishment of the wicked in the future state be strictly and literally eternal ?

47. Is the Christian Sabbath a Divine institution of perpetual and universal obligation?

48. What is a Sacrament ?

49. How many sacraments are there?

Such an array of questions may appear somewhat alarming to a young man who has but just began to study Theology; but no one is fitted to be an expounder and a teacher of the Word of God who does not clearly understand, and is not prepared to defend, these momentous truths. There is, therefore, no time to be lost. The whole powers of the mind must be turned to, the Bible, and to Bible truth. The leisure hours of night and morning must be carefully improved for the one great object of making you "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Prayer, earnest, persevering prayer, must be daily offered up to God for the light and influence of the Holy Ghost; and you will find, what thousands; have found before, that prayerful, plodding industry will be crowned with the effectual blessing of God.

Young men, my labor is now commended to you. My prayer is that it may help you in your first efforts to grasp the truth and to make it known "to others. And to each one who reads, these pages I exhort:—"Meditate upon these things; giving thyself, wholly to them, that thy profiting may Appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this .then shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

HAWTHORN, VICTORIA,

October 20th, 1868