

The Witness:

AN UNFETTERED MONTHLY JOURNAL

OR

Biblical Literature, Expository Papers,

Notes of Addresses, Conference Reports,

Questions and Answers, Intelligence,

Poetry, Correspondence, &c.

EDITED BY

JOHN R. CALDWELL.

NEW SERIES.—VOLUME II.

OVER ONE HUNDRED VALUABLE PAPERS FOR THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

GLASGOW:

THE PUBLISHING OFFICE AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE DEPOT,
HY. PICKERING, 180 BUCHANAN STREET.

LONDON: JAS. E. HAWKINS, 17 Paternoster Row, E.C., and 36 Baker Street, W.
DUBLIN: 10 D'Olier Street. BELFAST: 44 Ann Street. MELBOURNE: 179 Collins Street.

1892—22ND YEAR.

To Our Readers and Friends.



T is with much thankfulness to God that we record anew His faithfulness in enabling us to conduct *The Witness* for another year.

“Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

We are conscious of much weakness and imperfection, and it is our desire that its pages might be greatly more helpful to the children of God than they have hitherto been.

We look forward confidently to the year upon which we shall soon enter—if it please God that we continue in the place of testimony on the earth,—counting upon the same mercy and help of God that has hitherto been our support.

Difficulties and perplexities increase on every hand, and more than ever we need the “Wisdom that is from above.”

We therefore beseech remembrance in prayers, by all those who have the glory of God and the edification of the saints at heart.

We desire to thank heartily all those who have helped either by articles or by answers to questions, or by criticisms whether favourable or adverse. The latter we especially value, though we could often wish that they were written in a more friendly tone.

We also thank all who have endeavoured to make *The Witness* more widely known, and thereby to increase its circulation.

We are frequently finding that there are meetings and districts where it is unknown, and in bringing it under the notice of Christians, many might render effective help.

JOHN R. CALDWELL.

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Registered Telegraphic Address—“WITNESS,” GLASGOW.

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THE WITNESS:

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

A WORD FROM THE ANTIPODES FOR 1892.

JOY, COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, PEACE.

REJOICE in the Lord alway; again will I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 4-7).

The tenor of the believer's life Godward should be an ever-flowing expression of thanksgiving, an effluence of spirit-joy. It lends wings to the soul, enabling it to soar above the turmoil and harassment of daily life; but its enjoyment and sustainment depend upon the measure of soul communion with the Father. When "in spirit," as John the beloved was in Patmos Isle, an environment of difficulty, of adversity and misfortune, so-called, doth but become an occasion for increased communion with God, "by prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving."

The incidents of the pilgrim pathway, whether of a joyous or of a grievous nature, are disciplinary, the outcome of tenderest love directed by infinite wisdom. They tend to develop and mature Christian character, thereby fitting and preparing the co-heirs of glory for their prospective spheres of dominion and rule in the revealed kingdom of the Lord Jesus. The trainage of the wilderness has for its object the transformation of the believer's moral character into the verisimilitude of the Lord Jesus' character; it constitutes the process of "growing up into Him in all things" (Eph. iv. 15), the "putting off" the earthly, the "putting on" the heavenly (Col. iii. 8-12); in other words, it is the processively increasing

domination of spirit-life over flesh-life—the spiritual over the carnal. And in proportion to this spiritual or heavenly sublimation will be the measure of the believer's service and testimony upon earth to the glory of Him, "whom not having seen, he loves"; and corresponding thereto will be the grade of the sphere of dominion which shall be allotted to him—the guerdon of his trustfulness—when "the proof of his faith shall be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 7).

In the realisation of this Scriptural condition of absolute trustfulness in the infinite wisdom, love, and power of the heavenly Father, the believer should enjoy unruffled calm amid all the vicissitudes of his time-life—"The peace of God passing all understanding, keeping, or guarding, his heart and his mind (that is, his affection and his intellect) through Christ Jesus." Such the fruition, when the believer, practically and daily, lives a "life of faith," "walks by faith, not by sight," commits his way unto the Lord, and trusts the providential faithfulness of his heavenly Father. Then, in his inner consciousness will he feel fully assured that "all things work together for good," that every incident of his life is of Divine permission, and is an expression of the Father's tender love, inscrutable though it be, co-operating one and the self-same thing, the evolution of the heavenly Father's "thoughts of peace and purposes of love." Such the highest type of the believer's walk on earth, because such the example left for his imitation by the Lord Jesus.

The Saviour's life was a voluntary coalescence *in* and *with* the will of His Father, which led him inexorably into those infinite depths of obedience and self-emptying which ultimated in His death upon the cross. The harmony of His life found expression in His own

utterances: "I delight to do Thy will, O My God;" "Not My will but Thine be done." The things which He suffered were the gauge of His obedient trustfulness. The instinct of His existence on earth was ever manifested in His self-abnegation. His words, "My meat (or food) is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work," spoken to the Galilean disciples, as wearied and worn He rested at Jacob's well, reveal the spirit-symphony existing ever unbroken between the Father and Himself, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, throughout His isolated Nazariteship from Bethlehem to Golgotha. And, similarly, when His disciples shall have attained to that same mind, then will they be willing in self-renunciation to follow Him, to take up His cross, to tread in the imprint of His feet, in the Scriptural apprehension of their true Nazariteship, separation unto God; then will it be their *joy* to do and to suffer the will of the heavenly Father, to accept the cup of suffering or of discipline from His hand, be it bitter or sweet, and drink it, trusting His love.

From this, it is evident that the highest phase of the life of faith is "joy in God;" and hence the exhortation, "Rejoice in the Lord alway; again will I say, Rejoice" (Phil. iv. 4).

The outflow of trustfulness Godward, is communion. Trustful souls, expatiating in all that the Scriptures teach of the "wisdom, love, and power" of the heavenly Father, must of necessity be drawn into communion with Himself; and then, as they realise and enjoy the unfoldings of the riches of His grace and of His glory, will they make known to Him all their felt needs, their sorrows and their joys, "by prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving." As surely as they do this, will "The peace of God, passing all understanding (intellectual comprehension), guard their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Thus shall all the faithful in Christ Jesus, living in the power of the Holy Spirit, experience Joy, Communion, Thanksgiving, and Peace, in the "house of their pilgrimage," and go on their way "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

W.R.V.

It *may* be faith which reckons on God when difficulties have to be faced, but it *must* be faith which still reckons on God, in spite of impossibilities.

THE CHURCH OF GOD: ITS FELLOWSHIP AND GOVERNMENT.

REVISED NOTES OF ADDRESS, GIVEN IN CONFERENCE HALL, BY JOHN R. CALDWELL.

BEFORE touching upon the subject for this evening, viz., "The Government and Fellowship of the Church or Churches," allow me to refer to the subject of last Saturday. It seems to me we have had very abundantly brought before us that aspect of the Church which is synonymous with "the body of Christ."

The term "body of Christ" is doubtless a figure, and wherever it is used the thought of vital union with the Head and with the fellow-members is prominent. The term "church" describes the same thing, but without a figure. As you have again and again heard, the original word for "church" is "ecclesia," and signifies "the called out," and properly, also, in a derived sense, "the called together." All believers have been called by God out of death into life, out of darkness into light, out from the power of Satan into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.

As these blessings are the common heritage of all believers, all are in that sense of the Church as well as of the body of Christ.

I would refer you to one passage—Acts xx. 28—in proof of this: "Feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." In this aspect the Church embraces all in this dispensation who are purchased by "His own blood." *

I fail to see certain distinctions that have been drawn between "the Church," "the Church of God," "the Churches of Christ," and so on.

It seems to me, as a simple reader of the Scriptures, that wherever the term "of God" is added to the word "church," there is a very definite and obvious reason for it. For instance, in the passage already referred to, responsibility is laid upon those whom the Holy Spirit had fitted for the work, to feed the Church of God—the Church, that is, of God as to its very origin, of God as the object of His love, of God as the purchase of the

* It is asserted that the word here rendered "purchased" ought to be "acquired." Possibly this may be a better rendering, but it in no way affects the point we contend for, that all acquired by the blood are in the Church of God in this aspect of it.

blood of His own dear Son. How immensely the addition of the words, "of God," adds to the importance of the work, and to the responsibility to do it well!

Take another instance—1 Cor. xv. 9—"I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the CHURCH OF GOD." Why not as in Phil. iii. 6, when referring to the same facts, "persecuting THE CHURCH"? In the former he is showing the heinousness of his sin, and therefore emphasises the thought that it was that which was *of God* which he persecuted, which God loved and valued, even as the precious ransom-price at which He bought it. In the latter passage it is not the heinousness of his crime that he is exposing, but the sincerity and blindness of his zeal. No need in that sense to emphasise the thought of its being "of God." And again, 1 Cor. xi. 22—"What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?" As much as to say, "Will you dare, by your foolish behaviour, to despise that which is of God, God's dwelling-place, God's blood-bought and Spirit-sealed temple?"

It appears plain to me that the reason why the words "of God" are added in each of these cases is not to denote some different thing from what would be denoted by the term "church," but to emphasise the particular thought which at each point is prominently before the mind of the writer.

I would now turn to another aspect of the Church, which you will find in 3rd John. The pre-eminence which Diotrephes loved and acquired evidently involved a tremendous influence over the consciences of the believers, by means of which he was able to carry with him, in his high-handed casting out of the children of God, probably a very large proportion of the Church. And it is evident that he was one who would tolerate no difference of judgment whatever. If any dared to receive the brethren whom he would not receive, he forbade them, and if they would not bow to his decision, he cast *them* also out of the Church. So he narrowed down the circle of fellowship until he carried everything his own way!

If, as many of us have long believed, the Second Epistles bear upon the "last days," surely the only THIRD Epistle brings us to the

very end, and shows what we may expect to see at the final stage of the Church's history upon earth. Very special is its voice to us at the present time. Never was there a time when more high-handed action was taken or higher pretensions advanced among genuine children of God. In this passage, "the Church" is recognised by the apostle at the same time that he acknowledges a number of beloved saints as being cast out of it. They could not be both in the Chuuch and out of it at the same time. Here we have one distinct and definite instance, showing that the Church is not only spoken of in the wider sense of Acts xx. 28—the Church of God as equivalent to the body of Christ—but that it is also spoken of in a local sense, a gathered company of saints, expressive of the great divine ideal—having mutual relationship and responsibility as such which they are bound in the Lord to own and carry out. It was, therefore, quite a possible thing for those who were "members of the body of Christ" and of "the Church of God" purchased by the blood of Jesus, to be outside of the local assembly.

It is in this aspect of the Church, wherein human responsibility comes in, that all our difficulties arise.

I would submit that what entitles any man to a place in the assembly locally, is the fact that he is of the Church purchased by the blood of Christ. I repeat it, that that which gives any man, *in the first instance*—"primâ facie," as the lawyers say—a title to be in the local assembly gathered unto the Lord's name, is the prior fact that he was a member of the body of Christ, and of that blood-bought Church in which God is to be glorified throughout the eternal ages.—See Eph. iii. 21.

But some will ask, "Where is this Church?"

Dear friends, we must face the great and sorrowful fact that the Church upon earth, as a corporate thing in testimony here for God, has utterly failed—utterly failed in testimony corporately; not individually—for in the darkest ages Christ had His brightest lights—but corporately.

God in judgment has permitted it to be corrupted, broken up, divided, and scattered like the temple of old, of which not one stone was left upon another.

Out of all this terrible confusion, God has been leading individual souls in these last days—here and there a few, at first tens, then hundreds, now thousands. Each one in the teaching and leading of His Spirit through the Word discovering the failure and ruin of the Church as a corporate witness for God, and owning his responsibility to the Lord, has been seeking his way back to the old foundation, to the original apostolic doctrine and pattern. They have sought to go where they could carry out His Word, having no appeal but the Scriptures, and owning no authority but that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Such is the position God is leading them into.

One is led to it through seeing how sectarianism divides the children of God for whom Jesus died that He might gather them into one (John xi. 52). Another is exercised in conscience about the mixing together of believers and unbelievers in what professes to be God's assembly.

But, however led, the result is that they find themselves together seeking in much weakness and ignorance, and yet with some measure of true-heartedness, to carry out what they have learned in the Word.

But all around is confusion. The world has become religious, and the children of God have become worldly, and are hand in glove with the world. Errors have been imbibed even by true Christians, from human traditions as well as doctrines of demons and satanic lies, such as annihilation and "the larger hope." Amidst it all, is there anything to guide us in the Scriptures?

Let us turn to 2 Tim. ii. 19. Here is a seal with two sides—a Godward side and a manward. The Godward side is, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." In Acts ii. to v. there was little difficulty in knowing who were His. "Of the rest durst no man join himself unto them." In days of persecution there is little difficulty; the chaff is driven away. In apostolic days, the local church at Jerusalem or Corinth embraced the very same circle as the membership of the body of Christ—I do not, of course, refer here to one put away by the Word of God for special sin—and it ought to be so still; but such is the havoc Satan has wrought in the corporate thing, that

now we cannot tell who are and who are not the Lord's, as once it could be known. Hence the word for these last days—"The Lord knoweth them that are His." That is God's side of the seal. What is ours?

"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ (or the Lord) depart from iniquity (or unrighteousness)." This is the call of God to us; and in departing from what God has shown us to be unrighteousness, we shall find that we are not alone. We shall find that others whom God has been leading step by step, here a little and there a little, light dawning gradually upon their understandings, are casting in their lot with us. One is attracted by the truth, another by the separateness from the world and the coming together of believers only, another by the Scriptural order and simplicity of the Spirit's leading in ministry and worship, and so on.

But the knowledge comes not all at once; and if you and I begin by demanding, as a condition of reception into fellowship, the intelligent reception of truths that took us many years to learn, this is making our terms of fellowship, and not God's, and building again the walls of sectarianism.

Many references have been made to the reception of Saul at Jerusalem. Sometimes too much has been made of it and sometimes too little—we are creatures of extremes—but this much at least to me is evident, the thing they did not know, and which they wanted to know, was *whether or not he was a genuine disciple*. Satisfied as to that, the way into the fellowship of the brethren was open to him. They had no morning newspaper or telegraphic news to inform them daily of what was going on at Damascus. Barnabas knew the facts of which they were ignorant, and his testimony was enough.

But 2 Timothy shows us that that would not be enough now. Many an eloquent preacher holds the non-eternity of punishment. Such should not be received; it is fundamental error.

Others hold grievous error as to inspiration of Scripture, atonement, regeneration, and other cardinal doctrines.

Others there are who can only be regarded as causes of division, who think little of sowing discord among brethren and breaking up

churches into fragments, if so be they can carry things their own way.

Looking at all that surrounds us, it is clearly not enough now to know that one is a converted person. It is necessary to know that he is sound in the faith as well as godly in his individual walk; in short, it must be known to those who receive him that there is no evil chargeable against him upon the ground of which Scripture would warrant his exclusion. Granted that the person is known to be a Christian—"a disciple"—and that there is nothing against him on the ground of which Scripture would warrant his exclusion, then, in the name of the Lord, we must receive him. I know no other ground, and I never did hold anything else since I left the denominations myself.

Once I held it to be a right and a privilege to bring any Christian friend I liked to break bread. It is long since I gave up that as untenable. The privilege I claimed for myself I could not deny to others, and so the door was opened for any amount of carelessness as to who were received.

I have sought to instruct others as to the reasons that led me no longer to do as I had done, but I have never sought to coerce others into what I believed to be the mind of the Lord, to compel others to act beyond their light and their faith, or to press the matter, important as it is, so as to cause bitterness and division.

I warn you, dear friends, against overstepping the Word of God. You may reason out a very fine theory, hanging it upon some single verse of Scripture, and get many to accept it who do not take the pains to prove it by all Scripture.

For instance, what a theory is spun out of 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26! Certain assemblies that have accepted certain doctrines are "the Church of God." All outside them is "the snare of the devil." Every connection and association outside the so-called "Church of God" must be repented of, and separated from, as "snare of the devil," before a believer, be he ever so godly, ever so ready to lay down his life for the Lord, and for what he knows of His will, can be accorded any measure of fellowship. Alas, may not those who hold such a theory, and ruthlessly force it upon

others, be themselves, though they know it not, in Satan's snare?

I confess I feel ashamed to lift up my head as I think of such doctrines being advanced, of the sorrow they are causing, and the stumbling-block that is thus cast in the way of many who would fain follow were they gently led onward into the ways of the Lord. The truth should be held in love, and love should be in the truth; but these have been divorced—what God has joined has been put asunder, and therefore the judgment of God is upon us.

I believe we ought to endeavour to have as much fellowship with every child of God as we can have without compromising the truth. One, as the Lord's servant, may feel liberty to go where another could not. One might feel free where another would feel that his position for the time was a compromise. It is not our province to judge one another in such things, but to pray for one another, asking God that servants of His, who go where some of us could not with a good conscience, may be used beyond even their own faith and expectation in leading children of God into light and love and liberty.*

I would now shortly touch upon the Church's government. Read 1 Cor. iv. 19-21, "But I will come unto you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" The apostles were empowered by the Lord Jesus Christ to enforce, if need be, obedience to that which was His revealed will. This power was entrusted to them, not in order to destruction, but for edification. I have heard an Irvingite—a member of what calls itself the Catholic Apostolic Church—say that they had apostles, and that "the signs of an apostle" in power and mighty deeds had been seen by him, even to the raising of the dead! I could only judge that the young man was labouring under a hallucination. I do not believe that any such power remains now. In implicit obedience to the Word of the Lord, we can put away from among ourselves those whom

* Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp from which Moses had gone forth. Did Moses forbid or denounce them? Read his answer in Num. xi. 29.

the Word of the Lord instructs us to put away, and we can and ought always to seek to be of one mind in so doing, that one may not be building up what others are breaking down, or *vice versa*.

But, I ask, if apostolic power is claimed, have we apostolic discernment? Have we apostolic patience? Have we apostolic grace? Are even Churches of Christ infallible? Are they not liable to make mistakes—fastening, perhaps, upon a troublesome brother the title “railer,” or “covetous,” as a pretext for getting decently rid of him? Are all other assemblies to be subject to such a judgment as that?

Differences do not, as a rule, arise as to a drunkard or a proved and admitted holder of non-eternity, but about dubious cases where evil feelings have been generated. Then, instead of patiently and in brokenness of heart seeking unto the Lord for oneness of mind and judgment, the cry is raised, as of old, by the woman who had not the mother’s heart, “Divide the child!” But the mother’s heart yearned over the object of her love. And we have to get this grace from the God of all grace even now, to yearn over the feeble, scattered sheep who are being fed with much that is not bread, and with scant measure of grace.

We need patience and love, as well as clearest, simplest truth ministered from and unto childlike hearts.

May God raise up among us pastors and teachers after His own heart. Men who shall be felt to be helpers and comforters every time they open their lips.

Brethren, have you cried to God for such? Rarely, if ever, have I heard this prayer.

Satan is busy. When walking along the streets of London I have seen men selling penny puzzles. I never yet found out one of these puzzles until some one who knew the secret showed it to me. It may seem a trivial illustration; but I tell you satanic ingenuity is at work to put into the hands of every assembly of gathered-out ones from denominationalism to Christ, a question to engender strife, a difficulty they cannot unravel, a satanic puzzle which they cannot unlock; and so they puzzle and puzzle, and wrangle and fight, till, patience exhausted, the attempt is given up, the cry is

raised, “divide,” and Satan has gained his end. Oh, may God open the eyes of His children to the subtlety of Satan’s devices for the spoiling of the testimony of every feeble company that God has gathered in these last days around His Son.

MY LITTLE CONCERN IN A CORNER.

AT a meeting of a few believers in Christ for reading the Scriptures, Eph. v. 19, 20 was dwelt on. A sister in the Lord (a spiritually-minded one) said: “I do give thanks, but why am I not always singing and making melody in my heart to the Lord?”

Answer was made:—“If I be not giving thanks always for all things to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the cause must be some little concern of my own in a corner”; which answer was afterwards shaped as follows:—

WHEN I was sitting in my filth and rags on my native dunghill, the Partners Three in a great concern in pitying mighty love beheld me, took me up, washed me, made me whiter than snow, and clothed me with goodly apparel; moreover, took me into their partnership, the affairs of which ever prosper—such the wisdom, the power, the wealth of those Partners Three, its riches all mine—upon these only terms, no wisdom, no will of my own.

For a while I had my harp always in hand, and *did* make melody to the Lord, but, alas! in an evil hour it came into my head to set up “a little concern of my own in a corner.”

This I did, and when with all its little rattling wheels it was finished, a bright brass plate on the door spoke to passers-by the praises both of goods and maker; but, ah! the notice should have been, “All manner of earthenware and brittle goods made here by

Messrs. Self-Wisdom, Self-Will & Co.”

While busy thus no harp in hand had I, but vexations many because of my little wheels ever breaking or getting out of order.

A voice in their breaking I heard, yet heeded not; I had forsaken my resting place, but was not forsaken. The same love and wisdom that sought me out in my poverty and made me rich, sent me deliverance.

What I foresaw not came to pass. From the throne in the heavens the commandment went forth, and He beneath whose feet are put

all things in subjection, brought His wheel of judgment over my little concern, laying it all in ruins.

I woke up, considered, repented, returned with confession meet for my folly to my former place, my place of rest, of joy, of wealth.

Self upbraided I was received without upbraiding, for, indeed, I had been longed for and looked for. My harp which Self-Wisdom had hung upon the willows, was now again in hand, nor has been silent since, but gives forth tones of deeper tenderness than heretofore, and of more solemn sound.

R. C. C.

CHRIST AND THE CRITICS ;
or,
Christ's Testimony to Old Testament Scripture
versus
So-called Higher Criticism.

By W. H. BENNET.

THREE was a time when, for all professing Christians, a distinct statement by the Lord Jesus settled any question. *Doctrines* may have been differently understood, *precepts* even may have been thought capable of more than one explanation; but a simple statement of *fact* was accepted fully and absolutely as from One whose Word was final. So long as this was the case, there was a definite barrier to the acceptance by Christians of certain teachings and speculations concerning the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament, which were originated in Germany, and in time spread to this country. It thus became evident that if these speculations were to make way, and the denials of the authority of the *Scriptures* were to be accepted, the force of the testimony borne by the Lord Jesus must be got rid of.

The principle, on which many have already acted, was definitely stated at the recent "Church Congress," that "the writings of the Old Testament must, of course, be judged by the ordinary standards of literary criticism." This method of dealing with the sacred books men have dignified with the name of *higher criticism*, thus distinguishing it from that valuable work of *textual criticism*, to which some godly and learned men have given themselves. Before this idol of higher criticism, which is in no sense *superior* criticism, the claims of the Son of God must give way. It matters not how plainly the Lord Jesus may

have spoken on any point; if His words do not agree with the verdict of this higher criticism, they must be set aside that this may stand.

As an example of what we mean, let us take Psalm cx. Concerning that psalm, the words of the Lord Jesus are these: "David himself said, by the *Holy Ghost*, *The Lord said unto* my Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore calleth Him Lord, and whence is He then his Son?" For centuries all who had any respect for the Lord have felt that whatever question there was as to who wrote *some* of the psalms, there was no question that David wrote Psalm cx. But certain critics, who call themselves *Christian* teachers, say it is all a mistake, David never said anything of the kind, for instead of the psalm being written by David it was not written till nearly nine hundred years after David's death, and instead of its having reference to Christ, it was "in the fullest sense a glorification of Simon Maccabeus." This is the verdict of Professor Cheyne, who further asks, "Who else can be meant but Simon?" So in the "Commentary for English Readers," edited by C. J. Ellicott, D.D., the writer on the Psalms refers Psalm cx. to the period named, and though fully admitting that Christ "quotes it as the divinely-inspired utterance of David," he makes the following statement: "But it is now, even among the most orthodox [! !],* an admitted fact that, in matters of literature and criticism, our Lord did not withdraw Himself from the conditions of His time, and that the application He made of current opinions and beliefs does not necessarily stamp them with the seal of Divine authorisation." That is—to put the matter plainly—the statements of the Lord, concerning all things connected with the Old Testament, are not to be received, unless they are borne out by the deductions of the higher criticism.

It is not our purpose to dwell upon the general results of this method of dealing with Scripture, but rather to show that the principle above enunciated destroys the very founda-

* Can the writer be ignorant of the fact that men whose learning is equal to that of those whom he follows altogether disallow his statement? If he is ignorant of this, the editor could not be, and it is a solemn thing that Bishop Ellicott should send out such poisonous teaching under the shelter of his respected name. He himself protests against such teaching; but how could he give it a place in a work which he edited?

tion of everything—denies the Godhead of the Lord Jesus, falsifies all His teaching, and robs us of the consolation we may derive from any word He ever spoke. Those who decline to accept the statements of the Lord touching the Old Testament, and yet wish to pay Him outward respect and pass as Christians, adopt one of two explanations of the matter.

The first we may notice very briefly, for if it is only put into plain words, every one who is true to Christ will instinctively shrink from it. It is said by some that, though the Lord knew what was true, He accommodated His teaching to the opinions of His times. This simply means that, instead of setting men right where they were wrong, He confirmed their wrong impressions by adopting them in His teaching. He who was the *Truth* stated what He knew was *not true*; the *faithful and true Witness* told His hearers absolute *falsehoods*; He who said He spoke the *words of God* did actually and deliberately, on many points, speak the *words of tradition*. He spoke of "the law of Moses," though He knew Moses did not write the law; He referred to a certain prediction as spoken by the prophet Daniel, though He knew that it was not written by Daniel; He declared that Psalm cx. was the utterance of David, in order to show His own dignity, though He knew that David had nothing to do with writing the psalm. But it seems that some who have devised or adopted this theory of "accommodation" are no longer satisfied with it, or find that it does not gain ground with those who truly "call Jesus Lord," and so it is giving place to another, which, being more subtle, is more dangerous, and calls for more careful examination.

The theory now gaining ground is that the knowledge of the Lord Jesus was *limited*, and, therefore, as the Bishop of Manchester puts it, "when He quoted passages from the Old Testament, He might have no more knowledge of their age and actual authors than that which was current in His own time." According to this, though He *actually* said what was not true, He did not do so *wilfully*, but because He did not know any better. When, in the synagogue at Nazareth, a certain roll was delivered to Him, He *thought*, and the inspired writer who narrates the matter *thought*, that it was the writing of Isaiah that He read;

but the critics now know better. He *thought* Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and that David wrote Psalm cx.; but in all this He was mistaken. Then, we ask, Is the Lord's teaching of no value? Oh, yes, say *some* at least of these critics, His ignorance "in matters of literature and criticism" does not alter the value of the spiritual truths He unfolded. We may ask again, Could men ever commit themselves to such an absurdity if they were not blinded by that folly to which the pride of wisdom surely leads?

Apply the theory in one instance only, and its absurdity will surely be evident. The Lord quoted Psalm cx. as the language of David for the express purpose of showing that the Christ was owned by David as his Lord. Now, if the Lord was mistaken as to David's being the writer of that psalm, may He not have been equally mistaken about its reference to the Christ? But, further, if David was not the writer, is there any force whatever in Christ's use of it? Of all the theories ever started, *none* could be more senseless, *few* could be more blasphemous.

But the *subtlety* of this theory lies in the fact that it is actually based upon an interpretation of Phil. ii. 7, which, at first sight, would not be suspected of leading to such results. The inspired statement is, that Christ Jesus "being [subsisting] in the form of God . . . made Himself of no reputation [or emptied Himself], taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." Everything turns upon the meaning of the word rendered "*emptied Himself*." Of what did he empty Himself? Some have rashly concluded that it was of *Godhead*, without considering the absolute impossibility of such an interpretation being correct, and the idea has grown until one of the latest German writers on the subject teaches that "the self-humiliation of the Eternal Logos [Word] in becoming man, was an act in which He underwent a *change of nature itself, surrendering the personal life and consciousness of the Son of God* in order to take in its place the life and consciousness of a man." We call special attention to the words we have put in italics, and would ask, How could the Son of God surrender the personal life and consciousness of the Son of God without ceasing to exist?

The reviewer of the work referred to, from whose article we have quoted, truly says, "Once accepted, it is plain that the Kenotic theory helps one over difficulties that are felt with respect to the much-debated question of the authority of Christ in matters of criticism." Of course it does, for if, as it is put, with "*the extinction of His self-consciousness, the Son of God began His earthly life as we do ours,*" the conclusion is perfectly logical that His utterances have no more authority than those of other men.

But if we affirm, as we do, that such an interpretation of Phil. ii. is false and delusive, as well as derogatory to Him who is the Subject of the passage, it becomes us reverently to consider what is the meaning of the great statements there made. And it is only as those who with unshod feet (Ex. iii.) inquire in God's sanctuary that we can expect to learn anything of these mysteries. We must remember, too, that while we may and should seek to understand what Scripture declares, that is a very different thing from supposing that we can comprehend *how* He by whom all things were created and subsist could truly become an infant and a man, and yet still be essentially what He ever had been.

(To be continued.)

FAITH'S RESOURCES IN GOD.

FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS.

I CAN never be independent of man until I learn how dependent I am upon God.

I cannot be fearless of man unless I fear God and have strong faith in Him.

I can never be free from the bondage of man in some form or other until I am the willing bond-servant of Jesus Christ.

In order to be equipped with that boldness and fortitude, before men, which are requisite to the faithful service of Christ in these days of party strife, I must know what it is to fear and tremble before God; not with that kind of fear which hath torment, but which arises from a sense of my own weakness and tendency to err; that is, a fear and trembling caused, not by the knowledge of God, but the knowledge of myself.

If I would that God should do anything by me, I must know that I can do nothing by myself.

I enjoy fellowship with my brethren best when I am so filled and satisfied with the love and presence of Christ that I *could* do without it; and yet this is just the time I seek it, because it is pleasing to Christ and in accordance with the desire of the new nature in me.

To bear patiently and calmly the abuse of men, or the ill-treatment of my brethren, I must be able to say, in reality, "The Lord is my shield"; and to know that if He does allow a sharp arrow, even a bitter word, shot from a brother's bow, to pierce my heart, it is only that He may heal it with the tender touch of His deep sympathy, that thus I might know Him and His love better; and instead of causing ill-feeling in my own breast, the matter becomes an occasion for the expression of that love in me. And there can be no thought of returning their treatment, not only because one sees that their conduct itself, in its consequences to them, is a sufficient retribution, but because divine love leads one to take sides with Christ as their Advocate, instead of with Satan as their accuser.

A readiness to pass judgment upon others, and a reluctance in judging myself, always go together; as do also a readiness to judge myself, and a reluctance in judging others.

While I look at myself in relation to people and things around, and people and things around in relation to myself, and as they affect my poor petty reputation, I shall always be unhappy, shall never be what I desire to be, nor shall I have what I desire to have. But when I look at myself and things around in relation to Christ, and as His honour is affected thereby, I can "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory," because I see I am all I could wish to be; yea, what I could never have thought of being without the revelation of the purpose of God: and that I have all I could desire to have; yea, more than I could have conceived, had not the blessed God sent down His Spirit to make known the things He hath freely given us. And my only concern will then be for the interests of Christ and the blessing of othets. For what have I to seek for myself, when I see what I am and have in Christ?

How little one knows the reality of all this. Thank God for the desire to know it. J.H.B.

JOHN G. PATON,*

Missionary to the New Hebrides.

FEW books have been published of late years on missionary work, so stirring and inspiring, so thrilling and fascinating, as the autobiography of Dr. Paton. We are not surprised that the first edition was exhausted three weeks after its publication; and that since then it has had a phenomenal circulation. Originally issued in two volumes, the first describing the work on Tanna, and the second the wonder-working power of the Gospel on the Aniwa islands of the New Hebrides, we are glad to notice that both parts are now issued in one volume, at such a price as will put it within easy reach of many.

The book is written in a clear, simple, and forcible style, and as we read of the scenes of bloodshed he witnessed, the hairbreadth escapes he passed through, the innumerable difficulties and discouragements he surmounted, we cannot help praising God for such a heroic, devoted, whole-hearted soldier of the Cross.

If any one doubts the efficacy of prayer, or the transforming power of the Gospel, let him read this book and he will have ample food for reflection.

Again and again when death seemed certain, when muskets were levelled at him, and arms uplifted to pierce him, the Lord who is a sun and shield to all that trust in Him, interposed and hindered the blood thirsty cannibals from taking the life of His servant. Those who decry mission work among the heathen should compare Dr. Paton's description of Aniwa in 1866 and 1886.

The missionary was not born with "a silver spoon in his mouth," his parents being poor, but respectable and godly. His father was a stocking weaver, and lived in a small village in the county of Dumfries. At the age of twelve the boy left school and began to learn his father's trade, working from six in the morning until ten at night, with intervals at breakfast, dinner, and supper. His spare moments were spent—as were those of David Livingstone's at a similar age—in acquiring the rudiments of Latin and Greek. It is not stated when he was converted, but at the age of twelve he had

determined to become a missionary. This desire was doubtless fostered by his father who was a man of faith and prayer. Twice every day he gathered his household around him, and after reading a portion of Scripture and singing a psalm or hymn, he commanded them all in prayer to Him whom he sought to serve and love. The glimpses of home life given us in that Dumfriesshire cottage are refreshing and stimulating. Would that there were more such households! If there were, there would be more missionaries and evangelists sounding forth "glad tidings" in the regions around and beyond.

The missionary's story previous to his departure for the foreign field is most interesting. His early struggles to obtain an education without being a burden on his beloved parents, and his intense desire to be thoroughly fitted for the work of a missionary, are manifest. We see him with sappers and miners on the Ordnance Survey; then as a reaper on the harvest field; at the Normal Seminary, Glasgow; teaching school at Girvan and Maryhill respectively; as a student at the University, and as a hard-working and successful City Missionary in Calton, Glasgow.

At the close of 1859, we find him and Mrs. Paton and fellow-labourers, at Tanna, one of the islands of the New Hebrides—a group of islands thirty in number, situated about a thousand miles north of New Zealand. John Williams and his companion, Mr. Harris, on 30th Nov., 1839, as they landed on Erromango (one of the group), were clubbed, cooked, and feasted upon.

Mr. Paton found the Tannese painted savages, steeped in all the vices and darkness of heathenism. For four years he laboured and toiled with but little apparent success. The people were idolaters and cannibals, and had no written language. With wonderful rapidity he was enabled to speak to them of God's great salvation in their own tongue. As he sought to show them that in order to serve Jehovah it was necessary that they should cast their idols away and give up their cruel customs, they rose in rebellion against him. They had multitudes of stone and wooden idols, witches and wizards, and "sacred men." The heathen teachers and headmen did their utmost to stir up the Tannese to persecute and expel the

*John G. Paton, D.D., Missionary to the New Hebrides: an Autobiography. Popular Edition; price, 6d. Can be had at the Witness Office.

missionaries. When there was sickness or drought, hurricanes or accidents, the missionaries and their "Jehovah worship" were blamed.

A year after his arrival on the island, Mr. Paton sustained a heavy loss in the death of his devoted and gifted wife. Trial after trial came upon him, but he did not lose courage. After toiling on for four years, again and again narrowly escaping being murdered, he was driven from Tanna, and afterwards, for twenty years, he laboured in Aniwa, where God most graciously blessed his efforts in a marvellous way.

Nearly the whole of the Aniwas renounced idolatry, and many of them became humble and consistent followers of the Lord Jesus. Others have reaped what Mr. Paton was privileged to sow in Tanna, and there are now a number of earnest Christians in that abode of darkness.

As an evidence of the hatred of the Tannese to the "Jehovah worship," at a public meeting they resolved to kill the missionaries because they "hated Jehovah and the worship; for it made them afraid to do as they had always done;" and further that if Mr. Paton gave up visiting the villages and praying with them and talking about Jehovah "they would like him to stay and trade with them, as they liked the traders and hated the missionaries."

Here is one of many recorded illustrations of God's loving care of His servant. "One day the war chief and his brother and a large party of men surrounded the plot where I was working. They all had muskets besides their own native weapons. They watched me for some time in silence and then every man levelled a musket straight at my head. Escape was impossible. Speech would only have increased my danger. My eyesight came and went for a few moments. I prayed to my Lord Jesus, either Himself to protect me or to take me home to His glory. I tried to keep working on at my task as if no one was near me. In that moment, as never before, the words came before me: 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name that will I do,' and I knew that I was safe. Retiring a little from their first position, no word having been spoken, they took up the same attitude somewhat further off, and seemed to be urging one another to fire the first shot. But my dear Lord restrained them once again and they withdrew."

The treachery of the people was dreadful. Here is a sample. Mr. Paton was invited to visit a sick man whom he had befriended. "Come near me and sit by my bedside to talk with me Missi," said the heathen. "I did so, and while speaking to him he lay as if lost in a swoon of silent meditation. Suddenly he drew from the sugar-cane leaf thatch close to his bed, a large butcher-like knife and instantly feeling the edge of it with his other hand he pointed it to within a few inches of my heart, and held it quivering there, all a-tremble with excitement. I durst neither move nor speak except that my heart kept praying to the Lord to spare me, or if my time had come, to take me home to glory with Himself. There passed a few moments of awful suspense. My sight went and came. Not a word had been spoken except to Jesus; and then Ian wheeled the knife around and thrust it into the cane leaf and cried out to me, 'Go out quickly.' Next moment I was on the road. Not a living soul was to be seen about the village." He understood then that it had been agreed that Ian was to kill him. But we have said enough, and hope and pray that many missionaries of Dr. Paton's type may be raised up and thrust forth into the harvest field to gather sheaves of golden grain for our soon coming Lord. A. M.

NOTES OF A CONFERENCE ON THE SECOND COMING OF THE LORD.

THE conference was preceded by a special prayer meeting, when many came together to wait upon God to prepare both speakers and hearers for a large and lasting blessing.

Mr. H—— read 2 Sam. xix. 8-15, pointing out the effect wrought upon the hearts and ways of the men of Judah by the message sent to them by their absent king, touching his return. May it be so with our Divine David and our hearts during these days of conference, and may we have grace henceforth to go forth to "Gilgal," the place where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away, to meet our returning Lord. Mr. T. S. H—— read 2 Peter iii. 4, 5, and said how everything around testifies to the fact that we are in the closing days of this dispensation. A sceptical world is denying His coming, and a slumbering church is postpon-

ing His coming ; and we want our hearts to be aroused and our consciences exercised that we may indeed be "like unto men that wait for their Lord."

The conference was opened on Tuesday morning by Mr. V—— reading John xiv. 1-3, Acts i. 9-11, 1 Thess. iv. 13-18. Dr. N—— then spoke on "the importance of the Christian's hope." He pointed out that the hope of the believer is entirely distinct from all prophetic inquiry ; it is the personal return of Christ Himself. Before leaving this world, the Lord assured His disciples that He would return, and that to receive them unto Himself. He put absolutely nothing between the hearts of His own and that blessed event. He has willed it, and His will is law, that there should be nothing to detract our hearts from the blessed hope of seeing Him face to face. A thousand blessings cluster around this truth, but they are not *Himself*. We are called to look and wait for a Person, a well-known Person, a beloved Person.

Turn with me to Luke xii. 32-44. You will observe how our Lord, in this passage, begins by setting their hearts perfectly at rest : "Fear not, little flock," &c. He then reminds them of the Father's pleasure to give them the kingdom, and as the kingdom fills the vision we can let present things go ; and we shall exhibit the pilgrim's character, having our loins girded by day and our light burning by night, always expecting His return. Then follows a special blessing to those whom He shall find in this waiting, expectant attitude, which blessing is open to all God's saints. Another blessing is pronounced upon the diligent and devoted servant who fills up "the little while" with willing, whole-hearted service.

Turn again to John xiv. 1-3, where Christ was about to leave His disciples and for a while to be hidden from their view, but He would have their faith in lively exercise, and their hearts bounding onward to His return to receive them unto Himself. The word "mansion" really means "a place where people live at home." Once we had no place there, no title to go there ; but His precious blood has given us a title, and He Himself is coming again to fold us to His heart and bring us to His home. I don't look to enter a "dark valley" or to encounter the "swellings of Jordan," but for

my blessed Lord. If He appoints for me to fall asleep, "all will be well." I shall only change places, not attitudes. Our loved ones, who have departed, are there waiting *with* Christ, and we are here waiting *for* Christ.

Turn also to Phil. iii. 21, where we have the apostle saying, "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour" (R.V.). He appeared the first time as a Saviour in reference to our souls, and He will appear a second time as such in reference to our bodies, for they belong to Him and are to be brought into blessing when He comes again. Then will He present the whole family perfect before the Father, and He Himself will be seen, "the First-born among many brethren."

Mr. G. H—— spoke next on "The Connection of the Blessed Hope, and the Sure Word of Prophecy," and said :—We have just heard that the fulfilment of the prophetic Scriptures is not really the hope which God puts before us in His Word, although it is intimately connected therewith. Let us read 2 Peter i. 19. You will observe that in verse 11 the apostle speaks of our "*entrance*" into the kingdom, and in verse 16 we have a *sample* of the kingdom, and in this verse we have the *Guide-book* along the road to the kingdom. Notice three things : First, the Holy Spirit calls this world a "dark place." With all its boast of education and civilisation and its vaunted science and philosophy, it rests under the dark shadow of sin and death, and is hastening on to its awful doom. Secondly, we have a "bright light" in the dark place, viz., the Sure Word of Prophecy. We are not like a traveller journeying along some unknown road without a guide-book, or like a poor mariner at sea without compass or chart to show what course to steer. The unerring Guide-book and inspired Chart points out all the rocks and dangers, and as we take good heed thereunto we shall be preserved from making shipwreck of the faith, and steer a steady course into "the Haven of Eternal Rest." Thirdly, it is the believer's privilege to carefully and prayerfully study the Sure Word of Prophecy. God still says, concerning His own, "Shall I hide from them the thing I am about to do?" Our blessed Lord and Master still delights to bring us into close companionship with Himself, and the

Holy Spirit still delights to show to us "things to come." Thus will our thoughts be in the current of God's thoughts; we shall have the mind of Christ, and having "understanding of the times," we shall know "what Israel ought to do."

Mr. J. S. T.— then showed from the Scriptures how the Lord's coming must be both personal and pre-millennial. As the Old Testament prophecies concerning the first advent required a personal coming of Christ, so do the New Testament predictions regarding the second advent, and until He comes there can be no millennium. That golden age is to be ushered in, not by the preaching of the Gospel of the grace of God, but by the personal and glorious appearing of the Christ of God.

In the afternoon Mr. T. S. H.— gave a very practical Bible reading on "The Judgment-seat of Christ." Arranging the three aspects of judgment under three "S's," viz., our judgment as *sinners*, which was for ever settled at the Cross (John v. 24); our judgment as *sons*, which is still going on (1 Peter i. 16, iv. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 30, 31, and John xv. 6); then as *servants*, when our Lord returns (2 Cor. v. 10). At this judgment the quality of our work will be tested (1 Cor. iii.), the motive of our service will be laid bare (1 Cor. iv.), and our conduct toward our fellow-servants will be also manifested (Rom. xiv.).

The evening service was commenced by an address by Dr. M'K— on "The Raised and Changed Saints." Reading 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, he said this aspect of our Lord's return is like a mighty general rallying his men around himself. Christ, the great Captain of our salvation, is coming with the "assembly" shout, which will be heard by all His sleeping saints, and which will gather together all the living ones, then all reunited we shall be gathered around Him in the air, and thus be together and for ever with the Lord. The raised will then put on incorruption, and the living ones will then put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory," "Mortality is swallowed up of life."

Mr. G. H.— then dwelt upon "The Door Opened in Heaven," where, under the symbol of the twenty-four elders, the saints are seen at home with the Lord, "sitting upon thrones" in

His blessed presence, clothed in spotless righteousness and crowned with glory and honour. They belong to the blood-royal of heaven, their coronation-day has come, and we behold them a "royal priesthood," "kings and priests unto God." The "four living ones" also represent sinners saved by grace, and are the only ones ever said to be *in the midst* of the throne beside Christ Himself, reminding us of the mighty fact that "he who is joined to the Lord is one Spirit"; we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. In chapter v. the challenge goes forth to the whole universe to produce one worthy and competent to take the seven-sealed book from the hand of the eternal God who sits upon the throne. Christ is publicly and universally acknowledged to be the only One. Then the *new song is sung, which strikes a chord* throughout the whole redeemed animate creation, and the four living ones add their sublime "Amen" to the outburst of praise rolling from the confines of creation to Him upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Mr. T. S. H.— gave the closing address on "The Appearing of Christ." He showed what a solemn event it would be for guilty Christendom, according to 2 Thess. i. ii. Those who refuse the blood of the Lamb must experience "the wrath of the Lamb." Then its connection with the warrior judgment in Rev. xix., and the sessional judgment in Matt. xxv. When He shall appear, His saints will also appear with Him in glory.

(*To be continued.*)

"MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS" (2 Cor. xii. 9).

BLESSED assurance. There is nothing so weak that Jehovah's strength cannot give it might; nothing so empty that His fulness cannot fill. Yet how slow believers are to reckon upon this strength—how ready to trust their own. Notwithstanding the oft-repeated proofs we have of mercy and loving-kindness, our souls are still, even in small concerns, inclined to doubt God and look to self. It is only in conflict that we discover our nothingness. We then learn more of God's fulness. The more thoroughly our weakness is proved, the more simply and entirely do we lean on God. Conflict is not pleasant, but it is profitable.

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

THE way is dark !

I cannot see one step beyond the present ;
Valley of Death's Shadow,—so weird, so desolate !
Nought to lead on, or indicate the way,
But the ray of brightening Hope
That gleams upon Faith's steadfast eye,
Reaching the unseen afar, beyond the enshrouding
gloom.

Pole-star of the soul ! unerring guide !
Bacon of safety and of rest !
Goal of beatitude and home !

As step by step I track the devious path
With eye intent upon the destined heritage,
Wearied and lone, my pilgrim way I tread.
Forgetful of the past, prescient of the future ;
My stronghold's faith, my strength's omnipotence,
My guide God's Word, my light its prophecy,
My cheer its promises,
So precious, so exceeding great !

In peace rest here my soul, upon "the yea and the
amen,"

Of Him who cannot lie ;
From everlasting to everlasting, eternally the same,
"The Alpha and the Omega,"—"I am that I am,"—
Who was, who is, and who is yet to come,
The Almighty God, Jehovah Elohim.

Friend of the friendless, Father of the fatherless—Thou
God of love !

To Thee my soul would cling, in Thee would it abide ;
Nestled 'neath the shadow of Thy wing,
Hidden in the hollow of Thine hand, secure I am.
Were earth my heritage, 'twould bring me woe.
All weak and faint, all helpless and alone,
Life's springs all dry, or yielding bitterness;
Cisterns all broken, water not will hold ;
Mortality my destiny, the grave my goal ;
What here, that does not mock, that does not disappoint ?

Sin, in all its protean shapes and forms,
Befouled hath the whilom paradise of God,
Made bitterness and strife life's heritage for man ;
Vanity and vexation close up his troubled day,
In dread uncertainty,—and then—
Death's sting, how sharp ! Grave's victory, how sure !
But what beyond ? what, but abyssmal gloom !
Ilimitable, impenetrable,—so dark, so drear !
From which the soul, if veiled in unbelief, in sense, in sin,
Instinctive shrinks !

W. R. V.

A RECIPE FOR LATE COMERS TO MEETINGS.

A LITTLE less indulgence in the bed,
A little more contrivance in the head,
A little more of Jesus in the mind,
Will quite prevent your being so behind.

COMMIT thy trifles unto God, for to Him
nothing is trivial, and it is but the littleness of
man that seeth no greatness in a trifle.

THE "END OF THE AGE."

GERMAN SOCIALISTS AND TRADESMEN.—
SPECIAL TELEGRAM.—BERLIN, December 11.

—An extensive system of boycotting has been put in force by the socialists here against tradesmen who do not belong to or support the party. For a long time past it has been the practice to denounce all keepers of public-houses and halls who refused to let their premises for socialist meetings ; but a far more effective weapon than mere denunciation has now been devised, and is being used with the most mischievous results. It takes the form of "control marks," which are affixed to all goods manufactured by supporters of the party. Adherents are ordered to buy only such goods as bear these marks, which are principally used for hats and textile fabrics. The party has also issued an appeal to its members to purchase their Christmas presents only in shops kept by socialists. In Rixdorf the local committee has issued a list of tobacconists from whom alone the socialist may purchase. In the east and north of Berlin small businesses have been completely ruined by this boycotting. All dairymen, tobacconists, grocers, and the like are forced to subscribe to the socialist journals and to contribute to the party funds under pain of boycott. Even the great concert hall, the "Philharmonic," has been placed under the ban, and Herr Liebknecht, the socialist leader, recently incurred a severe reprimand at the hands of his associates because he and his family had dared to attend a concert of classical music held there.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers. We particularly request that each writer will give his name and address in full, not for publication, but that we may know who it is that seeks to help, and, if desirable, that we may communicate privately.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on ; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short* ; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following :

Please explain Gen. xl ix. 10. Did not the sceptre depart when Israel was brought into captivity, long before Christ came ?

2 Cor. v. 10. To what part of the believer's life does this apply?—before or after conversion, or both? Is the

"manifestation" before the whole church, or only between the individual and the Lord? In what way does a believer receive, for the good and for the bad?

What is the meaning of "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"? When does this take place?"

Does Mark xvi. 15-18 warrant one going forth now as a "medical missionary"? Does not verse 17 restrict the "signs following" to those only who believe?

Why is the term "Abba" used in connection with "Father" in Mark xiv. 36, Rom. viii. 15, and Gal. iv. 6? Why the repetition?

Is being made "a pillar in the temple of God" (Rev. iii. 12) a reward to be enjoyed here, or is it to be bestowed in resurrection?

Is it right for a believer to join a trade's union?

How, when, and where does a Christian reap the corruption threatened in Gal. vi. 8?

A VITAL QUESTION.

QUESTION 401.—*In what sense are believers made the righteousness of God in Christ? Is this the same as God's justifying righteousness referred to in Rom. iii. 26?*

Ans. A.—Let it be clearly understood that the Gospel is the revelation of God's righteousness for man when man has been proved to be without any righteousness for God. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel . . . for therein is the righteousness of God revealed on the principle of faith" (Rom. i. 16, 17). It is, essentially and positively, God's righteousness, presented to all: and upon all them that believe (Rom. iii. 22). It is not legal righteousness, the result of keeping the law, whether by myself or by another for me. It is the righteousness of God, apart from law altogether, which is manifested in the Gospel (Rom. iii. 21). God the justifier, and the righteousness, not human but divine; a righteousness which entitles the believer to a place in heavenly glory, where Christ—who, of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—has already gone. God has displayed His righteousness in setting Christ, who has perfectly accomplished all His blessed will, at His own right hand, and on the ground of that precious blood shedding on the cross, God can and does righteously justify every one who has faith in that same precious blood. How blessed that, for the believer, it is no longer a question of what is due to him as a guilty sinner, but what is due to that precious blood! The righteousness of God is now shown in "justifying us freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." It is not only the passing over of sins, as in past times; but the righteousness of God in so dealing with Old Testament saints, as well as in the still richer blessing of our being made the righteousness of God in Christ, now freely revealed.

The righteousness of God, then, in 2 Cor. v. 21, is precisely the same as in Rom. iii. 26, only that, whilst in Romans it is God providing, in the precious blood of Christ, a divinely righteous basis for the display of His grace, in justifying freely all who believe in Jesus, the more prominent truth, in 2 Cor. v. 21, is the

blessing accruing to the believer. In Romans it is "that God might be just," &c.; in Corinthians—"that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

G. A. S.

Ans. B.—There is a correspondence between the first and last sections of the verse—between the sinless Christ made sin, and the sinful believer made righteousness.

In what sense, then, was Christ made sin? Surely by imputation. Sin was not His, but was made His. He was reckoned as, and treated as, if He were sin. In Romans vi., sin is personified as a power ruling and ruining man. Here, also—but here as a culprit or criminal convicted and judged—for that purpose, for the exhibition of Divine judgment against sin, Christ is made sin, and on His head judgment falls—who knew no sin.

Pursue the same line of thought to the second section. God has also to exhibit His righteousness. He does so in us in the risen Christ. We, who are free from righteousness by nature, are as a further fruit of the substitution of Christ, made righteousness, the righteous ness of God in Him.

Righteousness is personified, as in Romans vi. 18-20, and we become, not "righteous," but "righteousness" in Christ. We are reckoned, treated as, and revealed before all the world as the righteousness of God. For in us, is it not seen that by Christ's grace in personifying sin, and so suffering on our behalf, we, the guilty, are without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, complete in Him, not a trespass of any kind imputed to us—and that of course, justly, righteously?

Thus the second question is answered also. Is this the same thing as God's justifying righteousness in Rom. iii. 26? The very same. In consequence of His having for ages passed over the sins of mankind without judgment and with every evidence in nature and providence of grace and love, it was necessary that God should justify Himself, His throne, which had thus seemingly countenanced or winked at sin in its domain. Therefore He set forth Christ as a propitiation, that by His blood it might be declared to all creation how detestable sin was to God (in spite of appearances), and how it was just and right to be gracious to sinners when their sins had thus (from the first, in God's purpose) been visited in judgment on the Substitute.

The bleeding Lamb of God is at once the justification of the sinner and the justification of the Judge who justifies the sinner. So not only are we declared righteous in Him, but God is declared righteous (iii. 26), and we are righteous in the righteousness of God, are, in effect, "the righteousness of God." G. F. T.

Ans. C.—The believer being *made the righteousness* of God in Christ, evidently is not the same as God *righteously justifying*, in Rom. iii. 26. In order to understand the distinction, we require to have in view what is advanced in the preceding part of Rom. iii. 9-19, where "we have man, Jew and Gentile, comprising the whole world, brought in "guilty before God," deserving the penalty of eternal wrath. Then, in verse 26, we have God's righteousness declared in the justifying or clearing of all who "believe in Jesus" from this just and awful sentence. The ground of God so acting towards us, being the *shed blood* of Christ, as

in verse 25. This knowledge gives us "peace with God" (Rom v. 1).

But there is also the righteousness of God as to our persons in the new relationship we have before God in Christ. This is what is referred to in 2 Cor. v. 17-21, where we are viewed as new creatures (or creation) in Christ; reconciled to God, and possessing a risen life or standing, to which no sin or guilt can be attached; the evidence of which is practical righteousness, the result of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within the believer. This truth is of immense value, the inlet of which to the understanding becomes the power of all consistent and godly living.

J. M.

Editor's Note.—We accept here the rendering of the R.V., "that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

It appears to us that the thought here is fuller and in advance of the thought in Rom. iii. There it is justification, which always signifies to "reckon righteous" or to "impute righteousness." The sinner believing in Christ is there and then justified—"reckoned righteous" by God. But here, in 2 Cor. v., the language is not "that we might be reckoned" but "that we might become" the righteousness of God in Him. It seems, therefore, to take in, not merely the act of reckoning righteous on the ground of the blood shed, but also to include that righteousness which is ours in union with Christ and in virtue of our standing in Him. He whom God "reckons righteous" or "justifies" is never again seen by God apart from Christ. The nature to which sin and guilt attached is reckoned by God to have been executed on the cross, and thenceforth the believing one is seen in Christ as to his standing, and Christ in him as to his life. He and Christ are one. If Christ is "God's righteousness," then he who is one with Christ has become "the righteousness of God in Him."

That a correspondence exists between the two sections in the verse, as pointed out in Answer B, is obvious; but we submit that there are also essential points of contrast.

"He hath made Him to be sin FOR us"—not "in us"—"that we might become the righteousness of God IN Him"—not "for Him."

Also the essential difference between the Greek words, "poyeo," "made," and "ginomai," "became."

"Poyeo" does not necessarily imply "to be made actually," but is often used in the sense of "constituted." See its use in John xix. 12, "maketh Himself a King"; Heb. iii. 2, "faithful to Him that appointed him"; 1 John i. 10 and v. 10, "hath made Him a liar"; Luke xv. 19, "make me as one of thy hired servants," and many such passages, where the word "ginomai" would be inadmissible.

Contrast the following instances of the use of the word "ginomai":—Gal. iv. 4, "born of a woman" (R.V.); John i. 14, "and the Word became flesh" (R.V.); "who was made (or became) of the seed of David according to the flesh"; 1 Cor. xv. 20, "become the first fruits," and other such passages, where "poyeo" would fail to give the full meaning.

One passage where "ginomai" is used may seem to go against our contention, viz., Gal. iii. 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (R.V.); but on consideration

it will be found to be exactly in unison with the rest. Christ did actually and essentially "become" a curse—the accursed one—in being actually crucified and dealt with in the hiding of God's face as under the curse. But in no such sense did he "become" sin. He was made or constituted the personification of sin by *imputation*, and not otherwise. Sin was *imputed*, but its penalty was not only imputed but actually borne.

RELATION TO ONE "PUT AWAY."

QUESTION 402.—How should a saved husband, brother, parent, &c., behave toward a wife, brother, or son excluded from fellowship according to 1 Cor. v.? Ought such an one to be passed unnoticed on the street as a perfect stranger?

Ans.—"With such an one not to eat" (1 Cor. v. 11), seems to us to be the only limitation imposed by the Spirit, and if such be the case, then we are perfectly free to exchange salutations on the street; and surely we can treat them as members of the *family*, though no longer of the *assembly*. But in all our intercourse with them, *let us never betray the slightest vestige of sympathy with the sin that necessitated their expulsion from the assembly*. Along with the Scripture, God has endowed us with "wisdom which is profitable to direct" (Eccles. x. 10), and the spirit manifested by the "wicked person," while under the discipline of the assembly, should guide us as to what manner of treatment he or she may deserve.

T.B.

Editor's Note.—In our behaviour towards one put away according to 1 Cor. v., we are liable to two opposite errors.

We may be so friendly with them as greatly to neutralise the divinely-appointed discipline. The words, "no not to eat," or, as it might be read, "not even to eat," imply that a total denial of Christian fellowship, even so far as refusing to eat with them, is the appointed remedial discipline.

It is a common mistake, perhaps well meant, but mischievous in the extreme, to "invite to tea," and otherwise continue on a footing of Christian friendliness with persons put away.

On the other hand we may, by refusing to recognise them on the street, be treating them in a way that we would not be warranted in treating "a heathen man and a publican." There are ordinary courtesies of life, that involve no recognition of Christian fellowship, which we owe to one another as fellow-men. But whilst he who has the mind of Christ will offer no insult, and be guilty of no breach of courtesy, he will manifest in his intercourse a studied reserve, which will guard his courtesy from the charge of disallowed fellowship.

The place of a wife, or children, or other near relationship *in the house*—or at home—is not affected, even though they are unbelievers (see 1 Cor. vii. 12, &c.) The recognition of natural relationship is imperative in its own sphere, and in no way affects the sphere of divine fellowship, which is the Church. The command not to eat evidently refers to eating as expressive of Christian fellowship, and has nothing to do with eating as a parent and child, or husband and wife, at one table.

THE NEW THINGS OF THE BIBLE;
BEING SUBJECT OF MINISTRY AT CONFERENCE ON
NEW-YEAR'S DAY, 1892. BY THE EDITOR.

THE old covenant is called the first covenant, because it was entered into with the first man—that is to say, it was a contract entered into between Jehovah and man in the flesh. It gave promise of certain blessings, conditional upon the obedience of Israel. But they knew not that they were without strength. They knew nothing of what God has given each one of us in measure to know—that is, the utter corruption of our nature, the deceitfulness of our hearts, and our inability to please God. In their ignorance, Israel came under a promise. They said, "All that the Lord has said will we do and be obedient." Many a one has come under a promise like that in times of conviction, when God by His Spirit brought sin home to the conscience. The promise made by Israel was quickly broken. God by the law, and by His dealings with man, has proved the truth of His own word that "the imagination of man's heart is only evil continually." Man has been proved to be utterly corrupt, dead in trespasses and in sins. But God had in reserve what He calls a "new covenant"; also, "the everlasting covenant," called by this name because it dates from eternity to eternity. There is a time coming when God will enter into covenant with His people Israel; but it will be upon a different principle from the covenant that He made with them when He brought them out of Egypt. The covenant then made was based upon their promise of obedience; if they failed, the whole thing broke down. They did fail; it proved a faulty covenant, therefore they could not enter into blessing through it. And so God says, "I will make a new covenant." Whilst the old covenant was based upon the promises of man in the flesh, the new covenant is based upon "better promises"—promises which are all on God's part. Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant, the One in whom the whole new covenant is ordered and sure. He is the Nazarite that vowed the vow that was to be fully performed. He said, "Lo, I come to do

Thy will O God;" "I delight to do Thy will O my God." He took the body prepared for Him. He became flesh and dwelt among us in the midst of trial, temptation, and difficulty. In that body He lived a holy spotless life in the midst of every conceivable obstacle and temptation that man and Satan could bring against Him; and at the end of it He laid down that precious life in atonement under the judgment of the wrath and curse of God due to sin. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." The will of God has been accomplished; the blood of the new covenant has been shed. As He handed His disciples the cup, just before He offered Himself up as the sacrifice for sin, He said, "This is My blood of the new covenant shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28). So that which could not be obtained under the old covenant, God has secured for His people under the new, the covenant ratified in the blood of Jesus, whom God brought again from the dead, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, the Mediator of the everlasting covenant. Through that blood God has secured the redemption of all that believe on Him. Our promises, our resolutions, our vows have no part in the new covenant. It is all God's "I will"; "I will remember their sins and iniquities no more;" "I will write My law in their hearts." It is not, "I will write it on tables of stone outside of them, which will condemn them," but they "shall delight to do My will." Mark two things said in 2 Cor. iii. of the old covenant; it is "the ministration of death," and "the ministration of condemnation." What is the new covenant? It is "the ministration of life" and "of righteousness." What a contrast! All that could be gained by man entering into a contract with God was condemnation and death; but whenever a poor guilty sinner trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ, God reckons unto him righteousness (Rom. iv.); he is made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. v. 21); Christ is his righteousness, he is made the possessor of eternal life, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of God (Eph. i. 13). Is it not a blessed thing that we are not under law, but under grace?

The new and the everlasting covenant I take to be the same in different aspects. It is

the everlasting covenant, inasmuch as it is based upon the eternal promises of God, and of the eternal Son of God, who has fully accomplished the will of God, even to the shedding of the last drop of His blood. It is the *new* covenant, inasmuch as it supersedes that which took place under the old covenant; the old passes away, and the new comes in. All God's blessings, whether for us now who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or for His people Israel in the future, when brought back to their land and convicted of their sin, they shall confess in the words of Isaiah liii., "He was wounded for our transgression," &c.: or whether it be the blessing of the world in the millennial reign of Christ, or that future blessing that we look for, "the *new* heavens and a *new* earth," all is based upon the new covenant. It is all inalienably secured in the blood of the everlasting covenant.

THE NEW CREATION.

2 Cor. v. 16, 17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." All things are of God in this new creation into which we are brought. It is not a renovated or improved man; not a man made better than he was, but a born-again man, a new man, the creation of God in Christ Jesus. No man is a Christian who is not in this new creation. Here is where the world's religion is all astray; it is ignorant as to sin and righteousness; it does not understand the necessity for a new creation. But when we arrive at God's thoughts about our own hopeless wreck and ruin, then we see that it must be a new creation. When a man puts his trust in Christ, God gives him eternal life and regards him as a new creature, begotten of God; having new desires, new interests, and expectations; everything is new to him. He is united to Christ; he is in living union with Him who is the Head of the new creation—"the beginning of the creation of God" (Col. i.). Christ is the origin and life of it. He who has risen up out of the grave, and ascended to the right hand of God, is the one Great Head of this new creation. If any man be in Christ, he is already even now standing in new creation. In Rev. xxi. 5 we read, "And He that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new." Also, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (ver. 1). Then all

things shall stand in new creation, eternal glory; and that is the place of our eternal blessing. But now, in the meantime, the moment a poor guilty sinner puts his trust in the Lord Jesus, God reckons him, yea, He takes him out from the darkness into the light, out from the old Adam into Christ risen, out from the dominion of the first covenant into the righteousness and light of the new covenant. We are translated by God into the new creation. As to our born-again spirit, we are as much in the new creation as we shall ever be. By-and-by our bodies will be brought into new creation blessing. Our bodies are purchased by the blood of Christ as well as our souls. In a little while we shall have resurrection bodies, fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God. Meanwhile we know by the grace of God that we are born again in Christ Jesus—partakers of His life. How blessed to know that nothing that is ours in the new creation, nothing that is ours in the bond of the eternal covenant, can be lost. If we were to die to-night it would only be death to that part of us which belongs to the old creation. All our new creation interests are where Christ is. "Our life is hid with Christ in God." Our affections and our treasure are where Christ is—"at the right hand of God." May God so work by His grace in us that it will be more manifest than ever that we indeed belong to the new creation.

Let us look shortly at what is said in the Scriptures concerning

THE NEW MAN.

Eph. ii. 13-15— . . . "For to make in Himself of twain one new man." What a blessed relationship we are put into here! God looks at us as *one new man*—Christ the head and we the members. God looks at Adam as the head of the old Adam race. He sees the whole Adam race in the one man a condemned race in virtue of their relationship to their head. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned" (Rom. v. 12). Thus God reckons all the race to have fallen in the one man when he sinned in Eden. We have inherited an evil corrupt nature—disease and death—from the one man. Now God sees one New Man. Who is He? It is

the Son of God, that Blessed One who glorified God on the earth, and finished the work that He gave Him to do ; raised from the dead and set at God's right hand. There is the New Man—the HEAD ; and here are the members down here upon the earth. These make up the one New Man—the Head and members together ; the New Man who is to have dominion in the new creation.

Eph. iv.—“The old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (ver. 22). That is the lusts that you think are dead, but suddenly, through unwatchfulness, they spring up and manifest themselves to your sad dismay.

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind ; and that ye put on the new man” (ver. 23, 24). Observe, we are to put on the new man. That new man is not only to be in our hearts, but manifested in our lives. You don't know what is in my heart ; it is from that which is seen in my outward life that you learn what is in my heart. God would have us to manifest that we are new creatures by putting on the new man, which, in God's estimate, is Christ. Therefore we read, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (Rom. xiii. 14), Christ is not only to be in my heart, He is also to be manifested by me in my life. It is by thus putting off the old man and putting on the new that we practically manifest that we are in and of the new creation. The grace to manifest Christ must come from God. We get this, not on the ground of our obedience, but on the ground of His eternal promise in Christ Jesus. “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. i. 9). It is the faithfulness of the covenant-keeping God that you and I have to lay hold upon to empower us to put off and mortify all that is of the old man, and to put on and to manifest the new man.

THE NEW-MADE WAY.

Turn now to Heb. x. 19, 20, where we find another new thing mentioned. “Having therefore, brethren, liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Christ, by a new and living way, which He hath new made for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.” There is one privilege of the new man, under the new covenant, that all believers in Christ

are entitled to, viz., access to God, and it is one of the most precious that God could bestow upon us. It is not merely that we have the privilege of going into His presence now and then as a visitor, but we have the privilege of abiding joyously and continuously in the conscious presence of God. We are enabled to do that by the indwelling Spirit of God. Our TITLE to draw near is that precious blood ; the POWER to draw nigh is the spirit which God hath given to us on the ground of the blood of the new covenant. Just as the oil was put on the blood when the leper was cleansed, so the blood is the ground upon which the Spirit has been given to us ; the blood is our title to enter into the presence of God with confidence and to abide there, whilst the Spirit is given unto us to enable us to draw near. We have no privilege like this. What is it that makes hell so terrible? Is it not to be cast away from the presence of God? David, in his confession, given us in Ps. li., says, “Cast me not away from Thy presence.” It cost God the blood of His Son to permit us to draw near to Him ; and yet how very little of our time is spent in the conscious presence of God. If we entered into this blessed privilege according to God's thoughts we would seek morning, noon, and night to dwell in the presence of God ; and thus, dwelling by faith in His presence, we would be waiting and longing for our Lord Jesus to come, singing the NEW SONG, and looking forward to our home in the NEW JERUSALEM.

(Addresses at same Conference by Alex. Stewart and John Ritchie will (D.V.) follow).

“THE LORD HAD RESPECT UNTO ABEL AND HIS OFFERING” (Gen. iv. 4).

ABEL took the place of the sinner, and in faith put the blood of the victim that had been slain between him and God. He thus owned that he could in no other way be an acceptable worshipper ; for “without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Having owned he could come in no other way, he takes his place with Christ, and becomes a sufferer from the “world that lieth in wickedness.” This is what the Christian has to expect at the hands of a world departed from God ; he must “suffer with Him” who died to ransom him.

CHRIST AND THE CRITICS ;
 or,
 Christ's Testimony to Old Testament Scripture
 Versus
 So-called Higher Criticism.

THE expressions "form of God" and "form of a servant" stand in striking contrast ; but the personality is the same throughout. The former declares the *condition* of the Son of God before He came into this world, and the latter the *condition* of the same blessed One after He was born of a woman. In each case the word *form* expresses what was external, though necessarily involving what was essential. Thus the expression, the "form of God," has special reference to all manifestations of the Son of God in previous times. It was in "the form of God"—in infinite beauty and glorious majesty—even though with "the likeness as the appearance of a man," that He manifested Himself to Moses in the bush and at Mount Sinai ; to Isaiah in the temple (John xii. 41), and to Ezekiel by the river Chebar. But when in the fulness of time "the Word became flesh," He did not regard His equality with God as a thing to be seized upon and displayed, but, having divested Himself of His rightful dignity and taken the form of a servant, He in that form and in the lowly path of obedience did the will of God. But it was not of essential Godhead that He emptied Himself ; He did not and could not cease to be what He essentially was, even though He became what previously He was not. He did, indeed, for ever cease to be *simply* in the form of God ; but only that He might be *both* God and man for ever. Before His coming into the world, we behold Him in His rightful and essential glory of Godhead ; after His coming into the world, we have the record of His moral glory as the perfect Servant of the Father, and in resurrection we see Him glorified with the Father with the glory which He had with Him before the world was. But it is the same glorious Person throughout, whatever the varied conditions or circumstances, even He who is "*the same* yesterday and to-day and for ever."

Thus in the Gospels He is ever before us as the One who is both God and man. Scripture knows nothing of one in whom there were "Divine elements," or even a "Divine nature."

All such expressions tend to the denial of His Godhead, or at least obscure the truth that He was as truly God as man ; a *Man* who could say, "*I* came forth from the Father." He is indeed *Man*, and that for ever ; but every attribute of Godhead is of necessity His. From the moment of His birth His name was "Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. i. 23). The babe upon Mary's breast was "the mighty God" (Isa. ix.), and the Man who was smitten upon Calvary and laid low in death was "Jehovah's Fellow," and that at the very time He was smitten (Zech. xiii. 7). Godhead in all its fulness, and manhood in all its perfectness, are united in the one Person of the Christ of God, and it is this blessed *Person* whom the Gospels ever keep before us. The actions and words therein recorded are the actions and words of Him who was both God and man.

Many things are said of Him which could be predicated only of one who is man, and many other things are set forth which could only be declared of One who is God. Yet the former are no more affirmed of Him merely as *man* than the latter are declared of Him as *God* ; but rather it is of the Person who is *both* that all these things are true. With reverent faith we accept the statement that the Holy Child "increased in wisdom," and thus learn that there was nothing *unnatural* in His childhood ; but in equal faith we receive His first recorded utterance, which as plainly shows that there was indeed the *supernatural*. As a boy of twelve, He not only astonished all the teachers by His understanding and answers, but He gave evidence that He knew the mystery of His birth and His peculiar relation to God as His Father. It is only the carnal reasoning of unbelief that would deprive His utterances of authority by speaking of *limited knowledge* when He went forth in public ministry. Men appeal to *one* statement of the Lord as giving some show of support to this idea. But if the Lord was pleased to tell us, as He need not have done, that "*even the Son*" did not know "the day and hour" when certain things would come to pass, have we any liberty to apply this to anything else ? Does not the fact that He could in the same breath affirm that God had not communicated that knowledge to one of His myriads of angels give

evidence that He was at that moment in the secret of Jehovah's counsel and *consciously* so? And if we fail to understand this one statement, is it not the part of true wisdom to wait for the day of full revelation rather than deduce from it a principle which would deprive the Lord's teaching of its authority?

But there is one point that seems to be entirely ignored by those who are trying to dress up the skeletons of old heresies in attractive garments, and that is the fact that, while the Lord was both God and man, the position He took was that of the Servant of Jehovah, and that, as He was subject to the Father in all things, so He was dependent upon Him for all things, including the words He spake. Of the promised Prophet, Jehovah said, "I will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him" (Deut. xviii. 18). Christ was that Prophet, and as He could say, "Neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me," so He could add, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me;" "As My Father hath taught Me I speak these things;" "I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John viii. 42; vii. 16; xii. 49). To His disciples He further said, "All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you" (xv. 15).

Therefore, from another point of view, this question is not what did Christ know or what did He not know; but, were the words given Him by the Father words of truth or falsehood? He spake the words of God, and speaking *from God*, He declared that David was the speaker in Psalm cx., that Moses wrote the law, and that Daniel wrote the book that bears his name.

But one more point should be specially noticed. Will those who say that the Lord's knowledge was limited "in the days of His flesh," maintain that it is limited now that He has been raised from the dead? Was His knowledge *limited* when, on the road to Emmaus, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself"? It was the *risen* Christ who said,

"These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke xxiv. 27-44). Thus did the Lord, as the *Risen One*, confirm all His previous teaching, and set His seal upon all those writings which are known to us as the Old Testament Scriptures, and which were received by the Jews in the threefold division which had long been adopted, and which He endorsed.

The conclusion of the matter is this—if we accept the verdict of the higher criticism, we must deny the Godhead of Christ; we must say that the words God gave Him to speak were false words; we must look upon Him even in resurrection as either deceived Himself or a wilful deceiver of others. If, on the other hand, we really own Christ as Lord, and allow His word to settle the matters on which He has spoken, we stand upon a rock upon which no waves of higher criticism can reach us; we are in a fortress that is impregnable. We can say to the adversaries of the truth—Marshal your difficulties, and let them be as perplexing as you please; bring forward your strong points and make them as forcible as you like; we are prepared to meet them all with the one fact, that He who *knew all* the difficulties did not find in the greatest of them any barrier to His acceptance of the whole of the Old Testament as the Scriptures of truth—the Word of God. Do the wise of the world taunt us with the folly of this way of treating the matter? Our reply is, that we do not object to be regarded as fools, if only we be fools for Christ's sake. Better be esteemed fools now by all the world for receiving the Scriptures, than be convicted of our folly in the day of Christ for rejecting them. And if we find what we cannot understand, or cannot fully reconcile, it is surely no little matter to wait for the explanation till the day of perfect revelation. It is as we take this place, and only thus, that we shall prove the truth of Psalm cxix. 165, "Great peace have they which love Thy law; and they have none occasion of stumbling" (R.V.).

CHRIST LOWER THAN THE ANGELS*

“**W**HAT is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man; that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels: Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet” (Heb. ii. 6-8).

Does this quotation refer to Christ or man? It refers to man as set over all by God—*i.e.*, so far as he was a type of Christ. In this place, however, Adam failed; so that all is taken up and made good by the Last Adam as man.

There are three things to be noted—viz.,
 1. He is made a little lower than the angels.
 2. He is crowned with glory and honour.
 3. All things are put beneath His feet.

“MADE A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS.” Why? The answer is: “for the suffering of death,” or, as Mr. Newberry translates it, “With a view to the sufferings of death,” that by favour of God, He might taste death for all. As it has been said, “Only through the blood of the cross could God reconcile all things to Himself. Only through the death of the Lord Jesus could we be reconciled (who were once enemies) and, brought nigh to God. He suffered death for the accomplishment of the purposes of God, and for the blessing of His own, and has won the everlasting homage of our hearts.” Well may we exclaim, “Hallelujah! What a Saviour!” Some people there are who would bid us “hold our peace” as the “many,” in the time of our Lord’s visit on earth, charged poor blind Bartimaeus; but when we remember “the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge”—the love of God manifest in the flesh—the infinite, perfect, and Divine love of the Man Christ Jesus, we must cry the more a great deal, “Hallelujah! What a Saviour!”

In the margin of both Authorised and Revised Versions we have the suggestion that the word might be read “a little *while* lower”; thus pointing out the time of His humiliation. Jesus Christ as the eternal Word—God with God—could not die, therefore a body was prepared for Him; and thus for a short time—a little while—He was made lower than the angels, that He might be capable of suffering death.

“CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOUR,” or, as we read in Newberry’s version, “Crowned as victor with glory and honour.” His work of suffering is ended; He has reached the throne and the crown. It will be remembered that upon the great day of atonement, when the blood of the sacrifice had been placed before Jehovah, Aaron the priest was accepted for the nation of Israel, and in the holy place wore the mitre, with “Holiness to the Lord” inscribed upon it. So, all our sins and iniquities having been put away by the sacrifice of Christ, we are now in our “great day of atonement.” He now, as our Great High Priest, appears “in the presence of God for us” and we see Him there “crowned with glory and honour.”

“The Head that once was crowned with thorns,
 Is crowned with glory now;
 A royal diadem adorns
 The mighty Victor’s brow.”

“ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.” This we do not yet see. He is not now on His own throne, but upon His Father’s, according to the word, “Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” By-and-by all things will be subjected unto Him.

FOUR VIEWS OF CHRIST in the past, present, and future :

- 1. PAST. “A little lower than the angels.” Verse 7.
- 2. . PRESENT. “Not yet all things put under Him.” Verse 8.
- 3. . “Crowned with glory and honour.” Verse 9.
- 4. FUTURE. “All things in subjection under His feet.” Verse 8.

“BY THE GRACE OF GOD SHOULD TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.” Grace is free, unmerited love or favour. God’s grace or unmerited love is made known unto us in such scriptures as Rom. v. 8: “God commendeth His love towards us, in that, *while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us”; and 1 John iv. 10: “Herein is love, *not that we loved God*, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” We never merited, never deserved His love; *yet He has loved!* This is grace.

“Twas grace that wrote my name
 In life’s eternal book;
 ‘Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
 Who all my sorrows took.”

The natural heart, however, is more angry

* From “Gleanings in the Hebrews.” By James Sprunt. Just published, 2/. Stoneman, London; Witness Office, Glasgow.

with God for meeting ruined sinners in grace, than for dealing with them in righteousness. Grace is the one thing that the natural man cannot understand. Grace meets the sinner *just where he is* in all his guilt, misery, and ruin. Compare Luke x. 33. Christ's tasting death for *every man* was a wonderful fulfilment of the precious Gospel word that fell from His own lips, when He declared that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). See also 1 Tim. ii. 6; iv. 10; Titus ii. 11.

J. S.

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—VI.

JOSEPH.

JOSEPH is a very full and striking type of the Lord Jesus. Stephen, in his address to the Jews, traces a parallel between Joseph and Moses on the one hand, and the Christ on the other. As those two had been rejected by the fathers, so they, their children, had rejected their true Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth (Acts vii.). And Jacob, speaking by the Spirit, points to Joseph as a type of the One who was to come. His language was: "His bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: (from thence is

THE SHEPHERD, THE STONE OF ISRAEL.)"

What Joseph was to the house of Israel, in NOURISHING and SUPPORTING it, the Lord Jesus is, in a spiritual sense, to "the whole Israel of God" (Gen. xl ix. 23-26).

I look upon this type as a delightful unfolding of the inspired sentence: "The sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow" (1 Peter i. 11, R. V.). The "sufferings" and the "glories!" All the teaching of the type naturally falls under one of the heads. I love to dwell on these types, for they give one such an enlarged conception of Christ's person and offices. In the doctrines of the New Testament we have, as it were, the *outlines* of the picture; but in the types and prophecies of the Old Testament the picture is *filled in*.

I. JOSEPH IN HIS HUMILIATION. Joseph was at once the special object of his father's love and of his brethren's hatred. There were several causes why they hated him. He

informed his father of their bad conduct; he was their father's favourite; and he was dreaming, and expecting to occupy a place above them all (Gen. xxxvii. 2-11). Thus they were *envious* of him; and that led them to sell him into Egypt (Acts vii. 9). Of all the contemptible vices of human nature *envy* seems about the worst.

For similar causes the Jews hated the Christ. God once and again acknowledged Him as His well-beloved Son; and every miracle of Christ was a further proof that He was what He claimed to be—*God's only begotten Son*. But the Jews, in their mad hatred, would not be convinced; and they actually said: "He casteth out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons." It is hard to decide which was the more amazing—their wickedness or their folly. The Lord Jesus, also, was a constant witness against their sins, rebuking them fearlessly and openly. This added fuel to their hatred, so that they did not rest till they had compassed His death.

Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren to see how they prospered. It was while on this mission that he was sold as a slave. Jesus came forth from the Father to His own, but they received Him not (John i. 11). He came

AS THE EXPRESSION AND PROOF OF GOD'S LOVE

to a guilty world; but His coming only stirred opposition and hatred in the hearts of the carnal Jews. It was by the suggestion of Judah that Joseph was sold as a slave; by a disciple bearing that same name was our Lord betrayed.

Not only was Joseph rejected by *his brethren*, but his righteous character stirred the hatred of *an Egyptian*, and led him to Egypt's dungeon. And so with Christ: Jew and Gentile, Pharisee and Sadducee, religious and profane, buried their differences in their common hatred of God's beloved Son. They wickedly and foolishly united in one great confederation to seek the overthrow of Jehovah's Anointed (Ps. ii. 1, 2). The Jews could not have put Christ to death without Gentile consent and instrumentality. As we have seen, it was because of *envy* Joseph's brethren sold him; and Pilate easily saw that

it was out of envy the Jews sought the death of Christ (Matt. xxvii. 18). But on his brethren lay the guilt of Joseph's betrayal and suffering ; and on the Jews, specially, lay the sin of having crucified their Lord (John. xix. 11; Acts ii. 22, 23).

Doubtless it was to hinder the fulfilment of Joseph's dreams that his brethren sold him. But the dreams of Joseph presaged the determination of Jehovah ; and the Almighty's purpose can never be thwarted. The very method they use to hinder their fulfilment is the very means that God employs to bring them to pass. So much for rebellious, shortsighted man.

And the Jews, in murdering the Lord Christ, only had one object in view, viz., to be for ever rid of the troubler. They had no thought of accomplishing God's purposes ; nevertheless that is what they did. For by Christ's death the way was opened up for the carrying out of God's purposes of love to a lost race ; and, by the same means, the opportunity was given for the carrying out of God's great pivotal design—the exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth as a Prince and Saviour. Admirable grace and wisdom ! Man's greatest sin has been used of God to accomplish His purpose, and to bring to mankind the greatest blessing it is possible for God to give or for man to receive. But we come to our second half of the subject :—

II. JOSEPH IN HIS EXALTATION. And what an exaltation ! Taken from the dungeon to be made ruler of Egypt ! But God's working is to be traced in all this. We would like to quote the glowing words of Ps. cv. 16-22, but must ask you to turn them up and read them. In like manner God exalted Christ (read Acts ii. 36; Phil. iii. 5-11, &c.). Joseph became the revealer of God's purposes to the king's servants when in prison, and to Pharaoh himself. The Lord Jesus was the perfect revelation of the mind and heart of the Father. "God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son" (Heb. i. 1).

In the very place that Joseph was cast out and humbled, he was afterwards raised to great dignity. Pharaoh exalted him, and he did it in a king-like way. He arrayed him in royal robes, put a ring on his hand, and a chain around his neck ; he made him ride in

the second chariot ; heralds went before him crying : "Bow the knee ! Bow the knee !" Pharaoh put everything under Joseph : "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou," was the one exception (Gen. xli. 39-44). Earth was the witness of Christ's humiliation, and earth shall yet see His glorious exaltation ; for, with His redeemed, He shall reign over this very earth (Luke i. 32, 33, &c.). We can scarcely read of men being called to "bow the knee" to Joseph, without being led in thought to Phil. ii. 10. Christ, as Son of Man, will have everything put under Him—the Father Himself excepted (1 Cor. xv. 27). He has received a commission to bring back a revolted world to God. And ere long every creature in heaven, on earth, and under the earth shall "confess Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father."

In his treatment of the people Joseph showed both grace and wisdom ; he proved himself

A STATESMAN

who possessed more than earthly wisdom. During the years of famine he preserved them ; and yet, without using the least pressure, he obtained themselves and all their possessions for the king. But when they had given their all to the Pharaoh, of his own accord he gave it back again ; only requiring a fifth part of their produce as an acknowledgment of the rights of the king. To appreciate this sagacious and humane conduct we must read the story, not in the light of modern Western democracy, but in the light of ancient Eastern despotisms.

ZAPHNATH-PAANEAH was the new name given to Joseph. Several meanings have been attached to this name ; but the weight of evidence seems to be that it signifies "*the food of life.*" This is both beautiful and appropriate, whether viewed historically or typically. The Pharaoh also bestowed on Joseph a bride ; and the bride became his, even while rejected by his brethren.

The application of all this to the glorious Anti-type is clear. In resurrection the Saviour has received the name which is above every name. He is, indeed, "the Bread of Life" to our souls. Again : while rejected by the earthly people, He is receiving from the Father a people to be His heavenly bride.

The Church is united to the *glorified* Christ. Yes, He is glorified! His personal sorrows and sufferings are for ever past, and He is now on the throne of God. Our Lord, our Head, is exalted; and we are exalted in Him. This is the barest hint of the lessons to be learnt from Joseph's Egyptian bride.

But was Joseph to be for ever separated from his brethren? No, indeed; that was far from the purpose of God. In their extreme need they came to Egypt; and after passing through much soul-exercise Joseph makes himself known to them; and ultimately he bestows upon them the best portion of the land. Every step in the bringing together of Joseph and his brethren is pregnant with spiritual instruction. But very briefly we must seek to indicate the application of it typically.

Abraham's natural seed are not cast off for ever; they will yet be a united nation in their own land. The Jews will soon learn that Jesus of Nazareth, whom their fathers rejected and murdered, and whom they have continued to hate and refuse,—that He was and is

THEIR TRUE MESSIAH.

The One whom they consider was judged of God for His sin, was at that very time bearing away their iniquities; and such will be their sorrowful, heart-broken confession (see Isa. liii. 4, 5). Joseph's brethren had their consciences awakened, and confessed their sins to each other, before he made himself known unto them. What tender grace Joseph displayed to his sorrowful, repentant brethren. His one aim seemed to be to set them at rest in his presence (Gen. xlvi. 16). This scene naturally suggests Zech. xii. 10. Ere long there shall be a literal fulfilment of this Scripture. Yes; the very children of those Jews who crucified the Christ shall soon "look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him." As Joseph's brethren were given the best place in Egypt, so Israel's land shall yet be the most fruitful of all the earth, and they shall be the first among the nations.

Much more might well be said on this wonderful and precious type, but we close with a *practical* word or two.

The history of Joseph teaches us that humility goes before honour, bitter before

sweet; the cross before the crown. This is a principle in God's dealings with all His own in all ages. Let us recognise it, for it will be the key to many a trial that will meet us as we are journeying through the wilderness. Like Joseph and his great Anti-type may we endure the cross and despise the shame. So that with them and the elect of all ages we may prove that, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And soon of us it shall be true, as one has written of Joseph:

"Out of grief to honour risen,
Winning rapture for thy pain,
And a palace for thy prison,
And a sceptre for thy chain."

J. N. C.

"BY THE ARMS."

"I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms" (Hosea xi. 3).

I.

"OH, tender Father, take me by the arms,
Teach me to go;"
I am a little child, fears and alarms
Distress me so:
Uphold me and direct my tottering feet,
For I am weak,
Wilful, and wayward, full of vain conceit,
Scarcely can speak.

II.

Oh, take me by the arms, the waves I see,
Boisterous and wild;
Like him of old who sought to walk to Thee,
A faithless child,
I've ventured on the waters, and I quake;
Shield me from harms;
"Teach me to go," my Father—God, and take
Me by the arms.

III.

Let me not wander from the narrow way,
But keep me still,
Close to Thyself, seeking from day to day
To do Thy will.
Oh, may I ne'er to this vain world go back,
With its false charms;
"Teach me to go" in faith's unwavering track,
Held by the arms.

D. G. S.

REMARKS ON OVERSIGHT OR RULE.

IN a former issue we were dealing with the difference between being "made overseers" and "taking oversight," and here we would draw attention to 1 Peter v. 2., R.V. "Exercising the oversight"; and a man can only exercise what he has received.

But some one may say, "If only those who are scripturally qualified are to exercise oversight, a very great number of those who at present attend 'oversight meetings' would be absent; in fact, very few left behind in many places."

Thus our real condition would be manifested. But are we willing to have our condition discovered to us? Or is the language of our hearts, as a brother once put it, "You know we must have brethren who will 'take' the care of the various meetings"? Must we? Or should we, in our poverty, ask God to give them?

When Gideon pitched beside the well of Harod with thirty-two thousand, perhaps he thought he "must have them"; but the Lord said, "The people are too many. Proclaim in the ears of the people, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return." This statute in Israel (Deut. xx. 8) had evidently been forgotten, or at least neglected, by Gideon.

The fearful and faint-hearted one was disqualified to fight the battles of Jehovah. So the Lord said, "Let him return and depart *early* from Mount Gilead." As the result of that proclamation twenty-two thousand returned.

The people are yet too many. "Bring them down to the waters, and I will try them for thee there," is the word of the Lord. Those that lapped as a dog, are set by themselves; and those who bowed themselves down upon their knees to drink, by themselves. And the number of them that lapped was three hundred. And by them the Lord delivered Israel out of the hand of the Midianites.

Thus we see that three hundred God-qualified, tried and chosen men could be, and were, used of God to accomplish His purpose. God did not use those who were disqualified.

Now, if each one would take heed to the proclamation in the Word of God as to what overseers should be, and then allow God to

try us (because with deceitful hearts we might try ourselves and be deceived: rather like the psalmist say, "Try me and know my heart"): what would the result be? Perhaps ~~we~~ starting as it was with Gideon, and doubtless with as blessed results.

Thus, as our poverty in this matter was manifested to us, the prayer so seldom heard now would often rise to the throne of grace from hearts burdened with a sense of our *need*, that God would in this time of *need* raise up shepherds to seek the young, to heal that that is broken, and to feed that that standeth still. But instead of this we seem, like those of Laodicea, to be saying, "I am rich and increased in goods, and have *need* of nothing." No *need* of "God-made overseers," and so they are not prayed for. In fact, "The priests 'take' into their hands rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof" (Jer. v. 31, margin).

Bearing those things in our mind, we might look with profit at some of the Scriptures, which give with no uncertain sound distinct precept for our guidance in this most important service of the Lord. Because all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

If the path we are treading be the wrong one for us, then we need reproof and *correc-*
tion. If we are ignorant as to our path, Scripture will instruct us. Therefore, with confidence, we should inquire at the Word of the Lord. And He has assured us that, "If any man willetteth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching"; and who "teacheth like Him"?

Should the result of His teaching discover to our souls the fact that we have merely "taken oversight," we trust by His grace that we may allow the Word "to correct" and "instruct"—yea, enable us to learn in the presence of our gracious God and Father what He would have us do.

In dealing with the following Scriptures, without dogmatising, we would seek rather to exercise one another by way of questions.

1 Tim. iii. begins, "This is a true saying, If a man desire oversight, he desireth a good work." Do I desire oversight? Has God given me the desire? Does that desire make

me visit the sick? Do I endeavour to seek out the absent ones? Do I manifest the spirit of a shepherd, or do I merely attend the "oversight meeting"?

Verse 2, "An overseer then must be blameless"; also Titus i. 7. And Paul's instructions to Titus as to appointing elders were, "If any be blameless." Is my manner of life such as commends me to the saints as one fitted to guide? Or is it such that almost the youngest can plainly see that I am not an example to the flock?

"Vigilant" or watchful. Do I watch for souls with a shepherd's eye? Am I watching to see that none render evil for evil? Do I watch unto prayer?

"Sober." Was there ever a time when sober men were more in demand? What need of sobriety in those who guide. Have I got it? Am I of "good behaviour"? Am I "given to hospitality"? Do I entertain strangers or share my home with a brother or sister if sojourning where I live?

Am I "apt to teach"? Do I make it my business to impart instruction, both by word and deed, whenever opportunity offers? Do I teach by example as well as by precept? Do I teach or do I talk? Do I occupy time in worship or prayer meetings with "talk of the lip" when saints cannot get away from me, being well aware that if I called a meeting of believers, where I was to address them, scarcely a person would come?

"Not ready to quarrel, and offer wrong as one in wine" (R.V. margin). Is this a picture of me? If so, how can I guide? Am I a striker? Am I greedy of filthy lucre? Do I talk about the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, while my money-loving heart would rather not part with a shilling? Do I sing, "This world is a wilderness wide, I have nothing to seek or to choose," while I am joining house to house and field to field, and every nerve strained to increase my bank account? Am I shutting up my bowels of compassion, while God is asking, "How dwelleth the love of God in me?"

Am I patient? Am I imitating the God of patience? Do I bear with the froward lambs of the flock? Do I, in meekness, instruct those that oppose themselves, or am I harsh and overbearing with those who cannot see with

me? Am I lording it over God's heritage? Am I a brawler? Am I one of the "opposition bench"? as another has put it, always to the front in strife, talking loud and long? Where are the Caleb's to still the people, the men whom God has taught to rule their spirits?

Am I ruling well my own house? Are my children in subjection, with all gravity? Have I faithful children, or are they in the cricket club, or perhaps at the theatre or some such place? Is that how I rule my own house? If it be so, then let us remind ourselves that God asks us a question and we will have to answer it to Him one day. We may cast all man's questions aside, but not so with God's. "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?"

"Not a novice, lest, being lifted up with pride, ye fall into the condemnation of the devil." Am I a young believer? Has this word been needed by me, or have I, in spite of this warning, "taken oversight," resulting in my being lifted up with pride and falling? If I have escaped this, do I not know many who have fallen through this very thing? Did I ever encourage them in it?

"Moreover, he *must* have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Have I this good report, or am I in debt? Am I given to wine or strong drink? Do I give full value in business? Do I pay my servants that which is just and equal? Am I with an evil eye hasting to be rich?

Few things have brought more dishonour and shame upon the Name of the Lord than neglect of these two last verses. Young men, puffed up with pride and conceit, attending "oversight meetings" and talking flippantly about the troubles in assemblies, and boasting about "standing for the truth," and then—ah! what then? A few short weeks or months and they are fallen into the condemnation of the devil.

Alas! how many to-day of would-be overseers, who lacked the indispensable "good report," have fallen into reproach (but not the reproach of Christ) and the snare of the devil, being taken alive by him in pursuance of the will of God (2 Timothy, ii. 16—Alford).

NOTES OF A CONFERENCE
ON THE SECOND COMING OF THE LORD.

SECOND PAPER.

ON Wednesday morning Mr. T—— dwelt upon "The Predicted Corruption and Doom of Christendom." He first showed that the expression embraces all who profess the Name of Christ, and is styled "the kingdom of heaven" in Matt. xiii., &c. He drew a striking connection between the corruption of the kingdom of Israel in the days of Ahab by means of that wicked woman "Jezebel," and the parable of the leaven hid by a woman in the meal, and the reference to Jezebel in that corrupt state of things as seen in the church of Thyatira, and more fully developed in Laodicea. Her doom is seen in the rooting up of the tares in Matt. xiii., and in the cutting off of the wild olive branches in Rom. xi., in the Lord spurning the Laodicean apostasy out of His mouth, and in Babylon being destroyed by the ten kings, yet to arise, as in Rev. xvii.

Mr. T. S. H—— then spoke on "The Times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi), where the Lord fully answers the first of the three questions asked by the disciples on Olivet. In Matt. xxiv. the Lord passes by this question, and answers the latter two. He now foretells the destruction of the city, the scattering of the people, and the sad, desolate condition of things, which still continues, and will go on "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

God's object in taking up Israel is seen in Ex. xix. 3-6, and in Deut. vii., viz., to set them forth as His witness in being a separate and holy nation before the eyes of the other nations of the earth. In this they most grievously failed, becoming as corrupt, yea, worse than the heathen around them. Failing as God's witness upon earth, God has set them aside, and "Immanuel's Land" is trodden down by the Gentiles. These times "commenced with Nebuchadnezzar," as seen in Daniel ii. and vii. But by-and-by God will vindicate Israel's cause and deliver them from their present terrible condition, by executing judgment upon their foes. Then will He restore the kingdom again to Israel, and Jerusalem will become the metropolis of the world and Palestine the glory of all lands.

Dr. M'K——'s subject was "The stone cut out without hands." We have been hearing of the "times of the Gentiles," which began about 600 years B.C., and they will go on until Christ shall reappear in person, smite the image upon its feet, and then fill the whole earth with His glory. Notice three things about the stone. 1st, It is cut out without hands; it is of Divine origin. 2nd, It falls suddenly, and by one unexpected and effectual blow the huge image entirely disappears. It is not a gradual process, but one sharp, sudden, decisive blow. 3rd, It then fills the whole earth. Christ will then reign as King of kings and as Lord of lords, wielding universal sway. All nations shall bow to His righteous rule, and then shall the knowledge of the glory of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

In the afternoon Mr. L—— gave a Bible reading on the subject of "Hope." As sinners unsaved we were without hope (Eph. ii.). In 1 Pet. i. 5, we are begotten again unto a living hope. It is the birthright of all God's people. This hope is referred to in Col. i. 5, 19, 27. Again in 1 Tim. i. 1, we read of Lord Jesus, our Hope. In Rom. viii., this hope is connected with the Holy Spirit and the redemption of the body. But it is possible to hold this hope only in an objective sense—i.e., something outside of ourselves entirely; but there is also a subjective view of this hope, as taught in Rom. xv. 13, and other Scriptures.

This hope, held in the power of the Holy Ghost, leads to a holy life (1 John iii. 3; 1 Thess. iii.). It comforts us in bereavement (1 Thess. iv.). It sustains amid persecution (2 Thess. i.). It gladdens our hearts as in Titus ii. 13; Rom. v. 2. Encourages in our Gospel work (1 Thess. ii.). It holds us as the anchor of a vessel when tossed by storm (Heb. vi.).

In the evening Mr. H—— spoke on "The Restitution of all Things." He said these blissful times look on to that day when God will take back His ancient people to their own land, and restore unto them the kingdom, building again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and then through Israel blessing all the nations of the earth. These words are found in Acts iii. 21, and they are intimately connected with Israel's contrition,

conversion, and cleansing. The time is coming when, in their hour of extremity and sorrow, they will be driven to cry to the God of their fathers to interpose on their behalf. At that critical juncture the heavens shall rend asunder, and Christ will come to their deliverance. Then shall they look upon Him whom they have pierced. They will discover in their wounded deliverer, Jesus the Nazarene, whom their fathers slew and hanged on a tree; and there shall be great mourning among them, as a man mourning over the loss of his first-born son. But in that day the fountain for sin will be opened unto them, when they will learn the blessed fact that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin," even the awful sin of shedding it. Then, when Israel stand before God deeply contrite, truly converted and perfectly cleansed, will come the restitution of all things. The prayer shall be fully and manifestly answered—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven." God's King shall sit upon the holy hill of Zion, and reign in Jerusalem, before His ancients, gloriously.

It will be a reign of universal sway (Ps. ii., lxxii.). Of universal peace (Ps. xlvi.; Isaiah ii.). Of universal blessing; blessing to the full for poor down-trodden Israel, for to her will come the first dominion; blessing to Gentile nations, who will in that day rejoice with Jehovah's people; blessing to the brute creation (Isa. xi., lxv.). And then shall the earth yield her increase, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Palestine will then become as Paradise, and yonder sterile desert shall blossom as the rose. It will be a time of universal worship of the One True and Living God, and His temple will become in very deed a house of prayer for all nations. Satan will be bound, and the curse to a very large extent be removed. In that day Jehovah will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and wine, and great will be the day of Jezreel. Creation's groan shall cease, and the heaven and earth be vocal with Jehovah's praise.

Dr. N— followed. We have been hearing of the King; we have now to look at His wife. My subject is "The Bride, the Lamb's wife" (read Rev. xxi. 9, 10). The Church is to be the wonder of Divine grace. It is com-

posed of all true believers, from Pentecost until He comes again. Christ will yet reign in peace and righteousness, but not alone. In Gen ii. we hear God saying concerning the first Adam—a type of Him who was to come—"It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make a helpmeet for him." And during the deepsleep the bone was taken from Adam's side; and of it God builded a woman, who was destined to share all Adam's dominion.

In Heb. ii. we have Ps. viii. quoted by the Holy Ghost, and applied to Christ. The time has not yet come when all things are manifestly placed beneath His feet; but we do see Him glorified at God's right hand. He shall yet receive His Bride there, and then they will come forth to reign together.

It was during the rejection of Joseph by his brethren that Pharaoh gave unto him Asenath to wife, who was to share all His glory. So Zipporah was united to Moses during the time when his brethren refused his authority. Then as king in Jeshurun, she was one with him. Pharaoh's daughter was also associated with Solomon in all his glory. These were all foreshadowings of "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." In Eph. ii., we have Jews and Gentiles saved by grace, and forming "one new man" in Christ. In Eph. v., we have the presentation of the Church to Christ; and in Rev. xix., we find the marriage of the Lamb taking place in the Father's house, after which, He will bring her forth and reveal her to a wondering universe. To this time our Lord refers in John xvii. 23. The world will see the Church with Christ, and then know that the Father sent the Son, and has loved us as He has loved Him. To this same time the latter part of Rev. xxi. refers, when under the symbol of the city of glory the Church is seen manifested during the thousand years of Christ's reign. The Father was fully revealed in the Son, and Christ will be fully revealed in the saints to an adoring creation. What manner of persons ought we to be in view of such a prospect? May we live in it, moment by moment, until the day break and the shadows flee away.

The closing address was given by Mr. L— on "The Great White Throne of Judgment," and was specially addressed to the unsaved. He said, I hope one result of this conference on this most important subject

will be a deeper desire in our hearts to reach the unsaved. It is but a little while ere He comes for us, or we go to Him. Let us read Rev. xx. 11-16. These verses bring us to the closing hour of this guilty world's history. The Great White Throne is seen, the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the earth vanishes out of sight. We read of God's Throne in Isaiah vi., but there we find an altar as well as a throne, telling of God's rich provision for the sinner. In Heb. iv., we find a Throne of Grace open to saints and sinners, available for any unsaved ones here to-night. In Rev. iv., we meet the Throne again; and there we find a rainbow encircling it, telling of God's faithfulness to His Word and to His people. But in vain we look for an altar or a rainbow in Rev. xx. It is a scene of solemn, righteous judgment.

The books are opened. In God's Word we read of various books. There is the book of God's providence revealing the riches of God's goodness to a guilty world. The book of remembrance, containing a record of words and deeds, of secret thoughts and hidden acts. The book of the law will also find a place at that tribunal, and will reveal those many offences against the commands of God. The book of the gospel also will be open then. That book telling of God's boundless grace and Christ's dying love. Then comes the book of life, as a last resource, and the name not found written therein. Now comes the awful sentence—"Depart, I never knew you." Each of those opened books cries "guilty," and God makes manifest to His Church and to angels His long-suffering grace and boundless love. What must the doom be? What else can it be than that so clearly laid down in God's Word?—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." They have died in their sins, were buried in their sins, were raised in their sins, judged for their sins, and now driven away in their sins, and to be chained to their sins for ever and ever.

“THE Lord never adds children to an unruly household. What a bad witness to His love and grace we should be to the babes, if He did!”—J. B. M.

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.

THE story of our Lord's passion in the Garden of Gethsemane has no parallel in any part of His antecedent life. Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell this story. All the recorded facts are ascertained only by reading the three narratives together—Matt. xxvi. 36-46; Mark xiv. 32-42; and Luke xxii. 39-46.

Jesus, previously to going into the Garden of Gethsemane late at night, had spent several hours with His disciples in an "upper room" in Jerusalem. He there kept the Jewish passover, appointed the Lord's Supper to commemorate His death, predicted the denials of Peter and the dispersion of His disciples, pointed out Judas as the traitor, and uttered those memorable words which are recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John. Nothing appeared in His conduct or language, during all these hours, to indicate the slightest consternation or dread in view of what He knew to be immediately impending over His head, and what He had foreseen and predicted when making His last journey to Jerusalem. There was no change in the outward facts and circumstances, at the time of His agony, with the single exception that He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, whither He had voluntarily gone, and not in the "upper room." The whole change, whatever it may have been, was in Himself.

And yet this calm and self-collected Jesus, whose life had been one of perfect purity and the most intimate companionship with God the Father, had no sooner entered the Garden of Gethsemane than He began to exhibit the signs of extreme mental suffering. He "began to be sorrowful and very heavy," and "sore amazed." He described His own condition by saying to Peter, James, and John, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me." Going a little distance from them, He "fell on His face and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." He repeated the prayer at three different times. Luke tells us that, "being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly," and that "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," and that an angel was deputed from heaven to strengthen Him. The Epistle to the Hebrews refers to this scene, and says that Jesus "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." The words describing His agony are few and simple; and yet words never painted a scene of greater apparent distress.

This agony came upon Jesus *suddenly*, without any change in outward circumstances, and then left Him just as suddenly. He suddenly passed into it from a state of complete serenity, and as suddenly passed out of it and resumed His usual serenity. No sooner did Judas and the soldiers appear for His arrest than this agony came to an end. It was instantaneous in its coming, and equally so in its departure, while overwhelming during its continuance.

It is worthy of special notice that the evangelists simply state the *facts* of our Lord's passion—when it began and when it ended; what He did and what He said, and how He appeared—thus setting the scene before us without a single word explanatory of its direct cause.

They did not attempt to be philosophers, and, as such, to account for the facts which they state. Mere human speculation here is out of place, and had better be omitted altogether. Let us never forget that our Saviour was a sufferer. Let His words be our guide when we are called to suffer: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."—*Independent.*

LURGAN CONFERENCE.

A NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN conference was held here on the 6th, 7th, and 8th January. On the first two days about fifty of the Lord's servants—evangelists and others, chiefly labouring in the North of Ireland—gave themselves to prayer, with humiliation, confession, and thanksgiving, from 8.30 a.m. to 8 p.m., with brief intervals for refreshments; and on the third day a general meeting of believers was held in the Town Hall, specially secured for the occasion. At every meeting the power and presence of the Lord were most blessedly enjoyed. There was no settled programme, and yet everything went on from hour to hour without a hitch, and the harmony of heaven was amongst us. To God be all the praise.

The principal subjects mentioned in confession were (1) the lamentable absence of that high spiritual tone which should characterise the saints of God generally; (2) the failure of those "gathered only to the Name" to back up their testimony to the truth with that personal and collective display of godliness and love which would convince the spiritual at least, who are not so gathered, of the truth of our position; (3) the lack of pastoral care over the flock of God; (4) the divisions among saints and assemblies in various places, and the dishonour brought upon the Lord thereby; (5) the painful lack of that power in the preaching of the Gospel which was so manifestly present in the North of Ireland and elsewhere over thirty years ago; and (6) the smallness of the number of young men now "going out" into the work. Fervent prayer was made to the God of "manifold mercies" for a speedy deliverance from this sad condition of things, and especially that He would raise up "saviours" for us (Neh. ix. 27), in the shape of men fitted to lead the flock of God into the paths of truth and righteousness, and to feed them with bread from heaven, and not with "bones of contention." Earnest prayer was also made (1) that God would lead into the truth those many thousands of true believers all over the world, who, being shocked by the increasing corruption of the sects, are floating about without any moorings, not knowing where to settle; (2) for backsliders; (3) for the unsaved members of our families; (4) for the persecuted Jews and Christians in Russia; (5) for the "coming again" of our Lord Jesus Christ; and for many other matters too numerous to mention.

Thanksgiving was rendered to God (1) for the numberless mercies and benefits lavished upon us in the past in our own souls, in our families, and in our assemblies; (2) for the restoration of some backsliders, notably one who had been a prominent preacher of the Gospel, and had fallen so low as to become a Socialist and an enemy of the Cross, but who had recently come back to the Lord with true sorrow of heart; (3) for a considerable number of

conversions in the Northern Counties, and for new assemblies formed there within the past twelve months; (4) for the very large number of gatherings where harmony and love still reign through the goodness of God; (5) for the unchanging faithfulness of Him who is able to do for us more than we ask or think; and (6) for the blessed hope of the speedy coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Brief portions of Scripture were read by one and another for our encouragement, and suitable hymns were sung, but there were no regular addresses on the first two days.

The general meeting on the 8th was interfered with by a heavy fall of snow, which made it impossible for believers from a distance to come in, but those who were enabled to attend were treated by our good God to a feast of fat things. A brother called attention to Benaiah, who slew a lion in a pit in time of snow (2 Sam. xxiii. 20), the subject being suggested by the day; and the very stirring little address he gave upon it so warmed our hearts as to make us forget our damp clothes and damp feet for the time being. Other brethren followed this happy lead, showing what mighty deeds were performed through personal affection for David, and exhorting all present to cultivate a deep, personal affection for our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we too might keep close to Him in the day of His rejection, and do valiant deeds for His sake.

We thank God from our hearts for this third annual conference of this character held at Lurgan, and we earnestly hope that God's servants elsewhere will be stirred up to meet in the same way.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Please explain Gen. xlix. 10. Did not the sceptre depart when Israel was brought into captivity, long before Christ came?

What is the meaning of "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"? When does this take place?

Does Mark xvi. 15-18 warrant one going forth now as a "medical missionary"? Does not verse 17 restrict the "signs following" to those only who believe?

Why is the term "Abba" used in connection with "Father" in Mark xiv. 36, Rom. viii. 15, and Gal. iv. 6? Why the repetition?

Is it right for a believer to join a trade's union?

How shall all be made alive in Christ according to 1 Cor. xv. 22?

Will the "incorruptible" and "immortal" body of 1 Cor. xv. 53 be the same in glory?

Please quote a few passages that clearly speak of baptism by immersion, as some believers find a difficulty in giving Scripture proofs when advocating this mode of baptism.

SOWING AND REAPING.

QUESTION 403.—How, when, and where does the believer reap the corruption threatened in Gal. vi. 8?

Ans. A.—The passage referred to is not, properly speaking, a threat; but a simple though solemn statement of cause and effect, which cannot possibly be

separated. Moreover, it is an universal principle, and not confined to believers, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The unbeliever, sowing only to the flesh, will assuredly reap corruption in the lake of fire, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"; but our God is a consuming fire, and cannot tolerate evil in any of His children, and He, "without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work"; but for us this judgment takes place now, therefore let us "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear." There is also the reaping of the fruit of our ways, even though God pardons our sin. Witness the case of David (2 Sam. xii. 13, 14). A man who before conversion had ruined his health and beggared his family, will not escape the natural result even after his conversion; and even the believer who fails in whole-heartedness for Christ, will not only lose the joy of communion here, but at the judgment seat of Christ will assuredly suffer loss (see Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. iii. 13-15).

Let us not be satisfied with anything short of the communion and joy which flow from keeping His Word (John xiv. 23).

G. A. S.

Ans. B.—I think the answer to "when" and "where" is "now" and "here" (see 1 Cor. xv. 50-54; Phil. iii. 21; 1 John iii. 2). It seems clear from these scriptures that corruption can only be reaped in this body of flesh and blood. As to the "how," it depends on the "sowing." Take the life of Jacob for example. He who had been the supplanter and deceiver begins to reap in Gen. chap. xxix. 25, then chap. xxxii. 7, chap. xxxiv., chap. xxxv. 22, chap. xxxvii. 33-35, chap. xlvi. 36. Christians who sow to the flesh, and who wander away so far as to gratify the lusts thereof, will, I believe, even though restored, reap—it may be in their family or in their own body—the sad effects. There is another side of it which might suggest another question. Some real Christians wander away, and seem to prosper in worldly matters. What the effect of the "judgment seat" will be on such I do not know. J. L.

Editor's Note.—One reply to this question contends that the "sowing to the flesh" is by the unbeliever; the "sowing to the Spirit" by the believer. This, it seems to us, is to miss the point of the exhortation. The unbeliever truly can do nothing but "sow to the flesh," and can consequently reap only corruption. But the believer has within him, as is plainly shown in Gal. v., a double nature—the one opposed to the other; he therefore may sow to either. The instances adduced of David, Jacob, etc., are directly in point. Sowing and reaping in nature are governed by inexorable law. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. So also in the spiritual sphere. The fruit will inevitably be in kind according to the seed sown. He who sows to the flesh, lives for self, for the world, will find that what characterises the result and issues of his life is "corruption." He who sows to the Spirit will find the result of his life and its issues to be characterised by life everlasting.

As regards the believer, the personal results must be reaped here, that is so long as he is "in the flesh" in the sense of 2 Cor. x. 3. But the corrupt issues may extend far beyond the effects upon himself personally, and may reach his family and more remote posterity,

as so sorrowfully shown in the issues of Jehoshaphat's worldly ways. Also in the assembly the results may be corruption and sorrow long after the departure of the one who sowed the seed of discord or worldliness.

PILLARS IN THE HEAVENLY TEMPLE.

QUESTION 404.—Is being made "a pillar in the temple of God" (Rev. iii. 12) a reward to be enjoyed here, or is it to be bestowed in resurrection?

Ans. A.—This promise, it would seem, is future. It is a reward to the overcomer. All rewards are dispensed at the judgment-seat of Christ (1 Cor. iv. 5). At the same time it may be enjoyed down here, in the sense of 2 Timothy iii. 8, but not as a present possession.

Paul knew a crown was his, but it will be awarded at the judgment-seat of Christ. Besides, Rev. xi. 19 points to the temple of God as in heaven, and we must accept that fact in answering the question. Therefore, we judge it will be bestowed in resurrection. All believers are stones of the temple, some will be pillars.

T. C.

Editor's Note.—The overcomer is he who keeps the Lord's works "unto the end" (see Rev. ii. 26). It is possible at any point up to "the end" of a believer's life here that he might through unwatchfulness, self-indulgence, or otherwise, be overcome by Satan, and so become "a castaway," or more properly "a disapproved servant" (see the teaching of 1 Cor. ix. 27), so suffering loss, that is the loss of the reward that might have been his.

It is therefore an error to suppose that any one of these promises to the overcomer will be bestowed previous to the tribunal of Christ.

Doubtless to the faithful is granted even now a present enjoyment of blessings analogous to those promised, but such spiritual enjoyment is not the fulfilment of these seven special promises.

"MANIFESTATION" OF THE BELIEVER.

QUESTION 405.—2 Cor. v. 10. To what part of the believer's life does this apply?—before or after conversion, or both? Is the "manifestation" before the whole church, or only between the individual and the Lord? In what way does a believer receive, for the good and for the bad?

Ans. A.—We judge this scripture to have reference to service rendered after conversion only; for the Cross of Christ sets aside forever all we were and did as sinners, while the judgment-seat of Christ, "after mortality has been swallowed up of life," will yet manifest all we are and have done as servants. That this manifestation will be public in its character seems plain from the parable of the pounds, where the nobleman, in bringing his servants to account, commits a certain work to *them that stood by* (Luke xix. 24). At this judgment-seat of Christ "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong he hath done" (Col. iii. 25); likewise "he that doeth good the same shall he receive of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 8). Thus the deeds done in the body range themselves under these two divisions, good and bad. For good deeds we shall be rewarded (1 Cor. iii. 14); for bad deeds we shall suffer loss (1 Cor. iii. 15), by the decision of the righteous Judge (2 Tim. iv. 8).

T. B.

SIGNS OF THE APPROACHING DAY.

AWAKE! ARISE!

"Watchman, what of the night?" (Isa. xxi. 11).

"Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. . . . The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. xiii. 11, 12).

"Exhorting one another so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25).

SIGNS IN ISRAEL.

(a) Persecution of the Jews in Russia: a shaking of the "dry bones" of the "House of Israel," preparatory to their national gathering of "bone to his bone," and their national organization of "sinews," "flesh," and "skin," binding them together (Ez. xxxvii. 8, 9).

(b) The Jews returning to Palestine, and the land becoming fruitful: the desolation and barrenness of centuries passing away (Ez. xxxvi. 8-10).

(c) A believing remnant arising: seen in the facts of the favour with which Christianity is regarded by many of the Jews, the spreading conviction that Jesus was their Messiah, and the remarkable conversion, by the direct agency of the Spirit of God, of some of the leading Jews, and the formation of "Jewish Christian churches" (Isa i. 9, x. 20-22).

SIGNS IN CHRISTENDOM.

(a) Sound doctrine not endured (2 Tim. iv.); the *Word*, the *Blood*, and the *Judgment* denied; Christ and the Scriptures arraigned at the bar of human reason, and declared fallible.

(b) Man and the world exalted, God and heaven ignored; the people's progress in this world, not the pilgrim's progress heavenward, is the modern theology of the popular pulpit. The aim being, evidently, to adapt Christianity to modern thought, and reduce it into harmony with natural taste. "They speak of the world, and the world heareth them" (1 John iv. 5, 6).

(c) The "churches" seek patronage by providing popular amusements (2 Tim. iii. 5), whilst Romanism, Rationalism, Theosophy, and Spiritualism are fast leavening them.

SIGNS IN THE NATIONS.

Political.—A policy of peace professed, war prepared for, and dreaded. Democratic lawlessness, restive to break all restraining authorities, crying, "Down with the throne and down with the crown, and stand by the rights of the people" (2 Peter ii. 10).

Social.—"Trades' unions," "co-operation,"

"boycotting," "badges"; all marking the principles of the coming Antichrist's kingdom (Rev. xiii. 11-17).

Scientific.—Man, in his pride, "willingly ignorant" (2 Peter iii. 3-5) of the Divine account of creation and history, vaunts himself that he has discovered, in the theory of "evolution," the formation of matter and the "origin of species," whilst in investigating the forces of electricity and "animal magnetism," he is fast succeeding (as he believes) in bridging the gulf between the natural and supernatural, and will soon show "signs and wonders," attributing them to natural laws, reigning over mind and matter universally. Thus, ignorant of the fact that he is inspired by demons, and at "agreement with hell," he shall ultimately deify his own nature, and Satan will fulfil his ancient promise—"Ye shall be as gods" (Gen. iii. 5). Following in the track of the Pagans, becoming "vain in their imagination," their "foolish heart" shall, like theirs, be "darkened"; "professing themselves to be wise," they shall, like them, become "fools" (Rom. i. 21-25); "for God shall give them up" also, but this time to a "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 11). "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." For it is written, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness" (1 Cor. iii. 19).

SATAN'S AIM.

He, as the "god of this age" and "prince of the authorities of the air"—his angels and demons—seeks, by their subtle agency, to "blind the minds of them that believe not," to the "gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4); and also to gain complete control of the world, by possessing the bodies and souls of men and women. God will permit this for a time. Satan and his hosts will be cast out of the heavens into the earth, "having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. xii. 12). The "spirits of demons" will then be abroad "working miracles," and preparing for the last great conflict with Christ, at His revelation from heaven, with "all His saints" and "mighty angels" (Rev. xvi. 13-16, xix. 11-20).

SATAN INCARNATE

shall appear in the person of the "Man of Sin,"

the "Antichrist," the "Beast," the "King," as he is variously called, giving him "his power and his throne, and great authority" (Rev. xiii. 2), appointing him the head of the revived, ten-kingdomed, confederate, old Roman empire, and of the united religions of the world, as it would appear—Romanism, Protestant systems and sects, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Theosophy, Spiritualism, &c., all amalgamated and embraced in one great system—the "church of the future," of which men are dreaming, but which is styled in Scripture, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. xvii. 5), and which becomes the habitation of demons and the hold of every foul spirit (Rev. xviii. 2).

Thus, by the "effectual working of Satan, in all power and signs and lying wonders," he shall secure the adherence and worship of "all kindreds and tongues and nations," excepting the faithful elect Jewish remnant, and their adherents, for whose sakes those unparalleled days of delusion, persecution, and death shall be shortened (Matt. xxv. 22).

THE CHURCH'S HOPE.

Every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, being "justified by His blood" (Rom. v. 9), "quickened together with Him" (Eph. ii. 4), and one with Him as a "new creation," forms part of that "great mystery," called in Scripture "the Church of God," which dates from Pentecost, and is the complement of "the Last Adam," His "Bride," destined to be associated with Him who is crowned with the "Victor's crown," and who "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25, Eph. i. 22, iii. 8-12, v. 30).

The proper and instant hope of the Church, is the fulfilment of the Lord's parting promise, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 3). "The Lord Himself shall descend," the "dead in Christ shall arise first," "we shall be changed in a moment," and "caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 17, 1 Cor. xv. 51).

"I am the bright and morning star," "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 16-20).

THE ENOCH-LIKE RAPTURE
of the Church, "to meet the Lord in the air,"

will bring "Michael and his angels" into direct conflict with "Satan and his angels" (Rev. xii. 7-9), who will now cease to be the "prince of the authorities of the air," and be cast out into the earth, which will now be a scene of social disorder, moral corruption, and physical violence, even "as it was in the days of Noah." The "lawless one," the "man of sin," will now be revealed. The political, religious, and commercial system of "Babylon the Great" will be established (Rev. xvii., xviii.). Israel, still in national blindness, though in their own land, shall suffer in "the great tribulation," the time of "Jacob's trouble." "Nation shall rise against nation," there shall be "great earthquakes in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven" (Luke xxi. 10, 11). "All nations" shall be gathered "against Jerusalem to battle," "the city shall be taken, and half of the city shall go forth into captivity" (Zech. xiv. 2).

ISRAEL'S HOPE.

"Then shall Jehovah go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle." "The Son of Man," "the Word of God," with lightning flash, shall burst through the opened heavens, accompanied by the myriads of His ascended saints and mighty angels. "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives," the place where last those blessed feet touched this sin-stained earth (Zech. xiv. 2-5). His glory shall cover the heavens (Matt. xxv. 31, 32). He shall drive asunder the nations. As "King of kings, and Lord of lords" He shall "overthrow the throne of kingdoms" (Hag. ii. 22). He shall cast the "Beast" and the "False Prophet that wrought miracles," "alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. xix. 19, 20). He shall "assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah" (Isa. xi. 12). To the "daughter of Zion" shall "come even the first dominion" (Micah iv. 8). "He shall build the temple of Jehovah; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a Priest upon His throne" (Zech. vi. 13). He shall establish His "throne in the heavens"; His kingdom shall rule "over all" (Ps. ciii. 19). He shall bind Satan in the bottomless pit, and reign in universal supremacy and peace for

"A THOUSAND YEARS."

"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. ii. 3), which shall be "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the city of the Great King" (Ps. xlvi.). "So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God from that day forward. And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity. . . . Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel" (Ezek. xxxix. 22-29). The nations shall "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: . . . neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah iv. 3). The "earth shall yield her increase" (Ps. lxvii. 6). The hills shall melt with fatness (Amos ix. 13). "All nations shall call Him blessed" (Ps. lxxii.).

"Arabia's desert ranger to Christ shall bow the knee,
And Ethiopia's stranger His glory come and see;
For He shall have dominion o'er river, sea, and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion, or dove's light wing can soar."

THE FINAL OUTBURST OF REBELLION,

which shall take place at the end of the thousand years, when Satan is released for a "little season," shall immediately be quelled by the descent of fire from heaven, and the unparalleled outshining of Divine glory, revealing the "GREAT WHITE THRONE, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away" (Rev. xx.). But the "dead, small and great," who died in their sins, shall not be able to flee away, but must "stand before God" and the opened books of that dreadful assize, and hear their doom of consignment to the "lake of fire," to endure "eternal punishment." Thus Jesus, the Lord, having subdued "all rule and all authority and power," shall "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," that, in a "new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," "God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24-28, Rev. xxi. 1).

FELLOW-CHRISTIAN!

let us remember how much more solemn those words of our Lord are to-day than when first written—"The time is at hand." Truly, as we look into the "sure word of prophecy," and then look around us, we can "see the day approaching." "Therefore, let us not sleep as

do others, but let us watch and be sober." Let us "seek righteousness," let us "seek meekness." WORSHIPPING, WORKING, WATCHING, let us "occupy till He come."

"Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12). T. R.

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.—V.

"OVERSIGHT";
VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE.

OVERSIGHT in the Church has of late been so much a question of controversy, that it is difficult to lift it out of the atmosphere of disputation, and to look at it calmly in the light of Scripture teaching. When there is anything of the nature of a religious war going on amongst leading men in Church, most Christians will think, and will draw conclusions; and it is of great importance that they be helped to think rightly, and thus enabled to arrive at Scriptural conclusions. It is entirely with a view to this end that these lines are penned.

In seeking to enter into the divine thoughts as to oversight, two things need to be kept in view. First, the preciousness of all, and of each one of the redeemed family to our God; and next, how important it is to Him that His children be found walking in the truth. Unless he who stretches forth to do oversight work has, to some extent, learned these cardinal truths in the presence of God, he has not learned the alphabet of shepherd-work; he has not begun at the foot of the ladder, but has "climbed up some other way." If we have not been taught the first of these truths, our ways amongst the flock will lack gentleness and grace; and if we have not apprehended the second, we will be found condoning that which the Lord hates.

In following out this subject let us look first at oversight work, what it consists in; second, at the qualifications necessary in those who do such work; and last, at what Scripture teaches concerning fellowship amongst those who are called to do oversight work.

First, then, let us look at what this work really is.

It is said of David, who was taken by the LORD from the sheepfolds to feed Jacob His

people, and Israel His inheritance, "So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart ; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands" (Ps. lxxviii. 70-72). Here there are two distinct departments of shepherd work, namely, feeding and leading—supplying the flock with food, and guiding them into and in ways pleasing to the Lord.

In Jehovah's charge against the shepherds of Israel we have the following solemn passage : "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost ; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them" (Ezek. xxxiv. 4). Here are five different things which the LORD charges these shepherds with neglecting to do. To take these up in detail would occupy too much time and space for a short paper ; but for one who would do oversight work to meditate and pray over this solemn passage in the presence of God, will do more to help him than to attend any number of oversight meetings. I cannot pass from this portion of Scripture, which speaks so searchingly to the hearts of under-shepherds, without remarking how little room there is in it for the theory, that *only* those saints belong to the Lord's flock who are scripturally gathered, and if they wander away from a right position they cease to form part of His flock.

Let us now come to the New Testament and glean instruction. "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season ?" (Luke xii. 42). The qualifications of the Lord's steward here are, that he know how to give the right quality of meat to the flock, in the right quantity, and at the right time. Then we have the well-known injunction, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts xx. 28). Here the word "feed" does not mean to supply with food, but rather to tend or rule ; that is, to watch over the sheep that none wander away, and also to see that all behave in a manner becoming the house of God. Mark,

here it is "*all* the flock," every saved sinner within their reach as far as lay in their power.

In writing to the Thessalonians the Spirit says, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you" (1 Thess. v. 12). Then, in verse 14, He turns round to the guiding ones and says, "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all." Here we have labouring amongst the flock, admonishing them, warning, comforting, supporting, and all this in the patience of Christ.

Look at another Scripture, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves : for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" (Heb. xiii. 17). Here oversight is to *watch for souls*, and that in view of the judgment-seat of Christ. The injunctions in the previous chapter are in keeping with this : "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees ; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way ; but let it rather be healed." "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God ; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (Heb. xii. 12, 13, 15). Whilst this quotation has a general application to all, as "all the members should have the same care one for another," yet it doubtless has a special application to those who are divinely called to care for the flock ; and here we have tenderly caring for the feeble and the erring, looking diligently lest the enemy get the advantage over anyone, and his poison spread amongst the flock.

We might go on, but enough has been said to give some idea of what Scriptural oversight really is. It is to feed and guide the flock, to heal the sick and wounded, to seek out the lost, to warn, to comfort, to support, to admonish, as each case requires. To look diligently lest the Adversary get amongst the flock : to watch for souls, and all this with Christ-like patience and gentleness. Well may we ask, "And who is sufficient for these things ?"

Before going on to the second part of our subject, I remark that one cannot help being struck with how little is to be found in the

divine Word about attending oversight meetings. I have not purposely avoided saying anything on this point; the truth is, that in looking without prejudice into the Scriptures, I can find nothing to say, that is, as to attending meetings forming any essential part of oversight work. I will take up this point farther on.

(To be continued.)

G. A.
J. B.

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—VII.

MOSES.

ON first thought we might judge that Moses stands in too great a contrast to Christ to be a type of Him. But a little search will prove that the contrast is between the two *dispensations* rather than the two persons. “The law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Jehovah's words to Moses were: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *LIKE UNTO THEE*” (Deut. xviii. 18). In the epistle to the Hebrews his typical character is again seen (Heb. iii. 1-6). Christ as the Apostle, the sent One from God to man, was typified by Moses; as the High Priest returning from man to God, Aaron foreshadowed Him.

We may view Moses as a type of the Saviour in the following particulars:—(1) *In his birth and early history*; (2) *as the deliverer and ruler of Israel*; (3) *as a mediator*; (4) *as a prophet*.

I.—IN HIS BIRTH AND EARLY HISTORY. Moses was born at a time when his people were oppressed and down-trodden. When Jesus was born the Jews were under the power of Rome, and Herod, an unprincipled king, governed them. Moses' parents evidently had Divine instructions that a more than ordinary future was in store for their son. His mother “saw that he was a goodly child” (Ex. ii. 2). This is more than a mother's usual appreciation of her offspring. It is explained in the New Testament as “fair to God” (Acts vii. 20, Greek). With this God-given conviction of the child's glorious future his parents hid him as long as they could; but unable any longer with safety to do so, they committed him to God and the Nile. “Those that honour Me I will honour,” is a Divine principle; so their

faith was not put to shame. The very palace of Pharaoh, the one who sought his life, became his home.

And very clearly to Mary and Joseph was intimated the wonderful nature and the exalted destiny of Him who should be born of her. Pharaoh endangered the life of Moses; Herod sought the life of Jesus. A like motive influenced them—fear of losing their crown. Many were destroyed by both, but in each instance *the child escaped*. Thus does God take the wise in their own craftiness.

Moses was born “one of the people,” so was the Christ. But Moses had the training of a king's son—every comfort and luxury would be his portion. Not so our Lord: He was born in a poor man's family; no king's daughter waited to receive *Him*. He was one of the poor in all His experiences and surroundings. He was not the reputed son of a king, as Moses, but the reputed son of a carpenter. And the Gospels clearly indicate that at the carpenter's bench the Son of God actually laboured (Mark vi. 3). What a dignity and honour this has for ever put upon manual labour!

II.—AS THE DELIVERER AND RULER OF ISRAEL. To save his people, Moses voluntarily renounced the wealth of Egypt and all the honours and pleasures of Pharaoh's court. “For us men and our salvation” the Lord Jesus laid aside His glory, came down to earth, and “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

The first attempt to deliver his people was unsuccessful; he was scorned and rejected by the very ones who should have received him (Acts vii. 23-28). So with the Antitype. “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” Their rebellious, defiant cry was, “We will not have this Man to reign over us.” Stephen, with great effect, pressed home the similarity of the treatment of Moses and Jesus of Nazareth. But this same man, whom at first they rejected, God ultimately used as their deliverer and leader; and Christ Jesus, so long rejected, shall one day be manifested as the Deliverer who shall “TURN AWAY UN-GODLINESS FROM JACOB.”

Egypt represents this world, and Pharaoh Satan, its prince and god. Pharaoh was a hard master and oppressed the Israelites: but the service was freedom and happiness com-

pared to the slavery of those who are slaves of sin and Satan, and such every unregenerate man is (Rom. vi. 20-23; Eph. ii. 1-3).

Moses was the greatest miracle-worker in the Old Testament. God thus demonstrated, to friend and foe, that He had sent him. Likewise miracles, many and great, were performed by the Lord Jesus, the Father thus attesting that He had sent Him to be the Saviour of the world (John v. 36). But there is a striking contrast in the nature of the two series of wonders: those of Moses were chiefly acts of judgment; those of Christ were purely acts of mercy.

Jannes and Jambres, as the leaders of the magicians, withheld Moses and endeavoured to bring down his miracles to the level of their own enchantments. The Scribes and Pharisees opposed the Lord Jesus, blasphemously affirming that His miracles were wrought by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. And as, at last, the very magicians acknowledged that Moses wrought his miracles by the power of God, so the very demons were constrained to confess that Jesus was the Son of God.

By the sprinkled blood of the Passover lamb the Israelites' first-born were preserved from the destroying angel; by the blood of Christ, our Passover-victim, sacrificed for us, all who believe on Him are delivered from the wrath to come.

From that point onward Moses became their recognised leader. They "were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x. 1.). The cloud overhead and the waters on each side, as it were, covered them up, and when they emerged on the other side it was a typical resurrection. Moses, not Pharaoh, was henceforth to be their law-giver and leader. So with the true Christian. In our baptism we show that we have died to sin, the law, and the world. The flesh no longer has any claims upon us, we have died to it; we are no longer of the world, therefore its prince is no longer our master. Henceforth Jesus Christ is our LORD. This practical aspect of baptism is too often forgotten among believers, though the point is made much of in the Word of God (see the R.V. of the following among other scriptures:—Romans x. 9; 2 Cor. iv. 5; 1 Peter iii. 15). Our

constant question should be, "LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME DO?"

III.—MOSES AS A MEDIATOR. Of the giving of the law it is said: "It was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator" (Gal. iii. 19). Israel felt their need of a mediator, and God provided Moses. Referring to the giving of the law, Moses once said: "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you the word of the Lord; for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount" (Deut. v. 5). And every sinner who in any measure knows himself and God, feels the same need. Man must have a mediator—one to interpose and act on God's behalf to him, and in his behalf with God. Such a mediator has been provided in the person of the Lord Jesus. He is the only possible One (1 Tim. ii. 5).

Moses was the mediator of a covenant of works; Christ of a covenant of grace. Thus it is spoken of as "a better covenant" (Heb. viii. 6). The law cursed and condemned, without the least mercy, anyone who violated the least of its commandments. The Gospel tells of One who has borne the curse of the law so that all who receive Christ go free. The law, though it was the ministration of death, was glorious; but the Gospel, the ministration of life, is much more glorious (2 Cor. iii. 7-11).

Through all their wanderings, Moses was the channel of blessing to the nation. The manna, the quails, the water from the rock, all came through him. In this he was a faint foreshadowing of our Lord Jesus. For every blessing a guilty world and an ungrateful church receive comes through the cross of Christ. Well may saved ones sing—

"Our every joy on earth, in heaven,
We owe it to Thy blood."

The intercession of Moses as mediator saved the people from judgment. They had sinned grievously in the matter of the golden calf, and a righteously angry God threatened them with destruction. But hark to those earnest, god-like pleadings of the man Moses: "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold! Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written" (Ex. xxxii. 31-33). That is, Moses offered himself for death that the nation

might be spared. But such a sacrifice could not be accepted.

But at Calvary we see One who was accepted. Worse than ten thousand deaths befall our adorable Substitute. He died beneath the stroke of judgment, and we are delivered from wrath through Him. He lives again to intercede for us ; to save us from sin's power ; to save us to the heavenly inheritance (Rom. v. 9, 10). Moses could not bring them into the land ; but our Redeemer will not give over His work till all His people are "safe at home within the veil."

IV.—AS A PROPHET. God's revelation of Himself has been progressive. At the beginning He was known as ELOHIM, the triune, omnipotent, Creator. The attribute herein revealed was power, might, force. To the patriarchs He revealed Himself as EL SHANAH, the all-sufficient God, the One who supplied the wants of every living thing. But to Moses He manifested Himself as JEHOVAH, the self-existing, unchangeable, and eternal One—God in covenant relationship with His people (see Ex. vi. 2-4). And all the revelations under the old covenant were but additions to this last-named glorious title, as Jehovah-tsidkenu, Jehovah-shammah, &c.

Moses was pre-eminent as a prophet. No man of old was admitted to the familiar intercourse with Jehovah which Moses enjoyed (Num. xii. 6-8 ; Deut. xxxiv. 10, 11). But not till Christ came had we a full revelation of God. All the others were partial and fragmentary. Not till the incarnation was God made known in that highest, yet dearest, of all relationships—FATHER. "No man hath seen God at any time ; the Only Begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father, HE HATH DECLARED HIM."

This is the characteristic revelation of God in this age. Only IN THE SON could God reveal Himself AS FATHER (see John xiv. 9 ; Heb. i. 1, 2, &c.) ; and only as we are "in Christ" can we call God our Father, for He is first of all the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and then the Father of all who believe on Christ (John xx. 17 ; Gal. iii. 26).

Favoured as Moses was, even to him God could only show His "back parts," the less glorious parts of His character (Ex. xxxiv. 18-23). But in Christ we have the last, highest, and

perfect revelation of God. All that we can ever know of God is to be seen in Christ, for He has shined forth giving "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6).

Moses and the prophets were like the moon and the stars in the night, it was infinitely better than total darkness, yet it was night only ; but now, in Christ, we have the sun at noon-day.

Fain would we speak of the wife and children whom God gave Moses in his rejection, and other points, but space fails us.

Personally, we might learn many practical lessons from the life of Moses. I point out one : God ever trains His instruments for special work, and the training is oftentimes long and painful. With Moses two-thirds of a long life was taken up in fitting for service. Eighty years' training for forty years' work. To us it seems out of all proportion. Yet it was God's way, and that is ever the best. May we, too, be prepared to undergo any training necessary that we may be vessels meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

J. N. C.

SATISFIED.

FOR ever in Thy presence satisfied—

Our rest, our joy in Thee.

Love's captives, at Thy feet we would abide—

Captives by grace set free !

Held in the grasp of resurrection power

That raised Thee from the grave ;

So send us forth in Thy redemption hour

Thou who art strong to save.

Still, while we serve, let each enraptured soul

The glory-vision see ;

Touch our dead lips as with the altar coal,

That we may speak of Thee.

And ever as the hopes of earth grow less

Wilt Thou not nearer come ?

Over the shadows of the wilderness

Shed the dear light of Home.

We seek no bliss but that which faith has found :

Unveiled Thy face to see ;

We fear no ill amid the foes around,

Save to lose sight of Thee.

—A. E. W.

FIRST THINGS FIRST.

THAT man's ways are so often contrary to God's is not only true of the careless worldling, whose first thoughts are for self and time instead of God and eternity, but also of the awakened and anxious. How often has it saddened our hearts to find them earnestly endeavouring to attain the virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and charity of 2 Peter i. 5-9, and entirely overlooking the fact that, *before all these*, God has put the "precious faith" of verse 1!

But we need not go outside the circle of the redeemed to prove that God's ways are not as man's, for, alas! a look back at our own path must show us that *our* conduct has testified against us in this respect again and again.

While eagerly searching the Scriptures for the great and deep things of God, how often have we, in our daily life, assigned to a very secondary place, or perhaps forgotten altogether, many things that He, in His wisdom, declares to be *primary*, either with regard to excellence or order? A very brief reference to a few Scriptures may help us in our self-examination upon this point.

(1) "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God" (Matt. vi. 33). Is it not a fact that, again and again, anxious thoughts for the morrow, care as to what we shall eat and drink, and dread of future ill, have been foremost in our minds, instead of the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom? If so, we have reversed God's order.

(2) It is possible that zeal for the salvation of souls has sometimes made us forget the words, "Let the children *first* be filled" (Mark vii. 27), that seem to contain a principle for ourselves. Oh, that before our special meetings for the unsaved there was more prayer and diligence over the Word amongst God's people, and more spiritual food dealt out to *fit them* for the coming fight! How difficult it is for a starving one to feed others. If our cups are not running over, we shall have little to give to those who are athirst.

(3) When there is a mote in our brother's eye we must, if we love him, seek to get it out. This work, however, though always difficult, would be rendered easier if attention

were always given to the divine command: "First cast out the beam out of thine own eye" (Matt. vii. 5). If we have even a grain of sand in our own, we shall make poor work of getting anything out of the eye of our brother.

(4) It may be that our work for the Master would sometimes have been of a better quality if we had remembered Luke xiv. 28. For want of *first* counting the cost, how much work has been left unfinished and eventually come to nought? Perhaps a little company has been saved and gathered to the Name, but the cost of nursing and feeding the young ones was not reckoned upon. The worker has flown away without providing a caretaker, and so individuals have been starved and assemblies have died out.

(5) It is written in 2 Cor. viii. 5, "They *first* gave themselves to the Lord." Have we all done this? How much more glory would be brought to God if we were ever conscious that not only is He ours, but that we and all we have are His! Then we should feel more clearly the absolute necessity of having the Lord's mind before making a move in any direction, nor should we dare to speak in His name unless He had given us the message.

(6) Now let us turn to the last four words of Rev. ii. 5. They are solemn ones. "Do the *first* works." Should it not be our constant aim that all our service should be done in the same spirit of self-sacrifice and love to the Saviour that characterised our first efforts after being saved? In those days our words were burning, our hearts overflowed with desire to please God and to lead sinners to Christ, and those to whom we spoke were made to shake. It is well, once in a while, to look back to the days of our first love, and to ask our very souls if our lamp is as bright as it was then, or if it is not nearly out.

(7) There is one other "first thing" to which is asked the reader's special attention. It is spoken of in Prov. i. 7: "The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of knowledge."

There is knowledge that "puffeth up" (1 Cor. viii. 1), but such knowledge was never gathered from the Word in the fear spoken of in the above verse. True instruction, received by the Spirit's teaching from the Scriptures by those who tremble lest they should grieve their Teacher, will humble instead of puffing up,

will lead us to be tender when tenderness is needed, and will keep us from the false charity that thinks lightly of evil doctrine and the careless walk.

We see in Prov. ii. 1-5 how the fear of the Lord can be learned. It is as we get to know God and His precepts more intimately that this fear grows upon us. There must be the constant receiving and hiding within us of the Scriptures. The ear must ever be open to the Spirit's teachings through the Word, and the heart must be applied to understand that instruction. Diligent prayer and searching are necessary for this, and also the recognition of the truths contained in verses 6-9 of our chapter. Is the price too high? Though it sets all human wisdom aside, we must either pay the price, or, throughout our lives down here, remain without what *God* calls knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the *first* lesson in the believer's school-book.

The answer to the question, "What is this fear?" is given in Prov. viii. 13: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil"; and the same verse tells us the evil things we are to hate, and that God hates too. Under the four heads of "pride, arrogancy, the evil way, and the mouth of perverseness" (Newberry), we have the roots of all the evils of which the world is full. A little examination will convince the reader of this, but space will not allow of an exposition. It is the fear of the Lord that leads us to tremble lest we think, speak, or do aught that would grieve the heart of our God or His indwelling Spirit.

We may test ourselves by Prov. xiv. 2 as to how much we have learned of this fear. "*He that walketh in his uprightness* feareth the Lord"—no others. If crookedness of any kind is knowingly allowed we must not flatter ourselves that we are fearing the Lord.

Conformity to the standard laid before us in these Scriptures would not only bring about the wondrous joy of Prov. xxiii. 5, but would bring down upon ourselves many of the blessings for which we so often pray. It is impossible to give more than references, but the reader would be repaid by reading the Scriptures referred to, and asking himself, "Are these blessings mine?"

The fear of the Lord brings strong confidence, a place of refuge, soul satisfaction,

deliverance from snares (Prov. xiv. 26, 27), contentment with little (xv. 16), and instruction (or correction) of, and departure from, evil (xv. 33; xvi. 6). It tendeth to life (xix. 23), leads to riches of faith and truth and honour from God (xxii. 4); and, without doubt, the dispensing of knowledge, gained in this fear, is better than the merchandise of gold (Prov. iii. 14).

Lest our sisters in Christ should think that there is nothing in all this for them, it must be pointed out that the last verse but one in our book tells us that "the WOMAN that feareth the Lord she shall be praised." The words of chap. xxiii. 19 apply to us all: "Be thou in the fear of the Lord *all the day long*."

May we have grace, if we have skipped the first steps of the ladder, to come down and commence over again. God's order must be best, and surely it is His will that we should learn first things first.

W. H. S.

LESSON FROM THE LOCUSTS.

(Prov. xxx. 27.)

THE wisdom of the four "little" things on the earth mentioned, appears in each case to consist in using the opportunity given them by God. With the ants it is a question of time: summer is given and used to good purpose for provision for winter. With the conies the wisdom is shown in weakness: taking the opportunity to make its refuge in the strong rock for the hour of danger. The spider's wisdom seems to consist in disregarding her loathsome unfitness for the king's palace, and in creeping in there when opportunity arises. All these are beautiful in their various ways as lessons to the sinner, who is short-lived, feeble, and vile; but the locusts, mentioned in verse 27, seem to teach the Lord's people truth that is needed now, and indeed has been needed from the beginning, that is, the truth of the power of having no earthly king when we depend on an invisible Lord.

The Israelites lacked this wisdom at Sinai when Moses was in the mount (Ex. xxxii. 1), when they said, "Up, make us gods, which shall go *before us*; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."

After all that Jehovah had done for them, it was “*the man that brought them up*” that they looked to, and, failing him, they asked for *gods to go before them*. So, again, in the days of the Judges, it is said, as a general habit (Judges ii. 19), “when the judge was dead,” “they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers,” till, in the days of Samuel, they asked for “a king to judge us like all the nations” (1 Sam. viii. 5); of which request the Lord said to Samuel, “They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken Me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.” Observe, it was “I brought them up out of Egypt,” not Moses, as they said.

The tendency to look at the outward instrument rather than to the Lord is, however, so generally acknowledged as a matter of history, that it is hardly profitable to dwell on it. It may be better, therefore, to pass on at once to the bearing of the locust lesson on ourselves at the present day.

If I may speak as an individual I can better point out exactly what I mean.

The force of the passage was first brought home to me when I had occasion to study a government report in which the habits of the locusts in North America were described. So far as I remember, they were hatched on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and, as soon as their wings were perfected, they showed signs of having some direction for flight instinctively impressed on them; for example, a south-east direction. To take this a north-west wind would be required, and on this wind springing up the whole would take flight. Should it drop, they dropped to. Other winds might arise, but not a locust would move until the north-west wind again blew, when the whole of the myriads would mount in the air again and be carried onwards, and this would continue until they arrived at the locality for which they appeared to be destined, when they all descended on the crops. Then human faces would indeed “gather blackness.” Some farmers might drag ropes across their fields between two horses, so as to keep the crop

moving and sweep the locusts off. Others would light fires. But by the end of a day the horses would be tired and the fires burnt out, and the locusts would have settled down on the crops. Compare this account with the wonderful description of the locusts in Joel ii.—God’s “great army” which He “sent.”

Probably the time when men most literally acted as His army, and when, like the locusts, and in miraculous power, they did not “thrust one another,” but walked “every one in his path,” was at the siege of Jericho, when the Lord appeared to Joshua as “Captain of the host of the Lord,” but was unseen by the men of Israel. Every step was ordered by the Lord, and the people, who had then passed through Jordan and had had their reproach rolled away, fought with power. It was not now “stand still,” and “hold your peace,” as at the Red Sea, but it was at the people’s shout that the wall fell, and they went up “every man straight before him” (Joshua vi.).

To come home to our own case. Probably any Englishman, if asked to name a wise insect, would mention the bee. Unquestionably bees are clever, but it is the very picture of human cleverness, the wisdom of man, rather than the wisdom foreshadowed by the strange instinct of the locust. A most satisfactory business-like system, from a human point of view, is carried out in a beehive. The essence of it all is that a single queen bee rules over everything. No one questions her authority, and all goes smoothly unless something upsets the arrangement. The queen, for example, may die. In such a case, a friend of mine, who kept bees, told me he had to send to London and get a queen sent down by post, who might do well or badly, as the case might be. On the other hand, where one queen is, a second queen may be hatched, and then she carries off a number of bees in a swarm, because two queens cannot go on together. So there comes to be a swarm flying through the air in search of a home. Far from having a fixed destination, like the locusts, it is easy to determine their place of settlement. A party may see them, beat pots and kettles hard and loud, and presently down they come. A man who professed to understand bees well, told me that the queen makes a low note in flight, and that this noise drowns it, consequently in a short time she finds she

is not heard and down she comes, with her the whole swarm, and so they are taken and "hived."

Compare the bees and the locusts, and say which generally best pictures the action of the Lord's people to-day. Do we not often get a queen and depend on her and think that all goes well till our queen, being man and not Spirit, fails us? Let the queen take any shape we may desire, the result is the same. The queen may be a "pope," a "bishop," a "minister," or a "general," and death sooner or later takes him. Have we then never seen something like a queen sent on trial post-haste? The queen may even be a Presbytery or a London Bridge meeting, and it will fail because it is within reach of human "pots and kettles." Then, have we never seen the smooth and even reign of one queen disturbed by the springing up of a second queen, and then swarming follows? It seemed most unreasonable for many to turn away and follow a new young queen with little to recommend her. Nevertheless, it was almost enough for her to cross antennæ with each bee she met to enable her to carry him off.

Pleasant and easy we may find it to point lessons for our neighbours. Let us come still closer home. To be in the position of power figured by the locusts, we must be actually moved and guided by directions which we have from our Lord. See that thou do all things "according to the pattern which was shewed thee in the mount." David proved the Lord's power alone with the lion and bear before he went out to meet Goliath in the sight of both armies, and he refused to go in armour which he had not proved. The difficulty is that it is easy to speak of being led and of not being led, as if every action through the day were the result of communion with the Lord, whilst 'tis often nothing more than assumption. It is no doubt easy to become sentimental and mysterious, but this statement amounts to little more than the fact that it is easier to miss the gold centre of the target than the outer white. What seems to be needed is that each individual should actually prove what comes before him alone in prayer and communion with the Lord over the Word. It is a great encouragement to find that another brother in the Lord has come to the same conclusion as oneself, if we believe that it is

the result of prayer and waiting on God; but it is but little encouragement to find that another can pronounce "Shibboleth" as we do.

Probably these words may suggest the suspicion that some attack is intended on some definite and recognised truth, and some vague fanciful imagining substituted for it. Let me say, then, that I believe there has never been a time when we needed more to buy the truth and sell it not, and that I have not any conscious aim beyond the desire that we may prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Certainly I believe that we are all individually apt to adopt Shibboleths, but let each detect them for himself. As assemblies, we are apt to drop into human plans for arranging for uniform and systematic action, because we have found how easy it is for our eyes to fail in looking upwards. This has been the history of the Church from the beginning. We may read it in the Bible, we may read it in Neander's church history, or even in the events around us. When the Lord sent Peter to the Gentiles without informing the church at Jerusalem, it needed grace to own that the invisible Lord had really given the Word, but God had provided proof for those who would receive it, and by grace the command was recognised. When Paul went to the Gentiles, however, the ranks of the great army were really troubled, and they began to "thrust" one another in their march.

Then, to come home to our own times, we have seen brethren combined on a system which presented the appearance of complete unity; but the unity depended on decisions, formed at a central meeting, being promulgated everywhere. And the result was that when division arose in the central meeting (which was the visible queen), the same system intended to preserve unity was powerful to spread division, till every corner of the communion felt the rending and splitting force. Doubtless it is right to take all opportunity to bring any truth before, or to mention any difficulty to, our brethren. The mistake is surely when necessity is laid on them to decide and act where the Lord has not given them the means of judging or any direct responsibility. In many cases our only guide as to the rectitude of a course taken by an assembly is our confidence in that assembly, and such

confidence is strong in the measure in which we believe in the reality of their looking to the Lord. So with individuals, it may be that some brother has taken a course in his family or in individual spiritual work of the wisdom of which we may easily misjudge. In such a case it would be well to remember that "to his own Master he standeth or falleth" (Rom. xiv. 4). "God is able to make him stand." The invisible Lord does not tell us *all* that He will have *each one* to do. Constantly we need to remember how imperfectly the invisible life and power is seen in the visible and tangible evidences within our reach. After going through the names of those in fellowship at an oversight meeting, for example, the thought may well come to us of the hundreds of lives going ceaselessly on which are represented by the list of names, and the question may well arise how far we have discerned on earth what is seen by Him before whom all things are naked and open. Many of us have been many years in our present position, may we be able to give account with joy of work done for the Lord Himself when He comes. My own conviction is that there is a constant danger of not distinguishing between the carrying out of a theory, however honestly it may be done, and real exercise of heart and prayer to God.

Heb. xi. 27.—"For he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."

1 Peter i. 8.—"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Mal. iii. 18.—"Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."

1 Cor. iv. 2, 3, 4, 5.—"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." C.O. B.

THE WHITE STONE.

Rev. ii. 12-18.

THE "white stone" is the reward of the overcomer when not only false doctrine is coming into the church, but the church is joining affinity with the world, under the influence thereof, seeking its support and approval. In this state of things the one who overcomes is he who is in intimate and secret communion with the Lord; and thus gets His mind about it all. He looks at things in relation to Him: and instead of seeking the applause of the world, and being overcome of the evil, he is satisfied with the Lord's secret approval and overcomes the evil. The joy and strength of his own soul are found in secret communion with the Lord, the rejected One, to whom he remains true and loyal, keeping himself personally free from the evil associations that the church is forming. Such an one feeds upon the "hidden manna," *i.e.*, is able to appreciate the humbled Christ (though now hidden away in the holiest before God), in a way that those who mix with the world are not; for the world did reject, and *does* still reject Him. And there is even something more in this than the feeding on the humbled Jesus for the sustenance of our souls in the wilderness, precious indeed as that is. It is the "hidden manna"—that which was laid up in the presence of God—which shows that such an one enters into God's thoughts about the humbled One in a very special way.

The "white stone," then, is the reward of such an overcomer. "White" in Scripture indicates purity. But as it was secret communion that enabled him to overcome, and the secret approval of the Lord that was sought by him when the church was going in for the open approval of the world, so there is a reward that answers to this; there is still a secret, an eternal secret, if one may so say, between him and the Lord—a new name written that no man knows but he who receives it, and of course He who gives it—some special joy known only to the one who receives it in the presence of the One who bestows it.

All this is intensely individual. Oh! how blessed, to be granted such deep and intimate communion with the Lord as to have a joy that not only no one else can intermeddle with but that no one else knows. And is it

not so even now with the one who goes on thus with the Lord? Is there not some special joy, deep down in the heart, between that soul and the Lord Himself which no one else knows, and which cannot well be explained? It is unspeakable and full of glory. Oh, to know it!

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Enoch "had this testimony, that he pleased God." That is, not only was testimony borne to the fact, but *he had it* in himself, "before his translation."

Oh! the blessedness and reality of this, in such times of error and confusion as the present. This secret communion with Christ, in the intimacy of His mighty, yet tender love, makes it become natural to go to Him in every little trial and difficulty, to lay one's breast open before Him, and unburden the heart of every weight that would otherwise fret and worry the soul, and irritate the flesh till one would become quite unfit for any testimony at all. I say, it is *such* communion that fits the soul for true and faithful service—that allays the fears and alleviates the sorrows of the grieved and troubled heart, and calms down the irritated temper to a deep and holy serenity: even in the presence of, may be, the maltreatment of brethren, the most heart-rending sorrows, and the greatest difficulties. It is this, too, that imparts power of endurance, constancy of mind, courage and humility of heart, and the deep, deep longing of soul after the good of the Lord's people and the conversion of sinners, that are absolutely necessary to a path of faith and testimony. It is this, also, that enables one to obtain the Lord's mind about things as they are; for when kept thus in His presence, in real implicit confidence and fervent desire, He treats one as a friend and tells out all things that He doeth; not that He gives fresh revelations outside the Bible, but He does give fresh revelations *from* the Bible to one's soul. The Christian in communion finds his resources more than commensurate with his varied needs.

Is this not so, dear fellow-Christian? Is it not possible so to live the inner life in the secret of the Lord's presence that the outer life will be pleasing to Himself? Indeed, can the outer life be pleasing to Him in any other way? And is it not possible for the soul to be kept in the secret of His pavilion from the

strife of tongues, and to breathe the pure and healthy atmosphere of His presence while the outer life may be lived in the greatest conflict, and lived for Him?

It is to be feared that we are too often found laying down lines for ourselves, or allowing others to do so for us, yielding to custom, and allowing ourselves to be influenced by party prejudices, so as to preclude our learning the Lord's mind as to our path directly from Himself and His Word. Indeed, our minds are so often made up as to our line and sphere of action that we do not even allow ourselves to be exercised about anything else, much less go to the Lord concerning it.

There is a strong tendency in all of us to settle down in some ecclesiastical clique, and to commit ourselves to the rules and customs of a party, so hindering individual exercise of soul. Had such been the case with all in the church at Pergamos, there could have been no overcomers there.

I am far from saying that there are no general principles in the Word of God, which the Lord will never lead us to violate. But one of those general principles is the individual responsibility of the child of God to act in the midst of the existing state of things for Him. This can only be carried out by individual exercise in this deep communion of which we are speaking. And this is possible when everything else goes wrong. It is this, then, that we are speaking of here. There are different aspects of this responsibility; but it is always *to* the Lord. The child of God has responsibilities in relation to the church, or rather church principles; for the church herself may be all wrong, and his responsibility would then be to overcome in the midst of the ruin therein, as was the case with the overcomer we are considering, who received the "white stone" as his reward. Individual responsibility is viewed, too, in relation to service; this may be in the church or in the world, but it is, or should be, for the Lord, under His direction, and to Himself. There is also individual responsibility in relation to the domestic circle, &c. It is of the utmost importance that we should realise our responsibility in relation to all things as directly to the Lord.

May we study more how to get the Lord's approval; may this be our object in the various

Christian relationships in which we find ourselves. And when we have it nothing more is needed as a compensation for the little suffering and effort that it may entail ; nothing more is needed to complete our joy in a path of service, and to stimulate our hearts therein. Though when there is this there will surely be its accompaniments : such as the Lord's hand working in the blessing of His people and the conversion of souls ; a deeply toned and godly fellowship with, at least some of the children of God. These are such pleasures as I believe are involved in the doing the Lord's will.

Let this, then, dear Christian reader, be our one object in life. We may fail, like the ship that sets out on a journey across the ocean. She maps out a certain course and keeps that before her ; she may be driven out of her track for a little while by the violence of the wind and storm, but she still has the same course before her, so soon recovers herself and gets back again.

Oh ! the blessedness of being truly the *Lord's* servant. Others may not know the special joy and blessing that our souls find in the doing of His will, as they will not know the new name written upon the reward stone by-and-by. But may it be our desire, as the spirit of God enables us, to make Christ and His truth more dear to all His people.

The greatest confidence and most intimate friendship must exist between two persons who share a secret. Oh ! is it possible for such holy confidence and friendship to exist between my soul and Christ as will result in an eternal secret between my heart and Himself ? Yes ; a Name known to no other but its recipient ; some special joy in Himself beyond and above the general felicity of the Father's house.

Oh, my soul ! here is something worth living for ; something that will make a short life of eternal profit ; yea, and that affords real joy and blessing even now, for it is in the present enjoyment of thy Lord's presence that such reward is obtained. Wilt thou not, oh, my soul ! earnestly seek grace, strength, and wisdom to live for this, and make it thy one business in this world !

May it be so with the reader and the writer of these few lines, by the grace of God and to the glory of our blessed and adorable Lord.

J. H. B.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of *The Witness*.

During the summer vacation I spent a month in the North of China, my time being divided equally between Chefoo and Shitau, two places lying 100 miles apart, but both in the Shantung Province. The more one sees of other lands, the more apparent it becomes that to understand foreign countries one must actually see them, even a short visit imparting a permanent sense of reality which cannot otherwise be attained. Personal conversation with labourers also elicits facts regarding the actual conditions of service in their respective spheres which can never be learned from missionary addresses or published missionary letters. Intending labourers (sisters especially) would do well, before making final arrangements, to gain as much information as possible by private correspondence with those already in the field. Such correspondence might sometimes be more advantageously carried on by friends interested in them, than by the persons themselves who are thinking of *going abroad*. *Conversations with labourers*, furthermore, elicit details of past straits that make one long for a far wider and deeper interest in the churches regarding those who have gone forth taking nothing of the Gentiles, and, too often, getting very little from God's people. One honoured brother, with a wife and family, could not reply to the letters sent to him by converts at a distance for lack of money to buy a postage stamp, and, at the time of my visit—this was not in China—he was obliged to wear a waterproof coat in order to hide the shabbiness of his other clothes. Another, also with a family, had been brought so low that he almost wept when given some money, there being nothing in the house but some meal and some small fishes. Another, when a child died, had no money wherewith to provide a coffin and grave for it, and for both of these he was indebted to the unsought kindness of denominational Christians. It is very easy for us to complacently say, that if God allows those depending upon Him to be in straits, there must be some good reason for it ; but this complacency may sometimes be of a piece with that which carelessly allows millions of heathen to go down to a Christless grave, with the subterfuge that God's elect are safe, so we need not put ourselves out in the matter. The Apostle James, when speaking of believers who were pinched in the necessities of life, looked at the question from the standpoint of their brethren's responsibility, not that of God's sovereignty. I once heard it remarked that, whatever might be the true interpretation of Matt. xxv. 31-46, one thing at least was clear—the value set by God on works of practical benevolence.

It is often imagined that labourers in Eastern lands can live on a very small sum of money. A good deal depends upon local and personal circumstances, and a good deal also depends upon whether labourers are meant to live in comparative comfort, or are simply expected to get along as best they can until their health fails, and there is a breakdown, which, if not final, at least leaves the worker with impaired powers for the future. A young man, known to myself, tried to live in an Eastern country upon tea and toast. After a time his brain seemed to lose its power, a doctor

had to order him nourishing food and strengthening medicine, and I am now told that he is lying dangerously ill. Another, also known to me, and in the same country, ate rice and eggs, and lived in an unhealthy locality, until he was seized with scurvy and became a perfect wreck.

It must be remembered that the missionary carries abroad with him the same frame of flesh and blood, and the same nervous system, that he had at home, and that service for the Lord does not secure immunity from either mental or bodily infirmity. Good food, medicine, rest, and change of air, are of even greater importance to a sick man, in a more or less isolated position and in a foreign climate, than to a sick man at home amongst friends and neighbours. Such "necessaries," however, as they would be considered at home, all mean money. Doctors in China commonly charge twenty shillings a visit, and a dentist's bill sometimes amounts to £40. Both the eyes and teeth are said to suffer in Eastern climates, and though doctors and dentists may reduce their terms for missionaries, these terms are still comparatively high. Furthermore, a journey, perhaps of some days' duration, must be taken in certain cases before medical aid can be procured, and this helps to make sickness a costly trial. While I was in Chefoo a missionary and his wife had to travel in from a station, 20 miles away, to bring a sick child to the doctor. Drugs, as well as professional attendance, are often more expensive abroad than at home.

Other things being equal, the longer a missionary has been in the field the more useful he is; but there is much more loss of health amongst missionaries than probably is commonly supposed, and this ill-health is often due to worry, over-pressure, and general neglect of the laws of health. Some statements on this point were made by a doctor at a general missionary conference held in Japan eight years ago: "One of the Boards working in Japan has within the last eight years expended more means in caring for broken-down missionaries than is required to meet the whole expense of their large missionary work for a year. . . . Enthusiasm and zeal are good qualities in a missionary, but to these you must add that which is better—judgment, wisdom, and self-control. The burning fire, shut up in the bones that cannot be controlled, only consumes vital energies and speedily produces failing health. A nervous, excitable, uneasy person will fret and wear himself out in from six months to three years in Japan." Another medical man stated that "Dr. Blodgett, of Shanghai, had some years ago collected statistics of the missionaries who had lived in China, and had found that the average period of activity in the field of Protestant missionaries was five years, and that of the Roman Catholic missionaries was less than that of the Protestants."

Instead of our Lord's example of "two and two" being acted upon, too often a single missionary, or a missionary and his wife, will be found labouring on amongst a mass of unsympathetic—if not actively hostile—heathen; or, it may be, Roman Catholics. If meetings have been established, the meeting must be held at the appointed time, however weak or weary the worker may be who has the sole responsibility of the work. When difficulties occur, or harassing

opposition arises, there is no brotherly ear to hear the tale, and to pour out the heart to God on behalf of the perplexed or tried one. It is balm to the wounded soul to hear the voice of another pleading with God in regard to some matter in which there is a common interest. Even the One who was ever in communion with the Father did not disdain to claim the sympathy of failing flesh and blood when Gethsemane became to Him the entrance to a valley of the shadow of death, in which He could no longer say, "Thou art with Me." There is spiritual truth in the words, "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?"

I am very thankful that Shitau is now a properly manned station, God having given Mr. and Mrs. Stephen fellow-labourers—first the Misses Moore, then Mr. and Mrs. Dawson, and lastly Dr. Case, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making upon his arrival at Chefoo. When a station is properly manned, not only is there much less strain upon the individual workers, but the whole district around can be traversed on preaching and book-distributing tours, while the work at headquarters goes on as usual. Sowing in that part of the Shantung Province has not been without tears. When our brother Stephen was lying sick and dying (as was supposed) in an inn, the Chinese were spitting and squirting water on him through the window, and the people would have dragged him out to die like a dog in the road, lest his spirit should haunt their house, had not his teacher and another man bravely defended the entrance to his room with a stick. When his child was dying, and he asked that the milk of a goat might be given to it, the owner refused, explaining that the life of its kids was of more importance than the life of a little foreign devil. Our brother himself has been suffering from frequent attacks of fever since his visit to a malarial district to distribute famine funds amongst the starving Chinese. Shitau itself is said to be a healthy place, entirely free from malaria, and personally I felt much drawn to the work and workers there.

The Romanists are at work in Shantung, as in other provinces of China. At Chefoo they have a fine stone chapel, industrial and other schools, and a convent, besides which the hospital is in their hands. They know full well the advantage of getting hold of children and caring for sick persons. The captain of one of the vessels I travelled in was told by a French doctor that the Romanists had many converts, but the hard thing was that when the priests spoke of taking away from them a monthly dole of from one to three dollars, the "converts" said they would cease their profession of Christianity, though some of them had been receiving payment for seven years. With our brother D. Clark, formerly of Hull, who is in the Customs service at Chefoo, I had some profitable seasons of prayer and conversation. He and another brother in the Customs service remember the Lord's death together.

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Japan.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Please explain Gen. xlix. 10. Did not the sceptre depart when Israel was brought into captivity, long before Christ came?

What is the meaning of "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"? When does this take place?

Does Mark xvi. 15-18 warrant one going forth now as a "medical missionary"? Does not verse 17 restrict the "signs following" to those only who believe?

Is it right for a believer to join a trade's union?

How shall all be made alive in Christ according to 1 Cor. xv. 22?

Why is the term "Abba" used in connection with "Father" in Mark xiv. 36, Rom. viii. 15, and Gal. iv. 6? Why the repetition?

In 1 John ii. 19 are those referred to as having "gone out," Christians or Antichristians?

What is the teaching of Lev. v. 11-13, where it appears sin is forgiven on the ground of atonement without blood? How is this reconcilable with Heb. ix. 22—"Without shedding of blood is no remission"?

Please explain Heb. x. 29.

What is the distinctive meaning of the words, "wisdom," "knowledge," "understanding," so frequently used in the Book of Proverbs?

If one in fellowship marries an ungodly person, how ought such a case to be dealt with?

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION.

QUESTION 406.—Please quote a few passages that clearly speak of baptism by immersion, as some believers find a difficulty in giving Scripture proofs when advocating this mode of baptism.

Ans.—The strongest proof that actual and complete immersion was intended by the command to "baptise" is found in the meaning of the word, which is not peculiar to Scripture but had a definite signification in profane writers of the time, well understood by all.

(1.) Dean Stanley writes:—"For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word "baptised"; that those who were baptised, were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water. . . . Bap sm by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient church, except in the rare case of death-beds or extreme necessity, as no baptism at all."

(2.) Liddell and Scott translate in their dictionary the word "baptise"—"To drown, dip under water, immerse, sink."

(3.) Confirmation of this view is found in John iii. 23, where *Ænon* near to Salim is selected by John for his baptisms; "because there was much water there." The journey thither was surely an unnecessary labour for his disciples, unless immersion was his practice.

(4.) Of our blessed Lord it is written, "And Jesus when He was baptised went up straightway from the water."

(5.) So the eunuch understood baptism, of whom in Acts viii. 36, it is recorded, that he cried, "Lo! here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptised?"

"And they went down both *into the water*, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptised him."

(6.) The word "baptise" is almost invariably followed in Scripture by the preposition "into" or "in," and not by the word representing "with" erroneously introduced into our Authorised Version, and corrected at least in the margin of the Revised. John i. 26-33.

(7.) The language and argument of Romans vi. would be utterly misleading, if sprinkling were intended. "Baptise into Christ, baptise into His death" (v. 2); "Buried with Him through baptism into death" (v. 3); "Planted together in the likeness of His death" (v. 5). Could language be selected more conclusive than this upon the point?

(8.) In 1 Cor. x, the waters of baptism are compared to those of the Red Sea.

(9.) In 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21, to those of the Deluge.

In neither case would the instruction be intelligible if baptism meant sprinkling.

To conclude with another quotation from our hostile witness, Dean Stanley writes:—

(10.) It was an "entire submersion in the deep water, where for a moment the waves closed over the bather's head, and he emerges again as from a momentary grave. . . . This was the part of the ceremony on which the apostles laid so much stress."

Fairness compels me to add that Dean Stanley, while so strongly insisting on the true meaning of the word and the original manner of the rite, kept up for thirteen centuries, seems to consider that we of the nineteenth are not bound to adhere slavishly to Scripture or early church custom, in a matter of form so inconvenient in our rigorous climate. G.F.T.

THE GLORIFIED BODY.

QUESTION 407.—Will the "in incorruptible" and "immortal" body of 1 Cor. xv. 53 be the same in glory?

Ans.—The scripture referred to does not speak of a difference between the bodies of the resurrected believers, but speaks of the state of believers *before* the coming of the Lord. The saint who has fallen asleep is the one who sees corruption, but the saint who is living on the earth when the Lord comes is the one who is termed mortal. But whether it be the one who has fallen asleep, or the one who is living on the earth when the Lord comes, they both shall be changed (1 Cor. xv. 51) and made like unto the body of His glory (Phil. iii. 20, Newberry's margin). I think that verse 49 of 1 Cor. xv. proves beyond doubt that there shall be no difference in the bodies of believers after resurrection, but "as we have borne the image of the earthly we shall also bear the image of the heavenly"; and also in the First Epistle of John, chap. iii. verse 2, "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him."

Editor's Note.—The foregoing reply gives the evident truth on this point.

The corruptible body of those who have died shall, at the coming of the Lord, by resurrection "put on incorruption," and the mortal bodies of those alive shall, in the instantaneous "change" then to take place, "put on immortality."

The result will be that all the glorified saints, whether raised or changed, shall be both incorruptible and immortal.

DEFEAT AND VICTORY.

AN ADDRESS AT ABERDEEN CONFERENCE,
BY ALEX. FRAZER.

"Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines?"—1 Sam. iv. 3. (Read verses 1 to 11).

THAT was a very good question the children of Israel asked in verse 3. It was not merely, "Why have the Philistines got the victory over us?" It went deeper down than that. "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us?" If they had only waited for the answer to their question it would have been well for them; but they did not do so. They just said, "Fetch the ark of God, that when it cometh it may save us." They brought the ark of God, and gave a great shout; but it was only a shout in the flesh. The Philistines fought and slew 30,000 of Israel, and took the ark of God. All this is very instructive; for "whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning," "now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous," &c. (Heb. xii. 11).

It is "those who are exercised thereby" who get the benefit. All the Lord's dealings—sickness and other afflictions—may not be for a direct sin against God. "Every branch that beareth fruit He purgeth it," &c. (John xv. 2). May we have exercised hearts before the Lord, and learn through our trials the lesson He would have us learn.

The priests here were wrong. Eli and his sons were not right with God; and when things are not right at headquarters how can they be elsewhere? It is most important that we, who seek to help the people of God, be in a state of soul to profit those we are addressing. A mother once said, "When I get sick my baby gets sick too"—it was drinking its mother's milk. May we give the sincere milk of the Word purely to the dear children of God.

Here, then, we get the defeat of Israel; after which they were under the power of the Philistines for a long time. In chapter vii. we get their victory. Much of our life is made up of defeat and of victory. It is blessed to see Samuel here. No Samuel is spoken of in chapter iv. But now the Lord speaks to Samuel, and he became the instrument in the hands of God of directing the people right, and then we see how all Israel lamented after the Lord.

D

Now Samuel gives them counsel (chap. vii. ver. 3). It was God's mind to help His people, but they were in a condition in which God could not, consistently with His holiness, help them. They must first put away their strange gods and prepare their hearts to seek the Lord.

Have we any idols that are hindering our God and Father blessing us and giving us the victory?

We are in danger of keeping up a controversy with the Lord. The Lord is perhaps teaching some of us to give up some bad habit, and the voice of God's Spirit is carrying it home to your heart and saying, "Do not cleave to that abominable thing, which I hate"; still you cling to it, and God's Spirit is grieved. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." The Holy Spirit would comfort us; but that comfort may be withdrawn, and instead of that you may have the mysterious trouble which arises from a grieved Spirit. Though no trouble in the business or family, yet one may be in deep sorrow; and why? Because no smile from God, no Word of God, a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Can we say with the apostle, "I know nothing against myself"? (1 Cor. iv. 4).

Though the apostle said that, he added, "Yet am I not hereby justified." I understand the force of it is: "As far as I know I am right with the Lord, but I do not say there is nothing amiss in me, for, if nearer the light, and more in His light, I might see many a black spot yet."

Perhaps some idle habit, or some commandment of the Lord disobeyed, is keeping the Lord from blessing some of you. If there is to be blessing, individually and collectively, remember there must be the putting away of our strange gods, and serving the Lord only; and then He has promised to deliver us.

They hearkened to the voice of Samuel; and now, says Samuel, "I will pray for you" (ver. 5). How beautifully this comes in. We may be hindering the answer to our prayers by not putting away our strange gods. Israel brought water, poured it out, and confessed that they had sinned against the Lord. It is beautiful to see a company of saints doing that: taking the low place before God and

saying, "We have sinned against the Lord." Sin brings weakness, as obedience gives power.

The Philistines hear that Israel is gathered together, and they come up against them. What a difference we have here: the Philistines coming up against a humble people, humbled before God!

Israel says to Samuel, "Pray for us, and God will save us"; but in chapter iv. they said, "When the ark cometh, *it* will save us." The further we get away from God the more we are inclined to trust in something *external*; for even the ark of God, without the God of the ark, what was it? The less that is known of God, the more people like to have forms, great attractions, great men. It is so easy to get away from the lowly, loving Jesus.

It is also beautiful to see the sacrifice coming in. This is our confidence and joy: a humble people before God, and the sacrifice offered for us. Israel said to Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us" (ver. 8). Then we find Samuel takes a sucking lamb and offers it for a burnt-offering, and "he cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him" (ver. 9).

What can God not give the sinner who takes the guilty place and pleads the sacrifice? If I am humbled, and take the place of poured-out water, God will surely give the blessing. But how? *Through the Lamb*. When we look to our God through the blessed Lord Jesus in the presence of God for us, oh the power of the plea! Our hearts wait on Him that His heart of love may flow out for us in the presence of God. The order changes here from chapter iv.

In chapter iv. Israel gave a great shout; but in chapter vii. the Lord shouts with His voice of thunder upon the Philistines (ver. 10). They pursued the Philistines and smote them; and then Samuel took a stone and placed it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Israel got their spoils all back again that the Philistines had taken from them. How God restores to us! How many of us may be in chapter iv. defeated by the enemy.

May we all be led into chapter vii., and so be able to raise our Eben-ezer, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

HELPFUL THOUGHTS on ROMANS VII.

BY THE LATE WM. HAKE, OF BARNSTAPLE,
Author of "How shall we order the Child?"

I. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who "knew no sin," "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." "He died unto sin." He died for us, and we, whose sins He bore, are therefore to "reckon ourselves to be dead to sin" (or to have died to sin), Christ having died for us. So we have the blessedness of the man "whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered, to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." Christ Himself having been "made sin for us," I say we are to "reckon ourselves to have died to sin" (because Christ died to sin), and to be "alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Sin is not now imputed to Christ, Christ having died to sin; nor is sin "imputed" to us, for "we are to reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin."

II. Nevertheless Satan is still a wily, mighty foe, and sin would—because of our having been "sold under sin" ("by one man's disobedience many were made sinners")—use its utmost power to "reign in our mortal body," and would have us to "obey it in the lusts thereof." But thanks be to God "grace reigns," not sin. There is a "power to us-ward who believe," a "power that worketh in us," by which we resist sin and Satan, and by which we obey this word: "Neither yield ye your members" (which we are tempted to do) "as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield ye yourselves unto God and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." We are therefore "debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh, but through the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the body," and "keeping under the body" we *bring* it into subjection. Thus did the holy apostle (1 Cor. ix. 27).

III. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Also: we are "not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in us." We are not of those who are "carnally-minded" (minding of the flesh, marg.), which is death, but spiritually-minded, "which is life and peace." "The carnal mind is enmity

against God, for it is not subject to the *law of God*, neither indeed can be." But "we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit" (not carnally minded), therefore according to Rom. vii, last verse, "With the mind we serve the law of God." Again, Rom. vii, "We delight in the law of God after the inner man." In other words the apostle says, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God."

IV. The law is "holy, just, and good," even as He is holy, just, and good, who made the law. Again: "We know that the law is spiritual" and compared with Christ, who kept the law perfectly, who "was without sin"; and compared with the holy law we, "in whom (that is in our flesh) dwelleth no good thing," are "carnal." The apostle draws the contrast when he says, "The law is *spiritual*, but I am *carnal*"; also he distinguishes between being "carnally-minded" (the minding of the flesh), which is death, "enmity against God," "not subject to the law of God," and I am *carnal* compared with the law which is *spiritual*. He says "The law is spiritual, but I am carnal." So in one breath he says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my *mind*." And again at the same moment, "With the *mind* I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

V. In the same chapter (7th chap. of Rom.) the apostle Paul writes as one "dead to the law" and "married to Christ." Nevertheless "sin dwells in him, and because he is married to Christ—alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord—because of this new relationship and new life he *knows* what otherwise he would have been ignorant of, that in him (that is in his flesh) dwells no good thing, and he "hates" the sin that dwells in him. He delights in the law of God, but sees another law in his members (which but for his being alive from the dead he *would not see*). Again (v. 25), with the mind he serves the law of God but with the flesh—in which dwells no good thing—the law of sin. He is not *in* the flesh but *in* the Spirit. If he were in the flesh he would not know that "with the flesh he served the law of sin." The apostle, "having the spirit of Christ," is taught to connect these two things

in the 7th chapter immediately before entering upon the 8th, namely, 1st, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God," but, 2nd, "with the flesh the law of sin." He does not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. He cries out against everything that is of the flesh and of sin. He no longer lives *in* sin, (vi. 2), but he knows that sin dwells *in* him."

VI. From the time of the fall of Adam—of one man's disobedience who was "sold under sin"—all save the Holy One of God, have made it manifest by transgression that they are "sold under sin"—sin has had its power over every one. There is indwelling sin which by grace we hate, resist, and overcome. But we cannot root it out. The law in our members wars against the law of our mind." Sin dwelt *in* the holy apostle Paul. There would have been no war against his mind, no sin dwelling in him, but for the "one man's disobedience," who, with all his posterity, being themselves transgressors, were "sold under sin." The apostle, I repeat—speaking of the flesh, and comparing himself with the holy, the spiritual law—says, "I am carnal, sold under sin." If he could have said "I compare myself with the holy law of God and I am not now carnal, I am not now as one sold under sin," it would have been because he had rooted out the flesh and indwelling sin, and there would have been no reason for his saying, what by the grace of God we all say: "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." "Not I but sin that dwelleth in me."

VII. But what one has said is true: "Indwelling sin is one thing; outbreaking sin is another." *But it is sin*, and for *sin* (whether the sin that dwells in us or the sin that breaks out in word or deed) Christ suffered. He died even the death of the cross; and to one who walked as the apostle walked, holily, justly, unblamably, the bare "thought of foolishness," pride, self-will, self-exaltation, covetousness, or what is at the root of these, namely, unbelief, was that which the holy apostle abhorred (though it were unknown to any but himself and God), seeing it was *sin* that dwelt in him, and seeing also that Christ *died for sin*, that Christ *suffered in our room and stead*.

VIII. He hated it, and his cry against it

was according to his holiness—a loud cry of abhorrence. Now, according to chapter iii. of this epistle to the Romans, *thought* of sin, so also chapter vii. 15, *sin indwelling* is in God's sight an *act*. Sin may be encouraged, even though it break not out. “That which I do” (often misunderstood as if it were *done* in man's sight) I allow not, I hate. The apostle adds, “It is no more I that do it” (for he did not allow it, he hated it), “but sin that dwelleth in me.”

IX. But if we sin in word or deed, or if evil or thoughts of evil be allowed, not hated at the moment, we cannot say of such sin, “Not I but sin that dwelleth in me.”

X. The time hastens when we shall have a body of glory like unto that of our blessed Lord; then the flesh and sin will no more dwell in us. We shall no longer groan within ourselves (viii. 23), as now we do, who nevertheless have the first-fruits of the spirit, but with praise and thanksgiving shall look back on the time of this life having been, as the apostle says, “sold under sin.” We shall then be delivered from all sin—delivered from this body of death.”

XI. The law in our members, because of this body of death, is continually warring against the law of our minds, and is bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, but “we are no longer in bondage to sin.” “I therefore (says the apostle) so run not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I *keep under* my body, and bring it into subjection” (as a conquered foe, a slave). Nevertheless the war is kept up, the apostle is conqueror. So long as he fights he conquers; so often as he conquers he gathers spoils. “He is more than conqueror through Him that has loved us.” He asks not the question, “Who shall deliver me?” in uncertainty. He has his ready answer, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Dead to sin because Christ died to sin; alive unto God (Rom. vi.); married to Christ; delighting in the law of God. With the mind he serves the law of God according to 7th Romans, and entering upon the 8th of Romans with these last words of chapter vii., “So then with the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

We need “line upon line” in regard to the words (v. 17), “Now then *it is no more* I that *do* it, but sin that dwelleth *in me*”; therefore the apostle is taught of God to repeat these words in v. 20, “Now if I *do* that I would not, *it is no more* I that *do* it, but sin that dwelleth *in me*.”

XII. The apostle Paul, through walking in the light of the countenance of God and remembering the sufferings of Christ for sin, saw sin which dwelt in him with God's eye. His apprehension thereof was quick, for he had a heavenly understanding of the commandments of Christ and the mind of God through constant fellowship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and through the communion of the Holy Spirit. He hated both the filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, both outbreaking and indwelling sin, with a perfect hatred.

XIII. “God is Light,” and we have fellowship with God as “we walk in the light, as He is in the light,” and so walking, being taught by the Spirit of God to make the commandments of Christ our weights and scales, our line and plummet, we discover sins of unbelief, pride, covetousness (according to what is called covetousness in the New Testament), self-will, and the like, which were before hid from us. We must know our “secret sins” to be cleansed from them. The power of the Holy Spirit worketh in us, and He dwelling in us ungrieved, testifies to our soul's comfort, of Christ and the preciousness and power of His blood which is cleansing us from all sin.

There is a fault too common among the people of God, namely, while they put off things of the old man, anger, wrath, and the like, they forget that they have also to put on the new man. That which is to be put off is sin that breaks out, and is to God's dishonour and our dishonour; also that which we are commanded to put on is Christ. It is heavenly, it is perfection of obedience to Christ, and the prayerful endeavour to accomplish this will always be found to be accompanied with deeper knowledge and deeper abhorrence of indwelling sin.

XIV. Let us who by the grace of God and the teaching of the Spirit of Christ desire to perfect holiness in the fear of the *Lord* (according to 2 Cor. vii. 1), let us seek

understanding of the words, "let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit." Many there be who have power, natural or spiritual, over the filthiness of the flesh, who are but ill-taught what means the "filthiness of the spirit." "The fear of the Lord is clean," and to perfect holiness in His fear is a deep, a very deep thing. What are the means to the end? "Let the word of Christ dwell in us richly." Let us consider Him and His ways and words, and compare them with our own, and ask God who has searched us (Ps. cxxxix. 1) and known us, to search us and know our heart, to try us, and know our thoughts. So shall we find in us wicked ways, ways which grieve the Holy Spirit which we knew not of. But this is solemn, yet healthful work for the closet.

May the Lord grant us the grace to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, and to take heed not to neglect the searching out the means to the end.

XV. The apostle Paul made it manifest by his cry against the flesh and indwelling sin that he had learned of God what was the filthiness of the spirit as well as the filthiness of the flesh, and the grace of God was sufficient for him both in regard to the one and the other, and that grace is sufficient for us, only we must see clearly the exceeding sinfulness of all sin in order to value, as we ought, the riches of the grace of God.

XVI. In the present day of the church's weakness and disobedience (oft unwitting) to the commandments of Christ, and failure of that "fellowship unto which God has called us," we should not marvel at the ignorance of many of God's people concerning the flesh in us "in which dwells no good thing," and sin which dwells in us, or that such words as "The law is spiritual but I am carnal," should be misunderstood.

When we have our body of glory it will be no marvel to any that the apostle should cry out in days when he was in his body of humiliation, "Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Not that he was wretched and miserable through yielding to the law in his members, for he had immediately before said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," but because of his quick

apprehension of sin and of the lust of the flesh in him, and his deep abhorrence thereof, that he cries out, "O wretched man that I am!" Nor is he in doubt as to deliverance, or who is his deliverer, for he immediately adds, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We should observe the next words, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." With the flesh that was in him (not he in the flesh) "he served the law of sin." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," are the next words in the epistle.

As we ourselves dwell in Christ through feeding upon Christ (see John vi. 46), as we walk in the light, as God is the light, we shall see more and more clearly whatever is contrary to the word and example of Christ. We shall hate everything that is of the flesh, as did the apostle. So shall we also through the Spirit that dwells in us, abhor *sin* that dwells in us, and in this body of humiliation shall "groan" as did the apostle, "being burdened; and the *thought* of foolishness of pride, covetousness, self-will, or any other branch of unbelief, will cause us to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" with joyful confidence in our deliverer the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the mind serving the law of God.

Nevertheless we have now a power which is almighty, working in us both to will and to do those things which please God. But for this power the law in our members would not only be "*bringing*" us into bondage, but we should be *brought* into and under the yoke. But we war and conquer and walk at liberty, and our delight is in the law of God.

The more holy our life, the more we are conformed to Christ, the better we understand what is, alas! but little understood, namely, the commandments of our Lord and Master. The more obedient we are to them in regard to word and deed, the stronger will be our exclamation against every thought and every imagination that is contrary to the perfection of Christ.

Lastly. Happy are we if we are by the Spirit taught our need of also the power of the intercession of our Great High Priest at God's right hand, through which God can be

well-pleased with us and our aims (which should be the highest aims of Christian life). Thus God will give us the testimony which He gave to Enoch, "who walked with God," that "he pleased God." If we also walk with God, we shall have the assurance from God that we please Him. We are bound to have this testimony through obedience that becomes a child of God, that we pleased our Father. We have need to know, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the word, more of Jesus Christ Himself, of His sufferings and His glory, of His ways and words, if we would have a ready rule in our hearts by which to judge rightly of our ways whether they be indeed such as please God. If this rule be ours we shall rather see how short we fall of the grace that was in the apostle when he wrote the 7th of Romans, than judge that our experience rises above that experience which is therein recorded.

"INCIDENTS OF GOSPEL WORK."*

MANY of God's dear people have reason to praise Him for blessing and help received through the perusal of tracts with the well-known initials appended, "C. H. M." (Charles H. Macintosh) and "C. S." (Charles Stanley).

Mr. Macintosh, though in feeble health, resides in Dublin, and still speaks by voice and pen; but his old friend "C. S." departed to be with Christ four years ago at his home in Rotherham, near Sheffield.

"Incidents of Gospel Work" is, we believe, the last book that Charles Stanley wrote. The book is an autobiography, and is written with the object of magnifying the grace, love, faithfulness, and power of God.

The "incidents" are exceedingly interesting, and prove that the gospel is still the power of God unto the salvation of the biggest and blackest sinner out of hell. The book is a most helpful one for evangelists, Sunday-school teachers, and Christian workers generally.

"C. S." was born in a Yorkshire village, and was left an orphan at the age of four. At seven he had to earn his living in the

summer by working in the fields, and in the winter months he attended the village school. When a merry little fellow of eight summers a gentleman who knew him said, "You will either be a curse or a blessing to mankind." This prediction was a true one, and by the mercy of God "C. S." became a channel of blessing to hundreds and thousands of his fellow-creatures. His conversion took place when he was a boy of fourteen, and shortly afterwards he began to "tell to all around what a dear Saviour he had found."

At the age of twenty-three we find him starting on his own account in the hardware business in Sheffield. For many years he traversed England as a commercial traveller, and at the same time did the *work* of an "evangelist."

From help he obtained through a Captain W—— the Bible became a new book to him. It was his daily study, and "he grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Though only possessed of a small capital when he commenced business, he managed to devote a good deal of time to preaching the gospel and teaching believers in various parts of the kingdom. Speaking of these early days, forty years after, he says:—"Seldom in those days did the Lord open my lips without some soul being converted. Not that this appeared at the time, but I have met them everywhere, ten, twenty, or thirty years after."

Instances are given of the Lord's thoughtful and tender care when in business straits, proving the truth of the promise, "Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Samuel ii. 30).

God marvellously blessed his labours in the salvation of the perishing, and in the edification and comfort of Christians.

"C. S." believed in the Lord's special and direct guidance of His servants. Again and again he was deeply impressed with the conviction that he ought to go to places to preach the gospel where he had never been; and on many such occasions he found a people anxious to listen. Here is an instance. "Three of us felt led to go to Leamington. We had a little notice printed, about the size of a small envelope, asking the Christians of Leamington to come together in the Music

*Incidents of Gospel Work: Showing how the Lord hath led me. By C. S. To be had at *Witness* Office, price 1/-.

Hall at three o'clock for prayer for the Lord's blessing on the Word to be preached in the hall that night. About two hundred came together, and oh! what a cry of united expecting prayer went up to the throne of grace. At seven the large hall was filled. That night God answered prayer. It was the birth-night of many precious souls. It was said some hundreds found deliverance and blessing that night."

By the way-side and river-side, in railway carriages and steamboats, at balls and races, in halls and chapels, in kitchens and drawing-rooms, theatres and concert halls, Charles Stanley nobly witnessed for his Lord and Master.

"He being dead yet speaketh" by hundreds converted through his preaching and scores of tracts and booklets he has written. What Christian worker has not heard of the "C. S." tracts?

"He tells how he began this most blessed service for the Lord. "I had been preaching the Word at T—, and brother W— said to me, 'Why don't you print some of those incidents of the Lord's work in the railway carriages? I am sure the Lord would use them.' I said I had never thought of it. He urged me to do so. How little did I think at that moment that the Lord would use them in so many languages all over the world."

The objects he had in view in writing the tracts are stated. "To look to God to give me to write just what He pleased, and to enable me to write it plainly without any adornment. To never allow me to write with a party feeling, but to write for the whole Church of God, or gospel to every sinner. In every incident related to give the exact words as near as I could possibly recollect."

Speaking of his well-known address on "Mephibosheth," he remarks:—"I believe the Lord rarely ever led me to preach from Mephibosheth without souls being converted. He has also been pleased to use that tract very often when repeated to the sick and the dying, and also through others preaching it. Mr. M— told me he had preached it in almost every city and town in America, and, he thought, never without souls being brought to God. It would fill a volume to tell of the

great number of cases that the Lord has been pleased to bring before my own notice."

Striking cases of conversion are recorded of persons saved in this and other lands through the "C. S." tracts.

His counsel to Christian workers is most seasonable and helpful, and is worthy of prayerful and careful consideration.

Invaluable is the following testimony:—"I have always found blessing and results in proportion to communion with Christ in His love to the whole church whether in writing or preaching; *and no Christian can prosper in his own soul unless he is seeking the welfare of others.*"

Speaking of "the righteousness of God," he says:—"Nothing short of the revelation of the righteousness of God in justifying the sinner can sustain the soul either in passing through the storms of temptation of the world, the flesh, and the devil, or in faithfully preaching the gospel to others. I would strongly press the prayerful study of the Epistle to the Romans on all young preachers of the gospel as to the basis and revelation of the righteousness of God.

Yet more: "Another thing I would impress, *unfeigned dependence on the Holy Spirit, whether as to a holy life or preaching the gospel.*"

Speaking of divisions among God's people, he remarks: "It is the state of the soul that is the root cause of division. False representations, bitterness and evil speaking, spiritual pride, vain conceit, worldliness, and want of uprightness."

"C. S." lived to see division upon division among those professing to gather on the "ground of the one body." "High Church claims" had long been propounded and enforced. Judging "questions" had taken the place of judging self, and gifted men had been looked upon to settle difficulties instead of God's Holy Word, and we have the sad spectacle to-day of four distinct parties of Christians professing to occupy "divine ground," to the exclusion of all others. There is a lesson for us in this, and it is enforced in the scripture: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The spirit of division is abroad. Let us judge ourselves instead of fellow-saints. Let

us seek to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are the household of faith"; and don't let us forget that nothing is universally binding where Scripture does not direct.

We advise our readers to procure "C. S.'s" interesting and instructive book.

A. M.

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.—V.—*Continued.*

"OVERSIGHT";

VIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE.

LET us now look at the qualifications and grace needed in those who would do oversight work. On this point one naturally turns to 1 Tim., chapter iii. I do not write out the whole of this passage, it is so well known, but I would ask the reader to go over it carefully to the end. A thoughtful mind will observe that almost the same qualities are required in a "deacon" as in a "bishop." Most of my readers will know that the word deacon, here, has no special reference to one who has charge of the funds of an assembly. The word deacon in Scripture never refers specially to such a service. It simply means a minister, or serving one. And here I believe it means one who takes a prominent place in preaching or teaching. Now, whilst the moral and social qualifications in verses 8, 9, 12, are enjoined by the Spirit on those who would minister the Word, no one would say that these qualifications alone constituted any man a preacher. Many a man has all these in some measure, and yet could scarcely open his mouth in a public meeting. These qualities are necessary accompaniments of the gift of a teacher or an evangelist, but they are not the gift. And the pastor is a gift to the church as really as the evangelist (see Eph. iv. 11). I would not say that the line between a bishop and one who is not, is as sharply defined as the line between the man who is an evangelist and one who is not. But I do say that a man may possess all the moral fitness enjoined in the passage under consideration in a larger measure than some real bishops, and yet he may be unfit to do bishop work because he never had a care for his fellow-saints put into his heart by God.

In the present difficult times assemblies are suffering from two causes. There is not

only a painful lack of God-given overseers, but they are suffering seriously from the heartless doings of some well-meaning men, who, whatever their place may be in the church, clearly lack the *heart* of God-given shepherds.

I am not making light of the injunctions laid down in 1 Tim. iii., but only pointing out that we may exalt it out of due proportion, as if it contained all that is needed to make a man an overseer. I would seek, if possible, to lift "oversight" in the church out of the mire into which it has been dragged, amongst saints who in many respects are carrying out Scripture principles.

I have already referred to a God-given care for fellow-saints, as in the case of Titus (2 Cor. viii. 16.) In order to understand this it has to be experienced. It is something entirely different from concern for the well-being of a "meeting" or "meetings" as such. It is also different from a sectarian care for the "party" to which we belong. A Christian may be very anxious about the prosperity of a "meeting," and very much concerned if saints disappear from the "meetings"; and yet know nothing of a Christ-like care for their spiritual condition. It is "the meeting" that many professed overseers are carrying in their hearts, and not the individual saints of God. The care they have for their fellow-believers is not because they belong to Christ, but because they belong to the "gathering." To love and care for our brethren and sisters because they "meet as we do," and to do so because they are infinitely dear and precious to the heart of the Saviour, are two very different things.

This is implied in the thrice-repeated question, "Lovest thou me?" which the Lord put to Peter when he charged him to feed and tend His flock. There is something here even deeper and more tender than love to fellow-saints for Christ's sake. There is genuine love to the Lord Himself. There is so much in man, even redeemed man, that is unlovely, and our hearts are so liable to become contracted and sectarian, that nothing will enable any one to apprehend what shepherd work really is, and to go on amongst fellow-saints carrying out in a feeble measure the mind and heart of Christ, but the affections bound to Himself.

Notice, also, in the case of Peter, the painful education he needed before the Lord gave him the charge of His sheep and lambs. Peter had to learn the deceitfulness of sin in a child of God, and the wiles and cunning of the enemy, before he was fitted to bear with others. And he had to experience the forgiving love and restoring grace of Christ ere he was fitted to lead other stumbling or fallen ones back to His feet.

If all who stretch forth to do oversight work had got their training in the same school as Peter, the work would be done in a very different way from what it often is. Notice also in Peter's case the need of *experience* in doing such work. When he was first converted he was sent out to catch men (Luke v. 10); but he needed to be converted again before he was fitted to tend and feed the flock (Luke xxii. 31, 32).

Let us now look at the example of Paul, into whose large heart God had put a care for *all* the churches (2 Cor. xi. 28). Perhaps it is not too much to say that there never was a Christian who took on, and reflected around him, so much of the image of the Good Shepherd who "laid down His life for the sheep," as Paul did. In writing to the saints at Rome, he says: "For God is my witness. . . that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers" (Rom. i. 9). To the Church of God at Corinth, some of whom called in question his apostleship, he could say: "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (2 Cor. xii. 15). To the Galatians who had been seduced from the "truth of the gospel," he said: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. iv., 19.) Mark here it was until Christ was formed in them, not the *church*. In giving his parting charge to the elders at Ephesus, Paul pointed them to his own example, and said: "Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts xx., 31.) That is oversight work as done by one who was above all others called and qualified by God to do it. The same master workman could say to the saints at Philippi: "For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all

in the bowels of Christ Jesus" (Phil. i. 8). Col. ii. 1, 2, might also be cited as an example of a true pastor's experience. I cannot close this point without giving a quotation from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonian saints: "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her (own, R.V.) children. So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us" (1 Thess. ii. 7, 8). I have quoted freely from the inspired Word because at the present time it is of such deep importance that the gathered saints learn "first hand" what "oversight" really is, and somewhat of the qualifications and grace necessary in those who do it. The expressions "overseeing men" and "oversight meetings" have been and are being reiterated till our hearts, and even our ears, are tired hearing them; and after all much that is passing for oversight is but a caricature of the divine reality.

There never was a time when the flock of God more needed true pastoral care and guidance, and if ever we are to have such amongst the saints, it must come down from the ascended Head of the Church.

In closing this part of our subject, let me point out the absolute necessity of a true shepherd maintaining in his own soul constant fellowship with God. After somewhat of a needful experience is gained, after a godly care for fellow-saints is put into the heart by God, and after the moral and social qualifications enjoined in the Scriptures are in some measure acquired, such is the deceitfulness of the human heart in "departing from the living God," and in a natural love of power, such are the subtle wiles of our adversary the devil, and in the ministry we have been considering there is so much to tax one's grace and patience, that without much heart-searching fellowship with the Shepherd who bled for the sheep, it is impossible for any one to go on doing oversight work in such a manner as will merit the approval of the "Chief Shepherd" in the "crowning day."

When that day comes, if He is to have the joy of presenting any of us with the "crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. v. 4), and if we are to have the honour of receiving

it, we must needs give up cavilling about oversight and oversight meetings, and set ourselves in earnest to learn what oversight really is, and how to do it.

G. A.

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—VI.

JOSHUA (The Leader).

JUST as Melchisedek and Aaron are both needed to give a full view of Christ as *Priest*, so Moses and Joshua are required to give a complete type of Christ as *Leader*.

Hebrews iv. 8, clearly proves that Joshua is a type of our Lord. In the chapter, Canaan and the Sabbath are types of spiritual and heavenly rest. Joshua brought Israel in to a rest, but it was not perfect and therefore was not permanent; and Joshua will bring all His people into the perfect and eternal Sabbath-rest of God. Ere long we shall fully have part in God's new-creation rest, and at the same time shall enjoy the anti-type of Canaan-rest—cessation from conflict. We will view Joshua as a type from three standpoints:—*As a Man, as a Leader, as a Warrior.*

I. *Joshua as a man, a type of Christ.*—It will be seen that both bear the same name. Jesus is the New Testament name for Joshua (Acts vii. 45; Heb. iv. 8). In apostolic times it was evidently an ordinary personal name (see Acts xiii. 6; Col. iv. ii). The name was given from time to time in honour, I presume, of the man we are considering. And with our Lord it is His personal name—His name as a man among men. The use thereof by the Holy Spirit is most instructive, but on it we may not enlarge. The name means, “The Salvation of Jehovah,” or “Jehovah the Saviour.” We learn that it was specially given to the son of Nun; he did not always bear it (Num. xiii. 16). The name was prophetic of what Joshua would in due time accomplish in leading Israel into the land and saving them from their enemies. The name Jesus was also

A GOD-GIVEN NAME TO THE REDEEMER OF MEN.

It was given Him before His birth. The one was the instrument of a temporal salvation to the tribes; but the other is the procuring cause of the eternal salvation of

His people. Joshua delivered the people from earthly foes; the Lord Jesus saves those who believe on Him from sin and all its consequences (Matt. i. 21).

Joshua, as born among the people when they were afflicted and down-trodden, shared in all their sorrows and sufferings, and Jesus Christ is “a brother born for adversity.” He knows by experience all the sorrows, afflictions, and trials of this earthly life. Christ is in heaven now, but He is there enriched with all the experience His sojourn on earth brought Him. Blessed enrichment! For He

“Though exalted feels afresh
What every member bears.”

Joshua was conspicuous for his love of truth and his courage. When, through fear, the ten spies gave a false report of the land, Joshua boldly stood forward and witnessed to the truth. Faith in the purpose and power of Jehovah enabled him so to act. And in these characteristics he was but the shadow of Him who is pre-eminently “the faithful and true witness.”

In all his career nothing is recorded against Joshua, if we except the treaty with the Gibeonites; and this evidently was a fault of the head rather than of the heart. But the Christ of God never once took a wrong step or made a mistake. Whatever He did, in word or deed, was wrought in communion with the Father, and in the fresh unction of an ungrieved Spirit.

II. *As the Leader.*—Joshua received his call to this work directly from God (Num. xxvii. 18). Of all the myriads of Israel's hosts he was the one chosen of Jehovah to lead the people into the land. Prior to entering on his work he received the gift of the Spirit as the all-necessary qualification for such service. As we read this we are reminded of the grand prophetic announcement of Isaiah: “Behold my servant, whom I uphold. . . .

I HAVE PUT MY SPIRIT upon him,” &c. The eternal Son is the elect servant of the Father in the glorious scheme of redemption. Himself testified that He was set apart, appointed, and sent by the Father (John x. 36). Our Lord's special reception of the Holy Spirit at His baptism, all will recall.

Not till the death of Moses did Joshua come to the front; till then, though the friend and companion of Moses, he was in comparative retirement. And the early part of Jesus' life was spent in the obscurity of Joseph's home and workshop. Such is God's way with all His servants.

HE TRAINS IN PRIVATE BEFORE HE USES IN PUBLIC.

May we know this by experience.

Next to Moses, Joshua was brought into closer communion with God than any of his fellows. He accompanied Moses when he went up into the Mount to receive the law, and remained the forty days awaiting his return; consequently, he had no share in Israel's terrible sin. And when Moses pitched "the tabernacle without the camp," Joshua went with him and continued there, where God revealed Himself (Ex. xxxiii. 7-11). And the Lord Jesus was ever separate from evil and in communion with the Father; He continued in His Father's love (John xv. 10).

Moses, the representative of the law, could not bring the people into the rest of Canaan; but Joshua did so. What God could not do through the law He does by Christ. And the Lord Jesus gives present rest to all who come to Him, and will ultimately bring all His own to the perfect rest above.

III. *As the Warrior.*—Moses was a great leader but not a warrior. Joshua was both. And as a general he was ever victorious. The promise given was definite: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life," &c. (Josh. i. 5.) The war in which he engaged was a series of brilliant victories. Even Ai was no real exception, for in the end he completely triumphed over it. In this he strikingly foreshadowed the blessed Son of God, who,

IN THE AWFUL FIGHT OF CALVARY, secured the overthrow of all our spiritual foes. For the believer, *sin, death, and Satan* are nullified (Rom. vi. 6; 1 Cor. xv. 54; Heb. ii. 14). We are now and here put 'into the place of "more than conquerors." If we are not so practically the blame lies with us.

To enable Israel to enter the land a mighty miracle was wrought. God thus bore witness

to Joshua and honoured him in the eyes of the people (Josh. ii. 7). And so with the glorious Antitype. Before entering on His conflict with Satan, at His baptism in the same river, the Father publicly acknowledged Jesus as His beloved Son.

Canaan is a type of "the heavenly places" where Christ is, and where we are "in Him"; Jordan rolling between was a figure of death. The passage through Jordan was a typical death and resurrection. Such also is Christian baptism. Our Lord's baptism was a symbolic anticipation of His death and resurrection—of the time when he would in reality sink beneath the waters of judgment. Baptism, rightly understood, is an acknowledgment that we have died and been raised again in our substitute. Personally we are on earth, representatively we are at God's right hand.

Our union with Christ in death and resurrection must ever be kept before us; for it is only as this is done that we can "walk in newness of life" and "serve in newness of spirit." So we have the instructive acts of the setting up the twelve stones in the Jordan, and the twelve stones in Canaan; these, to all generations, were to be a memorial of the crossing of Jordan. And, beloved, may we always have before us what our baptism signifies:

"A DEATH UNTO SIN AND A NEW BIRTH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS."

But even when they have crossed the river fighting is not the first order of the day. The "sharp knife" of circumcision has to be used upon themselves, before they may use the sword on others. By this "the reproach of Egypt was rolled away"; and henceforth they bore in their flesh the evidence that they were Abraham's seed, and so heirs of Canaan. And as those already risen with Christ, believers are called upon to mortify their members which are upon the earth (Col. iii. 1, 5).

Now that they are circumcised, with joy they keep the Passover. The manna, wilderness provision, ceases, and they eat of "the old corn of the land." We shall never "get beyond" what the manna typifies in the sense of not needing it. We may and do enjoy Christ as the "manna" and "the old

corn of the land" at the same time. The manna presents to us Christ in humiliation and death ; the Passover death only ; the old corn of the land Christ as the once crucified but now glorified One. There is death in them all ; for only as the One who makes atonement for sin can He become the food for our souls. All these details are deeply interesting, but we must pass on. May we, by the power of the indwelling Spirit, be taught practically these blessed truths. For here of all places a mere head-knowledge is a very poor thing.

Now they are prepared for the fight ; and Jericho, though walled to heaven, is soon overthrown. All perish except Rahab and those saved for her sake. She is incorporated into the favoured nation, and becomes one of the direct ancestors of the Christ, as concerning the flesh (Matt. i. 5). This was grace indeed ! It teaches us salvation for the chief of sinners, and at the same time hints at the union of Jew and Gentile in one body, in Christ.

Joshua only destroyed those who opposed him ; he spared the Gibeonites, whose fear led them to act and speak lies. So will it be when the Lord comes to the earth in judgment. The nations not in active opposition against His authority will not perish with His open enemies. Joshua caused his captains

TO PUT THEIR FEET UPON THE NECKS

of the five captive kings (Josh. x. 24, 25). And when Christ shall come for the salvation of His earthly people, He shall cause the faithful remnant to triumph over all their enemies (Mal. iv. 1-3 ; see also Rom. xvi. 20).

When the nations were subdued Joshua set to work to divide the land among the tribes. And, ere long, when the Lord shall put down all their foes, Israel shall inherit the land in peace ; and holding it on the conditions of the new covenant, they shall never again be dispossessed (Jer. xxxi. 31-37).

All the nations were not destroyed ; and, though brought into subjection, they were ever ready to rebel and cause trouble. When the people sinned they were given over to their enemies, who ruled them with a rod of iron. So with the Christian : "The old man," "sin," "the flesh," whatever we may call it,

is not dead or eradicated ; we have died to it, judicially, in the person of our substitute, but we are only practically dead as we are habitually walking in the Spirit. Be not deceived ; sin, as an indwelling principle, remains to the end, but we overcome it as we are abiding in Christ.

Under our divine Joshua let us gird up our loins, put on armour, and go in and take possession of that which is ours in Christ. Satan and the hosts of wicked spirits will oppose our every forward step ; but greater is He that is for us than all that are against us. The devil is mighty ; our Lord Jesus is Almighty. By daily yielding ourselves to be led on in the triumph of Christ, we shall prove what it is to be "more than conquerors through Him that loveth us." J. N. C.

SERVICE TO CHRIST.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—James i. 27.

"For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."—Phil. ii. 20, 21.

IT is a sorrowful and humbling exercise for the conscience, to contrast the untiring activity and the large expenditure of money which we can often so readily render to the things of time and sense, with the scanty measure of our bestowments on the things of eternity. The real cause of all this is the absence of vitality of soul, of a true and full enjoyment of heavenly things. We make many excuses, but the Lord has one answering and rebuking word for them all : "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii. 4).

So long as the saints are content with the thought of their souls being *secure*, touching the matter of salvation, and retire as it were from that affecting word, "Do as I have done to you," they of course can make no progress in the divine life, nor, as a consequence, in the service of Christ. A vast quantity of divine precept is lost sight of, and the resulting blessing not realised. It would be wholesome when we are not bringing forth fruit, to fear *being taken away* (John xv.) ; when we are lukewarm, to fear being spued out of the Lord's mouth (Rev. iii. 16) ; when we are hiding our talent, to fear being cast out as an unprofitable servant

(Matt. xxv. 14-30). If we have this world's goods, and shut up the bowels of our compassion, we should each one ask ourselves, "How dwelleth the love of God in me?" (1 John iii. 17). When we allow anger or enmity to dwell within us against our brother, we should consider whether we are in darkness (1 John ii. 9). "He that loveth not His brother abideth in death." Let no system of doctrine evade the full force of these solemn and searching warnings. Alas! how often do we dangerously rest upon doctrines as to our safety, without seeking after, and seeing that we *have the things that "accompany salvation."* That field which bringeth forth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whilst that only which bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God (Heb. vi.). *Israel lost the vineyard.* Why? Because they brought not forth its fruit to God (see Isa. v., Matt. xxi. 33-46); rather than do so they killed the Son of God. It is a solemn and searching word, that the controversy between God and Israel was regarding *fruit*. Jesus came to receive the fruits of the vineyard, and rather than give them they killed Him. They failed not in their profession—in this they abounded—but there was no fruit for the taste and table of the householder.

The thought in these days, it seems to me, in the minds of many of the Lord's children, is being served and cared for, rather than serving others. Large and jealous demands are made for personal attention and sympathy, whilst on their part they overlook *doing the same to others*. The consequence is, that a sickly and dissatisfied state of soul is engendered. Surely service to Christ comes within the reach of *all*. There are few who, with a little self-denial, might not have pence to give away, if not pounds. Few who might not so redeem their time as to have it in their power to make visits of sympathy, or to say a word to a poor perishing soul. At any rate, all can spend some time, had they the heart for it, before a throne of grace, and thus draw down by the prayer of faith showers of blessing.

The notion of a minister caring for me destroys the far more blessed idea of myself caring for others. The order of God is, "That the members should have the same care one

for another" (1 Cor. xii. 25). That the body of Christ should edify *itself* by the effectual working in the measure of every part (Eph. iv.). The Lord has constructed and tempered the body spiritually, as well as naturally, *to this end*. I am solemnly convinced that no church can prosper where this is not the case. What are saints left on earth for? Is it not to bring forth fruit to God, to be helpers of the Gospel, and caretakers of His people? The language of Cain was, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The saint should be a light before men, in the house, and in the world (Matt. v.). He is not his own, he is bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God; therefore he should glorify God in his body and spirit, which are His. He is called from darkness to light to show forth His praises. The Lord *hath said*, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God." Do we care for our families, our business, and ourselves? Do not even the publicans the same? "After all these things the Gentiles seek." Did not Jesus say, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and His righteousness"? (Matt. vi.). The sin of the age when Christ comes is not the neglect of temporal matters, but absorption in them; so that by reason of these things they will be unprepared to meet Him (Matt. xxiv. 36-41). The failure of the virgins is, they all slumber and sleep; they have, when He comes, ceased to watch and be ready. Their loins are not girded, nor their lights burning. Zeal for God is now for the most part lost sight of. Questions and persons are discussed, whilst the power of practical self-denying life is quenched. Activity in every branch may be seen, save in the service of Christ. The Laodicean's state is ours.

Brethren, the time is short. The night cometh when no man can work. Soon we shall have to render an account to God of *all* the deeds done in the body; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. A conflict exists now between Christ and Satan. We are on the one side or the other. Mere profession settles not the question. The Lord has said, "He that gathereth not with Me scattereth." If we are not for Him, we are *against* Him. Service to Christ conduces to our happiness, and to the

glory of God. As we sow so shall we reap. "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix. 6). "Blessed is he that soweth beside *all* waters." "This man shall be blessed in his deed." (James i. 25). "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

It is painful to see a professor of religion spending his days with no higher thoughts, as far as can be traced in his *actions*, than considering his own matters. Looking only on *his own things*. No widow's heart is by him made to rejoice. No orphan finds in him a father's care. No saint's feet by him are washed. Heaven is never made to rejoice over one sinner that he has been the means of leading to repentance. He spends his days like the beast that perisheth, the earth beneath his feet being what he lives upon. Can such a one be a Christian? It was the Lord Himself who said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." In these days, where are we to find the true-hearted self-denying Christian, he who is bearing the burden and heat of the day for his Master's glory? Sonship is one thing; to be a faithful servant and soldier of the cross is another. Christ was a servant; He is one now. He has declared plainly that He loves His Master, His wife, and children. From their service He has pledged Himself never to go free (Ex. xxi. 5; Ps. xl. 6; Is. 1. 5). His freedom, His delight, His meat and drink, are in the service of them He loves. To Him therefore God appoints the highest place, and crowns Him with many crowns. "He shall divide the spoil with the strong" (Isa. liii.). At the well of Samaria, the need of the poor harlot was more to Him than His own food, and this is the true spirit of service, the only service that has Christ for its impress.

There is a great reward in faithful service (see 1 Cor. xv. 58; Heb. vi. 10). Brethren, let us remember these things; seek to be able to say that we are free from the blood of all men, our life and walk testifying of Jesus. Let us seek by *well doing* to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, by our *good works* to glorify our heavenly Father.

Brethren, may the Lord awake our hearts to righteousness, that we sin not! May He plant in us larger desires than the world can satisfy!

May He so fill us with Himself, and cause our hearts so to overflow with His fulness, that out of our bellies may flow rivers of living water! Then, "our enemies being judges," they shall have to say of us, that we have been with Jesus. Many shall then have to rejoice on account of us in the day of glory. Above all, how truly blessed to hear Jesus say to us at the last day, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Amen. Amen.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Does Mark xvi. 15-18 warrant one going forth now as a "medical missionary"? Does not verse 17 restrict the "signs following" to those only who believe?

Is it right for a believer to join a trade's union?

In 1 John ii. 19 are those referred to as having "gone out," Christians or Antichristians?

What is the teaching of Lev. v. 11-13, where it appears sin is forgiven on the ground of atonement without blood? How is this reconcilable with Heb. ix. 22—"Without shedding of blood is no remission"?

Please explain Heb. x. 29.

What is the distinctive meaning of the words, "wisdom," "knowledge," "understanding," so frequently used in the Book of Proverbs?

If one in fellowship marries an ungodly person, how ought such a case to be dealt with?

THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE MEEK.

QUESTION 408.—What is the meaning of "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"? When does this take place?

Ans. A.—Meekness, or the patient endurance of wrong, is perhaps the fruit of the Spirit which most of all offends and stumbles men of the world, to whom meekness and meanness are alike.

But it is also most of all the mark that distinguishes the true follower of Jesus, the rejected and crucified.

In this passage, however, it is specially characteristic of the suffering remnant of the latter days, and it is of them the Lord speaks when He renews the promise of the earth or the land as their inheritance (Ps. xxxvii. 11, R.V.).

The time is therefore that of the inauguration of the Kingdom of Messiah, and the passages of the Revelation which correspond are chap. ii. 19, 26, 27, and chap. xx. 4.

For not to the Church proper, but to the remnant, is the promise of the earth or land. The Church's dominion is fully set forth in Eph. i. 20-23. G. F. T.

Ans. B.—The promises with conditional blessing are assured to overcomers through faith (Rev. ii. and iii. chaps.). The Lord is the perfect exemplar of all His teaching, and, as the pre-eminently "meek" Son of Man, will inherit this blessing in the millennium.

(Zech. xiv. 5, 9, 17), while here "He had no place to lay His head."

Will not Abraham, the father of the faithful, inherit it as promised (Gen. xiii. 15, &c.), together with "all who are of faith" (Gal. iii. 9; Heb. xi. 8, &c.)?

Will not Moses inherit it? He was the "meekest" in his day, and only *saw* the land (Matt. xvii. 3).

As to apostles, was not this conditional promise made? and is it not also for them who have obtained like precious faith through their word (John xvii. 20; xiv. 21-26; xv. 7), of whom none have yet inherited the earth because of *meekness*? Will not this reward, therefore, be given when "the Son of Man shall come in the glory of the Father, and in His kingdom" (Matt. xvi. 27, 28)?

Compare the foregoing with Rom. viii. 17, If of faith then children and heirs of God, "and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him."

Rev. iii. 21, 22—"He that overcometh, I will give to sit down with Me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father in His throne."

Rev. v. 8, 9, 10—These are the redeemed, "purchased by the blood of the Lamb, and made unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign on the earth."

Rev. xiv. 14—"These follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." Compare Zech. xiv. 5.

Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6, refer to overcomers, and as kings and priests of God and of Christ will reign with Him 1000 years. "This is the first resurrection."

Ans. C.—"The earth" often in Scripture means "the land" of Canaan, and here signifies the blessings promised to those who obey God in the true meekness of Matt. xi. 28-30.

The condition of meekness is exceeding rare, and while obtainable by all, through childlike and persistent faith in God, is not found by many. The enjoyment of God's promises, whether of an earthly Canaan or of what it signified, is EVER linked with obedience to His precepts.

A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—The Lord in His teaching had in view the setting up of His Kingdom in the earth, albeit a period had to intervene during which He should be rejected, His Kingdom postponed, and the mystery hid in God, or the gathering out of an elect people to be "joint-heirs with Christ," should be revealed and consummated.

The prayer He taught His disciples, "Thy Kingdom come," shall yet be fully answered. Then Christ, the meek and lowly One, the Heir of all, shall indeed "inherit the earth." The "joint-heirs" of His reproach and sufferings shall then inherit the earth with Him, in the sense and manner in which He shall inherit it.

But the saved of that day, who shall in meekness bear the wrongs and persecution of an apostate world dominated by antichrist, shall also be delivered from their oppressors; for them God shall arise to judgment "to save all the meek of the earth" (Ps. lxxvi. 9).

Then shall He "reprove with equity for the meek of the earth" (Is. xi. 4), and shall "beautify the meek with salvation" (Ps. cxlii. 4).

Many of the promises of the Lord, like this one, have primary reference to a people to be saved in the flesh for inheritance and blessing upon the earth during His millennial reign.

It does not, however, follow that these promises

have no application to the people now being saved for the heavenly inheritance. They certainly have a blessed voice for us also, inasmuch as all fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and all suffering that is brought upon us on account of the Spirit of Christ in us, shall be rewarded in that day when those who have suffered with Him shall reign with Him.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRISTIANS.

QUESTION 409.—How shall all be made alive in Christ according to 1 Cor. xv. 22?

Ans.—The subject of this chapter is the resurrection of those who "are Christ's." They alone are contemplated. That *all* will rise again Scripture abundantly testifies; but that is not the point here, the argument of the apostle being that the resurrection of Christ is a pledge of the resurrection of those who are Christ's. In verses 21 and 22 we have the germ of what is more fully unfolded in Rom. v.: the correspondence between the first Adam and the last, and how the *many* in each case are affected by relationship to the one or the other, the first Adam being the head of the human race, the last Adam being the Head of the redeemed race, as Isa. liii. says, "He shall see His seed." Therefore in the first part of the verse the word *all* is qualified by *in Adam*, and in the last part by *in Christ*. All who die die in Adam, and all who live in Christ, or all who are in Adam die, and all who are in Christ live.

W. H. B.

Editor's Note.—We believe this reply gives the true meaning.

Some view it differently, contending that the Greek "en" of verse 22 is equivalent to "dia" of verse 21, and has rather the sense of "by" or "through" than "in."

Death *through* Adam and resurrection *through* Christ, and the latter co-extensive with the former.

But there must be a definite reason for the change from "dia" of verse 21 to "en" of verse 22. In verse 21 the general principle is stated—that death having come through man, resurrection, in the wisdom of God, comes also by man.

But in verse 22 Adam is identified as the source of death to all who by virtue of relationship to and descent from him are therefore viewed in him as the branch is in the tree.

The evident analogy is that all who are in like manner related to Christ, being partakers of life and righteousness in Him, shall by virtue of this relationship be made alive, *i.e.*, be raised up from the dead at His coming. The "in Christ" of verse 22 corresponds, we judge, with the "of Christ," or "they that are Christ's," of verse 23.

Resurrection in the abstract is not attributed only to the Son (see John v. 21). It would therefore be incorrect to say that apart from Christ there could be no resurrection.

THE DEPARTED SCEPTRE.

QUESTION 410.—Please explain Gen. xlix. 10. Did not the sceptre depart when Israel was brought into captivity, long before Christ came?

Ans. A.—Prof. Douglas says:—"The very fact that Christ arose in due time is proof that the sceptre had not departed from Judah in the course of these reverses [*i.e.*, the captivity, &c.], precisely as a total eclipse is no proof that the day is at an

end. The sceptre was long of appearing in Judah; Israel had to wait for centuries in faith that kings would arise in the time of promise, although they had not been long of arising in the rejected line of Esau (Gen. xvii. 16, xxxv. 11, xxxvi. 31). The lapse of centuries before the sceptre appeared in Israel does not disturb our faith in this prophecy; neither need the lapse of centuries after it disappeared, if Judah was only kept together till the predicted rod should come forth of the *stump* of Jesse" (Isa. xi. 1).

Dr. Payne Smith remarks that the sceptre "probably indicates here tribal rather than regal rank, and means that Judah would continue, until the time indicated, to be a self-governed and legally-constituted tribe."

The above suggestions merit consideration, unless any more helpful explanations are forthcoming. W. H. B.

Ans. B.—By the sceptre in Judah is meant the sovereignty in it. By a law-giver—the administration of justice by those of the same nation, and according to their own laws. Shiloh—the Messiah. This was fulfilled (Luke ii. 46-49). The sceptre and the law-giver remained among the Jews till both began to be taken from them by the Romans, on their reducing Judea into the form of a Roman province, and then Christ, the Shiloh promised, began His coming as the Messiah, by then first entering on His Father's business, for which He was sent (Luke ii. 46). The "decree" (ver. 1) was issued three years before the birth of Christ, the enrolment of the people was made (ver. 4) but the tax was not levied till the 12th year after, when Archelaus being deposed, Judea became a Roman province, under a Roman governor.

Ans. C.—The sceptre or ruling power did not wholly depart from *Judah*, even after the return from Babylon; for that tribe absorbed the others and gave its name to the whole nation; and even under the Romans obtained a measure of authority. But when Shiloh, the Prince of Peace, came, quickly the power of Judah passes away, and makes room for the diffusion of the truth concerning Him, unto whom eventually shall be the gathering of all people. A. O. M.

Ans. D.—When God says "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah" let us give Him credit for meaning exactly what He says, just when as sinners we credited His "Shall not come into judgment" (Jo. v. 24). In Matt. i. we have the kingly line traced from Abraham downward, introducing Judah and David, and although the captivity is duly noticed, still the royal descent continues without interruption until it reaches Joseph "who was of the house and lineage of David" (Luke ii. 4), and last on the kingly catalogue stands Jesus who is called Christ (Matt. i. 16). From this chronological table it is "evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah" (Heb. vii. 14). Here we have the unbroken line from Judah to Shiloh, and here the line ends. Here is "born the King of the Jews" (Matt. ii. 2). In His kingly character He enters Jerusalem riding on the ass's colt (Matt. xxi. 5) in fulfilment of the prophecy (Zec. ix. 9). In Jerusalem His kingly authority is questioned (Matt. xxi. 23), and here we have a wondrous connection between Genesis and Matthew. "Binding his foal to the vine (Israel the empty vine, that brought forth fruit unto himself, Hosea x. 1), and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the

blood of grapes" (Gen. xlvi. 11); and after two parables showing their disobedience and His death and resurrection, he went on to Calvary, where Shiloh dies, but is raised again, and here the sceptre departs from Judah as an earthly tribe, and is transferred from earth to heaven, for in resurrection God says to Jesus, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom" (Heb. i. 8). T. B.

Ans. E.—Hengstenberg is said to have rightly translated this verse thus:

"Judah shall not cease to exist, nor to lose its superiority, until it shall be exalted to higher honour and glory through the great Redeemer, who shall spring from it, and whom, not only the Jews, but all the nations of the earth shall obey."

As he points out, "till" not unfrequently means "up to" and "afterwards."

The meaning of the prophecy therefore was, not that Judah was to execute royal power until Christ, and then lose it, which is the lame and unsatisfactory gloss usually adopted; but that the pre-eminence of Judah is to be irrevocably established in Christ, not spiritually, but in fact, in the kingdom of which Daniel prophesies.

T. E. R.

Editor's Note.—We give to this question several interesting replies.

On referring to the original it will be found that the word rendered "sceptre" does not necessarily imply kingly dominion. Learned and converted Jews hold that the word may be rendered "the tribeship," *i.e.*, whilst all the other tribes had, before the time of Christ, ceased to have any tribal standing in Israel nationally, the tribe of Judah remained intact. It is the ordinary word rendered "tribe," "rod," or "sceptre." The word rendered "law-giver" signifies rather "governor" or "law administrator."

ABBA, FATHER.

QUESTION 411.—Why is the term "Abba" used in connection with "Father" in Mark xiv. 36, Rom. viii. 15, and Gal. iv. 6? Why the repetition?

Ans.—The expression "Abba, Father," as first used by the Lord Jesus, is simply the word "Father" in Hebrew and in Greek—*i.e.*, in the language of Jew and Gentile, "Abba" is the untranslated Hebrew word; whilst "Pateer" is the Greek word rightly translated Father.

Thus the Lord Jesus in addressing His Father speaks in both languages, indicating that in His atoning sufferings and death, and in the High Priestly intercession based thereon, He enters into the experience and perfectly represents to the Father the Gentile believer as well as the Jew.

Likewise the Spirit in the believer (see Gal. iv. 6) speaks the language of both, and so maketh intercession for the Gentile no less than for the Jew.

Lastly, the believer taught by the Spirit recognises this divine unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ, and owns the one God and Father of all.

It is essentially the language of sonship, and expresses the confidence and affection of children.

In the Father's ear the two languages make one sweet note of harmony.

EDITOR.

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—I.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JOHN R. CALDWELL IN
MARBLE HALL, GLASGOW.

THE subject I have selected for these meetings is "The Earthly Relationships of the Heavenly Family," and I have done so feeling deeply the responsibility, specially for this reason, that those subjects are usually either altogether omitted from public ministry or else spoken of lightly as if they were of little consequence. But I am persuaded that they are of the utmost practical importance, if we are to glorify God, and if we are to be used by God in testimony for Him. It is our duty and our privilege to give heed to every part of God's teaching so that His Word may regulate our whole lives. I make no apology for speaking upon particular relationships, such as husband and wife, parent and child, in a promiscuous assembly, for I believe it is the will of God that we should *all* know His mind about *all* these matters; for even though we may not be in some of these relationships, there are, nevertheless, general principles connected with each which it is for the blessing of us all to know. Reference has been made (in prayer) to the presence of those who are recently converted, and I should hope never to forget the presence of such. I thank God that it is so, and I believe no subject dealt with from the Word of God in the love and unction of the Spirit will fail of interest and profit even to the new-born soul, and I think that this will be specially characteristic of our subject this afternoon. The forming of earthly things into representations of heavenly things is one of God's ways from the first. Creation was designed by God to be a representation of spiritual unseen things. We find it in the very first chapter of the Bible (see 14th verse), "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs." So that these heavenly bodies were intended by God not merely to mark off the days and the years but to be for "signs" or "types" —types of spiritual things.

We all are familiar also with the record of the creation of Adam and Eve, and how the Spirit of God shows us that their creation

was intended by God to be a representation of the great New Testament truth of Christ and the Church. So also God appointed that the Tabernacle should in all things be made after the pattern shown to Moses in the mount, so that it might be a complete representation of things unseen in the heavens. In like manner God intends that in the ordering of the earthly life of His people now on earth who constitute His dwelling place through the Spirit there should be a representation to Him, and a showing forth from Him to the world of divine heavenly relationships answering to those which pertain to our life down here. And I am bold to say that if a Christian household (I mean a household in which the father and mother are Christians) be ordered in all its different relationships according to the instructions that God has given us in His Word, I say that household, though not free from affliction, not free from discipline, shall nevertheless have a sweetness and a peacefulness that shall be a very antepast of the rest and peace of Heaven. God means that such should be the case, and if we only give heed to the fashioning of our lives according to the heavenly pattern, we shall find how blessed and profitable it is. Now, let us turn to Eph. v. 21, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God"; and as the apostle has written this word it seems natural that he should next go on to address the subject—one in the relationship he is about to speak of. So he begins with the wives—"Wives submit yourselves, &c., read verses 21 to 33. Read also in the epistle to the Colossians, iii. 18, 19, also in the epistle to Timothy, i. Tim. ii. 8-15. Read also in the epistle to Titus, ii. 1-5, and i Peter iii. 1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that, if any obey not the word,"—here is a word for any Christian wife who has an unsaved husband—"that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives." Read also verses 2 to 7. I have read these as being the principle scriptures which bear upon the subject, and would now shortly seek help as to their teaching. Turning again to Eph. v., I would ask you to notice that the burden laid upon the wife is summed up in

two words, "subjection" and "reverence." The burden laid upon the husband is summed up in one word, and that is "love." And does not that open up to us a grand spiritual reality? Does it not tell us that the place in which God has put us, in relation to the Lord Jesus, is summed up in these two words *subjection and reverence?* All our blessing consists in our individual subjection to the will and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in our giving Him, as a Divine Person, as one of the ever blessed Trinity, His place as Lord in the deepest reverence of our souls. I am persuaded that for old and for young there is no truth more needful for us to know in our inmost soul *than this*—that all our blessing is summed up in subjection to the will of Christ, and in reverence for His holy name. You see at a glance as we read Ephesians v., that the thought of earthly relationships being "types of the heavenly" so occupies the apostle's mind that he can scarcely get away from it, so he adds, "But I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Dear friends, God would have us know that we are put in these earthly relationships as His redeemed people. True, they pertain to this life—to the flesh; they all shall be dissolved and pass away—they are only for a moment. Nevertheless, so long as we are in them here, we are called to represent in them the mind of the heavens, the mind of God, the mind of Christ, the character and ways of God. Thus these earthly relationships become sublime, being representations of things divine, they have a significance and a glory that the world knows nothing about, and it is our highest privilege and our honour to accept the will of God concerning us, and seek to live in them according to His revealed will. Now, notice at the very outset that that which is laid upon the wife is *subjection*. I believe this is fundamental. There can be no order without government. There must be rule. There is a head to direct and control the body; and it is a remarkable fact in physiology that the brain literally controls and guides every member of the body. And so it must be, for "God is the head of Christ," "Christ is the head of the Church." God is supreme ruler and governor, all things are directed and controlled by Him. Sin is a

disturbing element of rebellion that has crept into God's creation, not without His permission, and in order that He might demonstrate great truths and problems we know not how far reaching. But this *sin*, only taking the fruit of the tree, was *rebellion against the will of God*. And wherever blessing is brought in, it can only be on the principle of divine control. You and I are brought to the Lord Jesus Christ to know and be subject to that control. And in the relationship of the wife to the husband, God has assigned to her the subject place. Her husband is to be her director, controller, and ruler, as well as her provider. This is God's will. In some parts of the world men regard the women as if they were inferior creatures, and they sit and make the women do the work, but God gives us right and true thoughts about her. Practically then, the wife is put in the subject place. It is hers to own the authority of her husband, and the Lord will bless every such pattern wife. This is the first step in the ordering of the household, the wife subject to the husband. If the children see that the wife is not subject to her husband, will the children be subject to their parents? Bear in mind that this is the foundation relationship of all society. It was the first instituted by God on earth when He took the woman and fashioned her from the rib of Adam. And most beautiful is the way of God in this creation. He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, type of that deep sleep of death which the Lord of Glory slept for us. He opened his side (the first surgical operation), took out a rib, and out of that rib He builded a woman. Adam could therefore say of her, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Oh! it is not that the Lord Jesus came down and took our nature upon Him, that is not it, but that we are formed out of Him, formed by new creation out of Him, "bone of His bones and flesh of His flesh." It has been beautifully yet quaintly remarked by Matthew Henry, "Eve was not taken out of Adam's head to top him, neither out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him." Very quaint, but very beautiful. So you see the glory and dignity God has put

upon the woman. But now mark, in the 2nd of Timothy, there are two grounds upon which the woman is given the subject place. The first ground is connected with creation, and the second ground is connected with trespass. The first ground is in the 13th verse, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve." That was the order of creation, and the Spirit of God from that very fact instructs us that the woman is therefore in the subject place. None the less honourable on that account; but if the woman was to be a type of the Church and its relationship to Christ, how could God assign to her any other place? Taken out of him, formed for him, presented to him, and to share equally with him his dominion over the creation. Such was Eve to Adam, such is the Church to Christ, such is the view God means every wife to have of that relationship in which she stands to her husband. Respect is the basis of all affection. I speak this most solemnly to many young people who are here to-day. Respect must be the basis of all true lasting affection. If your affection is a mere passing flippant liking it will not stand the test of the wear-and-tear of daily life. But where affection is rooted in respect for the person, there is a ground in which affection will develop. Now, notice the next ground. The first is founded in the order of creation, the second is connected with trespass. "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." The woman acted without her husband. The woman dallied with the serpent without consulting the man that God had set over her. She acted upon her own self-will, she failed in respect to her husband. That is the first failure we detect in Scripture.

(To be continued.)

"GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH."

ALL around us we see ruin, but "the Lord is the portion of His people" in all states of His church. *He cannot fail!* It is here faith has its hold; a hold no power of Satan can affect, for God is its force, and Christ has already accomplished the victory. Our position and circumstances may be changed, but faith always remains the same, because it rests on God who changes not, be circumstances what they may.

CONFLICT AND SERVICE.

LET us not be like those who, in the days of the Lord's conflict with His enemies, abode among the sheepfolds. Gilead abode beyond Jordan. Dan remained in ships. Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his creeks (margin). Whilst Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardised their lives unto the death in the high places of the field (Judges v. 16-18). They lived not for themselves, but for God, while their brethren shut themselves up in the heart and centre of their worldliness. The Lord felt this slight, this walking according to the course of this world, and not according to the current of His Spirit. In the days of David's prosperity, whilst Israel was in conflict, at the very time that kings go forth to battle, he sends forth his servants, but remains himself at home. He *tarries* still at Jerusalem. Instead of being a witness and a helper in the struggle, sharing Israel's fare, he sees the beautiful Bathsheba, and she, and not the enemies of Israel, secured his fall. It is ever so. To retire from the service of Christ, and the afflictions of the Gospel, into the course and current of our own things, is to peril our safety. Our place is conflict and service. To be off the battle field, is to be a deserter from our post, and to place ourselves at the disposal of Satan. Of those who confess themselves to be pilgrims and strangers, it is said, "God is not ashamed to be called *their God*." "Let no man take thy crown," is a word for every servant. Brethren, suffer not failure in others, or unrequited services, to throw you back. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shall heap coals of fire on his head." "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. xii. 20, 21). When Isaiah saw the grace and glory of Jesus, his answer to "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" was, "Here am I, send me" (Isa. vi.). When Elias was spending his time in speaking *against Israel, and exalting himself* (for these two failings generally accompany each other), the Lord asked him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" When again asked the same question, he repeats the same things. The Lord then puts Elisha *in his room* (1 Kings xix.).

MOURNING *versus* BOASTING:

A WORD FOR THE TIMES.

IN that part of the history of Israel contained in the book of Ezekiel, a state of things existed very much akin to the condition of many of God's children now.

The prophet was commissioned to speak in their hearing messages from God, to convey to them the knowledge of His will concerning them and their rebellious ways. In proof of Ezekiel's Divine commission, he was commanded to say, "Thus saith the Lord God," and that, whether they would hear or forbear.

Then, as now, there were those who, in an evil day, would "hear what God the Lord would speak" (Psalm lxxxv. 8), and act accordingly. Others again—and these in the majority—would forbear to hear. So the word of God to His servant was, "When I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house" (Ezek. iii. 27). Refusing to amend their ways and their doings at the reproof of the Lord, He visits them with judgment, as seen in chap. ix. Judgment began with those occupying the nearest place to God; "begin at My sanctuary" was the word. We may thus learn that, where the knowledge of God's will most exists, His judgment will be most severe when apostasy sets in. 1 Peter iv. 17 confirms this: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?"

But what we wish to emphasise most of all is, that there were those who sighed and cried for all the abominations that were done. On these the God of Israel set a mark; and, while most were being judged because of their evil ways, there was a remnant who humbled themselves before God. Having nothing whereof to boast, because of failure, they were prepared to receive correction and instruction at the hand of God.

Man is a failure wherever he is, and perhaps this is most apparent in "the Church." Given the highest privileges, coupled with solemn responsibilities, he has proved his utter inability to please God. Have we not all to confess how different we are now from what we were in

conversion's early days? Have we not all to admit that our first love has grown cold? Many of us who once were, in our measure, "burning and shining lights" for God, have now to confess before the Lord that the fire has gone out, and the light gives but a feeble, flickering glimmer? And what has caused the change?

DEPARTURE FROM THE LIVING GOD!

Heart disease has taken undisputed possession of very many of God's dear children. Hearts which once were aglow with heavenly fire from off the altar, are now cold and formal. Many who once were happy in the service of their Lord, now have "*no heart for it.*" Perhaps the worst feature of our departure from God consists in our boasting and presumption? That which is most lacking among the *saints—confession of sin and failure*—is, we firmly believe, the most becoming. Instead of being humbled before God for all His goodness, and on account of our evil ways, how many of us have been carried away by boastful presumption?

Position, it may be, has been one subject of our boasting. Puffed up with spiritual pride on account of being, *as we supposed*, THE Church of God, we have, in many cases, pointed the finger of scorn to *our brethren in the sects*, and vaunted *ourselves on our superior knowledge*. But what has been the inevitable sequel to such God-dishonouring conduct? We have been "*filled with our own ways.*" Leanness has entered our soul. God has laid us aside, and used as instruments for His glory others who had neither the knowledge nor the pride that we had, and who, may be, were in positions which, on account of our more perfect knowledge of God's will, we could not countenance. And can it be that we have learnt no lesson from it all? Let us be assured of this, that if God's saints are in a *right condition*, He will not be slow to bless them, although they may unwittingly be in a *wrong position*. We are not justifying a wrong position—far from it; but we are contending for a right condition of heart, in a right position of Church fellowship.

In view of our own failure, and that of others, we may surely thank the Lord that there are those who, even in these perplexing

and trying times, are sighing and crying on account of all the evils existing among the people of God. Upon these, as surely as on those of times gone by, God has set His mark. May He add to their number.

We are convinced that nothing short of a thorough breakdown before God, and a full and unreserved confession of our guilt and failure to Him, "telling Him all the truth," will bring us again into the enjoyment of that blessed communion with God we once had. And, while we shall then rejoice in restored communion, we shall have the power we have been vainly seeking to put things right in the assemblies of the saints. Fellowship with God means power with and for Him.

The days are darkening, and in the experience of many, "the fine gold has become dim" and the light is on the wane. Things are becoming more and more complicated in the assemblies. Conditions of fellowship other than those "in the Book" are being propounded by leaders, and many are being caught in the snare the Evil One has laid. Carnal brethren, exalting themselves, are bringing their new doctrines to the front, to the grief and pain of the faithful ones among the flock, and to their own deep loss. The spirit of division threatens to wreck the testimony of many assemblies. And, if the Lord tarry, we shall soon have to contend for the faith, once for all delivered, in a way that has not hitherto been necessary. Except the Lord, in mercy, prevent it, a most trying time is in store for those who would seek to fulfil their God-given responsibility of caring for the lambs and sheep of the flock. But is there no remedy? We believe there is. The question is, are we willing to apply it? to get down before God in the way already suggested? If so, we may count upon our God being all He has promised to be to us. His word is, "*Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.*" Shall we not respond from the depths of our soul, "Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord our God. . . . For we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers" (Jer. iii. 22-25).

Let us also take heed to the solemn warning, "Give glory to the Lord God, before He cause darkness. . . . But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your

pride, and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried captive (Jer. xiii. 16, 17). T. W.

THE TRUE SOURCE OF BLESSING.

Remarks on 1 Cor. iii.

THIS chapter teaches us that *God is the true source of blessing*, and that there is no other. "I have planted, Apollos watered; but *God* gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but *God* that giveth the increase." "Ye are *God's* husbandry, ye are *God's* building." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of *God*?" "And ye are Christ's, and Christ is *God's*." Well might the apostle inquire of the Corinthians, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but *ministers* by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" Well might he say, "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours." Paul could not speak to the Corinthians "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." His letter finds them in the same state, "For ye are yet carnal."

When the glory filled the Tabernacle and the Temple, there was no room for anything else (Ex. xl. 34; 2 Chron. v. 14); no place for the flesh; no room for glory, save in the glory that filled the place. The Corinthians, by setting up man and human headships, delighting in elements foreign to the Cross, became carnal. To be spiritual is to be a debtor to God for everything, to hold all in subjection to Him. Then the bondage and terror of man cease, and those fleshly elements of his, that captivate the senses, lose their enticing power. This is our high calling, to honour the Cross at any cost; to acknowledge no teaching but that of the Spirit of God; and no other source of divine power but that of the living God.

Such is the substance of the apostle's teaching in the first three chapters of this epistle; and such is the instruction needed now, as well as then, to save the saints from those things which charm their senses and exclude God. Our only safeguard is to keep our eyes so fixed on Jesus as to be able to say with godlike liberty of soul,

"We ask not, need not, aught beside—
So safe, so calm, so satisfied!"

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.—VII.

FELLOWSHIP IN OVERSIGHT WORK.

IN looking at this aspect of oversight work, we do not get much help from Old Testament precedent. In the government of the nation, it was Jehovah's way to rule Israel through *one* man chosen by Himself, such as Moses, Joshua, David, and others. Consequently, there was no opportunity for such fellowship as there is now in the government of the "House of God." We never read of *the elder* or *the bishop* in any church or city, but always "elders" or "overseers." This, in itself, implies the very closest fellowship. There is no room for independent individual action in carrying out rule in the Church. An apostle could, by virtue of his apostleship, "deliver one unto Satan" (see 1 Tim. i. 20), but no one can claim such authority now. However far in advance of his fellow-saints, or of his brethren in oversight, anyone may be, if he is himself under divine authority he will never act in a difficulty until he is able to carry others with him. Patience to wait on those who cannot see as far, or go as fast as he can, is a leading characteristic of a true shepherd. This principle not only affects single assemblies, it also reaches forth to, and affects, the peace of whole districts. No leading brother, who is right in heart with God, will ever throw an assembly into confusion by acting in an overbearing spirit; and far less will he throw a bone of contention amongst surrounding assemblies, by acting in a difficulty without *first* seeking the fellowship of those whom his action may affect. The injunction given to elders, "All to be subject one to another, and to be clothed with humility" (1 Peter v. 5), embraced a large tract of country, and clearly implies a fellowship in pastoral work which is little known now-a-days. The great fundamental principle, that all saints and all assemblies are under ONE government, the HEAD of which is in heaven, was in Scripture days practically acknowledged, and they were all willing to help one another as they had ability and opportunity. Not only so, but they were willing to be helped. There does not appear to have been any such limit then put on a pastor's responsibility as there is now. If a brother of experience essays to give counsel

or help outside of the little company of saints where he is understood to be in fellowship, his counsel is not infrequently looked upon and characterised as "interference." There was no such spirit in primitive times. Peter, who calls himself an "elder" (1 Peter v. 1), "passed throughout all" (Acts ix. 32). Timothy was sent to Corinth (1 Cor. iv. 17), also to Philippi, to know and care for their state (Phil. ii. 19, 20). Were such fellowship and help given and received now in the spirit of true humility, there would be a much closer and sweeter harmony between assemblies than there often is. An overseer's responsibility in primitive times would seem to have been limited by his gift and opportunities, and not by lines drawn around single assemblies, cities, or districts.

It might here be well to say a word about what is known as "oversight meetings." In doing so, I wish simply to give some help to those who have conscientious difficulties on this question.

When the LORD gave instructions to Moses about the "silver trumpets" for calling the assembly together (Num. x.), we get in verse 4 a most important principle: "And if they blow with but one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee." These leading men were brought together by divine authority. Anyone can see the difference between these princes meeting together periodically by mutual arrangement and the same men being convened through the priest blowing the silver trumpet. The one meeting would have been *human*, the other was by a divine call. Someone might here say, "We have now no silver trumpets and no priests to blow them." That is quite true; but it is equally true that we have now no "cloud" by day nor "pillar of fire" by night; yet no Christian would argue that therefore we have now no divine guidance. We have the antitype of the cloudy pillar in Person of the Holy Spirit; and if the Spiritual can—in measure at least—discern His guidance, may not leading men, who are in the counsel of God, discern when it would be of the Lord's leading for overseers to come together.

If we read carefully and without prejudice the various accounts in the book of Acts, we cannot fail to see that it was special circum-

stances that brought overseeing brethren together, and not an established system of periodical meetings. In Acts vi. it was the murmuring about the widows being neglected that brought together the twelve. In Acts xv. it was the question of circumcision which brought Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, and it was to consider that question that the apostles and elders came together (verse 6). In chapter xx. the elders of the church in Ephesus were called together by Paul to receive a solemn charge, which is recorded by the Holy Spirit for the guidance of overseers to the end of the age. In chapter xxi. it clearly was the coming of Paul to Jerusalem which brought the apostles and elders together on that occasion (verse 18). Paul and his company had tarried "many days at Cesarea," which was nigh to Jerusalem, and it was the "day following" his arrival when he went into James, "and all the elders were present." The coming of the great apostle of the Gentiles was an event which was sure to cause a commotion and bring together not only the elders but the "multitude must needs come together, for they will hear that thou art come" (verse 22). All this goes to prove that the then leading men discerned when there was a special need for guiding ones amongst the flock coming together. Also notice, on none of these occasions did overseeing brethren come together to sit in judgment on local difficulties, but to clear up general principles on which there was lack of intelligence or lack of the revelation of the will of God. To deal with local difficulties, the apostle Paul wrote (as in the case of Corinth) or sent a wise helper, as Timothy (see 1 Cor. iv. 17), or he promised to come himself (2 Cor. xiii. 1). So also the apostle John (3 John 9, 10). And if we can find no Scripture example for a district oversight meeting to adjudicate on a local difficulty, far less have we such a thing as a company of brethren coming together to sit in judgment on *assemblies as such*. This was never dreamed of in those days. It would be as easy to find a precedent in Scripture for "purgatory," or for the "infallibility of the Pope," as to find one for a company of leading brethren declaring an "assembly" of saints "out of the fellowship." That was the rock on which the late gifted J. N. Darby split, and the working out of that most unscriptural

principle has broken the system he tried to build up into fragments. And wherever and by whomsoever the same principle is attempted to be carried out, it must inevitably lead to endless division.

One step aside from the divine pattern is sure to lead to others; and one of the evils of the periodical district oversight meeting system has been to bring into the solemn work of oversight the *democratic* element to an alarming extent. Brethren are found attending the "oversight meeting" who do no pastoral work whatever, and who have no fitness for it. And overseers are known too often by their attendance at certain meetings, and not, as of old, by their personal godliness and their care for the flock. Where assemblies are large, there is a need for regular "business meetings," and it would doubtless be very helpful for elder brethren to meet often for prayer, and to help each other into a clearer knowledge of divine truth and of the principles of church government. But that is a very different thing from brethren meeting together in a judicial character. And as this element preponderates, the carnally-minded amongst the brethren are more and more attracted, and the spiritual are repelled. Even the local oversight meeting has in many cases become a snare; and it would be a good thing in such a case to give it up, and devote the time to prayer and visiting the saints. The flock would then have an opportunity of "knowing" who the shepherds really are; and those into whose hearts God has put a care for His people, would, as opportunity offered and need required, be drawn together by a law of spiritual affinity.

G. A.

"THE SHIELD OF FAITH" (Eph. vi. 16).

If the "shield of faith" be not raised, the smallest sin can cast us down and make our case appear a hopeless one. In the case of Peter we learn that the Lord will not let the faith of His people utterly fail. Jesus had prayed for him that his faith might not fail; and in John xvii. we see that He prayed for us. Satan has two different methods of putting forth his "wiles": one is causing us to rest in a fancied uprightness; the other, disturbing our peace by the remembrance of our sins. Both are the result of turning the eye from Christ.

"BECAUSE YE BELONG TO CHRIST."

Mark ix. 41.

ACUP of water is little in itself and the giving of it is a very small service. It might be given merely upon the ground of humanity, a kindly disposition willingly supplying the need of a fellow-mortal, apart altogether from any higher consideration. But this is not what the Lord has in view. He searches the heart, and judges of the act by the motive. It is not the work, the labour, the patience, that evokes His commendation, but the work of faith, the labour of love, and the patience of hope. If faith, love, and hope, in Himself be the spring, then the action, however trifling in itself, has a value for Him that nothing else can possess.

The cup of water given out of merely human pity might be bestowed upon a man or a beast, and the act would be right and commendable in any case; but the emphatic point which the Lord here presents in such bold relief is the special motive, the personal love to Him that prompts the giver, that regards not the position of the needy one, be it high or low, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, comely or deformed, the one consideration which outweighs every other is simply that the recipient belongs to Christ.

If he belongs to Christ, then love to him is love to Christ, kindness to him is kindness to Christ, service to him is service to Christ; so God appraises it, so Christ takes note of it, and so at His judgment seat will it be rewarded.

And the opposite is equally true. If by thoughtless, selfish behaviour, we stumble the weakest believer, it is a sin against that brother, but it is more, it is a sin against Christ (1 Cor. viii. 13). The principle is the same throughout: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" (Matt. xxv. 40, 45).

It is written, "Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." God's teaching is implanted deep in the nature He imparts. It is graven upon the heart. Every one that had been taught by the Father, came to Christ. It was spontaneous. It was an affinity of their very being that drew them to Him.

Even so every one that is taught of God, loves the brethren, not because they are specially associated with us in the fellowship of the assembly, or because they agree with us as to certain doctrines — such fellowship and such agreement is good and desirable—but the ground of divine love is not in this, but simply and only in the fact that they belong to Christ.

This gives the weakest, most ignorant, most foolish, most wilful believer a claim upon me to which no other consideration is comparable. He belongs to Christ; he is one of the sheep for which Jesus gave His life; he is one of the members of that body of which Christ is the head. Therefore I may not despise him, lest I despise Christ; I may not wound him with my tongue, lest I wound Christ; I must not stumble him, or I sin against Christ; I must not judge him, for Christ is his Judge and mine; and yet I must not suffer sin upon him, for Christ has shown me my sin and cleansed me from it and covered it; therefore ought I in love and concern for the honour of that name, to seek his cleansing and blessing.

It is no imaginary danger, but a real and present one that compels us to warn our brethren against departure from this fundamental principle of the truth of God.

There is, we fear, much at present that passes for love, which if tested by the Word of God would prove to be base metal.

There is love to those that love us. Whenever occasion arises to test such love, it turns like honey to vinegar. It is selfish and fleshly; it is not divine. "Do not even the hypocrites the same?" It is not because they "belong to Christ." There is love to those with whom in social position, in education, in understanding of Scripture, we have much more in common than with many others; but it is not the genuine article, it is not because they "belong to Christ."

There is love to those who attend "our meeting"; they have a claim upon us which we feel bound to own. But the wider circle of fellowship, those who compose other assemblies, and those who, equally the Lord's, are members of the different denominations, are treated and spoken of as though they had no such claim. Is such love and such service

really that which the Lord will own? It is indeed bestowed upon those that are Christ's, but is it *because they belong to Him?*

As we see the grouping together of believers into knots and coteries, defined by unanimity as to certain points of doctrine or church position, may we not even now be warned lest the element that is divine be lacking in our love, lest He who searches the heart should say of us, "All seek their own and not the things that are Jesus Christ's." J. R. C.

PROFOUND LESSONS FROM HOMELY THINGS.

Leviticus xxv. 1-25.

THE ordinances of God in the time of the law will be found, in their *materials*, to have been very homely, such as had to do with the commonest transactions of human life; and yet, in their *meaning*, to have disclosed or shadowed forth the deepest mysteries of Christ. For instance, the ordinance of the servant with the bored ear. The material there was the common matter of hiring a domestic—a thing, we will all allow, of the most homely nature; and yet in it was involved, and through it was shown forth, the mystery of the riches of the grace of Christ.

So, in the scripture I am now looking at. The subject or material is the sale and purchase of land, the price at which such bargains were to be regulated, and the term of years for which such transfers of property were to continue. But the truths conveyed through this ordinance are some of the profoundest and most interesting parts of the ways of God. This quality in divine institutions only sets them off to greater admiration. While conveying to the soul the knowledge of Christ, the more homely they are in their materials the more serviceable they must be to us, and the more welcomed they ought to be by us. We should afresh honour the skill of the Master who can teach so profoundly with such a book. And we have in these things a beautiful illustration of that truth, "To the poor the gospel is preached."

The divine ceremonies are not ceremonies, if I may so speak. They are ceremonies as being the due ways of the house. But they are not stiff and stately. They do not keep us

at a distance, or require some special occasions for their display. The disciple learns them, and the worshipper observes them, in the midst of family or social life.

Among these institutions or divine ordinances, I would now look a little more particularly at that enacted in Lev. xxv. The great principles of the whole chapter will be found, I believe, in this portion of it; and therefore I look only at so much of it, *i.e.*, the first twenty-five verses.

First, there is the principle of *earnest*, a well-known principle, I may say, in the acts of God with us. The grapes of Eshcol were the earnest of Canaan to the camp of Israel, while still in the wilderness or on the way. The Holy Ghost is now the earnest of the inheritance in the saint, travelling on through this present evil world, to "the rest that remaineth." And the sabbath of the land, enacted in this scripture, was the earnest of the Jubilee, while the term of forty-nine years, the age of the confusion and disorder of man's way, was still existing. It was a bunch of the fruit of the year of Jubilee, brought into the midst of the wilderness again. This sabbath did not do the business of the year of Jubilee, but still it savoured of it; it did not anticipate it, but it witnessed it (see v. 1-7).

In the next place, we find the principles of *redemption by purchase*, and *redemption by strength*, in this scripture; and the gap or interval which lies between the seasons of these two actions of the Christ of God, is likewise beautifully intimated.

The kinsman, according to this ordinance, was to redeem the sold possession, by paying the proper price of it to the stranger who had purchased it. This was to be done during the forty-nine years, the age of misrule and confusion, "man's day," as scripture would call it. But then also, in due season, or in the fiftieth year, the Jubilee would, by its own virtue, restore every such sold possession, and also every sold Israelite, to that place in the land and among the people, appointed by the lord of the land and the people at the beginning. Every man was then to return to his family and to his possession. God's order, for forty-nine years disturbed by man's traffic, was then to be asserted and exhibited again.

These are some of the deep purposes of God

in Christ. Paul speaks of "the *earnest* of the inheritance, till the redemption of the *purchased* possession" (Eph. i.); thus disclosing the very principles we discover in this beautiful ordinance, as we have seen; the earnest, the purchase, the full redemption or restoration, and the necessary interval between the purchase and the redemption. As again, in Rom. viii.; for there he speaks of "the first-fruits of the Spirit" in the saints, while they wait for "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." *

And what (I pause for a moment to ask) is the living power of such mysteries in our own souls? *Peace* and *hope* dwelling there together with the *enjoyment* of the *Spirit's presence*; the peace which the accomplished purchase by blood speaks, the hope which the approaching Jubilee or full redemption inspires, and the consolation of the indwelling Spirit, who is the seal of the accomplished peace, and the earnest of the expected inheritance. When peace and hope thus dwell together in the soul, and the indwelling Spirit is enjoyed, we do, in living experiences, understand the mysteries of this beautiful scripture.

Further, however, still. This ordinance tells us, that the Lord God, if I may so express myself, will not allow man to have the *last* word, or to take *eternity* into his hand, and dispose of it as he pleases. Man has a term of years granted him, in which it is left in his power to disturb God's order. But that license is limited. It continues, as we have seen, only for forty-nine years. But "the land shall not be sold for ever," says the Lord; "the land is Mine" (ver. 23). In the fiftieth year, the Lord will assert His right, and restore all things, according to His own mind. A time of "refreshing" that will be, a time for "the restoration of all things" (Acts iii. 19-21).

What a bright and happy truth thus shines in this verse of our chapter! "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," is the lofty proclamation of the 24th Psalm, and also of this ordinance. The voice of this ordinance thus joins in concert with other words of the same Spirit. And I may again say, what

bright and happy truth thus shines through this ordinance touching such a common matter as the buying and selling of land! No material or subject, I may also again say, could be more *homely*, no mysteries more *profound and blessed*? We cannot but admire the wisdom which *thus* teaches; which finds, as people have aptly said, "sermons in stones, and words in the running brooks"; which leaves the memorial of the Lord and His counsels in the midst of the occasions and circumstances of every-day life.

But further still. There are moral *admonitions* and principles of godly conduct here, as well as deep and precious mysteries. The Jew was taught by this ordinance to measure the value of his worldly possessions, by the year of Jubilee; for his sales and purchases were to be appreciated by either the distance or nearness of that season. All his trading or worldly business, therefore, of necessity reminded him of the fiftieth year, or God's approaching kingdom. All his traffic in the land measured for him how near or how distant that season was.

What a consecration of all the business of life was this! what a constant sense of God did this maintain in the hearts of the children of Israel! Just as the Spirit, through the Apostle, seeks to maintain the same in us, saying, "The time is short: it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoice not, and they that buy as though they possessed not."

But I must speak still once more. This beautiful scripture exhibits the *encouragements* of the Lord *in* obedience, as well as the *commandments* of the Lord *to* it. For the Israelites are here animated in the observance of the sabbath of the land by a promise of great increase every sixth year.

How lovely this is, as well as all the rest; and how significant of another well-known way of the Lord; for to this hour, in our own dispensation, encouragements of the highest character are given to the obedience of the saints. To those who keep His words, the Lord says, "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

* The trumpet of the Jubilee was sounded on the day of atonement, to signify that the rest and the kingdom and the glory, yea, everything of blessing depends on the blood-shedding or sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

STAND FAST.

IN
THE
FAITH.
Cor. xvi.
ver. 13.

IN
THE
LIBERTY.
Gal. v.
ver. 1.

IN
ONE
SPIRIT.
Phil. i.
ver. 27.

IN
THE
LORD.
Phil. iv.
ver. 1.

Limerick.

Watching unto the coming day
When Christ shall take His saints away ;
Quitting yourselves like men that see,
Be strong and full of charity ;
Until ye reach fair Zion's land,
Stand fast, stand fast, my brethren, stand.

Sons of the free, no longer bound,
Children of grace, in Jesus found ;
Loosed from the rankling chains of sin,
Redeemed and sanctified—made clean ;
Until ye reach fair Zion's land,
Stand fast, stand fast, my brethren, stand.

Ye citizens, in godly fear,
And as becomes Christ's gospel here ;
O let your citizenship be,
Strive for the faith in unity ;
Until ye reach fair Zion's land,
Stand fast, stand fast, my brethren, stand.

Dearly beloved and longed-for saints
'Tis he who doth not watch who faints ;
And they who do not love the Word,
Can ne'er stand fast in Christ the Lord ;
The time is short, He is at hand,
Stand fast, stand fast, my brethren, stand.

WILFRID M'CLURE.

A VOICE FROM AFAR.

Extracts from a letter of an aged antipodal pilgrim to a fellow-believer in the United Kingdom.

I RESUME my pen to communrune a little with you, for you are almost the sole remaining link that connects one with fifty years ago. When I transfer thought to paper, photos of the far-off past revive upon memory's tablet, and scenes and episodes, long dormant and forgotten, rise in vivid distinctness and panoramic reality. But as these begin to disappear in the advancing decay of old age, instinctively we gaze into the future, we "think of the home over there," the gathering place, the domestic hearth of the heavenly family, the heirs of glory. Earth's heritage doth but bring us woe, "vanity, vexation of spirit." We yearn for perpetuated rest and peace, for fellowship and heart's communion, for the reciprocation of unalloyed affection, for an existence of uninterrupted beatitude, ever intensifying, ever deepening, ever expanding in its apprehension and enjoyment of infinite love and glory. Could we but become truly crucified to fallen SELF, how would Spirit-risen SELF dilate and triumph even in this "the house of our pilgrimage," in

anticipation of the "eternal weight of glory" about to be revealed in us.

We have passed the limit of the threescore years and ten, and may any day be called home to join "those that have gone before." And when death has come, and interchange of thought has ceased, how pleasant for the survivor to retrace the outflowings of soul of one dearly loved and esteemed when in flesh ! Each one gathered is another link to the unseen. The older we get the more sensibly is this impressed upon us, and memory's effort is to reproduce the past, and to dwell upon its brighter spots.

Sympathy and association are the basis of time-life happiness, and will be absolutely so of the eternal life. The herd of toiling, sweating, suffering, restless mankind, stimulated by the vain hope of hastening a speedy emancipation from the physical and social ills weighing upon them, are yearning for *communism*, that is, for sympathy and association, and will attempt ere awhile to introduce and compel it. But the attempt, even if successful, must of necessity fail of anticipated result because of the moral depravity of human nature. Unselfish mutual co-operation is impossible until the Lord Jesus, in the setting up of the millennial kingdom, reconstitutes things—moral, social, and political. *His* will be a reign of righteousness ; oppression and war will have ceased ; peace and goodwill will be universal ; every one may then "sit under his own vine and fig tree, none making him afraid." But beyond the limit of time, far and away, in the beatified existence of "the new heaven and the new earth," selfishness will have no place. Every creature and every thing, then instinct with divine life and love ; self, as now known, will be known no more. Heaven and earth, animate and inanimate, will then be in harmony with Deity, "God all in all," and glorified humanity, as exemplified in the perfected "One Body," will realise to the full the accomplishment of the petition offered by the Lord Jesus, in the days of His flesh, to *His* Father and *our* Father—"As Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one" (John xvii. 21, 23). All will then be of one heart, one mind, one will, one volition. As the Lord Jesus had no will of His own, when

upon earth—"man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," "not My will but Thine be done"—so will it be in the consummated beatitude of believers' existence, because spirit, soul, body, corporately and individually, inspired, instinct, filled, with God.

Time-life is the discipline, the trainage for the eternal life, soon to be manifested. We acquire the *basis* of our everlasting character whilst pilgrims and strangers in the wilderness of time. Salvation unto Christ in glory is common to all believers, but no two in the resurrected, glorified state will be identical. As the stars, though generically alike, exhibit to human vision phases and characteristics differing in degree more or less, so, may it not be, with the glorified saints. They will all radiate or reflex the glory of the Christ, as He was and is the effulgence of the Father's glory, the expression of His character. There will be a universal homogeneity, for "God shall be all in all."

It is indeed comforting and exhilarating in spirit to contemplate an illimitable future of so entrancing a nature. It fills up "the aching void" within, and satiates one's every desire, one's deepest longing, one's highest aspiration.

What an age of research, investigation, scientific analysis, criticism, and discovery we live in! All leading to one and the self-same point, the culmination of human intellect in its revolt against all that is called God, or that is worshipped. The dictum of the prophetic psalm, in prospect of the coming crisis, is, "The fool"—man civilised, scientific, philosophic, as in the nineteenth century A.D.—"saith in his heart, *No God*"!!! Such the climax of "free thought," godless progress, unsanctified intellectual evolution, "hidden from the wise and prudent, but revealed to babes." "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Soon the hour will strike, when principles inherent in fallen human nature, but hidden in mystery down through the ages of the past, occult in the bosoms of the few, trained and energised to penetrate their *arcana*, will outflow and fascinate the masses, and be accepted by them. Then the anticipated universal emancipation from law or rule, political, social, and religious, will be openly *préached*, communism

and anarchy will be in the ascendant. But, as at the great French Revolution of 1789-1793, the acknowledgment and worship of the God of the Bible will be forbidden. "The mark of the beast, 666," whatever it may signify, must be impressed and borne. The alternative will be that or death!

The object of Satan, from the first, has been to identify God's creature, *man*, with himself, to secure his voluntary obedience by depraving his mind and affection, filling him with dread and hate of his Creator. Man, as influenced and possessed by demons, has lived from generation to generation in hostility and antagonism to God.

The prophetic utterance of Elohim to Satan, "The seed of the woman shall bruise *thy* head," intimated an incarnation of Deity. Satan seems to have so understood it, and he set himself at once to simulate and forestall this event. He so corrupted the antediluvians, that in righteous judgment God had to sweep them all away by the Deluge. After the Flood, from the days of Nimrod down to the "fulness of the time," the epoch fixed in the counsels of the Godhead, that the Logos should become flesh and "tabernacle among men, full of grace and truth," Satan originated, elaborated, and set up all the various civilisations and systems of idolatry, founded upon traditional legends of the judgments, words, and acts of the Almighty, as now found revealed and recorded in the books of the Old Testament. But all were based upon the fact of a divine incarnation, "begotten out of God"! Satan, the astute and wily Serpent, desired to forestall the revealed purpose of God, and thereby divert the expectation of the sons of men as founded upon "Thus saith Jehovah." He succeeded. Mankind believed the lie, the falsity; and the knowledge of the true God, the Elohim of promise and of faithfulness, was obliterated from their minds. They did not like to retain God in full knowledge—*epignōsei*. God delivered them up unto a reprobate mind—*adokimon*. Man became materialised, sensual, corrupt, and sank deeper and deeper in the corruption of sensuous superstition, until "God sent forth His Son, begotten out of a woman,"—"God manifest in flesh."

Satan, foiled in his persistent effort to seduce Jesus from His allegiance to His Father, as a last resource compassed His death, and for one Levitical Sabbath there was sorrow and disappointment among the heart-stricken disciples in Jerusalem; silence and expectant hush amid the "ten thousand times ten thousand" of the heavenly host, but exultation and triumph on the part of Diabolus and his legions of demons. All "was still as death," until the moment came for "life and immortality to be brought to light" in resurrection at the earliest dawn of the first day of the week. Then life came forth, as of right, out of death. "He is not here; He is risen." "Why seek ye the living One among the dead?" And this testimony was emphasised by the ascended Lord Himself to the "beloved disciple, an exile in the tribulation and endurance in Jesus in the isle that is called Patmos"—"I am the First and the Last, and the living One; and I became dead," and, behold, I am living into the ages of the ages, and I have the keys of death and of hades" (Rev. i. 17, 18). At the earliest dawn of the first of the week, the eighth or octave of the series, during which Everlasting Redemption was being accomplished, the tables were turned, Diabolus had outwitted himself. In carrying out his fell purpose, he had but accomplished the pre-determined and eternal purpose of the Godhead in the Christ, Jesus our Lord (Eph. iii. 11), who in His death sealed atonement for transgression, "put away sin" by the voluntary sacrifice of Himself, suffered the just on account of the unjust, so that the holy God might be just whilst justifying the believing sinner.

In resurrection, "life and immortality were brought to light," and Jesus, Son of God, Son of Man, the risen Christ, could emphatically declare, "All authority has been given Me in heaven and upon earth"; "Go, tell My brethren, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, My God and your God." He ascended, and sat down on, or in, the right hand of God, the expectant "Heir of all things," "crowned with glory and honour," "angels, principalities, and powers being subjected to Him." As Head over all to His Church—albeit "despised and rejected of men"—He now patiently waits for the hour to strike for all things to be

manifestly put under His feet, to "come again" in power and great glory, to put down all rule and all authority antagonistic to Himself, to bruise the serpent's head and destroy the works of the Devil, and subdue all things unto Himself. Then will He reign with absolute autocratic authority in His millennial kingdom of universal righteousness and blessing.

But even this, the pre-determined purpose of God, Satan will attempt to forestall and frustrate by raising up at the close of "the times of the Gentiles," "the Antichrist," the devil's counterpart, the exponent of man's lawlessness and wilfulness; for "he will exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped." This will bring on the final crisis, the last overwhelming judgments will be outpoured, the issue of the conflict has been revealed in the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament Apocalypse.

To this crisis all things now tend. Subtlety in philosophy, in science, in rationalism, in criticism, in relation to "the Scriptures of truth," is bewildering the minds of so-called "religious people," and is drifting them down the current of popular opinion to the vortex of the confusion and anarchy of universal agnosticism and communism. The world, notwithstanding advancing education and civilisation, is becoming more and more astutely diabolical. The energy and tremendous force of intellect, or the brain-power of "The Evil One," operating upon and through human pride, ambition, and aspiration, is begetting in the masses an insatiable desire for unrestricted liberty of action, emancipation from all control, freedom to follow out, as the only rule of life, the instincts of their own self-will. This may not be obvious to many of God's children, even among the thinking and more earnest, much less will it be to the worldly, the thoughtless, the pleasure-seeking, the disbelieving mass of mankind. These live for to-day, they heed not the morrow. Beyond the present naught have they, "God is not in all their thoughts." Self is the centre *around* which, the pivot *upon* which, they revolve. Self-gratification is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending of the unregenerate. It behoves those "taught of God," able to "compare spiritual things with

spiritual," those whom God hath "set as watchmen," to "blow the trumpet in Zion and to sound an alarm in His holy mount," "to lift up the voice to cry aloud to spare not," that those "at ease in Zion"—like Lot sitting in the gate, whilst judgment impended, heedless and ignorant—may be aroused from their torpor, quickened in spirit, and be enabled to come out from the midst of the modern Babel of religious, sectarian confusion, to bear the reproach of Christ, bear the cross after Him, "count it all joy" if they be reproached in the name of Christ. "Happy they in so doing for the Spirit of the glory and of God would rest upon them."

W. R. V.

THE HAPPY MAN.

HE is the happy man who can take things as they come, and deal with each of them as sent by God (through whatever channel) for his good and God's glory. But one may say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Not one! Our sufficiency is not of ourselves, but of God.

What are God's means to such an end? I ask first, Are you built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus? Well. If so, the hard heart has been put into the furnace of God's love, and the love of Christ. There now remains this to be done, and to which the Spirit of God leads and guides, namely, *to regard the pattern, Jesus Christ, in prayerful meditation of Him, through the Word.* Melted metal is conformed to the mould into which it is cast. He whose heart is melted, and is still being more and more melted, by the love of God and Christ (as he is led by the Spirit to contemplate the Word which records the sufferings and glory of Jesus), is prepared for practical conformity to Him, desires it, and therefore he searches through the Scriptures *to mark the ways of Christ*, and sees there how He received persons and things, and how He dealt with them *as they came*. Jesus appeared, as it were, to put Himself out of surrounding circumstances, dwelling *above* them, and thus cared only for the glory of God and the good of those whom He came to seek, to save, and to bless. He could bear "the contradiction of sinners against Himself," as one *deeply affected* by everyone's ways. Man needed to be taught better than he knew; so

Jesus availed Himself of the evil manners of men, and put His own by the side of such, that the contrast might be seen. Man's hard heart is only melted by the power of Christ's love, and his ways are only to be moulded by being cast into His heavenly pattern. The Spirit of God, through the Word, performs His gracious office, testifying of Christ to the soul.

He, the Spirit of truth, takes of that which is Christ's and shows it to us—presents the heavenly lesson, and enables us to learn it; so that, by the power of God, which worketh in us, we receive persons as they are, and take things as they come, dealing with all as sent from God, for His glory and our blessing. May we all be so instructed, moulded, and worked in by the Spirit, as to have such an understanding of our Father's will, together with the power to obey, that all our actions and words may show that Self is out of sight, and Wisdom before us; while we prove that "her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

PETER AND JOHN.

PETER drew the sword in defence of his Master, and cut off the foe's ear, not apprehending "the kingdom," but he could get no farther than the door of the palace; John drew no sword, but went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. Peter stood outside with the servants and officers, warming himself at the fire, when "that other disciple" was *confessing* Jesus before the high priest in the palace, and in the judgment hall before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. Peter could strike the foe, but not confess Jesus; he could not, like John, stand by his Master in His accusations, His insults, His scourging, His buffeting, spitting, and shame; he could not, like John, follow Jesus to His cross, bearing His reproach. John identified himself with his rejected Lord, and so confessed Him; Peter could not do this. So it is now. Fleshy energy will not serve us in the hour of testimony; the eye of faith and the heart of love alone will give us courage to stand by our Lord in His rejection now. Thousands, like Peter, would wield the sword in the name of Christ, but would they *confess* Him like John? We may judge ourselves by these things.

MEDITATION.

HAVE you ever thought much of the exercise of *meditation*, and how frequently it is spoken of in Scripture? Perhaps it may be from the want of this holy exercise and really comprehending it, that the Church of God is wanting in unity of doctrine and in spirituality of mind. The *study* of God's Word may be concentrated, deep, constant, like searching for a vein of gold, and *memory* may marvellously retain and bring forth what *study* has discovered. But *meditation* is not the discovery of more or of new things, but a calm sitting down with God to *enrich* itself with what *study* has discovered, and feeding with Him upon the stores which *memory* has laid up.

Study and *memory* make the ready and admired speaker; *meditation* the sweet living exhibition of Jesus everywhere, whether speaking or silent (Josh. i. 8, Ps. civ. 34, cxix. 15). The former hunts for something new when weary of the old; the latter finds renewed life, strength, and refreshment from the old, which are never old to *meditation*. Truths from an infinite, all-wise God have in them more than the best meditative faculty has ever, or can ever digest.

The Lord unfold to thee and me some of His own rich stores. They are so deep. But I am only at the surface of them. They are "our inheritance, and shall be for ever."

WORKING AND WAITING.

We are most earnestly engaged in watching for the coming of the Lord, when every moment as it passes bears up to the throne a record of faithful service.

"With gentle swiftness lead me on,
My God, to see Thy face;
And meanwhile in my narrow heart
Make for Thyself more space."

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers. Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being short; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be concise.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Is it right for a believer to join a trade's union? Please explain Heb. x. 29.

What is the distinctive meaning of the words, "wisdom," "knowledge," "understanding," so frequently used in the Book of Proverbs?

ATONEMENT WITHOUT BLOOD.

QUESTION 412.—What is the teaching of Lev. v. 11-13, where it appears sin is forgiven on the ground of atonement without blood? How is this reconcilable with Heb. ix. 22—"Without shedding of blood is no remission"?

Ans. A.—It cannot be said that sin is here forgiven on the ground of atonement without blood, for a lamb or a turtle-dove was to be offered; and only when the sinner could not afford either could an "ephah of fine flour" be accepted. Here we learn two things: firstly, a beautiful testimony to the truth that poverty shuts out none; and, secondly, that as the blood of bulls and goats could not really "take away sins" any more than "fine flour" could, therefore God could accept either, as pointing to the "one offering" of Christ, without any divergence from the truth that "without shedding of blood is no remission." This truth is made good at the Cross of Christ, and there only; all else were types and shadows. The "fine flour" could have no sign of joy or worship attached to it, no "oil or frankincense"; it must be ground only, like a victim slain.

Ans. B.—It is the *altar* of verse 12 that sanctifies the gift, the fire of which was ever burning, and on which this small offering (allowed because of the offerer's poverty) was placed. It may signify a feeble apprehension on the part of the offerer, but no offering for sin or trespass is ever accepted save on the altar of burnt-offering, or, in other words, for Christ's sake.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—The Israelites, whether poor or rich, had to provide the various sacrifices or offerings. The case that is referred to in Lev. v. 11 is that of one who was too poor to procure even "two young pigeons." In such a case the Lord prescribed a special "sin-offering." "But if his means suffice not for two turtle doves or two young pigeons, then he shall bring his oblation for that wherein he hath sinned, the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin-offering: he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon; for it is a sin-offering." And again, "It is a sin-offering, and the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven" (R.V.). The point to be noticed is that, quite irrespective of anything apparently to the contrary, and of our orthodox ideas of such things, the Lord prescribed a special offering to meet a special case, and put the matter quite beyond doubt and uncertainty by three times saying "it is a sin-offering." It was a sacrificial "rite"—a poor man's typical offering—not the great and solemn truth that is presented and explained in Heb. ix.

Notice the gradation or descending value of the offerings to meet the "means" of the offerer—"a lamb, or a goat, or two turtle doves, or two young pigeons; but if his means suffice not for these, the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour."

L. D. G.

Editor's Note.—It is hardly possible to read Heb. ix. 22, and the context, without admitting that the reference is to the Levitical offerings and not the mere statement of an abstract truth.

We should therefore not expect to find among the Levitical offerings a sin-offering in which there is no “shedding of blood.”

But it must be borne in mind that though the Levitical types are marvellously perfect they are not in all points “*the very image* of the things signified.” There are contrasts as well as similitudes. For example, the high priest having to offer “first for his own sins and then for the people's” (Heb. vii. 2).

The poverty of the offerer demanded a provision that was “not the very image” of the great sin-offering.

Nevertheless, there was that which typified *death*, viz., the grinding of the flour and the burning upon the altar. And it must never be forgotten that the altar was perpetually covered with blood. It was emphatically the place of death for sin, and as such told out continually the truth that remission of sins could not be without the shedding of blood.

MARRYING THE UNGODLY.

QUESTION 413.—If one in fellowship marries an ungodly person, how ought such a case to be dealt with?

Ans.—We approach this question with much delicacy, believing that before a righteous judgment can be formed a full knowledge of the person and circumstances is necessary. Every form of unequal yoking is hateful to God, but God would have us regulate our treatment of persons entering such yokes by the knowledge of His will they possess, “and of some have compassion, making a difference” (Jude 22). The person may be a young believer who had formed an attachment long before conversion and entered this yoke not knowing God's mind upon the matter. To such an one all grace and tenderness should be shown. But the person may be a believer of long standing, who knew God's mind upon the matter, and although faithfully warned by those who “watch for souls,” yet, in the pride and stubbornness of his fleshly will, enters a yoke that God has forbidden. Towards such an one we would alter our behaviour. But though these two cases differ so widely, *neither of them call for putting away from the assembly*. I fear we have failed to distinguish between discipline *external* and discipline *internal*. In 1 Cor. v. we have discipline *external*—“Put away from among yourselves that wicked person”; while in 2 Thess. iii. 6 we have *internal* discipline—“Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.” In the one case we have *put away*, while in the other we have *withdraw yourselves*, which does not mean that we are to divide and rent another hall, call ourselves *the Church of God*, and slander our brethren; but it means this, that while the disorderly person is still recognised as of the fellowship, we “note that man, and keep no company with him [we do not choose him for a companion (Ps. cxix. 63)], that he may be ashamed” (2 Thess. iii. 14), still seeking grace from God to “count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thess. iii. 15). We firmly believe that marriage with an ungodly person, unscriptural

though it be, can not be called anything more than disorderly walk, and should be dealt with accordingly.

Editor's Note.—Union between the living and the dead is dreadful to contemplate; and, being so distinctly forbidden in Scripture, if knowingly, and deliberately entered into it forms a grave offence and may not be lightly regarded.

At the same time there must be no overstepping of the Word of God in discipline. The sufficiency of the Scriptures demands that the Divine instructions be not overstepped, just as the authority of the Scriptures demands that they be fully observed.

We know of no command to *put away from among ourselves* such persons. But there is abundant instruction to rebuke and warn and also to avoid and refuse to countenance such unscriptural conduct.

Those who care for souls will not fail to endeavour to reach the conscience of such, and the assembly will pray for them that the erring believer may be restored and the unbelieving one saved.

Our most gracious and compassionate God and Father has often answered such prayer, though generally not until it had been proved by bitter experience that the way of transgressors is hard.

But it will be found that loving and faithful dealing will bring out the true condition of soul. In many cases there is a proud unbroken will, and faithful dealing is resented. Very often the assembly is finally forsaken for some denomination where such evils are condoned. In other cases brokenness of heart is manifested, although from the nature of the relationship what is done cannot be undone.

“GONE OUT.”

QUESTION 414.—In 1 John ii. 19 are those referred to as having “gone out,” Christians or Antichristians?

Ans. A.—Antichristians, surely. They had been in outward fellowship, but in heart and principle never been of the real flock of Christ. They were “not of us” is the writing of the Spirit.

A. O. M.

Ans. B.—The text clearly says that “they were not all of us.” Some were Christians, some were not. The disseminators of false doctrines, who had once been in the assemblies, but were not in Christ, had doubtless on leaving drawn many sincere souls away with them.

J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—That such a question as this should ever be asked is significant, for in all probability it has been prompted by teaching that applied the words to believers who have withdrawn from an assembly through pressure of trial, reproach, and difficulty, under which their faith and patience gave way.

It is sad when such backsliding takes place, and possibly shows that the truth of separation unto the Name of the Lord had never been really learned. Too often there is an element of human attraction, and when this fails, and difficulties arise, there is a going back to what had been left. But it is a sin and a shame to apply to such a word like this, which has no bearing whatever upon true Christians. The whole context makes this perfectly plain to the unbiased reader. Those who went out were doubtless the same sort as those who, according to Jude, “crept in unawares.”

GIDEON;
or, The Days of Spiritual Famine.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."

IN that remarkable list given in the New Testament of witnesses to the power of faith, the name of Gideon finds honourable mention. Let us look upon this man from the same point of view from which he is regarded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, viz., as an example of faith.

The book of Judges tells a sad history of the sin and failure of God's ancient people Israel.

We are told that Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel; but, as soon as that generation were gathered to their fathers, and there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done, then we find the enemy coming in as a flood, for the children of Israel forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

The people failed to exterminate the enemy, and to possess themselves of the land which God had given them. They got tired of fighting with their numerous foes, and forsook Gilgal, the place of power and victory, for Bochim, the place of weeping and defeat.

Israel came to terms with the enemy, and, settling down upon their lees, soon fell an easy prey to the heathenish customs and idolatries of the nations by whom they were surrounded. For this cause they were chastened by the Lord, who used the foe in the land as a rod in His hands, by which to work repentance in the hearts of his people.

We find a very grievous state of things mentioned in the sixth chapter of Judges. Israel had done evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord had delivered them into the hands of Midian seven years. The consequence was that the Midianites were joined by others, the Amalekites and the children of the East, who together formed such a vast host that they were without number; like grasshoppers for multitude, they entered into the land to destroy it.

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The increase of the earth was consumed, and no sustenance left for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor goat.

Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and in imminent danger of starvation; then they cried unto the Lord. The Lord in infinite mercy hears the cry of His distressed people and comes down to deliver them.

When Gideon, the son of Joash is introduced to our view, his faith is at once seen in his works. We are conscious that a mighty man of valour stands before us.

His faith is boldly outlined by the dark background that fills up the picture. He threshes wheat behind the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. What cares he for the foe who would rob the people of God of their food? He means having his own portion—the food of the land which his God had given him, and so, in the invincible power of a living faith, he appropriates that which he may justly claim.

I would pause here, and ask, have we not something in the present day which answers to this dark page in the history of God's earthly people? Has not the Church left her first love? Has she not as God's witness on earth, the pillar and ground of the truth, failed most ignominiously?

Does she still retain the freshness of Pentecostal days, when all that believed were together, and continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers? So long as the apostles remained, or during the lifetime of the elders who immediately succeeded them, the church retained much of her pristine beauty and power; but, immediately after their departure, declension and failure set in.

Both Peter and Jude, in their epistles, speak of apostacy from the faith once delivered to the saints, and the former apostle alludes to the solemn fact that judgment must begin at the house of God. In the twentieth chapter of Acts, when the apostle Paul takes farewell of the elders of the Ephesian Church, he, speaking with prophetic foresight, warns them against the double attack which threatened the church of God. Not only was there danger to be expected from the enemy outside, the grievous wolves who sought to enter in among them not

sparing the flock ; but, said he, "also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." There was the inside foe to be heeded : i.e., leaven, or false doctrine, in their very midst. We live in a day in which this evil has developed considerably, and has become nearly full-blown—evil men and seducers are worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Satan is transformed into an angel of light. Sin is tolerated when it appears in a religious guise. The professing Church has formed an unholy alliance with the world, and God has in result allowed her to become shorn of her strength, and she now presents the pitiful spectacle of Sampson with his eyes put out down amongst the Philistines, the laughing-stock of his captors. What is that against which the enemy has ever levelled his attacks? The Word of God. Alas! the foe in the land has succeeded only too well in robbing the Church of God's food for His people—that priceless legacy our God has left us—that unerring chart for the wilderness journey—God's light for our path, and His lamp to our feet.

What, I would ask, is faith's resource for present day evil and spiritual famine? To what were the Ephesian elders commended, in view of the dark tide of evil, approaching rapidly, and soon to come in as a flood? Not, surely, to a long line of fallible men vainly claiming to be apostolic successors, but simply to the infallible God, and to His immutable Word—the Word of His grace which is able to build them up and to give them an inheritance among them which are sanctified.

Such, then, is faith's unfailing resource even in the darkest moment of the Church's history—the living God, and the written Word.

Dear Christian friend, I would ask, are you following Gideon's faith? The Midianites are in the land. Wolves in sheep's clothing abound. Christian pulpits are filled with such men. Though working in different ways, the result is the same—God's people are robbed of their proper food. By these false teachers the saints are starved, for the Word of God and its precious truths are made of none effect by their criticisms and interpretations.

Gideon threshed wheat behind the wine-press to hide it from the Midianites. Go thou

and do likewise. Thresh out your own wheat. Avail yourself of what is yours ; of that which God has in grace given to His people for their strength and sustenance while here below. God's almighty power has been put forth on our behalf. He has not only brought us out of Egypt, but He has also brought us into the land ; not only saved us from our sins, but blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ ; and given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

Let us then not submit to be robbed of our heritage, but, adding virtuous courage to our faith, seek to appropriate "all the Word of God" not only for ourselves, but also "for all the people of God."

R. M. H.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

IT is of the utmost importance that in the coming together of the Church for the celebration of the holy fellowship of the Lord's Supper, the *purpose* of this service should ever be kept in its proper prominence.

This is indeed a principle applicable to every meeting, of whatever kind, that until the fixed purpose in view has been disposed of other matters should not be allowed to occupy its attention. Now let us inquire what was the fixed purpose in view when the disciples at Troas came together on the first day of the week (Acts xx. 7). For in ascertaining the purpose we shall be enabled to determine the purpose of all similar gatherings to this hour.

The words at the head of this paper supply the answer. On the night of the institution of the Lord's Supper its purpose was set forth by the lips of its founder Himself—"This do IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME" (Luke xxii. 19).

Mainly, then, it is a service of loving remembrance of our Lord. It is an act of worship. But it is more. The very form of the institution has great significance. "As often," saith the Spirit, "as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show THE LORD'S DEATH till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26). In which passage is indicated the perpetual application all down the age of the Lord's own words of dedication.

"This is My body which is given for you."

"This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Is it not evident, then, that the purpose of the service is the loving and grateful adoration of the Lord Jesus Christ in connection with His death, by which we have received the remission of our sins?

We have, in fact, the most sure guidance of the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ our Lord, and show them to us, as to the subjects which ought to occupy our hearts and minds on such occasion to the exclusion of all others. We are not left to any human aids for guidance. Scripture, our Lord's own word, fixes the direction in which alone on such occasions the Spirit leads the worship of the Church.

There are, it is true, in Scripture, many glorious and profound themes for study, ministry, and praise, with all of which it is both profitable and necessary that the Church of God should be occupied; but in the "breaking of bread" the Lord's death is the one subject that the Spirit of God sets before us. Is not, then, a departure from this to the consideration of other subjects necessarily a departure from the leading of the Spirit?

If, therefore, any brother have upon his heart that which would not tend to lead the thoughts to the Lord Jesus Christ and His precious blood-shedding, will he not feel it advisable to reserve the expression of it till the breaking of bread have been concluded, or till some other or more fitting occasion? "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

In the same way as to hymns; the leading of the Spirit will direct us at the celebration of the Lord's Supper to those hymns which are suitable to that special occasion. Many of the most beautiful and favourite hymns relate to personal experiences, to the position and glory of the Christian, to wilderness troubles, or to the soul's first apprehension of salvation, and have no reference to the purpose for which the meeting to commemorate the Lord's death has come together.

All such ought, therefore, to be reserved for other occasions, otherwise the mind of the assembly is distracted; and those who have come burdened with the earnest and absorbing purpose of remembering and showing

the Lord's death are hurt and wounded in spirit. Nay, the more beautiful the hymn be, the more needful and soul-stirring the word of teaching or exhortation, the more earnest and spiritual the prayer, the more does the intelligent worshipper feel the interruption, and desire that such absorbing exercises had not been introduced at a time when every help is needed to keep the attention fixed upon the special object of the meeting.

It may be objected by some that by this practice the subjects would become very limited and the meetings monotonous; but to these I say, Can such a subject ever be exhausted? If the souls of all are living in communion with the Lord, will there ever be a want of freshness, life, and interest in the simple remembrance of His death? The wisdom and foreknowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ is displayed in that He should have ordained a perpetual remembrance of that wondrous scene till He come again, for we are naturally very forgetful of the cross. There is nothing from which Satan desires more to turn our thoughts away, because it is the foundation of the faith. It is the key-stone to the whole edifice and superstructure of our religion. It is the entrance to all spiritual blessing, enjoyment, power, and peace. It is the fan in the hand of the Lord wherewith He kindles our affections afresh. Thence comes the loudest voice that speaks to us of the boundless love of Christ. By the cross we may master the flesh and live unto God. By the cross we are separated for ever from the world that crucified our Lord. By the cross God has triumphed over principalities and powers, made a show of them openly. There the darts of the enemy are quenched, and the Christian finds himself "more than conqueror through Him who loves him." And is it, then, to be wondered at that Satan seeks to occupy us with anything, rather than with the cross? And is it to be wondered at that the Lord Jesus should desire our continual remembrance of it "till He come" again? To those who live in the enjoyment of God, and in communion with the Son, this feast of remembrance can never become monotonous.

And here, for the sake of clearness, I would distinguish between the *object* of our worship, to which I have been referring, and the

ground of our worship. We commemorate the Lord's death from a standpoint of resurrection. Gathered on the first day of the week—the resurrection day (Acts xx. 7)—it is as a risen people that we worship. In fellowship with the risen Christ, and as risen with Him, and seated with Him in heavenly places, we look back to His death. From the light, as our position, we look back to darkness; from the place of triumph to the scene of the conflict; from the Canaan banks of Jordan, to its dark and swelling waves. It is quite true that it may be necessary at times to be reminded of the true platform from which we worship, yet, let us never allow ourselves to be occupied while round the Lord's table with, as it were, congratulating ourselves upon the greatness of our privileges, and the height and glory of our standing, while our blessed Lord is in the midst waiting to receive the grateful homage of our hearts, for the love and for the wondrous work by means of which we are what we are.

How is it, then, I would affectionately ask my brethren, that in very many of their meetings to commemorate the Lord's death other subjects are allowed to occupy their attention to the too great neglect of this?

What, I ask, is the present condition of things in many meetings? There is reference very often before the breaking of bread to our heavenly position, our future glory, our lofty privileges, our present trials, apart from any connection with the Lord's Supper. There are prayers about spiritual strength, about our walk before men, about the spread of the gospel, and the growth of believers. There are exhortations about behaviour (which, when they *follow* the breaking of bread, are never out of place), expositions of Scripture, teachings concerning prophecy, and chapters read having no relation to the subject. There are psalms read and hymns given out, which, though very good and beautiful, so far from being suitable to the occasion, sometimes contain not so much as a single allusion to the subject which has brought us together—and too often the breaking of bread, which, it is true, is still formally kept up, is either left to the end of the meeting, or, if I may say so, dragged in without any special reference to anything that is done or said before or after

it. Brethren seem to make the Lord's Supper the occasion for all kinds of mutual exhortation and spiritual exercises. The specialty of the occasion is overlooked, and the purpose is carried out only in name and form, while the heart and attention are otherwise engaged.

May I, then, affectionately suggest to my brethren, into whose hands this paper may fall, to consider the matter carefully, and to compare the general character of their meetings with the professed purpose for which they are gathered; and, if my description is in any respect true, I beg you in the Lord's Name to seek, by prayer and exhortation, to bring about a better state of things.

Let those brethren who are gifted to minister the word pause, before they rise to speak, and consider whether the thoughts they are about to express have relation to the remembrance to the dying love of Christ. Let the brethren who desire to praise consider, before they give out any hymn, whether it be one suitable to the Lord's table, and so also as to prayers and thanksgivings. Let the purpose of the gathering be kept prominently forward throughout, until the Supper has been partaken of.

If, then, there be upon the mind of any one weighty matter of any kind not relating to the object of the gathering, it may be advisable sometimes to communicate it after the Supper. But the writer's judgment is, that for such matters it were generally better to take another occasion. The recovery of the Lord's Supper from the place of neglect, non-observance, or observance at long intervals, into which it has fallen in Christendom at large, has led by a natural and, perhaps, inevitable oscillation, to the opposite error—the effort to make that weekly occasion serve for all kinds of spiritual edification, and all kinds of congregational exercises. The effort is disastrous in two directions—there is not time for much necessary teaching and exhortation, for intercessory prayers, and the devotional voice of the Church in its numerous and most various directions, and the Lord's Supper is, as has been shown, pushed into a corner.

A more scriptural arrangement would be that a portion of the Lord's day (as the most convenient in the week for this purpose) should be devoted to a meeting of believers

for praise, thanksgiving, prayer, and ministry of edification, by those gifted thereto. Also another portion of the day, as of old, to the commemoration of the Lord's death; or if, in order to leave room for the preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the children, it be found necessary to combine the two former meetings, let it be so, but always with the definitely marked termination of the one meeting, and commencement of the other, by which the evils here exposed may be avoided.

Here let me anticipate an objection, by saying that intelligent worshippers will never feel this all-important limitation of the direction of their thoughts to be a constraint. Let us ever speak out of the fulness of our hearts—only let us come to the Lord's Supper with our hearts so full of grateful remembrance of His dying love, that to turn from it to any other subject will seem to us out of place and inconsistent with the purpose for which we have assembled. It is true that the most scrupulously accurate and correct expressions are valueless in the sight of God, if they be not the utterance of the heart's fulness; and, therefore, let us diverge a thousand times over from the true line and definite purpose of such gatherings, all-important as this is to be observed, rather than return again to a formal correctness devoid of life, and a cold stereotype of orthodox principles devoid of spiritual power. For this last would be a greater evil than the first. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." But this is, when truly understood, a liberty not to depart from the subject which the Spirit sets before us, but to exercise our hearts in it, apart from the constraints and limitations by which all merely human worship is regulated.

We must distinguish between blind impulse in spiritual things and the leading of the Spirit. What we want is compared by the Lord to "rivers of living waters"; rivers sometimes fuller, sometimes less full it is true, but always flowing, and never swerving from that well-defined channel of truth that conducts to the deep ocean with which they are to be merged and become one.

The liberty of the Spirit, then, is not a license to speak as we like. It is always intelligent. It works with, and subject to, the

truth, and must not be presumed upon apart from the truth.

Let me not be understood to imply that before the breaking of bread, and worship in connection therewith, there must never be any preliminary occupation. It may be that gatherings will sometimes assemble, nay, it is certain that they often do so, in a condition quite unfit for immediately assuming the attitude of worship and the remembrance of Christ's death. Many will come in with their minds empty and inactive, and with wandering thoughts. Some, perhaps, will come in with a conscience defiled by over-much worldly concern during the week past, if not, as sometimes occurs, by positive sin; and thus, in either case, the tone of the whole meeting may be lowered by the low condition of some in it. "For, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." In all such cases there is but one course to be pursued, but one path in which the Spirit leads. Before worship can be proceeded with, there will be confession, prayer, and, possibly, ministry, in order to the restoration of communion with God and power for worship. Individuals will confess their faults silently between themselves and God. The assembly will confess aloud its low condition. In answer to prayer, communion will be restored, while, through the ministry or reading of God's Word, the minds of all will be recalled to and fixed upon the blessed subject for which they have assembled. This is an order, a channel of the Spirit's action to which the utmost attention should be given by those who would be intelligent worshippers in spirit and in truth. It is blessed when such preliminary exercises are not needed; but when they are, we must not attempt to disown the unhappy fact. In heaven there will be no need of them. There our hearts will be full to the overflow, and the uninterrupted song of praise our happy occupation. But, alas! how different is it now! Our empty hearts need constant filling; for worship supposes and requires a full and overflowing heart. Worship is the overflowing of the heart's fulness.

We must be careful, therefore, not to lower the Lord's Supper into a mere means of grace, though assuredly it is always this when spiritually observed. There is a great difference between coming to be reminded of the Lord's

DAVID.

death, and coming, as we ought to come, to spread a significant feast to His praise and glory. In the former case, the heart needs ministry, is empty, and cannot worship till it be filled; in the latter, the heart is full to overflowing, and its worship ascends, as the fragrance of sweet incense, to the Father's throne.

When, therefore, we come thus together, let us be sure to come in this spirit, not with the primary purpose of *getting* blessing, but of *giving* blessing, and honour, and glory, and praise to Him who loves us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

To this end may be suggested the advisability of the Lord's people devoting some time before the meeting to private reading and meditation upon their Lord's love, humiliation, sufferings, and death. Thus shall the hearts of all be prepared for immediately entering upon the blessed and holy occupation for which they have come together.

The neglect of this previous thought and meditation may, perhaps, account for much of that deadness and distraction of heart, of which many of us have often to complain.

I trust my brethren will receive what I have written with earnest consideration, and believe that it is intended in no spirit of censure, but in the humble desire to be the servant of the Church in ever so small a degree.

G. F. T.

"WHEREFORE DIDST THOU DOUBT?"

IT was a time of trouble, and my breast
Was filled with sorrow and with dark unrest;
My path was rough, nor could I see the way
That led to freedom and to brighter day.
The plans, so fondly made, were all o'erthrown,
And with their failure every hope seemed flown;
My faith grew weaker, and I lent an ear
To all that Satan told of doubt and fear.
And then, while all was dark, a ray of light
Shot through the gloom and broke upon my sight;
And I—unworthy I—was made to see
That He who died and rose still *lived for me*.
That God, who birds commanded and they took
Food to Elijah while at Kerith's brook;
Who made refreshing streams from rock to flow,
And widow's meal and oil no waste to show,
Still had the power, and could well supply
All help to those who simply would rely
On His strong arm, and in th' assurance rest
That He who knew their need could serve them best.

F. R.

MOSES is the great type of Christ as Prophet, Aaron as Priest, and David as King. As a Prophet Christ has fully revealed God. By Him as the Priest we now draw near to God. In Him we shall yet see rule after God's heart. Speaking broadly, we may say that our Lord was Prophet when on earth. He is now Priest, and in the age to come He will be King.

The Scriptures clearly intimate that David was a type of the One to come. In several passages it would appear that *the name of the type is given to the antitype* (see Isa. lv. 3-5; Jer. xxx. 4-11; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, &c.). These and kindred Scriptures await their fulfilment; ere long on this earth the *seed of Abraham* shall be ruled by their true David—the Shepherd-King—our Saviour and Lord.

Only as we see in David a type of Christ can many of the Psalms be understood. Penned by David, they yet give experiences and predict glories which can only be true in their fulness of Him who is at once "David's Son and David's Lord"—David's root, yet David's offspring.

For the purpose we now have in view, we may divide David's life into four periods:—

I. FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS PRIVATE ANOINTING. Like the most of God's worthies in all ages, he was of lowly origin. In a passage, which in the first place applies to David, and in a deeper sense to Christ, we hear Jehovah saying, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people" (Ps. lxxxix. 19). He was one of the people in his descent, and in training he was a simple shepherd lad. And the Christ of God was simply the reputed Son of Joseph and Mary, poor Galilean villagers. By comparing Luke ii 24 with Lev. xii. 8 we get a touching proof of the scanty means of the mother of Jesus. And in all Christ's training as a man on earth, from the manger to the Cross, He showed Himself as truly

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

Bethlehem (meaning *house of bread*) was David's city; and there the Christ, the true Bread from heaven, was born. The name David means *beloved*, reminding us of various

Scriptures which speak of the Redeemer as God's beloved Son.

But on these points we must not enlarge, but must hasten to the second period of his history, *viz.* —

II. FROM HIS ANOINTING TO HIS FLIGHT FROM SAUL. The first mention of David is in 1 Sam. xvi. In this chapter we have a simple yet graphic account of the private anointing at the hand of the prophet. For several hundred years Jehovah had been the invisible yet true "King in Jeshurun." But of His benign rule and special interpositions they had grown weary. The theocracy—the direct rule of God—no longer satisfied them; aspiring to be like the nations around, they clamoured for a king, thus directly rejecting God as their King (1 Sam. viii. 7). But this had been foreseen by God, for Moses had written as to the sort of king they were to have. But to this we may refer later.

Before they are fit to have the man of God's choice, they must be taught a bitter lesson from the king of their own choice. Whether as individuals or nations, the fact must be learnt that it is a hard and bitter thing to depart from God. In everything Saul was just the man they wished for, and God gives them their will. Centuries after Jehovah said, "I gave thee a king in Mine anger, and took him away in My wrath" (Hos. xiii. 11).

But the man of God's choice is of a far different spirit. At this time, at least, he was one whom the nation assuredly would *not* have chosen. Nothing in his appearance marked him as a future king. In fact, he was judged to be so insignificant, that when the other brothers were called to meet Samuel, he was left in the field. Yet he was God's elect; and, taught of God to recognise this, the prophet solemnly anoints him as king of Israel. And significantly we read, "And the Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon David from that day forward" (v. 13).

And so with the great Antitype. The Prophet Isaiah foresaw Him as the "despised and rejected of men." He foretells, that when He should appear, there would be nothing about Him outwardly to lead men to desire Him (Isa. liii. 2, 3). And yet God, through the same prophet, speaks of His Son thus, "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; Mine

Elect, in whom My soul delighteth: I have put My Spirit upon Him" (chap. xlii. 1). A special title of the Lord Jesus is the Christ—

THE ANOINTED.

But He was anointed, not with material oil, but with the Holy Spirit. This took place at His baptism, when He entered on His public service. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power." And His short but blessed after-life can be summed up in these words, "*Who went about doing good; . . . for God was with Him*" (Acts x. 38). And in this we know He has left us an example that we may follow in His footsteps.

The next recorded event is the familiar story of the fight between David and Goliath. It is a scene on which we would fain dwell, but a few words must suffice. At this time we learn of occurrences which the modesty of the shepherd boy had led him to keep secret. I refer to the conflict with the lion and with the bear for the sake of one little lamb of the flock.

Thus his training in private had fitted him for conquering the impudent defier of Jehovah and enemy of Israel. It reminds us of that awful hand-to-hand fight between the prince of darkness and the Son of God, when He "was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." And at last, in this mysterious, unique Being—real Man and true God—Satan has met his match. David showed the spirit of a true shepherd; he was no hireling. He loved his flock, and even risked his life for the sheep. And what shall we say of our David? He not only *risked*, but He actually gave up His life for His flock. Freely, voluntarily, He went to the Cross for us. He there gave such an exhibition of love as never before had been seen, and never again shall be. To all eternity, with grateful hearts, the redeemed will look back to the Cross.

The lion, the bear, and Goliath we may take as representing all the enemies we had against us—sin, death, Satan, the curse of a broken law. Our Lord Jesus at Calvary put away sin, robbed death of its sting, conquered the devil, and bore the curse of the righteous law of God. Oh, for a heart to take in these ever-glorious facts, that we may day by day

live under the shadow of the Cross ! Bless God, Christ has conquered ! With the reality of this typical scene before our souls, we may well sing :—

“ His be the Victor’s name,
Who fought our fight alone ;
Triumphant saints no honour claim ;
Their conquest was His own.
By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown ;
Trod all our foes beneath His feet,
By being trodden down.
“ He hell in hell laid low ;
Made sin, He sin o’erthrew ;
Bowed to the grave destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew.
Bless, bless the Conqueror slain !
Slain by divine decree !
Who lived, who died, who lives again,
For thee, my soul, for thee.”

David, the successful champion, at once began to receive some of the honours which had been promised. The exalted place he occupied in the hearts of the people we can gather from the popular demonstration that was made in his favour. It was the natural and spontaneous outburst of a grateful people. “ Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands ! ” And this was one thing which ever rankled in the heart of jealous, evil-minded Saul. He never forgave it. About this time it is written that “ all Israel and Judah loved David.” But nothing could save him from the hatred and persecution of Saul. And at last David had to leave the court and his own home and seek a hiding-place in the wilderness. This brings us to the next period of his history, but we will leave it for another number.

J. N. C.

“ ALL TRUTH ” (John xvi. 13).

We are exhorted to have “ our loins girt about with truth.” This is most needful, for we cannot tell which may be the next truth required to enable us to “ resist Satan ” in his wily temptations. In order to be thus “ girt,” we must be taught the truth by the Holy Spirit, *then* there is power in it ; otherwise, it only tends to puff up. If the truth we have is not held practically, it is of no avail. Those who are, in any capacity, ministering truth to others, must be watchful lest they have only an intellectual acquaintance with it—not experiencing it to be *life* to their souls, or like the pipe carrying the water, remaining unrefreshed.

EXCUSE AND CONFESSION.

THE crookedness of the heart early discovered itself in seeking to make excuse for sin, and from that time to the present one chief evidence of the unregenerate state of the soul is this readiness to palliate evil by endeavouring either to excuse it, or, if possible, to lift the blame off one’s self and to cast it upon others. Adam sought to shelter himself by reproaching both the woman and even God : “ The woman whom *Thou* gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat.” Eve is ready at a moment to cast all the blame on the serpent : “ The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.” And thus has the course of evil run on, so that there is perhaps no grace more difficult of attainment, no honesty more rare, than that truthfulness of confession which results from at once seeing sin as before God, and seeks for no cloak, and has no excuse ready as a palliation for it.

Excuses are not necessarily devoid of a measure of truth ; but rather their subtlety consists in the very degree of truth with which they are mingled, or on which they are founded. It was no direct falsehood that Adam or Eve uttered when they thus replied to God respecting their sin. But we shall be able to trace in all excuses either a mixture of untruthfulness or a concealment of part of that which has really occurred. Wherever this is the case, the soul is not exercised before God about the sin ; but either mistrusts the grace of God to pardon, or is desirous of standing well in its own estimation, or in that of others.

Let us trace one or two remarkable instances from the Word of God.

When Moses reproaches Aaron (Ex. xxxii.) respecting his sin in bringing such a fearful evil upon Israel, by making the calf at Horeb, what is Aaron’s excuse ? “ Thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us : for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me : then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.” Much of this was perfectly true ; but was it for Aaron to cast the blame solely

on the people? Would he have yielded to their request if he had remembered the presence of Him that was with them; and that Jehovah had really brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and not Moses? Was not the ground of His sin this forgetfulness of God; and, therefore, instead of instructing the people as to the presence and power of the Lord, he assisted them in their fearful idolatry, at the same time that he combined it with the name of Jehovah? Then mark the direct falsehood and folly of his excuse: "There came out this calf!" Had he no hand in making it a molten calf? Had the fire such miraculous power to fashion it? Had he not himself used the graving tool in order that his work might have more credit in the eyes of Israel? Alas! for the crookedness of the heart when it seeks to vindicate itself before man or God! But if Aaron thus desired to yield himself, he had in the sequel to learn, in another and far more sorrowful way, not to spare his own flesh; for the sons of Levi girded on their swords; and knew neither the nearest or dearest kindred in the slaughter that followed (see Deut. xxxiii. 9).

Let us next turn to 1 Samuel xv. Saul had been commanded utterly to destroy Amalek, but instead of doing so, he spared Agag their king, and the best of the sheep and oxen, &c.; in fact, all that was good he retained, but everything that was vile and refuse he destroyed. "And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Here Saul boldly declares that he has obeyed God's command, whereas he had just done enough to set his own conscience at rest, and had, at the same time, fully gratified his own selfish desires. "And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" When thus detected in his act of disobedience by Samuel, he has his excuse ready—"They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed." With what wonderful facility does this evil man alter his speech! Before he is convicted of evil, he says, "I have performed the commandment of the

Lord"; he takes all the credit of the obedience to himself. When detected in his sin, he casts the blame of the disobedience entirely on the people, "*They* have brought them"; at the same time adding another falsehood, namely, that the sole object in sparing the cattle had been for the sake of sacrifice; and he adroitly concludes his sentence by now claiming part of the credit of having utterly destroyed the remainder—"the rest *we* have utterly destroyed." But this is not all. When at length obliged to own he had sinned, in verse 24, then he has another excuse, "because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." When did Saul ever act from fear of the people? When did he ever fail to do according to his own will? And what is confession of sin worth before God when it is mingled with such hollow excuses, and when it is extorted by necessity rather than being the humble acknowledgment of error in His sight?

Let us probe our own souls and take warning from these instances; not attempting self-vindication in any case where there has been direct sin or failure, and even where we ourselves are unconscious of error and are falsely accused, leaving it to God to justify us in due time.

It is refreshing to turn from these sorrowful disclosures of the waywardness and folly of our hearts to one bright instance of honest confession, which is recorded for our example on all occasions of failure. In the chapter alluded to above, Samuel said to Saul, "The Lord hath given the kingdom to a neighbour of thine, *that is better than thou*"; and in nothing did David more display his superiority over Saul than in his immediate and unreserved confession of sin, when convicted of it by Nathan the prophet. "I have sinned against the Lord," is the short but deeply touching sentence. He estimates at once his sin in the right place, "before the Lord"; this closes his mouth as to any excuse or palliation. Had he walked before the Lord, he would not have sinned before the Lord; at the same time, he is able thus freely to confess, because he is conscious of the Lord's abounding grace. And what a psalm pours forth from his heart on this occasion (the 51st). In that he again utters the same truth, namely, that he has sinned before the Lord, and also that his sin

was against the Lord. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." Let us keep the two great truths in mind which are contained in this short verse, namely, that sin, *all* sin, is *before* the Lord and is *against* the Lord; so that the real depth of evil consists not in the way in which it affects others here, but in its being an offence perpetrated in the sight of God, and a direct act of disobedience and rebellion against His Majesty and Holiness. Then, again, David traces sin to its real source, so that the soul is left without excuse. It is not the power of temptation or the pressure of external circumstances that originates sin; but "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." It is the birth-plague with which we enter this world; and temptation only presents some opportunity for its manifestation.

This is an instructive subject for our soul's meditation, especially as it necessarily leads us to that precious blood which alone cleanseth from all sin.

True confession will therefore be unmixed with excuses; will not seek to cast the blame on another; will proceed from a soul which has estimated sin as an offence against God, and that weighs it in the presence of God; at the same time, this must always be accompanied with a deep sense of the value of Him, "who now once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

May we cultivate this habit of humble and sincere confession before the Lord—a habit of truthfulness in His presence; conscious, indeed, that we are shapen in iniquity, but with full, unreserved confidence in the love and eternal mercy of our God and Father, and in that precious blood that cleanseth, and in the living intercession of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

THE FEAR OF GOD.—The fear of God should be the habit of our mind, it should temper our joys and our sorrows too: "Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long." How many things do we meddle with that bring misery upon us for want of this holy fear! Does not the fear of God drive away every other fear?

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES.—II.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY JOHN R. CALDWELL IN MARBLE HALL, GLASGOW.

EVE'S partaking of the forbidden fruit was the outcome of the prior sin of not owning the authority the Lord had put over her. And may I not apply it? The Church, putting forth its hand after the joys of this world, was the result of her having first failed in subjection to Him whom God had set over her. If God's saints only saw it, all the evil and havoc that has been wrought in connection with the testimony for God on the earth has arisen from not apprehending this very truth of Eph. v., that as Eve was made subject to Adam, and the wife to her husband, so the Church was to be subject to Christ. And the Church's blessing can only be secured as she comes back to that very position, which she long ago forsook, of owning the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is written, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Evidently, had Eve consulted her husband, Satan's subtlety would not have availed to deceive her; and does not this let us into a marvellous secret as to what led Adam to share the woman's fate? I am persuaded that Adam's partaking of the fruit with her was not the result of ignorance, but of love. Adam allowed that woman that God had given him to be the idol of his heart, and in effect said, "I will share her fate. She has sinned and fallen, and I will sin and fall with her." What a type of the "second Adam," who shared not our sin, but who in love has borne our curse! Well may we sing—

" 'Twas love that sought Gethsemane,
Or Judas ne'er had found Thee;
'Twas love that nailed Thee to the tree,
Or iron ne'er had bound Thee.

" 'Twas love that lived, 'twas love that died,
With endless life to bless us;
Well hast Thou won Thy blood-bought bride,
Worthy art Thou, Lord Jesus!"

Now, let us glance again at Eph. v., 24th verse, "Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Now, we must distinctly understand that there are many scriptures which have to be taken in connec-

tion with other scriptures, otherwise they are liable to be misunderstood. When God says here that the wife is to be subject "*in every thing*," He never intends by that to teach that the woman is to be subject to her husband in things that are contrary to the revealed will of the Lord. This is a limitation that must ever be kept in view. It is equally plain in Scripture that we ought to be "subject to the powers that be" (Rom. xiii.); but you remember, after that Peter and John were laid hold of for teaching in the name of Jesus, and the powers that then existed commanded them "not to teach nor preach in that name," though perfectly willing to be subject to the authorities, yet, when it came to be a question of obeying God or man, they said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts iv. 19, 20). Thus we see that there is a limit to obedience. There is no limit as far as *our will* is concerned; but where it comes to be a question of the Lord's will, then the limit comes in, whether it be with the wife to the husband, the child to the parent, or the subject to the powers that be. If, for example, the husband wants his wife to tell a lie, subjection to the Lord forbids it, for subjection can be only "*in the Lord*."

Col. iii. 14, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." There is the limitation, "*as it is fit in the Lord*." Do not for a moment suppose that this subjection means that there is to be no expression of thought, no representing of matters of difference. There may be occasions many in which the wife has quicker perception, or a better understanding, of what the will of the Lord is. There may be a Priscilla that is ahead of her husband in knowledge, but it does not follow from this that the wife is to usurp authority. Her differing judgment may be expressed with all subjection. So also with children to parents, and younger to elder.

Timothy, as a young man, was exhorted to entreat the elder brethren as fathers, giving them the reverence that was their due. The subjection of the wife to the husband (if, on the other hand, there is the love of the husband to the wife), will never be the subjection of a slave, but subjection in love and respect.

And even if there be not due affection and consideration on the part of the husband, she will nevertheless be subject, because it is the will of the Lord and well pleasing to Him. Therefore let every Christian wife bear in mind that this willing yielding of the subjection that the Lord commands to her husband, and giving him reverence, is pleasing to Christ, and is in His sight an ornament that adorns her, and a service that will be rewarded on that day. It is a representation to others and to Him of the true relationship in which the Church stands to Himself.

Then as to the question of reverence, turn to 1 Peter iii. 6, "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord." Now, you know the verse in which that occurs in Gen. xviii. is just a laugh of unbelief! There is nothing noble in the verse except the one word, and the Spirit of God picks it out, because it expresses the reverence that is due to the husband. Not that the husband is always such a character that he commands the reverence (it would be a good thing if it was always so); but this reverence is not to be yielded on the ground of character, but because the Lord says it, and because it is that which He demands of the Church;—that she give Him, not only the place of authority, but that she also should worship Him and honour Him equally with the Father. It matters not what the husband may be, even if unconverted and coming home drunk on the Saturday night, the wife's business is—in all matters where she can with a good conscience do it—to submit herself to his will, and never to expose his sin, or speak of him disrespectfully. As a consequence, when the ungodly husband beholds the chaste and heavenly character of the wife's conversation, the Lord will put His seal upon it, and cause her testimony and self-denial to be the means of blessing to him. And before we leave this point, a word as to adornment. I am persuaded that God would have His children to pass through this world as unobservable as possible. I say as unobservable as possible, for there is such a thing as casting off worldly adornment and putting on something else equally noticeable, like our friends the Quakers, who wear either black or drab, or the wearing of a certain grotesque-shape bonnet, and a ribbon with some inscrip-

tion on it. Thus man ever runs to extremes. Now, I believe God's mind as to the adornment of His people is, that they should wear "modest apparel," consistent with the position they occupy, and as women professing godliness, such as in no way to attract the eyes of others. If, when you walk into an assembly, everybody looks at your gaudy or costly array, then you are off the ground of faith. God has thought fit to speak of these things, and by His Holy Spirit has written them down in His eternal book. They are there for our instruction, and it is our blessing to obey them. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." And tell me, would you rather have the ornament of great price, that attracts the eye of man, or would you wear the ornament of great price that the Lord of glory looks down upon with admiration, even the meek and quiet spirit that bears the harsh, quick word, and answers not again, content to be unnoticed and unobserved, seeking only to walk quietly and meekly with God? The Lord knows what it costs to be thus adorned!

Those He sees thus adorned here He will adorn with glory hereafter! I may remark, in passing, that these instructions concerning dress and adorning are all given to the woman, for the reason that it is necessarily the woman's weakness. I have sometimes thought, when Achan saw "the goodly Babylonish garment, and the wedge of gold," that the garment was for his wife and the gold for himself. But be that as it may, we read of Saul clothing the women with scarlet, and putting earrings in their ears. The man after the flesh takes this way of gratifying the people. God has spoken of these things, and therefore the need of them. Sisters in Christ, give heed to the Word, and seek in all your ways to be pleasing to the Lord Jesus. Give Him the first place, and you will never regret it.

Now, I must turn to the other side of the question. Let us go back again to Eph. v. 25-27: "Husbands, love your wives," &c. As I said at the beginning, the burden laid upon the husband is summed up in one word—"Love"; for all Christ's actings for His Church, and to His Church, are but the outcome of the love that is in His heart. Now, if the child of God is told to love his wife as Christ loved the Church, I ask you what is the

measure of that love? I do not know how God could have put it stronger; and this opens up another point. There are some people—indeed, many—who are gracious and godly, and, fearing lest they should not please God, they are afraid to love. A husband perhaps afraid to love his wife too much, or a mother afraid to love her child too much. But from the example of Christ we are taught that you cannot love too fervently. Love is not idolatry. What is idolatry? Idolatry is the putting of the object of love in the place of God, so that when God says, "Go there," my love constrains me to go another way, and I go contrary to God. He sees that to be idolatry. It is not the love that is the idolatry, but putting the object that God tells me to "love as Christ loved the Church" in the place of Himself, in order to please or enjoy the object of my love. That is idolatry; and as we have "a jealous God" to deal with, many a time a Christian has had his idol taken away. How often it has been said, when some loved child has been removed, "That was the dearest one of them all to me." Yes, it was *the idol* that was taken away. The Lord knows how to deal with us; but remember, He is a jealous God, and if we want His blessing along with His gifts, it is not by stinting our love, that will be scant enough measure at the best, but by never suffering the object of our love to come in the place of God. It is God first, and everything else after.

Another point. There is all the difference in the world between human love and divine love. The chief feature of human love is that it seeks to enjoy its object. Divine love seeks always to bless its object. The natural thought of love is, How can I get the fullest enjoyment of the object of my love? And so the husband allows the wife to take away far more of his thoughts than he ought; and so parents may spoil their children rather seeking to please and enjoy them than to bless them.

Now, remember that the Lord's love to us never comes down to seek enjoyment in us, apart from our spiritual condition. The Lord Jesus would rather have us separated from His fellowship, and have no joy in us, than go down to walk with those who are walking in conscious disobedience. Therefore, the first work He does, "He loved the Church, and

gave Himself for it." That He might do what? Enjoy it? That will come by-and-by. He does not get much enjoyment out of it now. "That He might sanctify and cleanse it"; that He might make it conformable to Himself. That is His first thought. Thus, depend upon it. He will get the greatest enjoyment in the long run. He can bear to wait now, for He well knows that He will get His enjoyment of His completed body and bride, "the Church," by-and-by. It is painful work sanctifying and cleansing the Church now, but He is looking forward to the day when He will present it to Himself. Eve was presented to Adam by Jehovah, but the Lord Jesus will present the Church to Himself.

"Meet companion then for Jesus,
For Him—from Him made;
Glory of God's grace for ever,
There in me displayed!"

He will get His joy in His people by-and-by, but meantime He has to do the hard, hard work. "As many as I love (and because I love them) I rebuke and chasten." Hard work that for love! Is it hard work for love to lift the rod and chasten? Yes; but it is only love that dare do it! The Lord's love is such that, at all costs, He will sanctify and cleanse, and He looks for His joy when He comes and makes us like Himself. In 1 Peter iii. 7, there is a word to the husband: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel."

Mark that "the weaker" is the one that is to be most honoured. The weakness is not *inferiority*, it is not weakness in that sense. The "weaker vessel" means the more delicate or fragile vessel. The flowers of the field are exquisitely formed, but they are weak and easily injured. That is the thought here. And because of that weakness, which the Lord knows, and which is part of creation, and not as resulting from sin, therefore He says, "Give honour to the wife." The wife is least able to defend herself against wrongs, and therefore protection is the part of the husband. She is the least able to care for herself, therefore to love, cherish, and support is the responsibility of the stronger one.

Another point. "As being heirs together of the grace of life that your prayers be not hindered."

Fellowship must be cultivated. Why? "That your prayers be not hindered." Oh, dear friends, God only knows how anything that comes in to mar fellowship hinders prayer! If a root of bitterness creeps into an assembly, what a bar it is to fellowship. Is it any wonder that the prayers are hindered and do not go above the roof? Such are discordant notes. They are not making one sound like the 120 trumpeters in the temple, or the 120 disciples in the upper room, who were "of one accord." The relationship of husband and wife is so close that any disagreement, any dryness, allowed to go on, will hinder fellowship. Then you do not like to kneel together in prayer. Perhaps you drop it; you give it up, until the Lord comes in with some sore stroke of His rod and brings you both down to *fellowship in sorrow*, and then your prayers go up again together! There must be fellowship between husband and wife. And tell me, young man, young woman, what of being yoked the living to the dead? Two hearts yoked together that cannot join in one cry to the blessed God! God save us from a curse like that, the living being yoked to the dead! These subjects are practical, and more might be said. I have only touched upon those points that seem to be the most prominent and important. May God teach us, by His Spirit, concerning the rest, and add His blessing.

THE EARTHQUAKE PROPHET.

AMOS was the prophet who went before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah (Amos i. 1). We may say that he was the prophet of that event (viii. 2; ix. 5).

That earthquake is treated by Zechariah as typical, as a notice of the Lord's controversy with the world, when again there will be earthquakes and pestilences, ministers of judgment, and vessels of wrath (Zech. xiv. 5).

Accordingly, *judgment* is the great burthen of Amos's prophecy, and it therefore served the purpose of Stephen in Acts vii., for that moment was also a *crisis* in the history of the Jew; and Stephen there quotes Amos (see verses 42-43; and Amos v. 25, 27).

But again, Amos treats the Gentiles as dealt with by God as well as the Jews. He judges them all alike—He brought the Philistines

from Caphtor, and Syrians from Kir, as He had brought Israel from Egypt—and in coming millennial days He will save all the *Gentiles called by His name*, as surely as He will build again the fallen tabernacle of David (see ch. i. 2; ix. 7, 12). Accordingly, or in this character, the word by Amos directly answered for James, in Acts x. 5, where the apostle was insisting on the independence of Gentile saints, and that they must not be required to be circumcised and to adopt the customs of Israel.

Thus these two great occasions in the history of the Church, in the New Testament, were served by the Spirit through Amos, who may be regarded as somewhat a distant and unnoticed portion of the Word of God. But it is beautiful thus to see that we are to live "by every word of God." We know not in what obscure corner of the volume, so to speak, that scripture may lie which is fitted and destined by the Holy Spirit to stand by the soul in the trying hour. Amos ministering to Stephen and to James witnesses this.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Is it consistent for a Christian to exercise his right in voting at either local or general elections?

Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45.

Is it scriptural to use leavened bread at the Lord's Supper?

Are there definite scriptures to warrant the singing of hymns when the church is gathered together on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread?

What is the exact meaning of "grace for grace" (John i. 16)?

Does any scripture teach that the Holy Spirit is present to rule, in an especial manner, at the meeting for remembering the Lord?

What is worship?

Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

Kindly explain 3 John 7, "Taking nothing of the Gentiles."

Are we to understand from Eph. v. 26 that the Church will be sanctified and cleansed apart from the responsibility of those who compose it to own and subject themselves to Christ as Lord?

What is the scriptural way for an assembly to raise money for the Lord's work and workers?

QUESTION 415.—Is it right for a Christian to join a trade's union?

Ans. A.—In approaching a question of this kind, we would do it with great caution and with measured steps. That there are many of the Lord's people members of trades' unions is beyond doubt, many who were members when they were converted and so continue, and many there may be in whose mind the question never arose. That trades' unions have contributed to the increasing of wages and shortening the hours of labour we believe is true, as well as bettering in other respects the position of their members; but we feel it to be our duty to deny that all these advantages are sufficient to justify a Christian in joining a trade's union. That trades' unionism has of late made gigantic strides is everywhere apparent, and, from what we have already seen, in proportion as it gathers strength so does it become more and more aggressive. Already are not the "rights of labour" and "fair remuneration" oftener determined by the power they have of demanding them than anything else? This accounts for the dislike that exists among unionists for non-unionists, and helps to explain the hope and prediction of a prominent trades' unionist, that the time is soon coming when the man who cannot produce his card of membership will find himself out of work. The Prime Minister, speaking from a political standpoint, recently said, "The spirit of the age is certainly combination," and for the sake of young believers we would endeavour to explain what is meant by "the spirit of the age." In Eph. ii. 2, the apostle says, "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world." From this scripture we would understand that what the Prime Minister called "the spirit of the age," the apostle called "the course of this world"—it is "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and it is certainly COMBINATION. The number of unions, lodges, amalgamations, and confederations of every kind, and for every purpose, that are rising up all over the land, not only among servants but among masters as well, fully proves it.

The apostle wrote, in Eph. ii. 2, that the days were *past* when they walked according to the course of this world. Alas that so many of those for whom our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself "that He might deliver them from this present evil world," not only from its doom, but also from its evil ways, should not only be members, but some even defenders of trades' unions! Surely this is to be deeply deplored. It is well that some are being awakened and alarmed, and are asking, "Is it right to join a trade's union?"

Now, if trades' unionism is anything it is a yoke—a binding together of numbers to accomplish purposes which to individuals are impossibilities. This is implied in a favourite motto amongst them, "United we stand, divided we fall," and one of the inexorable conditions of membership is, that each member must be governed by the majority. No matter how ignorant or how ungodly that majority may be, and no matter how ridiculous their decisions, they govern, and against them there is no appeal. For our part we know of no condition of life, either social, moral, or religious, in which we could bind ourselves to be governed by the *voice of a majority*, even if that majority were all Christians, far less a majority of unbelievers, of which

trades' unions are generally composed. We have known of Christians, who could not join a trade's union, offering to pay twice as much into the union as any other member to be allowed to work peaceably, but their money was refused; nothing short of being bound would do. A Christian intending to join the union must be prepared to be governed no longer by the Lord Jesus. If he is to be governed by the voice of a majority of unbelievers he must give up His yoke, for he cannot come under both. In short, he must be prepared to sacrifice "a good conscience" on the altar of trades' unionism.

We ask, are all the advantages of trades' unions enough to recompense such a loss? The same Lord who says, "Take My yoke . . . and ye shall find rest, . . . for My yoke is easy," says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (Matt. xi., 1 Cor. vi. 14). In the face of this I may choose to be yoked with unbelievers, as in a trade's union, but after joining them they will choose for me what direction, how fast, and how far I must go. Many of God's people could tell how they and their families had to face starvation at the bidding of a cruel and despotic majority.

But if we refuse to join the union, where will that put us? Unhesitatingly we say into "sufferings," "fiery trials," and we are not to "think it strange" (1 Pet. iv. 12). Is it not better to suffer at the hands of men with a good conscience than to suffer at the hands of God with a bad one? Is it not better to have the eyes of the Lord over us, and His ears open to our prayers, than the face of the Lord against us (1 Pet. iii. 12)? We must expect to suffer persecution if we intend to live godly (2 Tim. iii. 12).

Once we heard a believer, who had suffered much by refusing to join a trade's union, say, "I have far more than I brought into this world, and I am sure I have more than I shall carry out."

Notice next what the Lord has to say to those who are already yoked, and from what position He says it. In Gen. vii. 1, we read, "The Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark." From this we see that Noah went in unto the Lord. Now in 2 Cor. vi. 17 the Lord says, "Wherefore, come out from amongst them and be ye separate." It is from the outside place that the Lord speaks, and clearly that is where He is. We hear much of being "gathered out," and if we don't include trades' unions among the things out of which the Lord gathers, surely it is time we did. In Gen. xii. 1, "the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country," that was much, "and from thy kindred," that was more, "and from thy father's house," that was most. Surely this was a giving up? Yes; but what a receiving as well. Did Abram gain or lose by it? He gained an hundredfold! (Matt. xix. 29). Abram was not only commanded to do this, he was attracted out as well, for in Acts vii. 2 we are told that the God of Glory appeared to him on that eventful occasion.

What but the heart being attracted and won by "the God of Glory" could have enabled Abram to give up like this? And observe his beautiful consistency to his heavenly character in the offer made to Lot in Gen. xiii. 9. Then, in Gen. xiv. 22, with what becoming dignity does he refuse the offer of the King of Sodom. Then, some time after, when Abram had encountered some of the difficulties of being a stranger and a pilgrim,

the Lord appeared to him again and said, "I am the Almighty God." Nothing less could have met Abram's need, and he could get nothing more.

Here, in 2 Cor. vi. 17, the word is "come out." Surely that is a command; but it is not a grievous one (1 John v. 3). And surely if this applies to anything it applies to the unequal yoke with unbelievers. But there are attractions as well as commands. At the very threshold of coming out, the Lord says, "I will receive you." He told us this before, when we were lost, doubting sinners, and we found Him as good as His word. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii.). The next attraction is, "I will be a Father unto you"; then, "I who give these promises am well able to make them good, for I am the Lord Almighty."

"They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee" (Ps. ix. 10). We boast, and rightly boast, of the love that will give us boldness in the day of judgment. Why not let that "perfect love" cast out our present fear (1 John iv. 17, 18; Josh. xxiii. 14)? One of old was said to have "strong faith," one "great faith," one was said to be "full of faith," many were said to be of "little faith," but we have sought in vain for the man who had too much faith!

Having, therefore, these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, &c. (1 Cor. vii. 1), whether it be in the form of an unequal yoke with unbelievers, or anything else that hinders or displaces the desire to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. iii. 10). This is the time to lose, to suffer, and, above all, to have patience; to take no part in the wars of capital and labour. What recompense on that day when God deals with the wealthy, covetous, and cruel masters who robbed their servants of their wages. Then those servants who, in the grace of God, by their subjection, adorned the doctrine of God their Saviour, will know the power of these words, "Ye have condemned and killed the just," followed by God's boast concerning His own, "And He doth not resist you" (James v.).

One word more. Few servants had a worse master than Jacob; few masters had a better servant than Laban. Laban was a covetous man; covetous and deceitful, he changed Jacob's wages ten times. Had it been in these days of trades' unionism, and had Jacob been a member, we would have had nine strikes; but Jacob suffered and submitted, and God justified and rewarded sufferings and subjection (Gen. xxx. 31) by making Jacob, notwithstanding the reductions he submitted to, as rich as Laban, notwithstanding his covetousness. The Lord Almighty rewarding obedience.

W. L. J.

One who was a Member of a Trades' Union, but left for conscience' sake.

Ans. B.—Those whose hearts are exercised as to the Lordship of Christ and His claims upon the believer, will readily admit that to maintain a close walk with God the fullest allegiance to the authority of the Scriptures regarding his path is of first importance.

Looked at in the light of God's Word, we believe that the only answer to the above question is an emphatic "No." In tracing our answer from the Word, we might ask the question, "Is such a union clean or unclean?" That it belongs to the latter class is evident; then the word is, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch

not the unclean" (2 Cor. vi. 17). The same command was given to Israel as a nation: "Go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; . . . be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isaiah lli. 11); and in verse 12 we find the Lord Himself would go before them, and the God of Israel be their rereward. Oh what blessed companionship amid all this confusion and strife—"Outside the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. xiii. 13). Notice also Heb. xi. and verse 24, Moses refused Egypt's honours; ver. 25, he chose affliction with the people of God; ver. 26, he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. May it be ours thus to walk before Him unto all well-pleasing. Surely a right apprehension of such Scriptures will deliver us from affinity with all such ungodly associations. Compare also 2 Chron. xx. 35 to end; Psalm cxli. 4; Prov. xxiii. 6; Isa. viii. 9 to 16; Luke xxii. 28 to 30.

If we might venture a little of our own experience in the matter, it might be helpful to some dear suffering fellow-saint who is hardly beset by such allurements while treading the path of faith. During the past three years, trades' unions have been the prominent topic occupying the minds of the working community in the district in which our lot is cast, and any dissenting voice was speedily marked as that of an enemy. The writer and two fellow-saints, working for a firm employing about one thousand hands, were deeply exercised as to their position as regards the workmen's union. They were sorely pressed to join it, and no other dissenting voice was heard. We met together for prayer and searching of the Word, and also sought the fellowship and counsel of elder brethren and others gathered to the name of the Lord. After much meditation and deep exercise of soul, the result was that, like Daniel, we purposed in our heart not to defile ourselves by partaking of the so-called "benefits" of such a union. When it became known that we would not bow down to the image, nor receive the mark of the beast either in our foreheads or our hands, the storm that had been gathering burst upon us in all its fury. Time and space will not here allow us to go into the details of all that followed. Suffice it to say that when we could see no way out of the difficulty but submit to lose our employment, the Lord graciously came to our assistance and proved Himself a very present help in time of trouble, for, when the circumstances were made known to our employers, they would not allow any man to be dismissed for conscience' sake, or what they were pleased to term "his religion." Thus we proved that Daniel's God still lives, and is just as able to close the mouths of the lions as ever. The furnace, though seven times heated, could only burn the bands that held the three captives when one like unto the Son of God walked the furnace with them. We have every reason to praise our God for the way in which He led us, and our firm conviction is that God is delighted to deliver those who, by simple faith, lay hold of Him for all they need, and in carrying out the Word, "To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel xv. 22) we have proved the truth of His promise, "Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Samuel ii. 30).

S.

Ans. C.—As a voluntary act we believe it would be wrong, as it is certainly an unequal yoke, but his name may be on the books of the union against his will, so to

speak. For instance, quite recently two believers, who had kept aloof from a trade's union, were told they must either become members or leave their employment, failing which, all the other men in that department, amounting to several hundreds, would leave. The employers would grant no protection. The two believers said, "If left to ourselves we will not join the union, but to satisfy you we will pay what is demanded, rather than cause dispeace."

In the same workshop there is a believer who knows the truth of separation from these things, and who is an active supporter of the union. The questioner will discern the difference.

We would say, Let us preach the Gospel; and exercise ourselves to have consciences void of offence toward God and toward men, leaving the unions to others. He who sends His rain on the just and the unjust has, in His moral government, permitted unions, as, in many cases, the voice of the union has been the only one employers would hear.

A. E.

Editor's Note.—The foregoing replies (A and B) are both written by those who have experienced the trial and difficulty of having had to face the question practically. We have many other replies, but these contain the gist of all that is adduced. No doubt the reason this question is so seldom dealt with is the extreme and increasing difficulty of obtaining employment, in almost any trade, apart from membership in the union. And yet, however trying, in the first instance, that which is the will of God must, in the end, be for blessing to the believer as well as glorifying to God.

It must never be forgotten that the day of man's final apostacy, culminating in the reign of antichrist over the confederated nationalities of the Roman earth, is hastening on apace. Satan is making ready all things here for this final display of his power. The elements that have developed so amazingly during the past half century are all tending in that direction. The conflicts between labour and capital, anarchy and government, republicanism and monarchy, are all indications of the forces that are at work, which instead of terminating in "liberty, equality, and fraternity," shall end in direst despotism, none being permitted to buy or sell, or even to live, who do not own subjection to Satan's rule; and instead of peace and plenty, peace will be taken from the earth, and pestilence and famine shall follow in the train of universal war.

The teachings of the Word of God all go to separate the believer unto the Lord Himself from every principle and association, social, political, or religious, whereby this final culmination of iniquity is being brought about.

Many do not see this. In their blindness they seek, by joining in with these movements, to better the condition of the world. In defiance of the plain teaching of Scripture, they make common cause with the world in what they suppose to be a desirable object. Meantime, the spiritual tone is lowered, surely though insensibly, whilst earthly things engross the attention and obscure the heavenly hope.

As to answer C, some are satisfied to evade the difficulty in this way. But we hardly see that the moral support of the name on the membership roll and the "sinews of war," supplied in the shape of a subscription, is consistent with the instruction of the Word to, "be separate" and "touch not."

TEMPLE SERVICE.

HE who said "My thoughts are not your thoughts" has made the contrast very evident in both the teaching and the ways of His beloved Son.

The temple at Jerusalem was from the first regarded by Jesus as His Father's house. As such He owned it until, rejected and despised, He left it finally, saying, "Your house is left unto you desolate!"

His visits to it, His teaching concerning it, and His behaviour in it, all told the veneration with which He regarded it. He recognised the claims of its altar (Matt. v. 23, 24), He owned the priesthood that ministered thereat (Matt. viii. 4), and its divine appointment as the centre of earthly worship (John ii. 13; v. 1; vii. 14).

Twice in the course of His ministry His zeal for the honour of His Father's house, and for the Name recorded there, led Him to denounce the traffic carried on in it, and even by force to purge it from the base intrusion. Well He knew that, convenient as it might be to have sacrifices both for rich and poor obtainable on the spot, the motive was not divine. It was simply commercial. The love of money was the root. From being the Father's house of prayer it was degraded to the level of an Oriental bazaar, with all its bustle and covetous greed, its bargaining and trickery. People from other countries could exchange their money for the current Roman coin, and this was gain to the merchant; and again, they could buy oxen, sheep, or doves for sacrifice, according to their means, and this also meant gain.

The scene in the eyes of Him who dwelt in the bosom of the Father was indescribably revolting. It roused His holy indignation to the highest pitch. With scourge of small cords, that might hurt them a little but could not harm them, He drove the cattle and their owners forth, upsetting the tables of the money changers, and saying to those who sold doves, "Take these things hence; make not My Father's house an house of merchandise." Such was His view of bargaining—buying and selling—as connected with the temple of God.

How differently He regarded the gifts that were cast into the treasury, whether by rich or

poor! It seems to have been almost a custom of His to sit there (see Mark xii. 41; John viii. 20) finding joy in that which so accorded with the grace of the great Giver. Was not that gift of "two mites" a joy to His heart as He pondered the faith and love that withheld not her all from Jehovah? Surely He smelled, as it were, the savour of His own unspeakable gift.

And the service of the house of God, to be acceptable to Him, must ever be one of free gift, and never of contract, bargain, or constraint.

Herein are the thoughts of man diverse from God's. The service and worship of God throughout Christendom is, alas, almost universally one of *contract*. The highest abilities secure the highest money value, and are obtained by those who are able to pay the price. We do not say universally, for there are many noble exceptions, but we speak of that which is the rule.

The money element bulks and preponderates very much in proportion to the decline of spiritual power.

Money is indeed required, but we are persuaded that God can accomplish more by the loving gift of "two mites" than by the thousand pounds raised by pew rents or bazaars. The days of the Church's power were the days when her ministers had to say, "Silver and gold have I none."

What we would urge as a divine principle of universal application is, that in the things of God "giving and receiving" are acceptable, but bargaining, buying and selling, and the element of contract generally, are not in keeping with the character of His house.

But it was a "house of prayer." Prayer is that which tells first of the need of the suppliant, and next of the grace of the God to whom it is addressed. True prayer is ever well-pleasing to God, for God delights to give. We get wearied of demands upon us, but God never wears of demands upon Him. His resources of compassion and forgiveness and His supplies for every need are inexhaustible. Therefore in the temple of God of old, or in the temple now composed of living stones gathered and indwelt by the Spirit of God, prayer is ever acceptable. That "prayers, supplications, intercession, and giving of thanks" be made for all men, is the apostolic

injunction to Timothy. Thus the Church has power with men by having power with God.

When the children in the temple cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David," the chief priests and scribes again manifested the difference between their thoughts and God's. "They were sore displeased" (Matt. xxi. 15). They seem to have regarded such conduct as out of keeping with the sanctity of the place, though they could tolerate without censure the unholy traffic which the Lord cast out. But the children's voices uttered acceptable praise. To the Lord Jesus it was a grateful odour. They saw the works which He did—works of grace and power—and they recognised and owned Him as the promised Saviour of Israel.

And if such praises were acceptable in the temple at Jerusalem, how pleasing to God must be the praise and thanksgivings offered in the spiritual temple now, as fresh discoveries are made by the power of the Holy Spirit of the wisdom, love, and power of Him who is David's Son and David's Lord!

But the temple was also a place of healing: for "the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them" (Matt. xxi. 14). Indeed it was these streams of blessing freely bestowed that afforded the most convincing proof that He was from God.

And if prayer and praise be acceptable temple service, shall there not also be still the outflow of blessing—the ministry of good works; according as it is written, after the exhortation to "offer the sacrifice of praise continually," "but to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. xiii. 16).

And, lastly, the temple was a place for the ministry of heavenly wisdom and grace. The Lord Jesus owned it as such when, at twelve years of age, He was found hearing the teachers and asking them questions. And frequently, during the years of His ministry, was He found there, teaching the people and preaching the gospel (Luke xx. 1; John vii. 14; viii. 2).

The suffering bodies of the people were graciously healed, and still, though the miraculous gifts may be lacking, yet the visiting and nursing, and ministering to the bodily needs of the sick and afflicted, is Christ-like work, which ranks lower in our esteem

than in His who when He comes will own each visit paid to His sick ones (Matt. xxv. 42, 43).

But their souls also were fed with the bread of life, their wounded spirits healed and cheered, their broken hearts bound up with words of heavenly love and comfort, as well as the light flashed into many hearts that manifested guilt and need. And such is still the ministry which is of the Spirit. It will be of the same kind, it will bear the same stamp, it will effect the same results as the ministry of Christ in the temple.

And one thing ever characterised the ministry of the Lord. It always was suited to the condition and need of His hearers. He was uncompromising in His denunciation of hypocrisy and error of every kind. Whatever was false was exposed by the light; only that which was true could abide the searching power of His words. But He always had messages of love, and peace, and comfort, and joy, for the mourners in Zion. He knew that the Shepherd's work consisted mainly in feeding, leading, defending, healing, and binding up. The tearing and devouring was the work of the wolf. May those who aspire to ministry of the Word now in the house of God learn of Him. May they chiefly be known as feeders and comforters, and use their staves for the defence of the flock and not to break their bones.

Putting all these incidental allusions together, do they not form a most complete and beautiful picture of the services that become the House of God and are congenial to the Spirit of Him who dwells within? Alas! that so often another sort of exercises may be found. How often is prayer restrained and praise formal and outward! How often are the poor and the sick forgotten, and money freely used for the indulgence of self and worldly lusts! How often is the ministry of the Word dry, and hard, and cold! Cutting and hitting, strife and debate, in abundance, but sorely lacking the elements that feed, and comfort, and build up, and lead into communion with God and into the enjoyment of Christ!

May we all be led deeper into the mind and heart of Christ, and then the temple services will be more spiritual, more edifying, and more pleasing to God.

J. R. C.

RECOGNITION BEYOND THE GRAVE.

AS we grow older, life becomes more and more a memory. In childhood we looked into the future; all of life was in anticipation. In middle life we were actively engrossed in the duties of the living present. Now, in older age, life all lies behind. We live in the past. As memory recalls past days, it links in many a loved face that has long since passed away. And of all our loved and dear ones the vast majority are beyond the veil. These have, indeed, passed from our grasp, but how real is the hold they have yet upon our memories. How precious to us is every relic left to us which reminds us of them. The rings which once they wore; the chairs on which they sat; their letters, now so carefully preserved; the locks of hair, cut from their heads after death: these are to us as priceless treasures, all that we have left of those so dearly loved. And with what sweet, sad sorrow do we visit their graves, their last bed-chambers. Our heart's tenderest affections go out in these directions. These feelings are deep and true:

"God knows how deep they lie,
Locked in the breast."

How blessed it is to the child of God to think of these dear and departed ones with holy and pure memories. He thanks God afresh, as he thinks how that he with them trod the way of God together. How in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs they together made melody to God. How they were wont to go to the assembly of God in company. How that they together rejoiced in one common salvation, and laboured for one common Master. Truly blessed are such memories as these. Let us, indeed, thank God for them.

But did we not speak to those dear ones, ere they left us, of a glad reunion by-and-by, of an eternal meeting beyond? The wife left the husband, the mother the daughter, the friend the friend, all in the fond hope of a meeting again. This hope still cheers and comforts us. They cannot come to us, but we shall go to them. Shall we see them to know them? Shall we recognise one another again? This is an interesting and often asked question. Yes, we shall; it must be so. Reason and revelation alike testify to this. Unless it be

ours to recognise, and to be recognised, we shall in the future state have lost our identity. This cannot be, or our own dear ones are lost to us for ever; but they are

"*Not lost, but gone before.*"

That the departed have not lost their identity is clear from many passages of Scripture. We might argue, from the fact of many well-authenticated records of statements of the dying, that they have seen waiting for them the souls of departed dear ones. We choose, however, to keep to the clearer declarations of Scripture.

We hear David saying over his departed child (2 Sam. xii. 23), "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

In 1 Sam. xxviii., we have the account of the bringing up of Samuel by the witch of Endor. Was not Samuel there in his identity?

Isaiah xxvi. 19, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."

Concerning the judgment of the wicked, it is written, that they shall answer for the deeds done *in the body*. If they are to be judged for what they have done while on earth, they must retain the faculties of memory and recognition. They who have been wronged and sinned against by them, must be again recognised.

In Luke xvi. 19-31, we have very clear teaching on this subject. We find the rich man in hell, possessed of all the faculties of ordinary body and mind, viz., memory, sight, speech, feeling, hearing, &c. While the fact of recognition is clearly stated in that "he lifted up his eyes, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Again, what but the fear of recognition could have prompted the request: "Send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." It was, doubtless, the fear of the accusations and reproaches that his brethren would hurl at him if they came to that same place of torment. Surely this teaches that, in our individual identity, we shall pass into the future state, recognising and being recognised. But let us remember that recognition beyond the grave may be either a blessing or a curse! How awful the thought of memory and recognition in hell!

Matt. xxii. 31, 32, "As touching the

resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, *but of the living.*" One idea is clear from this: Abraham is Abraham *still*, Isaac is Isaac *still*, Jacob is Jacob *still*. Each still exists in his own identity and distinctness. As such, each one is known to the other, and each one to God.

The Sadducees could not conceive of any human fellowship in the life of the resurrection, except such as reproduced the relation and conditions of this earthly life. Our Lord's words teach absolutely the absence from the resurrection life of the definite relations on which marriage rests in this. The old relations may subsist under new conditions. Things that are incompatible here, may *there* be found to co-exist. The saintly wife of two saintly husbands may love both with a divine, and therefore a pure and unimpaired, affection. What a contrast here between our Lord's teaching and the sensual paradise of Mahomet.

Matt. viii. 11, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob." Luke xiii. 28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, *when ye shall see* Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, *and all the prophets*, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Here again are clearly included the ideas of identity and recognition.

1 Cor. xiii. 12, "Then shall I know even as also I am known."

Matt. xix. 28, "Ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here it is asserted by our Lord that the twelve apostles shall share with Him in the glories of the kingdom. Included in this must be the fact of knowledge and recognition.

1 John iii. 2, "We know that, where He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." And seeing and knowing Him, shall we not see and know each other? Our spiritual bodies will appreciate and recognise spiritual beings hereafter, as our natural bodies now do natural objects.

In Romans viii. 23, we are stated how to be

"waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The body itself shall be redeemed. This is the burden of that much-loved fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians; and one of the most precious words in that chapter is, perhaps, the little word "*it*" (the body) "is sown," "*it*" (the body) "shall be raised." The body that is sown is that which shall be raised; and being raised, shall it not again be recognised?

Our Saviour came forth from the tomb in the very body that was placed in the tomb, and in that same body was recognised by the disciples after His resurrection. Luke xxiv. 39, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself." The identity of the body was thus proved. The resurrection was a reality, not an appearance—"It is I Myself." From this we argue that we shall have in heaven the very body we now possess,* and so be verily ourselves when we have reached our Father's home on high.

In relation to this subject, there is one sweet word which the writer would specially point out, and that is the word "**TOGETHER.**" It is so used in the following scriptures, as to be conclusive on this subject of recognition of, and fellowship, amongst the departed. Let all who are interested in this subject weigh that word, and meditate upon it.

1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up **TOGETHER WITH THEM** in" (certain eminent scholars have said that the word "the" ought not to be here; if so, the beauty of the passage is much increased) "clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." What a blessed "**together**" is this, the raised dead and changed living. Verse 18, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." And precious is the comfort contained in the words, as we mourn for the dead.

2 Thess. ii. 1, "Now we beseech you,

* The identity of the resurrection body with the one that died, notwithstanding the marvellous change that shall be effected by divine power, from natural to spiritual, from weakness to power, from dishonour to glory, is a mystery, and yet fully recognised in Scripture. So much so, that the act of resurrection is connected with the opening of the graves where the bodies were buried, and with the depths of the sea where such multitudes have been drowned. In the sceptical mind, many questions hard to be answered may here arise; but Scripture treats the subject as above, and it is ours simply to believe.—ED.

brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by *our gathering together* unto Him." The gathering of all saints will, indeed, be unto Him; but at the same time shall be "*our gathering together*." The Greek noun is nowhere else found, except Heb. x. 25, said of the *assembling together* of believers for congregational worship. The "*our*" means the meeting of the living and dead together.

1 Peter iii. 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with your wives . . . being heirs together of the grace of life." "*Together*" *here*; "*together*" *there*!

1 Thess. ii. 19, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" It was the thought of presenting these Thessalonian Christians to the Lord, that filled Paul with hope and joy. To have this hope fulfilled, they must know Paul, and Paul must know them.

Matt. xvii. 1-9 contains an account of the transfiguration. This is, perhaps, one of the plainest passages of Scripture that teach identity and recognition after death. This is so clear that exposition is needless.

Rev. vi. 9, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." John saw and identified the souls of the martyrs. Here, then, is recognition.

Heb. xii. 1, "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," &c. The idea of witnesses is that of spectators. They of whom chapter xi., verses 5 to 39 speak, are spoken of as those by whom we are "*compassed about*." Everyone knows that the imagery is suggested by the great national festivals of Greece. The chief points are the discipline of the competitors, the struggle, the rewards, and the crowd of spectators. Hence we argue that the word "*witnesses*" is used in the sense of spectators of the race. The chief thought must, however, be by no means forgotten, viz., that the runner's steadfast gaze is to be fixed on Him who has Himself traversed the course before us, and is now the Judge and Rewarder. Our present use of the text is to point out the meaning of the word "*witnesses*," which in the sense suggested must carry with it the idea of recognition.

A few verses, just before and after this one, may serve to throw much more light upon the subject. Heb. xi. 15, 16, "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." Each of these had been led to regard the state of wandering in which he spent His life as a state of earthly waiting for an enduring home. "Wherefore . . . God hath prepared for them a city." They are now alive, and abiding with Him where He is. Who can exclude from this passage the idea of recognition and identity?

Heb. xi. 40, "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us (or apart from us) should not be made perfect." We with them, and they with us, shall have perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in the eternal and everlasting glory of God. They shall not attain the full and perfect glory in soul and body, until the full number of the elect (including us with them) are all gathered in. Shall we not amongst them know, and be known?

Heb. xii. 22-24, "Ye are come unto mount Sion, unto . . . the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus," &c. "The heavenly Jerusalem"—this is the city spoken of in chapter xi. 13-16. Into this "general assembly" shall every blood-washed soul be brought. For ever there shall he be happy and secure. There will he again meet and recognise, and be recognised by all whom he once knew and loved in Christ while on earth. Our loved ones in Christ do but pass on before, and waiting, they watch us approaching the shore.

We have been looking at a few only of many scriptures, that go to show that after death we shall know, even as we are known. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." From our friends in Christ we have only been parted for a little while; but a short time and we shall meet them again, where sorrow and dying shall be for ever unknown. We shall meet, never more to part. Amen.

G. N. W.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

x Peter iii. 21, 22.

THE *affections* and the *conscience* are both addressed in the precious mystery of the Gospel. Provision is there made to engage the heart for God, and to quiet the conscience toward God. This is its glory. This gives a sinner an interest in the *justice* as well as in the *love* of God. In one sense, it is all love, for love or grace is at the source; but it is grace providing for the demands of justice, and thus giving ease to the conscience, or to the judicial sense of the soul exercised about right and wrong, or good and evil. The Gospel provides "the answer of a good conscience toward God,"—and this is done "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."* But there is blessed doctrine contained in that.

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus was the public witness from God that He had accepted the previous death or sacrifice; and consequently, when understood and pleaded by faith, it relieves the conscience or gives it a good answer to God. And that, too, on the surest ground; because it is *God's own witness of God's entire satisfaction touching all that might affect the conscience.*†

The resurrection, therefore, addresses the *conscience* rather than the *affections*. It is the conscience which triumphs in it. It is for the conscience it provides a feast and a rest, for it tells the satisfaction which the God of judgment, "by whom actions are weighed," has found, in the preceding death or sacrifice; and that is the point, the one point for the conscience.

God has again seen the blood and passed by. I may have poor thoughts of the blood. All my best thoughts are but poor. I may desire the Holy Ghost to unfold its preciousness more and more, but that need not hinder the rest of the conscience, for the conscience is concerned in God's view and estimation of it, and not in mine: and the resurrection of the Lord proclaims *that*, as loudly, as distinctly, as conclusively, as the passage of the angel

* This is not a good conscience, as being the verdict on our own practical ways, but as expressing our state personally or positively before God; as in Heb. ix. 14; x. 22.

† I may not have a good conscience toward myself; if I may so speak: I may not forgive myself—nor do I in one sense. But that does not affect my good conscience toward God, or the assurance that He has forgiven and accepted me.

over the sprinkled lintel proclaimed the value of the blood which had so sprinkled it.

Thus the resurrection speaks of the death; and therefore to the conscience.

There are two ordinances under the law which sweetly figured the resurrection and its virtue for the conscience.

In cleansing the leper, the living bird was let loose in the open field (Lev. xiv.). In the day of atonement, the living goat was sent away into a land of forgetfulness (Lev. xvi.). The happy bird took wing and departed far away from the scene of death, as into heavenly regions with heavenly freedom; it was let loose into the open air. The delivered goat, "the *scape-goat*," was sent from the place where judgment had been executed on its fellow into a land not inhabited, where there was none to accuse, none to remember or talk of sin and judgment, a land of separation.

For, just in this way, the conscience is borne, in the faith and understanding of the resurrection, into the light and freedom of heaven itself. Beautiful shadows these Levitical ordinances may be, and beautiful shadows they are; but they are but shadows, faint and distant resemblances of the great originals, which we get in this Scripture, which tell us that He who has borne away our sins carries the freed conscience with Him, so to speak, up to heaven. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him."

The conscience of a sinner believing in Jesus may now delight itself as in heaven, in the highest heavens, above "angels and authorities and powers," as a bird let loose in the open field.

Such is the atmosphere prepared by grace for a sinner's conscience. It is the *conscience* that is carried to heaven by the resurrection of Jesus. The believer is thus made "perfect as pertaining to the conscience." The conscience triumphs, it celebrates the resurrection as all its own. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God,

who also maketh intercession for us." Such is the language of a soul freed in conscience toward God (Rom. viii. 33-39). Such is the triumph of a sinner borne above "angels and authorities and powers" with Jesus, as a bird let loose into the air, or a goat dismissed into its natural wilderness. And liberty, perfect liberty, is the natural place for our souls to breathe in. The resurrection of Christ, and His being seated far above all heavens, having purged our sins, makes it so.

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—III.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL, in Marble Hall, Dumbarton Road, Glasgow.

READ Eph. vi. 1-4; Col. iii. 20, 21; 1 Tim. v. 3; 2 Tim. i. 4-6, iii. 1-5. I have read these passages as being the principal ones bearing directly upon the subject before us, viz., PARENTS and CHILDREN. I would remind you of what I think we saw last Sunday very clearly from the Scriptures, that all these earthly relationships are intended by God to be representative of the heavenly, the spiritual—the great realities of which these are truly but the shadows. Thus God would have the child, the son or daughter, to represent on earth "the Son of His love," who was ever obedient to His Father's will, who ever trusted in His Father's wisdom, love, and power, and who did always those things that pleased Him. Jesus was truly the wise Son that maketh a glad Father (Prov. xv. 20). The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ever delighted in that blessed Son, and that Son, as a necessary consequence, always found joy in His Father. Everything else might be against Him, but He always had His joy in God. We saw last Lord's-day that the instructions to the wife were summed up in one word—subjection; and those to the husband in the one word—love. So I think the word that seems to sum up the relationship of the child to the parent in the scripture is that of "obedience." It is still the subject place: and as we saw the Church's blessing lies in its subjection to the will of its Lord, and the wife's in subjection to her husband, so the child's blessing lies in subjection to the will of

its parent, as Jesus found all His joy and blessing in obeying the will of His Father. This is the first thing that all young children have to learn. They have to be taught it. They have to be instructed that, as the parent, being a child of God (for it is to such I speak), owns subjection to his Father in Heaven, so his child, in order to experience the blessing of God, must be in subjection to his father on earth. This relationship belongs to the foundation of all social order. God has made these fundamental relationships in social life very strong. How strong the tie that binds the husband and wife together! Alas, in these days when natural affection is at a low ebb, it may be found in many cases there is little affection between husband and wife; but this is not God's order, nor God's thought. The tie is indissoluble. It is the very closest, for if a man loves his wife he is said to love his own flesh. So also with parents and children. God has made the affection of the parent to the child, and the child to the parent, to be one of the very strongest bonds on earth.

It is only a symptom of that disintegration that sin has wrought, and is increasingly working, in these last days, that natural affection seems to be dying out. It is not gone. There is still a good deal of it in the world, and we bless God for it. But it grows less, and we are led to believe it will grow less as evil and the power of Satan abound in the world. But among God's people, grace, instead of diminishing these natural bonds and affections, rather binds them the closer, elevates, ennobles, and purifies them. A Christian child ought to love his parent beyond any other, and a Christian parent ought also so to love the child, because God has shown us what is the love and subjection of His dear Son to Him, and also His love and care over that beloved Son and over all those who are in Him.

I would ask you now to turn again to Eph. vi. You notice in the second verse we read that the commandment under the law is referred to by the Spirit of God. We do not often have any of the ten commandments brought forward in this definite way in the New Testament. But here we see that the mind of God does not change. His commandments were good for Israel, and they are

good for us also. This one is referred to as being the first commandment to which God attached a promise. You see by this how the Spirit of God in the New Testament teaches us to look carefully at the words of the Old Testament. Modern criticism reproaches God and His Word by putting the Old Testament at the bar of human reason, criticising it and declaring it to be full of mistakes. But we find no such way of dealing with the Old Testament Scriptures in the New. Here they are uniformly spoken of with the utmost reverence by the Lord and His servants, and always referred to as an infallible authority, against which there can be no appeal. The very words are noted, and even the order of the words is in some cases specially pointed out. The fact of this being the first of the ten commandments to which God attached a promise is dwelt upon in order to give it special weight with children who seek to please God. And what is the promise? "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

This is not an earthly dispensation: our inheritance is not like that of Israel in the land of Canaan, or on the earth at all; our hope and expectation is in the heavens. Nevertheless I have no doubt whatever that the Spirit of God really intended that the words here should be taken as they are given: that it is a very great blessing and privilege from God, even in this dispensation, to live long on the earth. It is our one opportunity to serve Him, to glorify Him, to be the means of winning souls for Him, to be the means of blessing to His people in leading them into the knowledge of His will and His ways. With all this, and the coming recompense in view, it must be an inestimable blessing to live long on the earth. I believe it will be found that, although these things cannot be taken without exception—there are exceptions to every rule, and God in His sovereignty does according to His will—nevertheless it will be found that as a rule those who honour their father and mother receive blessing from God and have their lives of usefulness prolonged.

And notice the word here is not simply "obey," it is a word of much wider scope than that. It is "honour." If you honour a parent, that necessarily includes obedience; for if there is no obedience there is no honour.

But the word "honour" means far more than obedience. There may be obedience of a sullen nature and of a legal character, but not of love, not of delight. It is of the Son of God that it is written, "I delight to do Thy will." This is more than mere legal obedience. God complained of Israel, "If I be a Father, where is Mine honour?" (Mal. i. 6). Israel refused to render Jehovah the honour that was due to a Father; but His own dear Son gave Him the honour, and therefore His obedience was the obedience of delight. Lively, hearty obedience is that which brings blessing to the child and joy to the parent, and nothing else does.

But "honour" includes more than this; it includes a respectful way of acting and speaking to and of parents. In these last days perhaps few things are more observable than the dishonouring way that parents are spoken of and to. In many cases the father is not called father, but "the governor," the only thing recognised being his place of authority. The mother is not called mother, but "the old lady," or some such irreverent name. "Father" and "mother" are sacred titles; but the terms nowadays in common use show that God's thoughts of the honour that is due to the father and mother are not apprehended.

I would refer again to 1 Tim. vi., and ask you to note that word, "To show piety at home" and "to requite their parents." Now, this is a word for children of maturer years. What I have been speaking of so far has been rather for young children, and might perhaps have been more appropriately spoken in the Sunday school, although there are some here young enough to receive the benefit; but the words I now refer to are applicable to those who are of maturer years, but are still children in the sense of having parents alive—such as a widowed mother, and perhaps a grandmother.* The word is "to requite their parents." Oh, dear young people, you do not know what it is to have a parent's care, and a parent's anxiety, and a parent's labour for their child! You little know what you cost your parents when you were infants. You little know the weary hours of labour to keep you in comfort and that you might lack

* The word rendered "nephews" might be "grandchildren."

nothing ; the nights of anxious watching when you were sick, of which you never thought again when you were well ; the groanings of a burdened heart that have been poured out in secret to God about you. You little know what you cost your parents !

It is well for you young people to consider these things, and that it is the will of God that you should have the privilege of *requiting* to some extent that care and labour. And if your parents are spared to you till they are old and infirm, and they need your care and your support, grudge it not, but count it your privilege and joy to support them ; recognise it as a responsibility that God has laid upon you to requite your parents, to see that they lack for nothing that you can possibly provide them with, to see that in all respects you honour them and give them joy as they sought when you were young to care for you, and to give you all that was good, and to make you happy. You will find in this there is blessing. I never knew one yet that honoured and cared for their parents that God did not bless. I have known others that disobeyed God's command, when cursed selfishness triumphed, and they have been brought to sorrow. Depend upon it, those that respect not, honour not, and support not their parents when they need their care are disowning a claim that God has put upon them, and they will surely come to grief.

We ought to observe the ways of God. In this dispensation God has withdrawn further from immediate interference with the course of things on earth than in any previous period. He works no miracles ; He does no wonders that the natural man can perceive. Even that recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, the shipwreck of the apostle Paul—the last piece of history we get in the book—no miracle was wrought. They were all brought safe to land, and faith could see the hand of God as plainly as if a miracle had been wrought. The world might say it was all chance, and see no wonder about it ; but faith could see it was the hand of God. If your eyes are open to observe the providence of God you may yet discern His recompenses and judgments, and oftentimes the repayment of evil to men's faces, although not in the same apparent way as when Elijah called fire down from heaven. It is our

privilege to watch God's ways in His all-wise providence in the world and among His people. Therefore I say any whose eyes are open to observe these things will find that still there is truth in this promise of God to those who honour their father and their mother.

Just a word or two in the book of Proverbs xiii. 1—"A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."

The Lord Jesus Christ was the "wise Son." He gave ear to His Father's instruction, and He did always those things that pleased Him. Antichrist will be the scorner, that heareth not rebuke, and in his day, when men are gnawing their tongues for pain, with these very tongues they will "*blaspheme God.*" Every child is walking in the way of the one or the other. He is either a child that is hearing his father's instruction and profits thereby, or else scorning rebuke and taking his own way. The one is the way of Christ, the other the way of Antichrist.

DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART.

"**T**HE heart is deceitful above all things," saith the Lord. The "old man" is corrupt according to its *deceitful* lusts. It often seems to be serving God, when it is really gratifying self-will and fostering pride. It will put knowledge and feeling in the place of faith, and peace in circumstances in the room of peace with God through Christ. It will make the care of the church, success in service, benevolence, &c., so many *springs* of joy instead of God. The flesh will seek gratification in anything but God ; it will traffic in truth, to the neglect of the Truth, and resort to any stratagem rather than trust God. Again, sometimes lusts and rebellion lie dormant, so that evil tempers and desires seem gone ; but temptations come and make lamentable discoveries. Israel, at the Red Sea, praised God heartily, and thought all misery was left behind ; but when God *proved* them in the wilderness, what unbelief, murmurings, rebellions, lust, and idolatry came forth !

THIS is the time of our faith ; the time of our knowledge is, as St. Paul says, to come, for at best now we see but "through a glass darkly."

A. N. G.

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—IX.

DAVID.

(Continued from page 88.)

III. FROM HIS FLIGHT TO THE DEATH OF SAUL. David was too well known and popular to long remain alone ; and the little band quickly increased in size. We read, " David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam ; and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him."

It is probable that, after David's escape, Saul began to persecute his kindred ; and we judge that it was for their own safety they thus came to David. His brethren had seen him anointed by Samuel, but not believing, not understanding, or being jealous of the young brother, they had scarcely treated him with common kindness, and had sought to hinder him in his fight with Goliath (*1 Sam. xix. 28*). But now things are changed. It may be the force of events had compelled them to recognise in this stripling God's anointed ; at least, from whatever motive, they cast in their lot with David.

During the years of our Lord's ministry His kinsmen did not believe on Him ; yea, more, on one occasion they endeavoured to restrain Him by force, thinking He was mad (*John vii. 4* ; *Mark iii. 21*). But after His resurrection they evidently accepted Him as the Messiah, for we find some of them occupying prominent places in the Church (*1 Cor. ix. 5* ; *Gal. i. 19*, &c.).

But beside his kinsmen others gathered unto David. " And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented [*bitter of soul*], gathered themselves unto him ; and he became a captain over them " (*1 Sam. xxii. 2*). A motley crowd this ! and one hard to be managed. But God's chosen king is equal to the occasion. He restrained and ruled over them, and, through being with David, every one becomes more or less a hero. It is like a spiritual tonic to read of what some of these men did for *their* David. He completely won their hearts, and probably not one but would have willingly laid down his life for the sake of his loved leader (read *1 Chron. xi.*). Oh, brethren, shall OUR David have less true-

hearted devotion and self-denying service from us ? Surely not !

David, in retirement, shadows forth Christ on His Father's throne, waiting till His enemies be made His footstool. During this interval He is attracting sinners to Himself. And it is no great stretch of the imagination to see, in these distressed, bitter of soul debtors, pictures of ourselves. The descriptions of our condition in unregenerate days, in the Word of God, are anything but flattering. But, thank God, we have been given to know our indebtedness and the impossibility of ever meeting it ourselves ; we have been made discontented with the service and rule of the usurper ; and bitterness of soul on account of sin has been ours. This was necessary ere we would have come to the Lamb of God for salvation. But IN HIM we have found all that our souls needed. Again, we may rejoice that it is to *a Person* we have, and still do, come. " And I," said our Lord, " if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men *unto Me*."

Just as these men gathered unto David, so the Church is called to share with Christ in His rejection. For the fact is, not only *was* our Lord rejected, *He still is* by the great majority of those who know of Him. But the only rallying point for the redeemed is *the name of Christ* ; not ordinances, creeds, ceremonies, or preachers, but our risen Lord Himself (*Matt. xviii. 20*). It has been the bane of the Church, in all ages, that she has forgotten the simple fact that this is not her reigning time. The world still refuses to submit to our Lord ; and in the measure that we are faithful to Him we shall continually be made to feel this.

Concerning an effete, though God-given system, it was written, " Let us go forth therefore UNTO HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach " (*Heb. xiii. 13*). We admit that " the camp " here, in the first place, means the worn-out Mosaic economy. And yet how sadly does " history repeat itself." The sin, the rebellion, the apostasy of Israel, have their counterpart at the present time in the professing Church. Who for a moment thinks that the Church has continued in God's goodness ? Comparing things around us with the Scriptures of truth, we must write—*Failure ! Failure !* Indeed, the great professing body

seems to occupy, at this moment, an almost analogous position to Judaism just before the destruction of Jerusalem.

And the voice of the Spirit sounds loud and clear, "Come out of her, My people!" For, in reference to a Christianity which has the form, but denies the power of godliness, the emphatic injunction is, "FROM SUCH TURN AWAY!" Let each one of us see to it, not only that we go forth without the camp, but that we go forth TO HIM. And not only on the first day of the week, by gathering unto Him at His table, but every day, in all our words and ways, may we manifest our pilgrim character.

"My Lord, my Master, help me
To walk apart with Thee,
Outside the camp, where only
Thy beauty I may see.
Far from the world's loud turmoil;
Far from its busy din;
Far from its praise and honour,
Its unbelief and sin."

And then, when the kingdom shall come, those who, like David's men, shared in the suffering and rejection, shall have part in His glory and exaltation. Every little thing purposed, or done, or suffered for Him, shall then be remembered and rewarded. And if we but get His smile and approval on that day, what will it not compensate for? It has been truly said, that "when the glories of heaven fill the soul, a little of earth goes a long way!" May His personal beauty and the coming glories so fill us that we may henceforth live, not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us, who rose again, and is coming to gather us to Himself in the air.

IV. DAVID REIGNING. These years in the wilderness were needed by David; they doubtless deepened his character, and enabled him to bear, with steady hand, the full cup which was put therein. Instructed by Jehovah, David went up to Hebron, and there *the men of Judah* received him as their king (2 Sam. ii. 1-4). Not till several years had elapsed did he become king of all Israel. When they crowned him they give three reasons for so doing: (1) "We are thy bone and thy flesh." No stranger, but one of themselves, who knew them well. (2) "When Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." He was no untried man; again

and again he had proved his fitness for the high position. (3) "And the Lord said to thee, 'Thou shalt feed My people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.'" Thus last, though not least, they recognised him as the one appointed by Jehovah (2 Sam. v. 1-5; compare Deut. xvii. 15).

How beautifully these conditions will be met by the Lord Jesus must be apparent to all. We must not enlarge on them.

When Christ shall come, too, the order will be the same. He will come first to distressed Judah at the time of their unprecedented troubles, and the faithful remnant among them will discern in Jesus of Nazareth their Messiah. It is said distinctly, "The Lord shall save the tents of Judah first," &c. (Zech. xii. 7). In this connection the whole chapter should be read.

One of David's first acts, after his coronation, was to take the stronghold of Jerusalem from his enemies, and make it his chief city (2 Sam. v. 6-9). When Christ shall be manifested, Jerusalem will be surrounded by the armies of Antichrist. But the Son of God shall shine forth in His brightness and destroy all these enemies, and then He will set up His earthly throne there (see Zech. xiv. 14; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Micah iv. 1, 2), and then shall be fulfilled the word spoken by the angel before His birth, "And the Lord God shall give unto Him THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID" (Luke i. 32). This is not a throne in heaven, but one on earth, at Jerusalem.

After this David waxed greater and greater, for God was with him. He conquered and subdued all the nations, and they became tributary to Israel. On a far wider scale, ere long, shall be the conquests of the true King of Israel and of the nations, and for the thousand years shall they enjoy His beneficent rule.

We have thus glanced at some of the chief points in which David was a type of Christ; but we cannot read his history without perceiving that he was a man of like passions to ourselves. Few have sinned so deeply as David; few have repented so truly. His language has become the natural expression of penitents of all times. But we have neither the time nor the inclination to dwell on his sins and failings. Among the sons of men God has had but one perfect servant, "the

Man Christ Jesus." It is well to go step by step through the eleventh of Hebrews, but not to stay there. There are many bright examples, but the only one that in everything we can follow is Christ—"looking unto Jesus." And we look in order to follow and become like Him. .

May He again whisper in power to our souls, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." As such, our Lord, we wait for Thee. J. N. C.

A MISSIONARY CONFERENCE.

A FRIEND at Cardiff has favoured us with the following notes, which contain so many points of general interest that we are glad to insert and commend them to the notice of our readers.

On 31st May these meetings were held in the Adamsdown Hall, when our esteemed brethren Dr. Baedeker, Dr. Maclean, Henry Payne (from Spain), and others, addressed large gatherings of believers, who felt it to be a season of deepest exercise of soul, as these servants of the Lord reminded them of His great commission : " Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Then, of the effects of divine grace upon those early Christians, who first "gave themselves unto the Lord," and then, "*constrained by His love*," ministered unto Him, and then to the members of His body, of their substance, and, even in circumstances of deep poverty, "abounded unto the riches of their liberality" (see 2 Cor. viii., ix.; Phil. iv.). And also from whom the Word of God, and the testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, was "echoed forth in every place," by men who hazarded their lives in their Master's service, and were ready to spend and be spent in ministering to fellow-saints, and in preaching the glad tidings of God's great salvation to their perishing fellow-creatures.

Special attention was directed to the apostle's words : "I AM A DEBTOR, both to the Jew and barbarian," and to the fact that this DEBT is inseparable from our privilege as heirs of the grace of life; and that ye are "not your own, for ye are bought with a price," was impressed upon our hearts with solemn earnestness, and all felt it

to be most needful truth for the Laodicean days in which we live.

Dr. Baedeker gave a deeply interesting account of his visits to the persecuted Christians in the south-east of

RUSSIA.

Many were encouraged by his simple and hearty testimony of the Holy Spirit's work in converting sinners through the preached Gospel and the circulation of the Scriptures. Attention was drawn to the sad fact that whilst the authorities in benighted Russia allow the Scriptures to be circulated, they persecute and imprison those who desire to preach and practise the teaching of God's Word. He mentioned cases of believers who sacrificed the comfort of home and earthly prospects rather than agree to be silent in their testimony, and reminded us that it was the true apprehension of their being DEBTORS to the God of all grace and to their fellow-creatures that made them "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Seasonable exhortation was given to the saints in our favoured British Isles to respond to the claims of divine love and grace.

The consciousness of how little we, as sinners saved by grace, respond to the claims of redeeming love was deeply impressed on our souls by these meetings; but earnest prayer was offered that the Lord would

"Kindle within us a holy desire,

Like that which was found in His people of old ;
Who felt all His love, and whose hearts were on fire,
Whilst they waited in patience His face to behold."

And as the result of this conference there should be *more practical* "FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL," and helping, *after a godly sort*, His servants who "have gone forth for His Name's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles."

To further this it was suggested that in every assembly of God's gathered people a special evening should be set apart, and known as the

"MISSIONARY PRAYER MEETING."

And, wherever convenient, it was proposed that this should be held on the first Monday evening of every month. Also, that at the commencement of this meeting some brother should read suitable extracts from letters received, or from "Echoes of Service," &c., to

acquaint fellow-saints with cases to be remembered in prayer and thanksgiving.

In connection with this it was suggested that additional interest might be secured if a map of the world was suspended on the wall at these meetings, and the *locality* where brethren are labouring pointed out when their names are mentioned. Also, that at the close of these monthly meetings a collection should be made of the offerings of the Lord's people, and this be apportioned to His work in other lands (or occasionally *at home*), as determined by brethren taking oversight in the assembly, and the sum and its destination be named to the assembly at the next missionary prayer meeting. Better still, if each assembly decided at the beginning of every month to communicate with one of the Lord's servants at home and abroad, sending the month's contributions direct to those named, with a loving letter of encouragement. This plan has been followed for many years in some assemblies with good result.

It was remarked that where assemblies *conscientiously* discharged these duties to the Lord and His servants heralding the Gospel in other lands the Church was generally found in a healthy state and Gospel work prosperous. The principle unfolded in 2 Cor. ix. 6—“Sowing bountifully, and reaping bountifully”—bore this out.

Would it not be well if the readers of this paper made similar proposals for the consideration of this deeply important subject in their respective assemblies, so that the stigma may not rest upon any gatherings of God's people that they do not set apart periodical meetings to specially remember their brethren labouring in other lands, and give for their sustenance, freely, “*as the Lord hath prospered them*”?

DISTRICT CONFERENCES.

It was further suggested that similar CONFERENCES (*i.e.*, afternoon and evening meetings, with an interval for tea) should be arranged in DISTRICTS when brethren from other lands are willing to visit; and that dear brethren who are generally visiting this country to recruit their strength would, by some such prudent measures as these, be spared needless correspondence, journeyings, and public speaking, which are matters demanding our unselfish and prayerful consideration.

E. H. B.

THE WOMAN IN THE CROWD.

I HAVE been lately comforted by a certain feature in the story of the poor woman in the crowd, as we may call her (see Mark v.).

The crowd was around Jesus. It made Him its object. Carnally or naturally, and not spiritually, I grant; but still the crowd was making Jesus its object. It was a religious movement, though there might have been little of real life in it.

Much people followed Jesus, thronging Him and pressing Him; and I ask myself, is it not so very eminently at this moment? What a stir about religion there is! The various actions of hand and foot, and pen and tongue, all about religion and the church.

But this crowd operated rather as a hindrance to the poor woman; it made her approach to the Lord somewhat more difficult.

Comforting, however, to see that He was as much at the bidding of faith, though in the crowd, as when He was alone with the poor Samaritan at the well of Sychar. Solitude or bustle, retirement, or the crowd, made no difference in Him, though it did in the approaches of His people. The Samaritan had a great natural advantage; but the Lord is independent of natural advantages and above hindrances, and this poor woman, and the son of Timeus, and Zaccheus of Jericho, shali, each one for himself, prove that Jesus heals in the midst of all this religious and worldly stir.

The crowd was made up of very different materials. Jairus, with a heart full of faith and expectation, was in it. Apostles too, and disciples, as well as the large assemblage attracted and borne on the spirit of the times or by the occasion. Morally, all like the scene of action at this moment around ourselves! A Spirit-led sinner is there also, having Jesus and His healing power before the thoughts and desires of her soul. And the crowd could not hinder the Saviour from personally waiting on her, and in the midst of it all precious communications pass between them.

Is not this comfort now-a-days! What is surrounding Jesus this moment but a like religious stir? The crowd is again making

Him its object. Meetings, lectures, journeys, books, societies, conversation, activities of all kinds, are full of Jesus; and yet how well the heart knows that most of this is carnal and worldly. And how surely it also feels that all this is a hindrance to the soul. Often do we sigh in spirit for the solitudes of Sychar; for scenes and seasons where Jesus was less noticed by the world, less the object of public attention, more manifestly disallowed and rejected.

Let such thoughts, however, be hushed. Let faith take up the Lord in the circumstances in which it finds Him, whatever they be, and assure itself that no natural hindrance can prevail. Crowds cannot stop the flow of His virtue, though they may perplex a little the way of approach to Him, and hinder, in their measure, our bringing our vessels to that fountain—our necessities to that fulness.

“HIM THAT WAS VALUED.”

HOW feebly can we enter into the infinite value that God sets upon Christ—the shining out of the Father’s glory; by whom also He made the worlds; the Son of His love, whose meat it was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. We get as far as the blind man of John ix., “One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see,” and it is unspeakably blessed thus to have our eyes opened, but it is another thing to have fellowship in God’s appreciation of the obedience unto death by which our deliverance was wrought. When God’s heart yearned over a perishing world, and “He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor,” then Christ stood in the awful breach that sin had made, “Lo, I come . . . I delight to do Thy will, O My God.” As we reap the fruit of that wondrous propitiation, when His soul was made an offering for sin, do we know in our souls something of the sweet savour to God shown forth in the “male without blemish” consumed on the altar of burnt offering, and of the frankincense wholly burned in the one memorial meat offering? “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation.” Let us look a moment beyond the thought of a personal salvation, and hear the voice of God as

the disciples heard it when they were shown on the mount of transfiguration the foretaste of the coming kingdom. There was nothing spoken of salvation there, or of rewards of service, although salvation was the ground of all the blessed revelation. God spoke to His saved ones of that which filled His own heart. “This is My beloved Son.” Centuries have passed away since the disciples heard it, and still ever, as we get within the shadow of the glory cloud of His presence, we hear the same words. And as the ages roll on, God will but open up fuller and richer revelations of the one blessed Person in whom His soul delights. He wants to bring us into fellowship with His own joy that our joy may be full, that He may cause our tiny vessels to run over with that which fills and satisfies His own heart.

We read in the law of the offerings, “The fire shall ever be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.” Whether it be the completeness of the one sacrifice for sin, typified in the fire of the sin offering, or the preciousness of His obedience unto death shown forth in the burnt offering, the sweet savour is ever ascending afresh to God. We also read, “In the place where they kill the burnt offering shall they kill the trespass offering.” It was one ground of meeting for God and the sinner. Again, in Leviticus v., we learn that if he that sinned was not able to bring a lamb, then he might bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons; and if he could not bring these, then the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour should be accepted for him. Infinite grace could accept the smallest offering, because large and small were alike laid upon the blood-sprinkled altar; yet have we not here, as in the law of the leper, the thought of different degrees of value? “If his hand cannot reach to the sufficiency of a lamb” (margin), then “such as he is able to get” is graciously accepted; the turtle dove or the fine flour pointing to the one sacrifice, and consumed on the one altar, where the blood had been. But yet the doves were not equal in value to the lamb, neither the fine flour to the doves. Each offerer, though he be equally accepted, is nevertheless personally identified with that which he brings.

May we not learn lessons of deep spiritual meaning here concerning our fellowship with

God in this one point that brings us into closest touch with Him, our value of Christ? We may not utter it, but He that searcheth the heart takes the testimony as we write it day by day by our thoughts and words and ways, on the passing tablet of time, our brief time of opportunity to make much of Christ. He took keen note of the price of His betrayal: "A goodly price that I was prized at of them." He takes keen note of our value of Him too. He knew the price of the alabaster box of ointment. Wondrous grace that He should prize it too much to let it pass. Alas, that we should be only half given to such surpassing love. May God help us henceforth, with heart and life, to say with Paul, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift," to join even now in the song of the redeemed ones round about the throne: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

A. E. W.

"FOR Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." It is this which gives abiding rest to our souls, and not what *our* thoughts about our own hearts may be. Faith never thinks of that which is worked in the heart by the Spirit as a ground of rest; it receives, loves, and apprehends what God has revealed about Jesus in whom *He* has *His* rest! We rest when we have the same thoughts of Jesus as God has. Human knowledge and intellect do not give us this rest; it is only taught by the Spirit of God.

Correspondence.

THE GENERAL ELECTION.

To the Editor of *The Witness*.

DEAR BROTHER,—I feel sure of your hearty agreement with what I am about to write, whether you may have thought of saying a word on the subject or not. Perhaps by the time the next number of the *Witness* is out the summons for a new Parliament may have gone forth, and the conflict of the General Election already have begun. Anyway it is evident that the whole kingdom will soon be stirred from one end to the other by rival claims of contending parties, and the efforts of these parties to return one member or another.

The high privilege and consequent responsibility of Christians to pray for kings and all in authority, and by implication to pray concerning all kinds of govern-

ment, is an abiding one, however little felt or appreciated; but there are times when, for this as for other things, there is a *special* call, and surely the present is such a time. While we rejoice in the blessed fact that it shall soon be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever," we should rejoice none the less in the assurance that the *present* title of our Lord is "The Prince (or Ruler) of the kings of the earth," and that already "all authority in heaven and on earth" is given to Him.

The knowledge that He is able to control the counsels of men, and to overrule all things for the furtherance of the counsels of the Most High (Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11), should encourage Christians to do their part in the holiest by giving themselves to special prayer, both in private and in public, that, amid all the strife of those who are contending for power, God will so restrain and order that what is for the good of the kingdom at large may be brought to pass. For "giving of thanks" we have abundant cause, however much we may see around us to mourn over. For the preservation of the Queen of this realm we would thank God, while we pray that His rich mercy for eternity may be her portion, as well as continued protection in the present time.

As an apostle did not hesitate to put believers *in remembrance* of what they already knew, so it may be well for us to remind one another that He whom the world has rejected, and still rejects, says of us, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." God in His infinite grace has called us unto "the fellowship of His Son," and "our citizenship is in heaven," from whence we are looking for Him. It is this heavenly calling that raises us above the politics of the world by making us strangers and pilgrims in it. It is sadly true that in the teaching of the majority of even Christian teachers the truth of the heavenly calling of the Church of God has no place, and consequently practical separation from the world is little known. If, therefore, we have learnt ever so little of the Church's calling and hope, it the more behoves us to make it manifest that we are separate from the world, and in fellowship with the rejected King. It should, indeed, be known that our position is not one of indifference; but that our part in these matters is that of intercession.—Yours sincerely in Christ,

W. H. BENNET.

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was truly thankful for the publication of Mr. G. F. Trench's letter on "the observance of the Lord's Supper" in this month's number of the *Witness*. So keenly have I and others felt the need of some special ministry on the subject that I was intending to have written to you on the same lines for that very number of your paper, but pressure on my time hindered my doing so, for which I am now very thankful, as nothing could be better and more exhaustive on the subject than G. F. T.'s letter.

Indeed, it leaves little more to be said, and I have only to add my entreaty to those who are in the habit of ministering at the Lord's table, that they will suffer this word of exhortation, and spare those who come together to remember our Lord from the infliction of addresses on walk and conduct, or, indeed, on any and

every conceivable subject, from the preaching of the Gospel down to inveighing against ritualism, or against sects and systems, and warnings against the advance of scepticism and infidelity.

As G. F. T. very truly says, these things are needed, and come in seasonably and acceptably in their right place.

But our spirits are disturbed, and our thoughts about our Lord diverted and upset, by the intrusion of some subject quite irrelevant to the object of our meeting together. If we had only to complain of this in those who are uninstructed in the truth of worship, we might hope that ministry on the subject might in time teach them to understand the purpose for which we meet, and what is suitable to that object. But, alas! it is not always so, and we find sometimes dear brethren whom we love and esteem above many, and whom we could in no wise spare from our fellowship, who are frequent offenders in this respect, and if they ever grasped the thought of what true worship is, seem at times to completely forget it, and turn on to any subject that may seem important to themselves, quite forgetting the consideration that is due to those who want to remember the *Lord only*.

If, as G. F. T. says, they would only wait until after the Lord's Supper was over, and then make their appeal to those assembled as to what their walk and conversation ought to be, on the very ground of the claims of Him we have been seeking to remember, their words would be words of power, and not words to disturb and distress those who want to worship.

I thought on reading, to-day, Jeremiah v. 4, 5, of how one might be induced to excuse this on the ground that it was only "the poor in knowledge and the foolish who know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God," who thus transgress; and turning to the great men, or those instructed in the way of the Lord, appeal to them in the matter; but they also "have broken the yoke and burst the bonds." We must not boast in our privilege of open ministry in worship if we fail in subjection one to another, lest God refuse to recognise the liberty we claim to be the liberty of the Spirit, and He have to utter such a record against us as we read in verse 10 of the same chapter in Jeremiah, "Take away her battlements for they are not the Lord's."—Yours in the Lord,

5 Upper Fitzwilliam Street,
DUBLIN, 10th June, 1892.

F. C. BLAND.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45.

Is it scriptural to use leavened bread at the Lord's Supper?

Are there definite scriptures to warrant the singing of hymns when the church is gathered together on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread?

What is the exact meaning of "grace for grace" (John i. 16)?

Does any scripture teach that the Holy Spirit is present to rule, in an especial manner, at the meeting for remembering the Lord?

What is worship?

Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

Kindly explain 3 John 7, "Taking nothing of the Gentiles."

Are we to understand from Eph. v. 26 that the Church will be sanctified and cleansed apart from the responsibility of those who compose it to own and subject themselves to Christ as Lord?

What is the scriptural way for an assembly to raise money for the Lord's work and workers?

QUESTION 416.—Is it consistent for a Christian to exercise his right in voting at either local or general elections?

Ans. A.—It is not without significance that whilst in Scripture detailed instructions are given for the behaviour of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, and also *subjects*, no instructions are given for the guidance of Rulers. The same may be said of the whole subject of worldly politics. The Christian who enters the sphere of politics, with all the party contention and endless questions as to "men and measures" inseparable therefrom, is like a mariner who, so long as he abides in the course laid down for him, finds every detail anticipated on his chart and infallible guidance by his compass, but who, having deliberately departed from the prescribed course, is left to the mercy of unknown currents, only guiding his vessel by guess-work as to his whereabouts—shifting his course to escape a shallow he runs foul of a rock, and after wasted time over fruitless endeavours to attain his end he fails even in his attempts to regain his proper course.

We see no middle course between seeking to influence the world power by vote, and seeking, as Rome has ever done, to control the powers of the world in her own interests.

The subject is a large one and to discuss it fully would involve a volume, for those who think they see in political privileges a legitimate way for the Christian to influence the world for good, have produced many arguments in support of their position; but it is impossible to treat it exhaustively in the limits of reply to Questions.

Many times have we seen great political calamities averted and blessings secured, not through the influence of the votes of Christians, but in direct answer to the prayers of the children of God. If we but realised the power that is committed to us in 1 Tim. ii. 1-3, the very warrant of the King to touch His golden sceptre (Esther v. 2, 3), we should estimate the power of a party vote at its proper worthlessness.

J. R. C.
[See also "The General Election" in "Correspondence."]

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

TO those who are called to be *worshippers* the answer to this question is of supreme importance, and the consideration of it calls for more than a brief note in a column of replies to questions. The attempt to answer it makes us feel how feeble are even our best thoughts on this great subject, and also to long that we may know more of being *worshippers* indeed.

Examples of worship are numerous in Scripture, and they are given for our instruction. Abraham and Isaac went to worship (Gen. xxii. 5), and their worship was a costly act of obedience to the command of God—the father giving up his greatest treasure, and the son yielding up himself in response to God's requirement.

When stroke after stroke had fallen upon Job "he fell down upon the ground and worshipped" in perfect submission, saying, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The worship of Israel was arranged by Divine appointment, and consisted of prescribed offerings to their God and King. Only for very special occasions was any form of words given; but in the utterance of the Israelite over his basket of firstfruits, when presenting it at the altar of God, we find the prominent features of true worship—the confession of his own utter unworthiness of all that he had received, and the acknowledgment of what Jehovah had, in pure mercy, wrought on behalf of His people.

Three times in the year did God require Israel to appear before Him, that they might remember and own the great things He had done for them, give of their substance as He had blessed them, and rejoice before the Lord their God.

In some of the many calls to worship in the book of Psalms there seem to be special references to these appointments of God. Take as an example Ps. xcvi., which calls upon us to sing "a new song": "Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name: bring an offering, and come into His courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth."

There is one Psalm that is called "David's

Psalm of Praise" (cxlv.), and in simple and forcible language it sets forth what God *is* and what God *does*. Is not this giving to Him the glory due to His Name?

Thus it is also in the Song of Hannah—that inspired outpouring of her heart when her prayer had been answered, and she had dedicated her son to the Lord (1 Sam. ii.). It is equally so in the song of the father of the Lord's forerunner when he had received the fulfilment of God's gracious promise, and in the song of that "highly-favoured" one who in faith received the greater promise before it was fulfilled (Luke i.).

But it is when we reach the book of Revelation that we seem to learn most fully what worship is. God has been pleased to give us this unveiling of the future that we may both rejoice in hope of His glory and cherish now the spirit that will characterise us then. The *mention* of the Lord Jesus in chap. i. calls forth the ascription of glory there given (verses 5, 6), and the *sight* of the Lamb causes the outburst of the new song in chap. v. If chaps. iv. and v. reveal to us the glory of the throne and Him who sits thereon, they equally show us what will be the response from all redeemed and unfallen creatures. As we read them we can but *feel* that we are in spirit in the heavenly temple, and seek to do now what we shall do when we are really there. In chap. vii. we see the redeemed giving God the glory due to His Name by ascribing their salvation to Him and to the Lamb, while, again, angels fall down and worship. So in many places, especially chap. xix., in connection with the display of God's judgment and the joy of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

We have only glanced at a few of the many scriptures that answer the question, What is worship? Worship is the outflow of adoration from a soul that is satisfied with God, and finding such delight in Him as leads to submission to His will, obedience to His Word, and a hearty response to His claims. God has had one *perfect* worshipper on earth, and Psalm xvi. was the language of His heart. We are called to follow Him. In His case obedience, submission, response, and adoration were all perfect. In our case they will be perfect in the future; but they should be *now* things of growth, and they will be as we make it our business to walk before God.

As a feeble sense of what worship is in God's estimation will make us think little of rendering it to Him, so a growing conviction of how precious it is in His sight will lead us to value highly the privilege of being permitted to draw near to Himself, through Christ, as His worshippers. We do well, therefore, to consider that the worship of His redeemed ones stands next to the worship of "His own Son." In the worship of holy angels He indeed delights; but the worship of His *children* ever speaks to Him of that great sacrifice which alone could make them worshippers. Their worship, moreover, is the fruit of the Spirit by whom alone they cry, "Abba, Father." Thus is it doubly precious in His sight.

One great feature of our worship is *confessing to the Name of the Lord Jesus* (Heb. xiii. 15). The *Name* of Jesus is expressive of what He is, and, as in former days the offering upon God's altar, which was typical of Christ, was a sweet savour to God, so the telling out before God of the perfections of Christ and His finished sacrifice ever brings sweet fragrance into His presence. We thus "bring an offering and come into His courts." We *confess* what *we were* according to Isa. liii. 6, but we also *confess* the worth and fulness and preciousness of the Name of Jesus; we own that Name as *our only* hope, the very stay of our souls, and ointment poured forth to our broken spirits.

True worship is *spontaneous*. All attempts to get up worship are like putting strange fire upon God's altar. To do what would hinder worship is like seeking to put out the fire that God has kindled. For, though we cannot get it up, we may either cherish or hinder it. The haste of the day, and many other things, tend to hinder that secret communion with God by which alone it can grow. If we knew more of worship in private we should know more of its blessedness when we assemble to show forth our Lord's death, and how jealous we should be over that worship which is so "acceptable to God"! . How would *mere talk*, whether to God or to one another, be banished from such a meeting! How we should shrink from putting even true ministry of the Word in the place of worship! How we should seek so to help one another that each might be able to say, "My *soul* doth magnify the Lord, and my *spirit* hath rejoiced in God my Saviour"! W. H. B.

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—IV.

PARENTS AND CHILDREN—(*continued*).

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL in Marble Hall, Glasgow.

THEN take another passage, Prov. xv. 20, "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother." Now, you know there are a great many lads, who have a sort of respect for their father, but they think it beneath them to have respect for their mother.

Perhaps your father or mother are **not** altogether worthy of respect; but it is pleasing to God you should honour them all the same. Hear them reverentially, and, as far as you can, seek to please them.

Another passage I would refer to is Prov. xix. 27—"Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge." In the Epistle to the Hebrews, twelfth chapter, there is a quotation from the book of Proverbs which says: "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son," &c. (verse 5). So that there again you have an instance of the reverential way in which the Spirit of God calls us to regard the Old Testament. Here, as noted in Heb. xii. 5 concerning another scripture, God is speaking to you and me as His children—"My son," &c. We ought, therefore, to listen attentively.

Where are the words of knowledge? They are in this book we call the Bible. "Cease, my son," to hear modern higher criticism, to read books that bring the precious Word of God down to the level of a human production, set it at the bar of human reason, and criticise and condemn it. Cease to have anything to do with such teachers and their works. Occupy yourself with "the Word of God," "the words of knowledge," "the words of wisdom," and cease to hear any other kind of instruction. Many a one has taken up a book through mere curiosity and has received a fiery dart into their minds, and a stain upon their conscience, which they have never quite got rid of.

Prov. xxii. 15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."

I am not speaking to parents; but let chil-

dren ever understand this, that because they are children of Adam, because they are born of a corrupt stock, therefore it is that foolishness is bound in the heart of a child. Even the little child of two years old will show its pride, its self-will, its determination to have its own way. It will show its disrespect for father and mother, and slap its mother in the face. Such is human nature! The very same thing that develops itself into what we see around us—the total disregard for parental authority. In the child of a year old you will see the very same spirit, and unless it is dealt with firmly, perseveringly, lovingly, it will go on and develop to the child's own sorrow and to the grief of the parents. However pleasant they may be to their parents, foolishness is there, and God would have parents to use the wisdom that He has given, that this foolishness might be curbed and driven out of them.

Now, just a word upon 2 Tim. iii. "In the last days," and I am persuaded we are already in "the last days"—they are said to be "perilous times"—perhaps more intelligibly, "difficult times," that is, times in which it is more difficult than ever it was to know and carry out the will of God. Here we have drawn, by the Spirit of God, a picture of the "difficult times," and I only ask you, in the present connection, to notice that one of the features is "disobedience to parents." You find on every hand that young people will have their own way. They will choose their own companions, their own amusements, their own path in life, if they are permitted to do so. They will go from their parents' roof because they resent and will not brook the good and gentle restraint of parental care. What is the consequence? Many a lad has gone off to sea, and has had to rough it aboard ship, and then come back, having found out it is not better than home. Another goes into the army. He is attracted by the red coat and medal. And he who would not submit to the reproof of his parents is ordered shortly to walk straight up to the cannon's mouth! Wherein is this better than if he had remained at home? Only that he has got gratifying his own will. He has no more liberty or privileges; everything is diminished that was for his good. He has got his own will, that is all! You will find, young friends, that your

own will is the hardest chain you can be bound with. "Ephraim is joined to his idols. Let him alone." To be left alone, left, to the despotism of your own will, is the severest chastening that God can send.

It is to this despotism of self-will that all things are tending in this world.

The world will not own the authority of the One whom God has made both Lord and Christ.

The cry is "liberty, equality, and fraternity," and socialism is its embodiment; and its popularity consists in its proposal to give man the greatest scope for the exercise of his own unrestrained will. But where is there harder bondage than that of the "trade's union," which denies a man the right of working for his support if he bow not to its authority?

And out of the elements of human will there will develop the last great dominion upon earth—the rule of one who shall be the people's choice, and from whom will be expected the perfection of liberty and good will; but, alas, instead thereof, only direst bondage. The image he sets up must be worshipped, and his mark—the mark of servitude to Satan—must be received on penalty of death and prohibition to buy or sell. Neither religious nor commercial liberty here. Man's self-will culminates in bondage.

To this end all things social and political are now tending, and the prevalence of disobedience to parents is one of the signs that the end is approaching.

Now let us glance a little at the other side of the question—God's instructions to the parents. Eph. vi. 4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Col. iii. 21, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." I doubt not there is some very serious danger that parents are hardly alive to, or there would not be this twice-repeated charge not to discourage or provoke their children. There is such a thing as a parent asserting his will in such an arbitrary and inconsiderate way that it simply provokes opposition. Even in the assembly those who rule may provoke opposition by asserting what they believe to be the will of God *in a domineering way*.

Children have got feelings as well as parents,

and love would consult these feelings and not ruthlessly wound them. Even if the necessity for punishment arise the child should be made to feel that it is the doing of love and conscience, and not a mere arbitrary asserting of authority. Chastening is very often the outcome of the heated provoked spirit of the parents. Oh, that parents would learn before they deal with children seriously about faults to deal with God first. In this way there would be less of the provoking.

Notice, the burden is laid here upon the father. This must be taken in connection with what we were looking at last Lord's day. In God's mind the father and mother are one, and must never on any account, in discussing matters, show differences of judgment in the presence of the children. If they see that their parents are not at one they are quick to discern who is on their side, and well they know how to take advantage of it. God's thought is that the father is the head of the house, and the mother is in all her ways to be subject to, and in sympathy with, the father. Hence, the instructions as to bringing up the children are to the father, and the responsibility lies with him; but it is of universal observation, and seen clearly in Scripture, that the mother, in the earlier years of children, has necessarily far more influence over them than the father: hence the importance of father and mother being of one mind—the father endorsing the instruction of the mother, and the mother so acting that she knows her authority will be upheld. A father and mother must be one in their authority or the house goes to wreck.

The same principle holds good as to rule in the assembly. Those having oversight ought first to be of one mind. Their differences should be discussed quietly among themselves, as a father and mother would discuss their differences apart from their children. Then, being of one mind, authority is easily maintained, and there is not the same danger of provoking to wrath.

Notice that expression, "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Nurture gives the idea of nourishment, or the supply of every kind of need.

The grace of God has provided for all our requirements, both as guilty sinners and as

needy creatures. We have daily recurring needs, both of our souls and our bodies, and the Lord provides for all.

Admonition gives the idea of the claims of the Lord: His expressed, revealed will as binding upon those who are the subjects of His nurture. Thus the nurture and admonition go together, but the nurture must come first.

Thus, by word and life, by teaching and example, the parent is to set before the children the grace of the Lord as the One who provides for every need, and the claims of the Lord to the hearty obedience of every part of His revealed will.

It is the privilege of parents to count upon God to bless such upbringing. He has given His word, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

It is matter of common observation that many dear Christians have had very wild children. There is no rule without its exceptions, but if you and I knew the history of these wild children, perhaps we might find a secret cause that we would not have supposed. Perhaps we would find that in the first three years of its life the child had been spoiled. The discipline and restraint had not been begun early enough. Perhaps the father had not endorsed the mother's instructions, or the mother had not carried out the father's will, and, when the children discovered it, they had only to take part with the one or the other in order to get their own way. I have known such a family, and often wondered that their children did not grow up to be a comfort to them.

The secret was that when they could not get their own way with their mother they got it with their father, and when they could not get it with their father they got it with their mother. Anyhow, they got their own will when young, and then, when grown up, they took their own course in spite of all remonstrance.

If you and I as parents go contrary to God's instructions we are "sowing to the flesh" and we shall not fail to reap corruption. The sorrow will come back upon our own heads, unless God in His mercy is sought unto and grants repentance to those to whom we ourselves had been the cause of stumbling.

Gen. xviii. 17-19. I do not know any instance in all Scripture of obedience that is comparable with the obedience of Isaac when he allowed Abraham to bind him. He was a young man and could have resisted it. I have not the slightest doubt but that he was trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and he knew the blessing of obedience. "I would rather die than disobey my father," would be his language; a type of the blessed Son of God, who said, "I delight to do Thy will," although it was the suffering of the Cross. Then take another instance of the opposite. 1 Sam. iii. 11-13. Now it was not that Eli did not remonstrate with his sons; he did; he spoke to them, he remonstrated with them (1 Sam. ii. 22-25). But *it was too late*; Eli had allowed them to have their own way when they were young. It is the sapling that must be trained, and, depend upon it, the earlier the instruction and the rule of the loving parent is begun with the child the better. Soon it becomes habit with the child to obey, then the battle is gained and all becomes easy. One other instance. 1 Kings i. 5, 6. These two sons of David, Absalom and Adonijah, were the children of a very beautiful woman, and were doubtless very handsome young men. Perhaps their beauty was their curse. David allowed them to have their own way. He could not bear to rebuke them, to discipline them, to curb their will. He would have displeased them, and this he could not bear. But a parent *must* displease his child betimes. But beware that you are not always displeasing your child.

Beware lest you fail to take opportunities you might have of pleasing them, of showing your approval of them, and of giving them credit when they do right and well. Be as liberal and frank when you show your approval as when you show you are displeased. Never let the child be provoked to say, "There is no pleasing of them."

Parents ought to let their children know and feel that they love them; even when using the rod they ought to be made to feel that the parent's heart is broken by doing it. The idea of chastening when one is hot with anger, irritated at the annoyance the child has caused them, is foreign to Christian discipline. Often when such temper is shown it is the parents

who ought to be chastened rather than the child. May God give parents to see it is a solemn thing to chasten. "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

He does it in love. So much so, that before His chastening hand is off us He draws us to Him to pour out our heart into His ear and own how bad we were. The dealing of the parent ought to be to the conscience of the child, always to show *it is sin against God*, and in this way you bring the truth of the Gospel and of the need of the Saviour before the child as nobody else has power to do. The Sunday-school class is valuable, but it can never supply the place that the parent ought to occupy.

Parents may confidently account that God will save their children. We have His expressed promise even to the jailer, "Thou shalt be saved *and thy house*," and why should not all the children of God's true people believe. If we commend Christ to them, the Gospel to them; if we seek diligently to instruct them, we can surely count upon God to bless and make us the means of their conversion as well as of their godly upbringing. And remember in these days we need special wisdom from God in order that children may not be brought up according to the world's evil ways and foolish fashions. Grace does not run in the blood, it is not hereditary, nevertheless it often runs in the line, as with Timothy in his grandmother and in his mother. Grace often descends from parent to child, not by nature, but by the blessing of God.

One thing strikes me lately in meetings in Scotland and Ireland. God is working in saving the children of His people. This is a special way of God in preparing for the end. What a grand thing it will be when the whole family goes up to meet the Lord. Like the Philippian jailer's, the house of Crispus, and others. Why should it not be so? May God's children covet this grace of Him, that whole households be saved and ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

Does not the constant recurrence of the words in our Lord's history, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," and in reference to such *very minute* particulars, lead you to expect an *amazing* particularity of fulfilment in the final development of God's plans? A. N. G.

MACKAY OF UGANDA.*

DURING the past ten years there has been an increased and deepening interest in the work of the Gospel in the "regions beyond." Africa of late has been wonderfully opened up, and numbers of brave soldiers of the cross have penetrated its forests, climbed its mountains, and traversed its plains with the glad message of redeeming love. The "dark continent," with its 600 languages, spoken by from 200 to 250 millions of people, is a wonderful continent. It has an area of 12,000,000 square miles, and is about three times the size of Europe. From north to south it is 5000 miles long, from east to west 4600, and has 16,000 miles of a coast line.

Alexander Mackay, "the hero of Uganda," as he has been called, laboured for fourteen long years in Africa, and nobly served his Lord and Master.

Uganda is a country lying east of the Congo Free State and west of the Victoria Nyanza, a fresh-water lake as large as Scotland. It is now under a British protectorate.

Mackay was born in Rhynie, Aberdeenshire, and was the son of a Presbyterian minister; his parents being decided Christians. While attending the Aberdeen Grammar School he was led to accept of Christ as his Saviour. At the age of twenty-five we find him in Berlin pursuing his profession, that of an engineer. His leisure time is fully occupied in "works of faith and labours of love," but his heart is set on the mission field. He is offered a partnership in a large engineering concern in Moscow, with the prospect of making a fortune, but he decides to go to Africa as a herald of the cross. He applies and is accepted as an "engineer missionary" by the "Church Missionary Society," which had decided, in response to Mr. Stanley's famous letter and appeal to Christendom to send missionaries to Uganda, to establish a station on the Victoria Nyanza. A party of five, including Mackay, left in April, 1876, for Zanzibar, arriving there by the end of May. Dr. Smith, one of their number, dies. Mackay is busy constructing a road from the coast to the interior. After a journey of close on two years Kagei, on the south shore of Victoria Nyanza, is

reached. Mr. O'Neill and Lieutenant Smith are murdered. In November, 1878, Uganda is touched, and Mtesa, the king, of whom Stanley has written so glowingly, accords him a welcome. He has a narrow escape from poisoning, but gets over it in six days.

Most earnestly, faithfully, and perseveringly does he toil and labour. At first the king and his court give him a patient hearing, but by-and-by there comes a change. One day we see him at court combating polygamy, slavery, and witchcraft. On another he is at his forge, anvil, lathe, and grindstone, with hosts of slaves and chiefs crowding his smithy; even there pupils are gathered with reading and spelling lessons in their hands. Now he is busy making wooden types, and anon he is hard at his printing press; and then he is building a boat or sinking a well.

His labours are, however, greatly hindered by the arrival of a number of French Roman Catholic priests. The wily papal messengers do their utmost to prejudice the minds of the king and his court against the truth. Mackay calmly refutes their errors. They assert that the Bible is a book of lies, that the Pope is the "king of religion" in all the world, and is the "only authority to teach the truth." He confutes their reasonings and maintains that "Christ is the sole Head and His Word the only guide."

The king and his court are bewildered, and declare that "every white man has a different religion." The Arab traders, who are bigoted Mussulmen, bitterly oppose him. They blaspheme terribly when he declares that Christ is Divine. They contend that "religion is a thing of pure belief and has nothing to do with manner of life."

Mtesa and his people are firm believers in witchcraft, and Mackay again and again seeks to expose it. Long discussions are held, and at one time it seems as if it would be given up.

After a *baraza*, or cabinet council, the chiefs that oppose advise the king to have nothing to do with the religion of the white men, as it is only a preliminary to their taking his country.

The king decides to leave the Arab and the white man's religion, and to return to that of his father's. Mtesa affirms that he understood that Mackay had come to teach them to make powder and guns; but that if to instruct them

* "A. M. MACKAY," to be had at *Witness* Office, 7/6.

in his religion was his main object he would be better to go back to England.

Mtesa dies in October, 1884. Mwanga, his son, a weak, fickle, and worthless youth, succeeds him. Soon after Mwanga's accession tidings arrive that white men are on their way to the country from the east, by what is called "the backdoor of Uganda." The king commands the white men to be slain. Bishop Hannington is the only white man of the party, and he and his porters are cruelly murdered. The fear of Britain avenging the bishop's death leads to a chronic state of jealousy and suspicion against the mission and its work. Mwanga then determines to put a number of the Christians to death. Writing of this, Mackay says: "Our first martyrs have won the martyr's crown. On 30th January three Christian lads were burned alive after being terribly mutilated." Then a general massacre of the Christians is ordered. Some are speared and tortured and over thirty roasted alive in one pyre. The missionaries are called spies, and are suspected of being in league with England to get the country over to British rule. A plot is discovered on the part of king and chiefs to murder them; and the king's favourite page, who ventured to say it was wrong to kill the bishop, is burned alive.

The work, meantime, has been prospering. Many profess to be Christians. The chapel becomes much too small and is crowded on week evenings. The king issues an edict that no one is to come near the missionaries under pain of death. In the darkness of the night many go to the station to speak and learn of Jesus. Numbers of the converts are cruelly murdered by the king's command. Finally, through the hostility of the Arabs, Mackay is expelled from the country, though Mr. Gordon and Mr. Walker are allowed to continue the work.

On being driven from Uganda, Mackay establishes himself at Usambara, on the south shore of the Victoria Nyanza. Bishop Parker (Bishop Hannington's successor) and Mr. Blackburn arrive and a missionary conference is held. Within two weeks of each other the bishop and Mr. Blackburn are both carried off by fever, and Mr. Ashe is obliged to return to England on account of ill health.

The persecution, meantime, in Uganda has

become so severe that the two missionaries flee from the country. Mackay is visited by Emin Pasha, H. M. Stanley, and his party, who stay at the station for three weeks. Mackay, writing of Stanley, says: "He is a man of iron will and sound judgment, and, besides, is most patient with the natives. He never allows any of his followers to oppress or even insult a native. If he has had to use force occasionally to effect a passage, I am certain that he only resorted to arms when all other means failed."

Then there is a revolution in Uganda, and Mwanga is deposed and implores Mackay's help. Uganda Christians flee to Usambara, where they are cared for and helped. By-and-by Mwanga is restored to the throne, an old pupil of Mackay's is appointed prime minister, and the chieftainships are equally divided between Protestants and Romanists; religious liberty is proclaimed and the work prospers. But Alexander Mackay, at a time when he appears most needed, is stricken down with malarial fever, and after five days' illness, on 5th February, 1890, is taken home to be with the Lord whom he loved and served.

Some of Mackay's thoughts on the carrying on of missionary work are most valuable. He considered that establishing mission stations at great distances inland "without a strong base at the coast, and occasional stations on the way, was a serious mistake in judgment and would entail enormous expense and unnecessary loss of life." Speaking of the numbers of white men who die in Tropical Africa, he has some important remarks.

(1) "I have generally found the natives as subject themselves to fevers and other ills as white men in the same locality." (2) Most severe illnesses in the case of white men in Africa arise from their own imprudence or want of knowledge of cause and effect. When such essential facts are recognised, that *chill* and not malaria is the main cause of African fever, the foe will be defied on his own ground, and the Anglo-Saxon will outlive his black companions even in the heart of Africa."

Mackay received the offer of an important post under General Gordon, and the Imperial East African Company were anxious to secure his services. But his heart was in the work of the Gospel, and he turned his back on all such

tempting proposals. He now rests from his labours. The careful and prayerful perusal of Mackay's biography is eminently calculated to increase and deepen interest in the evangelisation of Africa, and cause Christians to remember more frequently at the throne of grace those who have gone forth, in obedience to the Lord's command, into the dark corners of the earth to tell out the unsearchable riches of Christ.

A. M.

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE.

Matt. xiv. 15.

THIS little action has a good deal in it for our meditation. Among other things, it gives us man and God in contrast—the heart that we carry in us and the heart of Jesus.

In Matthew xiv., the action begins with the disciples. They propose to their Master that He should send the multitude away, and let them provide for themselves as well as they could. "Send the multitude away," said they, "that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals."

This was a wretched motion of their hearts. As we say at times (discovering the guile that is practised by us all, if we be not watchful), "It was one word for the multitude, but two for themselves"; for they wanted to be left alone, and they felt the presence of the people to be intrusive on their ease and retirement with their Master (see Mark vi. 35, &c.). There was something of hypocrisy and cold-heartedness in this suggestion. It was a sample of the common selfishness.

The Lord's heart was of another quality, as I may say. He speaks, in answer to the disciples, of *feeding* the multitude, and not of *sending them away*. "They need not depart," He replied; "give ye them to eat." And surely it is blessed, as well as humbling, to have *our* hearts thus rebuked by *His* heart, when we find that the dark ground of our selfishness, after such a manner as this, sets off the brightness of His graciousness and love.

But the disciples are angry. They have but a few loaves and some small fishes in their stores; how could it be thought that they either would or could spread a table for such a company?

Here was a further disclosure of their hearts.

There was no *faith* in them, as there was no *love* in them—no proper apprehension of Him, as well as no kindly desire or sympathy towards the people. They knew of nothing but the provision of their basket—so many loaves and so many fishes. They did not calculate on the fact that they had *Christ* in the midst of them; they had no faith to value such an item as that in the account of their stores and riches and resources. But this unbelief the Lord silently rebukes. "Bring them hither to *Me*," says He; by such words intimating to them that they had more than loaves and fishes in their company; yea, did their faith but apprehend it, they had among them the very God of the wilderness, who, in other days, had fed their fathers in a land of drought and barrenness for forty years. And having said this, He proved to them, though *without* upbraiding, that His arm was not shortened, and He spread the table of the desert again for the thousands of Israel.

Surely *man* and *God* are here displayed; the heart which we carry is here disclosed, and the heart of Jesus.

But we have more of this still.

In the next chapter, on a like occasion, the action begins with the Lord, and not, as on the previous occasion, with the disciples. But how differently! With what a different motion the heart of Christ enters the scene of human need from what their hearts had entered it! "I have compassion on the multitude," says the Lord, "because they continue with Me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way."

With the disciples the word had been this—"Send the multitude away that they may buy themselves victuals"; with the Lord the word was this—"I have compassion on the multitude." And He shows how minutely and exactly He had acquainted Himself with their sorrow, taking notice of the length of time they had been with Him, of the journey they had now to take ere they could get food, and of the distance they had come (see Mark viii. 2, 3). All this is perfect in its season, but it has no answer in the hearts of the disciples—no suited answer—nothing according to its grace and tenderness. The answer the Lord gets sadly betrays what is in us all—slowness of heart

to believe God, and coldness and narrowness of heart in the love of one another. Their reply to their Master tells us that the recollection of the late feeding of the multitude had entirely departed from them; and they are again only full of the thought, how impossible it was to feed so many people with so few loaves and fishes.

Could we have believed this? I am disposed to ask. Could they have so soon forgotten the lesson of the previous chapter when all the circumstances of the present occasion were so directly fitted to bring them fully and vividly before them? But they *had* forgotten it—so indifferent is the heart we carry to the glory of God, and so cold and careless, touching the need and the sorrow of the scene around us.

Surely, then, I may say we do, in these actions of “feeding the multitude,” look at the two objects, *man* and *God*, or the heart that we carry in us and the heart of Jesus. And we are to be humbled by the one, and comforted by the other. The contrast is perfect. It is light and darkness; but it is happy to see that the love of the Lord was not wearied out by what it again and again got from man and in man. He did not give up His disciples after such discoveries as these, but went on with them in patient love, even to the end.

And I would say, let us not learn one of these lessons without learning the other. We may learn what man is, that we may be humbled; but we must not, through unbelief, refuse to learn what God is, lest we come short of all true evangelic, divine life and consolation. If we know and own that we have destroyed ourselves, let us believably listen to the sweet voice of God’s own mercy speaking to us and saying, “In Me is thine help.” We may go down into the humbling distant place which *conscience* opens to us, but we must also go up into the high and holy and happy place, which *faith* apprehends.

“HE who is too busy to find time for prayer, is busier than God asks him to be.”

“THERE is nothing God has promised in the Bible, but it is all yours in Christ.”

“WHEN God puts faith into the fire, it is not to consume it, but to prove it and improve it.”

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—X.

SOLOMON.

AS types of the Christ, David and Solomon should be studied together, for the one is the complement of the other. Both foreshadowed Christ AS KING: the former our Lord as the rejected One, who shall ultimately subjugate all nations; the latter Christ in the glory and blessedness of the millennial reign. Let it be remembered that we are examining Solomon as a *type*, not as an *individual*. As a man he was a strange combination. Much might be said of him as sage, poet, philosopher, and inspired writer; and on the dark side of his character as a voluptuary and worldling. But our subject is “Solomon as a type of Christ.” We notice

HIS NAMES.

These, like all God-given names, are full of instruction. Both names were from the Lord and were prophetic of His person and reign. His best-known name, *Solomon*, means “*the peaceful one*.” From David himself we learn that Jehovah gave this name before the birth of the child, and it was given as that which should characterise his reign (1 Chron. xxii. 7 10). His other name was *Jedidiah*, i.e., “*beloved of Jah*,” or Jehovah (2 Sam. xii. 25). In the latter there is an evident reference to David’s own name—*the beloved*. God may have graciously designed the name as a daily reminder to David that his sin had been forgiven. Jehovah’s love for Solomon must have been a special love, for, several centuries later, we find an inspired writer referring to it (Neh. xiii. 26; compare Mark x. 21).

But it is plain that the names fit the Messiah infinitely better than they did Solomon. To the Christian, peace, as connected with the name of Jesus Christ, has immensely deeper significance than the peace which Solomon’s name foretold. At His birth peace was sung of, in His life peace was manifested, by His death peace was secured, in His resurrection peace was preached, and ere long as the Prince of peace He shall rule Israel and the nations.

And the unique love of the Father for His only begotten Son we can scarce imagine, much less write of. But we know that when on earth God once and again pointed out the Redeemer as His beloved Son, in whom He

was well pleased. And yet, mystery of grace, Christ's members share with Him in this matchless, eternal love of the Father (John xvii. 23). Alone, in the secret of His presence, with reverent hearts we may well sing :

“So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be :
The love wherewith He loves the Son—
Such is His love to me !”

THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

This was the great work of Solomon's reign. It was a stupendous undertaking, and was thoroughly carried out. David made great preparations with a view to its erection, but it is Solomon's name that has ever been associated with it. For grandeur and costliness it stands at the head of all the vast structures the world has ever beheld. More than 150,000 men were employed in building it, and at the lowest possible calculation it must have cost many millions of pounds (see 1 Chron. xxii. 14, xxix. 1-9).

It was made of blocks of stone prepared and fitted for their places before they were carried to the spot ; so that we read : “There was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building” (1 Kings vi. 7). As stone to stone noiselessly came together it would appear as some vast growth.

In the light of the New Testament this building stands forth as a type of another Temple which was to be reared : a house not made of stone and wood and gold, but a spiritual building, made up of living stones, to be the eternal dwelling-place of God. Out of the quarry of nature the Lord is taking one from here and another from there, and fitting them into this grand heavenly temple. The Spirit of God is working silently, steadily, successfully toward that end. Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone, and in Him “all the building, fitly framed together, GROWETH into an holy Temple in the Lord” (Eph. ii. 20-22).

Inside, the stones were covered with cedar wood and gold, so it is briefly said, “THERE WAS NO STONE SEEN” (1 Kings vi. 18) In that simple word we have a hint of all that is meant in the New Testament by the believer being *in Jesus Christ*. Oh, blessed, thrice

blessed fact : God can never view His people except as “in Christ” ! We are beautiful to God in all the comeliness of His Son—accepted as He has been accepted. But we must pass on.

· · · · · SOLOMON BEGAN HIS REIGN BY EXECUTING JUDGMENTS.

We feel some measure of regret for hoary-headed Joab, yet undoubtedly he deserved his doom. But for his position and influence with the army, David would have caused him to be put to death long before (1 Kings ii. 5, 6). And Adonijah was still nursing his designs on the throne ; at least so Solomon interpreted his request, and he was probably correct (1 Kings ii. 22). As long as he lived, peace was not secured, and so with the others whom Solomon caused to be put to death.

That the millennium will be ushered in by a series of judgments the Scriptures abundantly testify. In Christendom, and in Messiah's land at least, men will have taken sides for or against the Lord, and those found in open rebellion shall be destroyed (Zeph. iii. 8, Isa. lxiii. 1-6, &c.). To enlarge on this, space will not allow.

SOLOMON'S PROSPEROUS REIGN.

Solomon was the first and last who, through all his reign, ruled a united people. Under him the kingdom reached its highest point of prosperity. Evidently God designed therein to give us a picture of the reign of Him who is indeed “greater than Solomon.” War and tumult marked the reign of David, peace and rest distinguished the reign of Solomon. He was able to say, “The Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent” (1 Kings v. 4). With this they enjoyed unparalleled prosperity (1 Kings x. 27), and were correspondingly contented (chap. iv. 25). In his day Israel was the dominant nation in the East ; many kings around acknowledged the sway of Solomon, and to him paid tribute (chap. iv. 21). And many sought him out on account of his wisdom : they would seek to get some of the riddles and problems of life solved, which surrounded them as they do us of this later age.

The seventy-second psalm, as well as several others, was probably penned by Solomon. It gives in glowing colours a fore-view of the

reign of Messiah. In this kingdom *righteousness* shall have her due place. Justice shall be impartially administered by all rulers under "the King of Righteousness." No oppression on the part of rulers, no injustice between man and man. Yet with this there shall be the mildest and best of laws, such laws as shall make for the welfare of the subjects. The beneficence of this King shall only be equalled by His righteousness.

The kingdom here depicted shall be *a universal kingdom*. Alexander, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and other ambitious conquerors, have dreamt of a world-wide kingdom, but the dream has never become a reality. God has reserved this honour for His Son, the once humbled and crucified One. *His* kingdom shall be *universal and eternal*, i.e., it shall last as long as there shall be a state on earth (ver. 7).

We learn the effects of this rule when it is said, "Prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised." His people's "GOD SAVE THE KING," shall be no mere words. It will express their great desire that He may continue to rule them. And as their Saviour-King he shall be the object of their worship—"Daily shall He be praised."

God's Word is a wonderful telescope; it brings near and makes real to the eye of faith distant scenes and circumstances. Other scriptures bring out additional features of Messiah's reign. Some of these we may but barely enumerate. *Satan shall be restrained* and not permitted to tempt men (Rev. xx. 1-3). Who can say how much of the sin and sorrow of the world this will do away with? *Idolatry*, with all its impurity and cruelties, shall be a thing of the past (Isa. ii. 18-20). And, better yet, *the true God shall be universally known and worshipped* (Isa. lxvi. 23). At last "the war-drum shall throb no longer"; the need for armies shall have ceased (Isa. ii. 4). In a different way than most expect shall the dreams of poets and philanthropists be fulfilled. *The earth shall bring forth plentifully*, so that all shall be satisfied (Amos ix. 13). Now even the creation, through man's sin, *groans*; but they are birth-groans, not death; they shall usher in that brighter day. *Human life shall be vastly prolonged*, and, it would appear, will only be forfeited for aggravated sin (Isa. lxv. 20).

And yet even this state will not be perfect; not on account of failure in the King, but on account of incorrigible man. During Solomon's life there were heard the mutterings of the storm which broke over the nation after his death. Probably, towards the end of his reign, Israel had reasons sufficient for dissatisfaction. But a like result shall follow the reign of his great antitype; though there will be *no cause for it in His rule*. But like every other dispensation it shall end up in judgment, because of man's sin.

During Christ's reign the heavenly people, His bride, shall reign with Him. But even now, in our own persons, we may anticipate the peace, the joy, the contentment of this coming era. To do it we must unreservedly give over the reigns of government into the hands of Christ. We must instal Him as Lord of the will and the affections. In the searching words of the Spirit of God may we "sanctify in our hearts Christ as Lord."

"Take Thou our hearts, and let them be
For ever closed to all but Thee:
Thy willing servants, let us wear
The seal of love for ever there."

J. N. C.

DECLINE IN THE GOSPEL MEETING.

FEW would deny that our Gospel Meetings have, in many instances, lost their simple, sound, searching character, and have become more or less formal, partaking of the character of a "church" service rather than an evangelistic meeting with the power of God permeating it and manifesting itself as the meeting proceeds.

There are exceptions to this rule, we willingly admit; for such we praise the Lord. But why should it only be exceptional cases that cause us thus to praise Him? Surely, with such a Gospel as has been committed to us, there is no allowance for cold formality. The Cross, with all its told and untold glories, has no formality. The throne, where Jesus sits, bears up the One in whom God has vested "all power." The rapidly approaching day of His coming should dispel the dulness and keep our hearts aglow and every one of us busy from day to day.

But as to the prevalent coldness and lack of

interest in the work, we ask, Is there not a cause? Yes; but few seem to blame themselves. All seem to blame their fellows. The preacher blames the workers, the workers blame the preacher, and there may be wrongs and rights on both sides. The preacher may be *more* occupied with his preaching than with the One who is preached; the workers more occupied with the preaching and the preacher than with the Lord, "who hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," &c. (1 Cor. i. 27, 28). It should not be so, but it seems too evident that in many gatherings this is the case.

Then, the unconverted are not reached. Why? Did the reader not once delight to bring his neighbours next door to the Gospel Meeting? and now it may be your neighbour never hears you say, "Jesus saves," and seldom do you ask him or her to the meetings, and when you do it is just a cold half hearted intimation of the meetings in the same way as they tell you of some social meeting to be held in "the church" on Thursday night. No loving entreaty, no word of welcome, and still less do you trouble yourself much to get them with you; and so one and another comes and goes alone, the only seeming interest being, "It would never do for me to be absent."

Then, you once prayed much that the Lord would help you to get them out, and more, that they might be arrested and saved; but the prayer has stopped, and we believe it is here that all is wrong. Our experience is that when exercised in prayer about any matter we are always constrained to put our shoulder to the wheel and push with all our might. Much more might be said, but meantime we ask every reader to seek unto God in prayer and self-examination about the work of the Gospel. However busy you are, dear brother or sister, or however little inclined you may be, get before the Lord in the matter, and we believe that next Lord's-day, or perhaps sooner, we shall find that God is true to His promise: "There shall be showers of blessing."

A. B. G.

"THE husbandman is never so near the tree as when he is pruning it."

A GOOD CONFESSION.

THE chains that have bound me are flung to the wind,
By the mercy of God the poor slave is set free;

And the strong grace of heaven breathes fresh o'er
the mind,

Like the bright winds of summer that gladden the sea,

There was naught in God's world half so dark or so vile

As the sin and the bondage that fettered my soul;

There was naught half so base as the malice and guile

Of my own sordid passions, or Satan's control.

For years I have borne about hell in my breast,
When I thought of my God it was nothing but gloom;
Day brought me no pleasure, night gave me no rest,
There was still the grim shadow of horrible doom.

It seemed as if nothing less likely could be,
Than that light should break in on a dungeon so deep;
To create a new world was less hard than to free
The slave from his bondage, the soul from its sleep.

But the word had gone forth and said, "Let there
be light,
And it flashed through my soul like a sharp passing
smart;

One look to my Saviour, and all the dark night,
Like a dream scarce remembered, was gone from
my heart.

I cried out for mercy, and fell on my knees,
And confessed, while my heart with keen sorrow
was wrung;

'Twas the labour of minutes, and years of disease
Fell as fast from my soul as the words from my tongue.

And now—blest be God and the Saviour who died—
No deer on the mountain, no bird in the sky,
No bright wave that leaps on the dark bounding tide,
Is a creature so free or so happy as I.

All hail, then, all hail, to the dear "precious blood,"
That hath worked these sweet wonders of mercy in me;
May each day countless numbers throng down to its flood,
And God have His glory, and sinners go free!

"WALK IN THE SPIRIT" (Gal. v. 16).

If we are not walking in the Spirit, Satan will turn even our duties into an occasion of sin, by making us do them at the wrong time, or in the wrong way. He knows that it is only when they are done as Christ would have them done that we shall have a blessing in them. There may be much busy activity, but if it is not in the Spirit it will deaden the soul. Satan often tries to make prayer a conflict, and will at times get the believer to say, "I cannot pray; I cannot get into God's presence now." But, this is the very time we need to pray. If the mind has become distracted by getting occupied with worldly things, return to the Lord *as you are*, for He alone can restore you.

"BEWARE!"

ON considering this word in the Scriptures with its immediate connections, I find that it occurs ten times warning of ten evils, which are specified below.

We generally find a warning succeeding a promise in Scripture. The unsaved are so slow to believe, and believers' hearts are so prone to self exaltation, that the gracious Lord finds it necessary to add this solemn word to His blessed promises.

We are told to BEWARE :

First.—Of forgetting God (Deut. vi. 12, &c.; viii. 11). Both these warnings are uttered after promise of an entrance into the promised land.

Second.—Of evil and uncharitable thoughts (Deut. xv. 9); uttered after promise of great riches.

Third.—Of things forbidden (Judges viii. 4-13); uttered in connection with Samson's consecration to the Lord.

Fourth.—Of dangers foretold (Job xxvi. 18); a warning to the unsaved.

Fifth.—Of the wrath of God (Acts xiii. 40); uttered immediately after the glorious gospel message.

Sixth.—Of false teachers and their leaven (Matt. vii. 15 and xvi. 6-11).

Seventh.—Of men (Matt. x. 5-17). Alas! our great snare. Uttered after the Lord Jesus' statement—"Behold I send you forth."

Eighth.—Of evil workers (Phil. iii. 2).

Ninth.—Of the error of the wicked (2 Pet. iii. 17); uttered in connection with the danger of the last days being evil.

Tenth.—Of covetousness (Luke xii. 15); a warning to those with riches and inheritances.

W. M'C.

Correspondence.**A LETTER FROM JAPAN.**

TOKYO.—About a month ago one of the young believers, named Ishiwaru, came in with a very happy face, exclaiming, "There is another brother added to the Church in Shimo Rokuban Cho!" The young man in question, although full grown, is a pupil in a large private school in which I am teaching. Very shortly after his entrance I found myself alone with him in a class-room, so urged him to attend the Bible-classes in

my house. He soon became impressed, but, being a thoughtful man, did not speak of his feelings. When walking home one Sunday evening, the young believer just spoken of pressed him to come to decision for Christ, and then and there he avowed himself a believer. The next time some of the church came together, he witnessed such a good confession before us all, that we gladly received him as a brother, and a few days afterwards he was baptised in the river. Including the young surgeon, now at a naval station, there are eight Japanese in church fellowship, all brought out of the darkness of uninstructed heathenism into God's marvellous light. It is delightful to see the spiritual growth in some of them, and their earnestness to give others the gospel; one begins to understand, in some small measure, the apostle's words, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John iv.).

Ishiwaru, already spoken of, had a fellow lodger who came from his own province of Satsuma, a student of law, aged 27. Hearing that this young man worshipped God, he lost no time in making his acquaintance, and the young man came to the Bible classes here on Sunday and Thursday last. His story is rather a remarkable one. Eleven years ago he had a school-fellow who was bitterly hated, because he was the only Christian in the school. Sometimes, at night, he secretly visited this Christian, who told him Bible stories, but never taught him about God or Christ, as far as I can learn. Five years afterwards he came to the conclusion that there must be one God, the Creator, and for the last six years he has worshipped this God, without receiving any Christian instruction, and without reading the Bible, I am told. He believed that the Creator heard his prayers, and he supposed that God was pleased when he tried to act up to his own idea of what was right, while trouble, he supposed, was sent as punishment for his faults. When he was shown, from the Bible, that it is God rather than the sinner who is the seeker in such cases as his own, he appeared to be much interested.

Besides teaching medical students in a government college every day, I have there a class of six naval surgeons, and one of these latter asked me, a few months ago, if they might come to my house on Sunday afternoons to learn about God. This incident gave me much encouragement. On most Lord's-day afternoons since then four or five of these officers have spent two hours or more with me, reading the Bible and having it explained to them. A few coloured Scripture pictures greatly interested them, and I may say that, in teaching beginners, large coloured Scripture pictures, if well executed, are most helpful; but these, unfortunately, it is impossible to purchase in Tokyo. Some time ago a lady missionary wrote to me begging me to help her in this matter, but though there were some most hideous prints on sale at two or three shops, I was unable to find anything suitable for sending to her. Might I suggest to liberal Christians at home the advisability of inquiring, when corresponding with foreign labourers, if Scripture pictures and picture-books are needed for their particular work? The Gospels, which to us appear so simple, are full of difficulties to the heathen in Japan and China. A Japanese woman, on reading or hearing the story of Zacharias and

Elizabeth, in Luke, exclaimed, "What good people those were! did they live in Kobe" (a town in Japan)? With the aid of thoroughly good pictures of "The Good Shepherd" and "The Lost Sheep" the surgeons already spoken of were able to enter into, and to enjoy, the teaching in John x. and Luke xv. on these subjects. Without such aid this would have been practically impossible, for sheep and shepherds are scarce in this country. Although I have lived for over four years in Japan, and have visited many places, twice only have I seen a sheep—except in the Zoological Gardens. The Lord Jesus took as object lessons things that his hearers were quite familiar with, and the Lord's illustrations must first be made intelligible to those in other lands—whether young or old, whether living in Britain or in Japan—before they can be made to fully subserve their purpose. The person who has not only an attached but a well-instructed Sunday-school class shows good missionary qualifications, I think.

As I have more than once been written to in regard to foreigners obtaining employment in Japan, I may say that employment is now very difficult to get, and many foreigners have been obliged to leave the country in consequence. As regards education, private schools are mostly too poor to afford such payment as foreigners necessarily require, while government schools and colleges suffer from the ruthless cutting down of expenditure insisted upon by the majority in the Diet. There has been a tide of reaction against foreigners, and they were, in any case, only required to fill the high posts, while natives of the country were being trained to succeed them. The old relation between teacher and scholar has been sadly altered, and it is pitiful to see how fearful Japanese schoolmasters are of offending their scholars. Very recently a foreign teacher was rudely assaulted, on a very trifling pretext, by two stout young fellows who were jealous of the school in which he was a master, and all the energies of the respective heads of the two schools concerned were directed towards turning away the aggrieved man from insisting that the two culprits should make a personal apology to him. He, however, refused to be moved, and, after a stormy meeting with their own principal, the two assailants came in, shouted out what was much more of an exculpation of their own conduct than an apology, and abruptly left the room, without waiting for a word in reply. There is a strange spirit of lawlessness abroad. Bands of rowdies, called *soshi*, are employed to intimidate, and even attack, politicians of various parties. Within the last two or three weeks, one prominent member of the Diet was struck on the head with a club while riding in a *jinrikisha*, and when he defended himself his assailant drew a sword from under his clothes. Another was wounded with a sword-cane by a *soshi*, with whom he had declined to enter into argument in the street; and a third was obliged to send for the police to disperse an angry deputation of seven youths from a law school, who were insisting that he should account to them for his proceedings in Parliament. Over 160 members of this dangerous class have been expelled from the capital for the remainder of the Diet's sitting.

Those who have to earn their bread in Japan do not find the climate so delightful as is represented by mere visitors and holiday-makers. This part of the country

is not good for nervous or consumptive persons, the air being very heavily charged with moisture, and the sudden changes of temperature are trying. On April 25 the thermometer registered 81 degrees at noon; the same instrument registered 56 degrees at noon on the following day.

On looking through a Bible used in former years, with many passages marked and some dated, one is surprised to find continual proof of the statement that "not by bread alone doth man live, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In the dark and cloudy day, in the time of difficulty or expectation, of hope, or of disappointment, the question is, "Is there any word from the Lord?" and if there does appear to be a word from the Lord, it is to that that the soul clings. When glancing through old diaries there may seem to be much that is broken, or fruitless, or incomplete, even of things apparently committed to the Lord. But the end is not yet. David was satisfied that his tears would still be in God's bottle—in God's book; doubtless he had learned to stay himself upon that name of Jehovah which assures us that the past and the future are both ever present with God. Whatever may have melted, like foam, in the waves that lie behind us, the eye of God has marked it. Christ sees us under the fig-tree, though mostly, perhaps, He apprises us not of it. We may learn a deep lesson from the story of the widow who cast all her living into the temple treasury, as has been pointed out by Dr. Edersheim in his *Jesus the Messiah*. She, poor and desolate, was allowed to turn away and mingle with the throng, without a single word of cheer and encouragement from the only One who knew all that was involved in the offering. But He knew that she walked by faith, not by sight.

WILLIAM GEORGE SMITH.

45 Shimo Rokuban Cho, Kojimachi, Tokyo,
4th June, 1892.

THE OBJECT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

REFERRING to article in June number on the Lord's Supper, by G. F. T., and to letter from Mr. Bland in July number upon same subject, we desire to offer a few remarks.

Whilst fully sympathising with the views therein advanced as to the object of the Supper, and also with the vexation experienced when ministry, even though in itself edifying, yet unsuited to the occasion, is intruded to the hindrance of worship, we nevertheless believe that there is another side to the subject, due consideration of which would tend greatly to rectify the evil.

As a rule, the Lord's-day assembly for the breaking of bread is the only occasion in the week which even approximates to a gathering together of the whole church. Generally speaking, week-night meetings are attended by a mere fraction of the number in fellowship.

Sunday-afternoon meetings for teaching are most valuable, but many are unable to attend a second meeting after so short an interval, and many are prevented by other engagements—Bible and Sunday-school classes, Gospel meetings, visitations, and so on.

These inexorable habits enhance greatly the value of the Lord's-day morning meeting as an occasion for edifying ministry as well as for worship.

Generally speaking, the meeting may last without

much general inconvenience for nearly two hours. Those who whine about the length of such a meeting would do well to consider the length of meetings held by the world for entertainment or for political or other purposes of intense interest. Two hours soon pass if the heart be in it. This time, if properly utilised, is ample for both worship and ministry. But what is the hindrance?

Our experience is that not infrequently the first hour is taken up with a hymn and a prayer, a hymn and a prayer, alternately, the hymns not always appropriate to the occasion, and the prayers containing little of the element of worship and being largely repetition of the same requests over and over.

We have turned aside from read prayers and a liturgical form of worship generally in order to enjoy that which is indited by the Spirit of God. But, alas, is it not true that such performances as we are at times subjected to, though professedly in the name of the Spirit of God, are judged in the inmost souls of spiritually-minded persons to be only a more obnoxious development of the religious ways of the flesh?

If brethren come together really happy in the Lord, in the mutual confidence of love, and determined to keep full in view the prime object of the gathering, would not a comparatively short period of "preliminary exercises" suffice to introduce "*the Supper*," whilst the actual breaking of the bread and drinking of the cup might be lingered over in blessed meditation and thanksgiving, instead of being hurried through, as often occurs, because of the lateness of the hour.

There might thus easily be from half an hour to an hour for edifying ministry *after* the Supper, the benefit of which all would partake of.

This principle understood and acted out has in fact been found to be happy and profitable, and the wonder often expressed that the time had passed so quickly.

As to ministry, we submit, as commanding itself to spiritual sense, that ministry before the Supper should be such as to bring Christ, personally, before the hearts of all gathered. A sight of His wounded hands and side dispelled the sorrows and the fears of the disciples of old and filled their hearts with gladness and worship. Practical instruction as to conscience, life, walk, and service, may appropriately follow.

J. R. C.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45.

Is it scriptural to use leavened bread at the Lord's Supper?

Are there definite scriptures to warrant the singing

of hymns when the church is gathered together on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread?

Does any scripture teach that the Holy Spirit is present to rule, in an especial manner, at the meeting for remembering the Lord?

Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

Are we to understand from Eph. v. 26 that the Church will be sanctified and cleansed apart from the responsibility of those who compose it to own and subject themselves to Christ as Lord?

What is the scriptural way for an assembly to raise money for the Lord's work and workers?

THE TAKING OF MONEY.

QUESTION 417.—Kindly explain 3 John 7, "Taking nothing of the Gentiles."

Ans. A.—The brethren who went forth simply "for His Name's sake," did not make a trade of their ministry, but were actuated by one governing principle—"the love of Christ constrained them"—and they would not take anything towards their support from those who knew not the Lord. No doubt, in the case referred to, the messengers of Christ were Jews, hence the distinction of Gentiles, which in our own case would be equivalent to the ungodly.

G. A. S.

Ans. B.—"Taking nothing of the Gentiles," seems to teach us clearly that God's true messengers did not take or seek their sustenance, as they went about preaching, from *worldly patrons*, lest they should discredit their Lord. The system of seeking to extend the Lord's kingdom by *depending* on worldly people or means for it, is calculated to hinder His work (by such agents) and to grieve the Spirit. Children of the King should not beg from His subjects, less so from rebels against Him.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—3 John 7, 8 says that we should become fellow-helpers to the truth by receiving those who "went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles."

In the first place, Who are the Gentiles? "O, we are all Gentiles," is a common expression, but not a Scriptural one. "Ye were Gentiles," writes the apostle to the Corinthian converts (1 Cor. xii. 2), not "Ye are Gentiles." No; they ceased to be Gentiles the moment they were "in Christ" (see Gal. iii. 28, Eph. ii. 11-19). So did we; but every *unsaved* man is either a Jew or a Gentile, and of these 3 John 7 teaches that God's people should be entirely independent, "taking nothing," not even the smallest favour, without paying for it if possible, but depending on their Lord to supply all their need according to Phil. iv. 19.

F. H. J.

Editor's Note.—A recent comment on this passage renders the word "Ethnos" "Gentilish ones," and applies it now to Christians in denominations! The word is never so rendered, but always either "Gentiles," "nations," or "heathen." The passage, in the wisdom and fore-knowledge of God, anticipates a time when Gentiles unregenerate, but with form of Christianity, would proffer support to the servants of God and so bring them into a snare. Evidently this method of Satan had already begun. Compare Ezra iv. 1-2.

WORSHIP.

QUESTION 418.—What is worship?

Ans. A.—Briefly, worship is the overflowing of hearts filled with the love of God, the rendering back to Him of His own. In order to worship I must know God as fully revealed in Christ; I must be dwelling in His love, in intelligence of the relationship which His grace has established. “The true worshippers shall worship the *Father* in spirit and in truth.” If I do not know God in this relationship, I cannot truly worship. This, of course, implies that all question of sin is settled, that the conscience is purged, and (although so long as we are in the body, wants will exist) that all sense of need is lost in the overwhelming sense of that infinite grace which has placed us in the light and peace of the presence of God without a veil, through the infinitely precious blood of Christ. “We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Read Deut. xxvi. 1-11; 2 Sam. vii. 18-29; John iv. 20-24; Rev. iv. 5.

G. A. S.

Ans. B.—Worship is the outgoing of the renewed soul Godward, through Christ, as led by the Holy Spirit.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—Worship and ministry in the Church are two separate things which ought not to be confounded. Worship ascends, from the Church, by the Spirit, through Christ, to God. Ministry descends from God, through Christ, by the Spirit, to the Church. New Testament worship consists mainly, though not exclusively, of thanksgiving. The Hebrew and Greek words commonly rendered worship, signify to fall down and pay homage, whether in request or thanksgiving. It is to bow the heart and will to God, under a sense of His infinite worthiness. In all the epistles this word is dropped, and a word used which means “giving of thanks.” “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips” (Heb. xiii. 15). “Ye are an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter ii. 5). “And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him” (Col. iii. 17). At the table of the Lord, when the saints are gathered to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of the Lord Jesus, what so fitting as thanksgiving? Thus the Lord by His example has instructed us (see 1 Cor. xi. 24; Matt. xxvi. 27; Mark xiv. 23; Luke xxii. 19). That in this the early church followed the example of Christ is evident from 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 17. Many bursts of worship occur in the Epistles that form blessed patterns for us (see Rom. xi. 33-36; xvi. 25-27; also Eph. iii. 20, 21). In the book of Revelation, the heavenly worship of chap. v. 9, 10, is caught by the apostle, and re-echoed on earth, as in chap. i. 5, 6. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me” (Ps. i. 23). “Worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3). As kings and priests unto God, to worship is our common privilege. There is a beautiful picture of worship in 2 Chron. vii. 1-3. It was a day of great gladness—the fire consumed the burnt offerings, and while it burned, the people “bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon

the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever.” So also in chap. v. 13, 14, it was when the trumpeters and singers were as one to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord that the delight of God, in such service, was testified by the glory filling the house. Such was the spirit of the disciples previous to the Pentecostal glory. “They were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God” (Luke xxiv. 52, 53). And when all, with one accord, in one place, then again, as of old, God testified His delight, sending His Spirit as a rushing, mighty wind to dwell within His living temple of redeemed sinners. Another beautiful Old Testament picture of worship is in Deut. xxvi. 1-10. It is all the acknowledgment of the grace of God—a sacrifice of praise. Probably this is specially alluded to in Heb. xiii. 15. J. R. C.

[See also article by “W. H. B.” page 113.]

GRACE FOR GRACE.

QUESTION 419.—What is the exact meaning of “grace for grace” (John i. 16)?

Ans. A.—It may be answered in two ways:—
(a) God giveth grace to the humble, but it requires grace for humility, therefore we need “grace for grace.”
(b) Grace is love flowing to the undeserving. We are saved by grace, and, more than that, one of the fruits of grace to us is, or should be, grace in us. “That we may be the children of our Father in heaven, for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” “Love ye the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” And so we have received “grace for grace.” ABDI.

Ans. B.—“Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” Out of His fulness have all we received, and grace or graciousnesses—corresponding to the grace that is in Him.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—Each fruit of the Spirit was in maturity in Him, the only begotten Son. Each believer, begotten of God, has the same qualities in embryo. Grace corresponding to grace.

G. P.

Ans. D.—“Grace for grace” might be rendered “grace answering to grace,” or “grace over against grace.” Out of the divinely-maintained fulness of the widow’s pot of oil (2 Kings iv.) the empty vessels were filled, and had in them, consequently, oil corresponding in kind to the oil in the pot. Or, to use another illustration, suppose we place in order on one side of a line abundance of various sorts of fruit; then take some of each, placing it on the opposite side; we should thus have fruit over against fruit—the same again in kind, though differing as to quantity. So as it is stated in John i. 14—Christ, the eternal Word, made flesh, is “full of grace and truth”; all believers receiving out of His fulness have in them, therefore, “grace for grace.” That is grace answering in kind to the grace at the Source, though infinitely less in degree, inasmuch as “in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” This interpretation is in harmony at once with the original (where the preposition translated “for” is *anti*, “over against,” not *epi*, “upon,” as it is often read) and with the context.

D. R.

RETURNING BY THE BOOK.

REVISED NOTES OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
WM. BLANE IN JOHANNESBURG.

I WISH to read over again the scripture which has been already read (Isa. xliii.), and to point out the connection between it and what goes before. Read from verse 23 of chap. xlii. "Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken, and hear for the time to come? Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not I the Lord, He against whom he sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, neither were they obedient unto His laws. Therefore HE hath poured upon them the fury of His anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name; THOU art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned. For I am the Lord," &c. This takes our minds away back to Egypt. God had to cause His people to pass through many things in the wilderness because of their sins; but the assurance that they would arrive in Canaan at last was this, "I have redeemed thee." "He brought them out to bring them in." The fixed purpose of the Lord to have them in Canaan would be carried out in spite of all the waywardness and wanderings of His people, and we know that it was so.

Now, in the land, the Lord is again dealing with this loved people because of their disobedience to Him; but they are both deaf and blind to His voice and His hand. He gave them for a spoil, poured upon them the fury of His anger and the strength of battle, and set them on fire round about, yet they knew it not; they did not see Him in it all! "But now," now that these things are being felt and laid to heart, "thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by name; THOU ART MINE." Mine still! Created, formed, re-

deemed, and called of the Lord. "When thou passest through the waters [the waters I bring upon you for your sins], I will be with thee; even if they swell to rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire [the fire I kindle because of your disobedience], it shall not burn thee; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I, Jehovah, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, am thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore I will [still] give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not," &c. This opens up wonderful thoughts! God brought this people out of Egypt with the seal of redemption, and, because He had once taken them up, He would deal with them right through, until every promise was realised, and all His purposes with them fulfilled. Thus the Lord leads His people back to Himself through deep waters and fiery trials, but all the while He Himself sustains them. This is a sorrowful experience, but a sorrow from which springs joy to the Lord as He sees the fruit of repentance, and joy to us as we again feel the comfort of His presence.

Turn to Neh. viii. No student of the Scriptures, who understands the Lord's dealings with His people, can open the books of Ezra and Nehemiah without seeing the type of the return to the old paths in these our own days. God's people had been captives in Babylon, which means "confusion," and is a type of the many-tongued worldly religion of our day. From Babylon a remnant was delivered and brought to Jerusalem, first under Zerubbabel, next under Ezra, and lastly under Nehemiah, and there the worship of God was restored. Here we find an example of how they came to do the right things. Verse 1, "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man in the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel." This is a good sign. Any return to the ways of the Lord must be by the Book. We may depend that God's Spirit is at work in their hearts when His people cry, "Bring us the Book." They had seen much in

Babylon, had heard much of what once was and what was not now the case, but the sure way out of the confusion was by the Book ; that, and that only, could point the right path. Dear friends, there is nothing like God's Word. I think if there is one thing I seek to attain more than all others it is the study of the Scriptures of Truth. True, the letter may be put before the spirit, but while we require to test our own spirits, because we may be deceived by them, "every word of God is pure" ; "as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." There is no deception with the Book. A man may persuade himself that he is all right, he may feel at peace with God and man, but that is not enough. Both position and condition must be regulated by the Word of God.

"And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, . . . and he read therein, . . . and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." Verse 5, "And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, . . . and when he opened it, all the people stood up, . . . and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground." All this reverence for the Word of God, which had been so long unnoticed, must have been very dear to the heart of the Lord. From the oldest to the youngest, every one of that seeking congregation, when that long-neglected Book was opened, stood up and bowed the head in true worship. What a blessed sight for the eye of God after all those years wherein the Book was closed and forgotten ! Verse 8, "They read in the Book of the Law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." These three things we who open the Book of God in public would do well to note. First, read distinctly. Second, give the sense. Third, cause the people to understand the reading. We should endeavour to read well—distinctly, so that the Word of God may have due effect ; and the best way to get at this is to read distinctly in secret, and practice well before God.

Then give the sense. Some seem to strain their whole being that they may give power to the Word. Let us give the sense, and let the people take it into their hearts before the Lord, and He will give the power.

Then cause the people to understand. It is wonderful how little is really understood of the Word read in public. We are too apt to take it for granted that much is known, when we should begin at the very first word and break small the bread of life, and labour to make the youngest and most ignorant understand. This was His way who said, "Have ye understood all these things ?"

Verse 9, "All the people, when they heard the words of the law, wept." And they are told to "mourn not, nor weep, for *this day is holy unto the Lord your God.*" It was a sweet savour, a day dear to *Him*. They mourned and wept when they heard the law which condemned them, and when they felt their weakness to carry out all it said ; but it was added, "Neither be ye sorry, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." They grieved, and rightly so, but the Lord joyed over that returning remnant, and from His joy came their strength, and their joy would follow this true sorrow for their sin. Let us seek first His joy, and that will become our strength—the strength in which to carry out His will and rejoice in His ways. In returning from sin, and confessing our wanderings, we have no joy. There is no happiness in the broken-hearted saint bowing before God and his brethren in confession of shameful failure. But as God looks on, and as He takes that returning prodigal to *His* heart, there is a joy throbbing there which none can understand but the Father who feels it ; and as the Father rejoices, the child is strengthened by His joy and girds himself anew to do His will.

It is to the stricken penitent, who is passing through the anguish of returning to the Lord, that it is said, in Isa. xliii., "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee, and the fire of mine anger shall not burn upon thee." The most precious promises of God were made to returning backsliders, and the most pathetic appeals were made to them when living in sin, that they might again, in true penitence, return unto *Him*.

Read Gen. xv. 17, "And it came to pass, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp passed between those pieces." The smoking furnace of affliction wherein they would sorrow and

weep, and the burning lamp of promise wherein they might rejoice. And *both passed between the pieces* of the covenant-cut sacrifice. As if He would say, as Isaiah said long after, "Fear not! for I have redeemed thee." Their sin in selling Joseph was punished with the smoking furnace of Egypt, but side by side with it was the burning lamp of God's promise of deliverance. This is wondrous grace and real comfort when we must suffer.

Read Isa. l. 10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?" This condition is not easily taken in. Here it is one who fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of His servant, yet he walks in darkness and has no light. Fearing and obedient he hath no light. This can only speak of a returning one, for to him who follows on to know the Lord "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Now I do not advocate being in this condition. We should be joyful and bright; but when it does come we ought to benefit by what follows. Here it is, "Let him *trust* in the name Jehovah, and *stay* upon his God." Jehovah is His covenant name, and God (Elohim) the Creator's title. Just as when on a dark night, in a lone and unknown country, you lose your way, and, in your perplexity, you come upon a great tree or rock, and stay yourself upon it, saying, "I will not move till the light comes." So, in this darkness we get God, and stay upon Him who *created* and *formed* us, and He is everywhere; while we trust in the name Jehovah, knowing that He hath *redeemed* us and *called* us by name, saying, "Thou art Mine," as in Isa. xliii. 1. They who compass themselves with sparks, and get up a fire for their own light, shall lie down in sorrow. Let us not invent joy; let us not get up feelings; they cannot last. But let us abide the darkness in the safety of staying upon God, and in the assurance that the light of Jehovah will arise in due time.

There is much in the Word of God to cheer us and make us joyful all day long. "Rejoice in the Lord, and again, I say, rejoice," is like the report of a double-barrelled gun calling us to praise. But while this should be, we have to deal with actual facts, and it is sad

to confess it is not so; and to-night we have tried to point out the only resource for him who is willing to lay his condition bare and truly to return again to the Lord.

Look at THE THREE SONGS OF ISRAEL in the wilderness as illustrative of what really is in our case.

In Ex. xv. we have their first burst of song: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord." It was the song of their deliverance—a song of salvation. I need not read it all, but just remark that "THE LORD" is the key-word of it all. The name Jehovah occurs twelve times. That name fills their mouth, for "He hath triumphed gloriously."

Now look at Num. xxi. 17. Between Ex. xv. and this passage lies all the weary wilderness. Their first song was by the edge of the Red Sea, and now they sing their last song, on the borders of Moab, near the Jordan's brink. It is indeed a little, little song, and, sadder than all, it is not a song to the Lord. Verse 16 is full of meaning: "They came to Beer," the well of Jehovah, "that is the well whereof the Lord spake to Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water." This strange verse connects the well with the smitten rock "which followed them," "and that rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x.). "Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the law-giver, with their staves."

In the first song there is nothing whatever about princes and nobles. It is all about the Lord and unto the Lord. But in this last song He is forgotten and men are remembered. How like the lives of many, perhaps most, Christians! At conversion there is a burst of song to the Lord. It dies away as they enter the desert, and never again is the voice of praise heard till they are about to cross the Jordan of death, and then for what a little while! and how full of men and things!

There is but one mention of song made between the Red Sea and the borders of Moab. One song in forty years! Turn to Ex. xxxii. While Moses had been forty days in the mount with God, the people had made a golden calf, and built an altar before it, and proclaimed a feast to the Lord (verse 5). Now

verse 17, "When Joshua heard the voice of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the *noise of them that sing do I hear.*" One song in forty years, and that before a golden calf! And this was at "a feast unto the Lord"! We need to be suspicious of much of the song of to-day. It is wonderful how brightly and happily we join in singing at our feasts unto the Lord when we are in prosperous circumstances! when health and plenty of money are our lot in temporal things, or when there is no trouble in the church nor anxiety as to the Lord's work; when everything goes smoothly, it is easy to sing. But alas! take away the golden calf of peace and plenty, and we fill up our years with murmuring against the Lord.

May the Lord enable us to learn the lessons He would teach us in these things! for especially do we need them here in this place of exposure, and strange, new temptations, where gold is truly a god after which men pant, and for which they toil and suffer and plunder and deceive, and to which every talent and affection, and even life itself, are often sacrificed.

Even here let us, as "strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."

"Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another" (Eph. iv. 32).

ALAS! how often is the heart of our loving Lord and Master, and the ever-blessed Spirit of God, grieved by the want of love among the children of the kingdom. We may easily imagine what a grief it is to the Head to see the members of His body railing at each other. To see the heirs of the same hope, whose names are on His breast, and whom He presents before His Father in heaven, broken asunder on earth by petty differences must wound His heart. The danger among the "followers of the Lamb" does not lie in their *differences* but in their *dissensions*. Where they "dwell in unity" there "the Lord commands a blessing for evermore." "See that ye love one another, with a pure heart, fervently."

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—V

MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL in Marble Hall, Glasgow.

READ with me the following Scriptures as bearing upon our subject:—Eph. vi. 5-9; Col. iii. 22-25; 1 Cor. vii. 20-24; 1 Tim. vi. 1-5; Titus ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. ii. 18-21. Note in Peter that the word rendered "thankworthy" in verse 18, and that rendered "acceptable" in verse 19, are the same word that elsewhere is rendered "grace." So it might be read "For this is grace," &c. Read also Is. xlii. 1-4 and 19-21.

In this relationship, as in all the others we have been looking at, we have the pattern of heavenly things. The Master and the Servant is one of the relationships in which we find our Lord Jesus stood to His Father. He was not only the Son, He was also the Servant, or Bond-servant; and we have Him frequently in the book of Isaiah called "My Servant." Where the Lord Jesus is spoken of as Servant, it is pointed out that whatever discouragement, opposition, and difficulty He might meet with, He would in the end be successful, and this success was to be achieved by His implicit obedience to the will of His Master. He was the obedient Servant as well as the obedient Son. He says (Ps. xl. 6, marg.), "Mine ear hast Thou bored"; doubtless an allusion to the Hebrew servant whose ear was to be bored with an awl to the doorpost, and thereby he became responsible to serve his master for ever. Our Lord Jesus was the obedient Servant unto death, "even the death of the Cross." Self-pleasing or man-pleasing had no place in His thoughts or ways. He had only One to look to, and only One to listen to; and just because He was the obedient Servant, therefore He was the One whom God pledged Himself to uphold. "Behold My Servant whom I uphold." God was able to make Him stand, and God did make Him stand; and because He was the *obedient Servant* and the *upheld Servant*, therefore He was the Servant in whom His Master, Father, and God ever found delight; if God delighted in Him, God was sure to make His way successful, and the issue is, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth."

He is now at the right hand of God. The fulfilment of Isaiah xlii. has not yet come to pass. Has He failed? No. Is He discouraged? Nay, verily; He is rewarded at the right hand of the throne of God, and patiently waiting until every word be fulfilled. Now, God would have us to understand from His relationship as Master to Jesus as the Servant what our relationships, one toward another, are as masters and servants. Just as in the case of the husband and wife. The Lord Jesus is the pattern for the husband, and the husband's ways ought to be after that pattern. The Church being put in subjection to the Lord, as the wife to the husband; therefore the wife's place is after that same pattern, the place of subjection. So also with the father and the children. The Father in Heaven had one beloved Son upon earth in whom He was well pleased, and that subject, obedient Son, who was ever a joy to His Father, is the pattern for the Christian son upon earth, even as that Father's love, and care, and watchfulness, and faithfulness to His Son is the pattern of what a Christian father's care to his children and family upon earth should be. The same principle holds good as to master and servant. God would have the earthly to be a counterpart of the heavenly. In the New Testament the word "servant" in all these passages we have read is literally "bond-servant." It is not the thought of our modern arrangement, in which the servant becomes a servant voluntarily, and engages for so much a week, which engagement terminates at will, due notice being given. That is not the New Testament thought of master and servant, and therefore there is always some difficulty in applying to present-day conditions such passages as we have read. But although the terms of engagement differ, the relationship is the same; the principles which God has given in Scripture applying to bond-servants and heathens are equally applicable to the existing state of things around us. These many guiding Scriptures did not cease to apply when slavery ceased. Though servants are not now bond-servants, but free, made free in the happy liberty of the government under which our lot is cast, free to engage or disengage, the only condition being that they abide by contract, still these divine instructions remain in force, and blessing

can only be secured by loyal adherence to every word God has written. The divine principles equally apply, whether it be one who may be made free by the payment of a certain sum, like a soldier, or one engaged for a week, a month, or a year.

I am sure it must have struck you how much more is written upon this relationship than concerning any other of the relationships we have considered. Possibly one reason for this is, that the large majority of the Lord's people in those days were of the class of bond-servants. "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (1 Cor. i. 26). They were mostly the poor of this world, and being the poor of this world they were mostly in the bond-servant position. And our blessed Lord never respects persons; in His esteem all His own are looked upon as valued at the price of His own precious blood, therefore He speaks more in detail, more in the language of warning, and more in the language of promise and encouragement to those who were in the position that must have often been irksome to the flesh and hard to bear, involving, doubtless, many hardships and many wrongs, and yet from which the great bulk of His people were called.

In 1 Cor. vii. 20 (just glance at it a moment) there is the twice-repeated exhortation, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called," and in the second passage (verse 24) it is "therein abide with God." There are many callings in which one may be called by the grace of God, but in which it would not be possible to remain *with God*. There are unlawful callings in which a Christian could not abide with a good conscience. It is the will of God that each one who is in any such calling or position should seek deliverance from it at once, and at all costs; being the Lord's free man he must keep a good conscience. The Lord must be the first to be recognised in the matter. But here the calling spoken of is that of a bond-servant, and it says though you be a bond-servant, care not for it, do not be troubled about it, do not be thinking if you were free you could serve God so much better. Get rid of this thought; you have as large a sphere of service, though you are a bond-servant, as He sees fit to assign to you, for you are "the Lord's free man." You

are no longer under bondage to man ; free from sin and Satan, "bought with a price," you are the servant of the Lord Jesus, and He put you there, and He means you to shine just there where He has called you. When you walk through the streets at night, you see the lamps are scattered all along from north to south and east to west. What would you think of a proposal to get all the lamps in the city brought together into George's Square? The lamps are set where they are meant to shine ; so those who were converted were called in very diverse positions. One in Caesar's household, one the chamberlain of the city, one an Areopagite, one there, one here ; but the great bulk of mankind being of the serving class (not the rich, or noble, or mighty), therefore the Lord calls many from that class, and means them to shine where He calls them. The exception is if you cannot abide "with God," out of it you must be. Now let us remember this, that if God has called you as serving in a mason's yard, or a joiner's shop, or at a mill loom, or as a household servant, He has called you for the very purpose that there you should let your light shine. There is the spot where you can best serve the Lord who has made you free, and there is the divinely-appointed sphere of your service and testimony, the place to adorn His doctrine ; it is there that your life is to be an advertisement for your God. Has that been apprehended? Have we apprehended that whatever our position is, that is the place where God means us to be?

I am not saying anything at all, mark you, about liberty of contract, of one giving his warning and leaving, and getting better employment. In all these things, we are variously circumstanced, and each one must seek guidance for himself ; the one thing to be sure of is, however attractive the promotion or advancement may be, that God is with us, and that every step is taken in His fear. If the root of it is simply covetousness, to get up in the world, advancement in life, that is an unworthy motive for a Christian. God would have us to put Him first. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," &c., as His "righteous Servant" ever did, and He will see that you lack for nothing. These earthly blessings are but the trifles with God ; they shall all be "*added*," or thrown into the bargain, so to speak. "Your

heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of these things." Only set Him first, and we will be astonished to find how He can load and bless us, even when things seem crooked, rough, and impossible.

Let us now look at some of the details of the instructions given.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling." There is a great difference between godly fear and slavish fear, between the fear that a child has lest he offend a loving parent and the fear that hath torment.

I remember once hearing of a household servant in a wealthy family; there were costly things in the drawing-room, vases worth hundreds of pounds, and her duty was to dust the room. She would say, "I never go into that room without trembling in case I break some of these things." This serves to illustrate our position as Christians. Not that you are handling brittle ware, but that every hour and every day of your life the honour of our Lord is at stake, and the whole doctrine of Scripture is to be commended or brought into ridicule, according as you obey or disobey its teaching. I would have you notice in these passages that the Lord dwells more upon the adorning of His doctrine in speaking to servants than to any other relationship. To the wife with an unconverted husband, there is almost the promise that her godly, chaste behaviour, "without the word," will be the means of winning the husband for the Saviour. But to servants is specially granted the unspeakable honour, the high blessed privilege of adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour. Thus, whether to their fellow-servants or employers, they can speak after a fashion that no one else can ; they can speak with voice and with life under the blessing and control of the Lord Jesus Christ. From such one word would come with more power than ten thousand words from a street preacher, or from one whose life is not adorning the doctrine. Thus, as "upon those members of the body which we think to be less honourable we bestow more abundant honour" (1 Cor. xii. 23), and as in the case of the wife the Lord puts honour upon "the weaker vessel," so He puts honour upon servants, the high honour of being where they can exhibit

the mind and ways of Christ in a way that is almost impossible in any other position. As regards the expression "fear and trembling," at your leisure refer to such passages as "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. ii. 12); Titus being received with fear and trembling (2 Cor. vii. 15); such scriptures proving that it is not slavish fear, but a godly concern for the name and honour of the Lord in the manner of our behaviour.

"In singleness of your heart as unto Christ." You find the same thought in Col. iii. 23, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Now, what is the meaning of that? If I understand it aright, it means this, that whatever your work or occupation — whatever capacity you are serving in — God would have you, when you start your work in the morning, to get your eye off your master and mistress (excepting in as far as you require to know their will) that you may serve in singleness of heart, without being distracted by any other consideration, going about your day's work as work for the Lord. It is that if you get up to sweep the carpet, or to labour in the workshop or at the loom, whatever the duty is, act so as if the Lord were standing at your side, saying in your heart, "I am sweeping this carpet for my Lord"; "I am weaving this cloth for my Lord." Your earthly master or mistress may be a hard one, and never pleased, but it is your privilege to get your eyes off them. You are not doing it for them, you are doing it for the Lord, your eyes are on Him. You will have no rest or comfort in your life, no recompense from Him, nor will you be made a blessing where you are unless you see it thus. You will kick and rebel, like "a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke," unless you see it thus, and learn that you are in all things serving the Lord Christ.

On one occasion, I remember, tea was prepared for me by a dear Christian. She had washed the cups and prepared it all with her own hands, and she told me afterwards that as she was doing it the thought came into her mind, "how joyfully, how carefully I would do all this if, like Martha of old, I had been making ready the tea for Jesus!"

But she added, "I *was* doing it for Him." She had learned the meaning of that word,

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not unto men."

Don't you see how the whole complexion of labour changes with the thought? How labour is lifted up into the sphere of worship; how God thus dignifies and ennobles it, however common-place it may be?

Thus Jesus, His blessed Servant, wrought at the carpenter's bench until He was thirty years old, and there glorified His Father.

It is written concerning Him in Isa. xlii. 19, "Who is blind, but My Servant? or deaf, as My Messenger that I sent? who is blind as He that is perfect, and blind as Jehovah's Servant?"

He was blind to every consideration but one, His Father's glory. As one blind and deaf He saw and heard nothing, though at every step a thousand influences were brought to bear upon Him to turn Him aside from the path of obedience. He had His eye upon God alone; He had but one to please.

So should it be with us, and if you and I were living like this what a different life we would oftentimes lead! Many say they would not have a Christian servant in their employment. I thank God I cannot join in this cry. I can speak well of Christian servants; not that I have found them perfect, for I am not perfect myself, but Christian servants have been the best I have had. But I know it is not always so; the complaint in many a case has been too well founded. They have often proved themselves more unwilling to oblige, and less disposed to take the heavy end of the burden, than a good-natured worldly man or woman. Such things are a reproach, a shame, a denial of the gospel! There ought to be none so accessible in time of need, none that can be so counted on, none whose master can depend upon them for doing the work well as the Christian.

"Not with eye service." What does that mean? It is serving when your master's eye is not upon you, exactly as if he were looking at you. Some are like the boy with his novel under the lid of the desk. He reads the novel when the master goes out at the door, and when he comes in down goes the lid of his desk and he is busy writing! This is eye-service. There is a man who, as long as his foreman is away, can go round the corner and

stand half an hour or so smoking his pipe. He thinks nothing of his master's time. Can such an one be said to be trustworthy? If there was not the danger of "eye-service," it would not be spoken of in this way.

It is a reproach and dishonour that such things should happen with Christians, and, where this is the case, his eye is not on the Lord. He has no thought of the recompense then.

"THE EARNEST."

THE presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit is the characteristic feature of the present dispensation. It is this that marks the present as the time of greatest privilege, and hence of deepest responsibility, in the world's history. It was for this expedient that the blessed Saviour should go away; for, said He: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you" (John xvi. 7).

The presence of the Holy Spirit is even of greater value to the Church than the bodily presence of the Lord Jesus. In the days of His flesh His bodily presence was of necessity limited to the few; whilst now the Holy Spirit indwells each believer.

The ministry of the Lord Jesus was circumscribed by place and time; the ministry of the Holy Spirit knows no such limits.

It is, however, our purpose now only to consider one aspect of this blessed ministry.

Three times in the New Testament the Holy Spirit is spoken of as an "Earnest." 2 Cor. i. 22—"Who (God) hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts"; 2 Cor. v. 5—"Who (God) hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit"; Eph. i. 14—"Who (the Holy Spirit) is the earnest of our inheritance."

It will be noted that the Holy Spirit, as an Earnest, is the possession of every believer as a matter of gift and grace, apart altogether from attainment or merit. So we read: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30).

The Holy Spirit takes up His abode in every believer the moment he is born of God; according to the word of the Lord, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be *in* you" (John xiv. 17); "This spake He of the Spirit,

which they that believe on Him *should* receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 39).

So we read again: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9). The manner of our reception of the Spirit *now* is by the "hearing of faith" —(Compare Gal. iii. 2 and Eph. i. 13).

In the New Testament times we read of four instances where the reception of the Spirit was accompanied with outward and visible signs. There were four special occasions when representative persons, who embraced and represented the whole of mankind, were thus, with the same outward manifestation, brought into that in which such distinctions are unknown. For in Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew (see Gal. iii. 28; Col. iii. 11). These occasions were as follows: —The Jews (Acts ii.); the Samaritans (Acts viii.); the Gentiles (Acts x.); the disciples of John (Acts xix.).

These are the only instances given when outward signs accompanied the reception of the Holy Spirit. These outward signs are not now repeated.

By faith we believe the testimony of God's word, that the Holy Spirit does indwell us, and takes up His abode within us the moment we accept the Lord Jesus as our Saviour. Our assurance of the blessed fact depends not, then, on our frames and feelings, but on the testimony of Jehovah.

Nevertheless, if the presence of this mighty Power and glorious Person is not a great reality to us in practical, everyday experience, we may well conclude something is wrong.

He is called, as we have already noticed, three times "an Earnest." An earnest is a pledge and surety of something to come. An earnest is only of use in proportion as it is real and tangible.

A person wishes to buy a property, and gives a cheque as an earnest that in due time he will pay the balance. If that cheque is not presented to the bank and proved to be good, it is of no use as an earnest.

Is it not true that the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within us is to many of us a matter of faith rather than deep realisation? If this is so, then we do not know and enjoy Him in His glorious office as an *Earnest*.

It is the mark of an indifferent state of soul when we need the sharp reminder, "What ! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God ?" (1 Cor. vi. 19).

The tokens of the Holy Spirit within should not only be manifest to those who watch our conduct, so that they testify we are indeed led by that Holy Spirit, but also a matter of deep and conscious realisation in our own experience. So real to ourselves should His presence be, that this precious, priceless possession should indeed be the earnest to our own hearts of all the future gifts and blessings that the God of all grace will delight to bestow.

The indwelling Holy Spirit of promise is the earnest of our inheritance *until* the redemption of the purchased possession (Eph. i. 14). Then shall we enter into the fulness, and no more know in part. But how and in what sense is the Holy Spirit an earnest of the glorious inheritance for which the saved wait and long—that inheritance, which is incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for the redeemed ? (1 Peter i. 4).

This question suggests another. Of what does this inheritance consist ? And is not the answer, " Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit " (Rom. xiv. 17), enjoyed because of unhindered and uninterrupted fellowship with the Father and the Son ? No unbelief to limit ; no sin to hinder !

True, hunger, pain, sorrow shall be banished. True, that city prepared (Heb. xi. 16)—the prepared place in the mansions (John xiv. 1-3)—shall reflect in all its exquisite beauty the loving hand and mighty wisdom of the Blessed Designer ; yet these, after all, are but the fitting externals which accompany the true life—like the furniture and decorations of the house which proclaim the character of the home life. True, very true, " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him " ; yet can we add, " But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit " ?

That blessed Spirit gives us to know the things freely given to us of God (1 Cor. ii.). That blessed Spirit, if we grieve and hinder Him not, will give us, even now and here, such foretastes of heavenly joy and peace that,

as a matter of glad experience, we shall know Him as indeed the *earnest* of our inheritance, the joys of heaven, deep and pure, being but the *fulness* of what we now enjoy in part.

Oh, to know more of the blessed indwelling Spirit as an earnest of coming bliss !

W. H. S.

EVOLUTION AND THE BIBLE.

[FIRST PAPER.]

THOUGH few readers of *The Witness* may have been disturbed by the modern doctrine of evolution, the fact that it is so widely accepted makes it needful for us all, and more especially for those who read the religious and scientific literature of the day, to be on our guard against the subtle doctrines connected with it. So long as this pernicious teaching was confined to avowed unbelievers in the Scriptures, there was less danger of the disciples of Christ being ensnared by it ; but now that it is accepted and enforced by those who take the place of Christian teachers, it is high time to test it by the Word of God. In a recent religious review, a writer states that "the evolution theory has established an uncontested claim to give a scientific explanation of the material world," and in one of the most notable books of recent years the writer accepts the theory as though it were an unquestioned truth, and seeks to prove that there is a complete analogy between it and the great truths of Scripture concerning *redemption*—that is, so far as his theory allows place for anything worthy of that name. Others, who take the name of *Christian evolutionists*, proceed further in the same direction, with the avowed aim of attracting the learned to the truths of the Bible, supposing that if it can only be shown that Christianity rests upon a strictly scientific basis opposition to its teachings will be broken down.

Now, all these efforts betray an ignorance of the fundamental principles of Christianity, even though those who make them may in their hearts trust in Christ as their Saviour. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians the apostle shows clearly that there can be no combination of divine and human wisdom, because the human understanding has become utterly darkened through sin. God begins with man at the cross of Christ, as it is written,

"We preach Christ crucified . . . unto the Greeks [*i.e.*, the wise of this world] foolishness." The thought of leading the wise of this world to accept Christianity on a scientific basis ignores the truth that no one can receive *Christ* except by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and that the natural man cannot receive or know the things of the Spirit of God. Any faith that might be produced in this way would simply stand in "*the wisdom of man*," and not "*in the power of God*," and thus the result would be the exact opposite of that which the apostle Paul sought (1Cor.ii.). Some of the most solemn words of warning to believers found in Scripture are spoken in connection with this very matter; for it is with special reference to the introduction of human wisdom into the Church of God that the statement is made, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God defile."

But what is this doctrine of evolution that meets us on every hand? Discarding atheistic and mere theistic speculations, we may say the theory adopted by professedly Christian teachers is; that in some remote period in eternity God created a mass of hazy, opaque material of which worlds might be made, and that by virtue of an inherent power with which He endowed it, or, as some would say, by the working out of a law stamped upon it, in due time this mass of matter became condensed into suns and systems. Then—confining our remarks to the world we inhabit—all the trees and flowers and fruits sprang naturally from the soil; and, as regards animal life, we are told that matter, becoming *in some way* endowed with life, developed from a few simple germs into all the varied species of animals now found on the globe. We are further informed that this development took place "by microscopic steps over infinite fields of time," the meaning of which, on closer inspection, is really that things began so long ago, and developed so slowly, that there was no definite "beginning" such as that spoken of in Gen. i.

But it is when *man* becomes the subject of contemplation that both the irreverence and absurdity of evolution theories are fully seen. Without attempting to trace man's pedigree through all the links which evolutionists have discovered or *invented*, we may give some idea

of it. Matter became "*in some way* endowed with life"; this life first showed itself in the form of tadpoles; from tadpoles, after successive generations, came fishes; fishes gradually developed into primary mammals; in process of time were evolved apes, then "man-like apes," then "ape-like men," and from these ape-like men sprang men. Those who acknowledge God in the matter do recognise that, just as "in the passage from the non-living to the living, God must have had a hand," so, "in the passage from the animal to the human, God has had another intervention, to give His own impress to Nature's tardily-developed king."

We might be tempted to smile as we read this account of the origin of the human race, and to think that some one had resorted to a rather questionable kind of amusement for children; but we may rather weep at the thought that any child of God, with the Bible in his hand, can be so beguiled by vain deceit as to turn away his ears from the truth, and find pleasure in such fables. Yet this is what many are doing. Christians who accept these novelties, and are not prepared to reject Scripture, do their best to harmonise its teachings with them; but, it is no matter of surprise that their twistings of Scripture for this purpose should be held up to ridicule. Thus one scientific writer says: "If we are to listen to many expositors of no mean authority, we must believe that what seems so clearly defined in Genesis—as if great pains had been taken that there should be no possibility of mistake—is not the meaning of the text at all. The account is divided into periods that we may make just as long or as short as convenience requires. We are also to understand that it is consistent with the original text to believe that the most complex plants and animals may have been evolved by natural processes, lasting for millions of years, out of structureless rudiments. A person who is not a Hebrew scholar can only stand aside and admire the marvellous flexibility of a language which admits of such diverse interpretations."

That there is really no middle course between the acceptance of the first of Genesis in its simplest and most literal meaning, and being driven hither and thither by every fresh idea of those who call themselves philosophers,

has long been the conviction of some, and will have yet to be learned by many more of the children of God. We say this in spite of the assurance of a Christian teacher that "science, with no weapon but inexorable fact, has made this [literal interpretation] for ever untenable." The contention of some that, because the New Testament concludes with a *symbolic* description of the glories of the new creation, we are warranted in regarding the narrative of the creation in Genesis as *symbolic*, altogether ignores the difference between *history* and *prophecy*, and it further ignores the many references, in subsequent scriptures, to the action of the Creator.

The effort to harmonise the truth of creation with any idea of evolution at once leads men to minimise the work of creation, and to be content with the "admission of a Creator to start the process." A nobleman, in writing on this subject, says: "We strain our imaginations to conceive the processes of creation, whilst in reality they are around us daily. . . . It is only familiarity that has veiled their mystery." He further expresses the probability that, had we been spectators, "from the beginning creation would have seemed to us a growth and not a manufacture." This seems to come perilously near the denial of the definite creation of matter out of nothing. Indeed, one writer on the first of Genesis takes refuge in the idea that "it is not stated whether God created out of nothing, or out of eternally, or, at least, pre-existing matter." Without discussing the meaning of words, we might ask if he had never read the statement of Heb. xi., that "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear"? This statement absolutely denies the pre-existence of matter, and definitely affirms that the world was made out of nothing.

The assertions that "the processes of creation" are "around us daily," and that "we are even now in the middle of a truly creative work," really deny that the work of God as Creator was *finished*. Scripture asserts that "the heaven and the earth were *finished*, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God *finished* His work which He had made" (Gen. ii. 1, 2, R.V.). There is another blessed sense in which the Lord could say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"; but not in the sense of creating.

The tendency of this doctrine to turn men

from Scripture finds a solemn illustration in the case of a yearly lecture in a large denomination. The subject selected is always a prominent Biblical topic, and the lecture is published, and thus endorsed, by the denomination. In 1887 the subject was: "*The Creator, and what we may know of the Method of Creation.*" A great subject truly, and one on which we should have supposed some information would be sought from Scripture; but, on the contrary, Scripture is conspicuous by its absence. And, what is still worse, when the lecturer does refer to Scripture, it is merely to try to explain it away. One example may suffice. The statement that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground," denotes "a slow creation, through a long line of varied life." He adds: "It was the possession of what we call the soul that gave to the manhood its being. How this was imparted, who can know? Who shall explain?"

The fact that the doctrine of evolution touches the truth of man's immortality, seems to be leading Christian evolutionists to take refuge in the idea of some special intervention of God in the last stage of the development of man. The question is perfectly natural, if man has sprung from the brutes, how can he be more immortal than they? This doctrine may, as some put it, give hope for still further development on the part of the *race*; but what becomes of men individually? The only answer of the Christian evolutionist is, *The body is not man*. Another writer puts the matter thus: "What is man? This physical organisation—these legs, this body, this beating heart, these lungs, these eyes, this brain? No! God formed the body out of the dust of the earth. He ordered that out of lower materials. How long He was doing it, and what was the method of the procedure, the writer of Genesis does not tell us, and probably did not know. Whether it was done by some instantaneous process, or whether by long and gradual process from lower order of life, is immaterial. How the ship was built is not the question. Whence came the captain that commands it? That is the question. And spiritual philosophy declares that, whether by long process or quick process, by gradual evolution or by instantaneous creation, no matter, when by some method of God's workmanship, the physical organism had

been built, the living inhabitant was breathed into it by the very breath of God Himself." Another puts the same idea somewhat differently: "The ape did not develop into man; but it is conceivable that he may have furnished a physical structure of such perfection of organisation that God could use it as a condition upon which to erect His highest creature, Man."

That this line of argument touches the grand truth of the resurrection we will show presently; meantime we simply affirm that it denies the plain statements of Genesis. If man is not man without the spirit—or "breath of life"—which God breathed into him, it is equally true that man is never called man without his body. Indeed the body is spoken of as man in Genesis ii. 7. Nothing can be plainer or more definite than God's own account of the creation of man: "God *created* man in His own image, in the image of God *created* He him; male and female *created* He them"; and still more particularly, "The Lord God *formed* man of the dust of the ground" (Genesis i. 27; ii. 7). Let us mark the repetition of the word *created* in the first passage, and observe that the latter statement affirms the origin of man's *body*, as is most evident from the further information that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." There is no warrant in Scripture for any such distinction between man's body and spirit, as might be illustrated by a *ship*, and the *captain* that commands it; man is not *man* without spirit, soul, and body.

No one can question the literal accuracy of the narrative in Genesis without questioning the truthfulness of the Lord Jesus who, in reply to the Pharisees, sets His seal upon it. He tells them that Moses *regulated* the law of divorce, not forbidding it entirely because of the hardness of their hearts; and adds, "But from the beginning of the creation God made them a male and a female." God formed one man, and one woman for the man, and joined them together by the marriage tie (Mark x. 2—9); and He did this, says the Lord, at "*the beginning of the creation.*" The Holy Ghost by Paul bases precious instruction upon the same truth (Eph. v. 31), thus again affirming the historical accuracy of the narrative. W. H. B.

AN APPEAL FROM CHINA.

DEAR FRIENDS.—We desire to bring the subject before you of the need of labourers in this land to carry on the Lord's work. We are afraid lest you should think that because we now number a party of eight foreigners in Wu-ch'en that the needs of *North-west* (to speak more particularly) Kiang-si are fully met. You must neither suppose this, nor that even this one district is supplied with light-bearers sufficient to lighten the darkness of these masses of idol and demon worshippers. Were there thirty-six thousand workers in China alone, each would have ten thousand souls. Kiang-si has a population of over fifteen millions according to the lowest estimate, with an area of 72,126 square miles. Out of seventy-three walled cities in the province only ten are occupied by the Lord's servants, leaving a sad total of *sixty-three cities without a station or a solitary witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.* This is exclusive of many townships, hundreds of villages and hamlets, which throng the principal rivers and lie inland at a distance of say from two to ten miles apart according to size. Without having *seen*, can you grasp this fact? Can you believe it? Imagine as one passes through the gate of one of these cities and sees the shops and streets filled with people it is with the consciousness that they do not know the name of Jesus. They have been left by us from one century to another to the worship of dumb idols, and, having worshipped the work of their own hands and the imaginations of their own hearts, have now become like unto these vile and hideous images. Thus we find them to-day without either moral rectitude or self-restraint, and in many cases capable of the most cruel, lying, and dishonest dealings that were ever charged upon the heathen world. The fact is, in trying to combat such a state of affairs, or to reach the heathen at all, we are terribly undermanned, and no considerations should cause those to hesitate who are free to come, unless they have a *definite* call to stay at home. We feel that you do not understand that multitudes are without the knowledge of the gospel, while thousands of Christians are grouped together in little England. You must admit that such

a state of affairs is not apostolic, and, in the light of Mark xvi. 15, that no such place as England was ever intended whilst vast regions remained unblessed by the revelation of divine and eternal love. Many have never considered their responsibility to the heathen. They have aimed at faithfulness at home in their own circle, whether large or small, but the thought that myriads beyond that circle are daily perishing without a knowledge of Christ has not been given serious attention. While, on the other hand, others are casting longing eyes towards a wider and more needy sphere of labour, but are halting between the thousand and one "*pros and cons*," either suggested by their own hearts or by dear friends or brethren in Christ. To such we would say, "Why halt ye between two *opinions*?" Why do you try to count the cost of imaginary sufferings and trials, which God may never send you, and hesitate to go forth in His Name? Oh, for those who will put their trust in the Lord! Trust Him, and He will abundantly supply all you need. Trust Him for health, He can and may give you better health than in England. Trust Him for the language; He can and will give you the opening of the mouth in the midst of the heathen. And even in the matter of food you can trust the Lord. China is a civilised country, and produces much of what we are accustomed to have at home, supplemented by foreign stores if desired, which can be purchased at every open port. Do not suppose that coming to China is all that some fanciful and romantic minds would lead you to suppose, or that our lives are anything other than what may be expected of ordinary beings. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible" to be able to live in China and serve the Lord by so many men and women who have no great gifts to lay at His feet, but only common-place matter-of-fact powers of daily living and walking *so as to please Him* in humility of mind and with patient perseverance? We would remind dear brethren, in their collective character, that they occupy a position of responsibility towards the outside world lying in heathen darkness, and that as they help or hinder those who desire to come, so will they hinder or further the blessed news of the gospel reaching those "who sit in darkness and in the shadow

of death." Brethren and sisters, let us echo the apostolic word, "*the time is short*." Then, too, "the King's business requireth haste." The day of service will soon be over, and the night cometh, bringing for us blood-bought and ransomed ones rest and the consummation of all our joy and hope, seeing and being for ever with the Lord and Master, but for those who have never heard of a Saviour the "outer darkness" and the wail of never-ending despair.

Praying that the response of many a heart may be, "Lord, here am I; send me."

(Signed) EDWARD J. BLANDFORD.
JANIE G. A. BLANDFORD.
HARRY PRICE.
R. ERNEST JONES.
JOHN L. DUFF.
MARGARET DUFF.
MARGARET ELLIOT.
ANNIE L. LUCAS.

WUCHEN, PEIYANG LAKE,
CENTRAL CHINA, 16th May, 1892.

THE YOUNG EAGLES.

AMIDST the rugged overhanging rocks,
Within a nook, an eagle's nest is found;
So snug and warm, that loth the eagles are
To try their wings, and learn to fly around.

But see the mother bird, so wondrous wise,
Has in her love for them stirred up the nest,
So that the thorns may probe their tender sides,
And force them out from off their cosy rest.

Trembling they stand, until the mother bird,
With vigorous flappings, drives them from the side;
They use their feeble strength, and try to fly,
But, failing, fall upon her outstretched wings.

With confidence thus gained they try again,
Knowing beneath them are the wings of love;
Their mother teaches, aids them in their flight,
And soon they too can reach the heights above.

E'en so it was with me, so loth was I,
Although my Father in His love saw fit
To stir my nest, I felt it hard to say—
Father, it is Thy will, I can submit.

My way was straitened; so He drove me forth,
And showed me how to fly, nor weary be,
For underneath His wings of love He spread:
How great His love in caring thus for me!

'Twas thus I found the pain He had to send,
To show me His great love and sympathy;
And I delight to find my rest in Him,
Until He bears me to the heights above.

That blissful time, when all my lessons learnt,
And freed from all the cares and sorrows here,
The resting comes—the Sabbath rest He gives
To all His children to His heart so dear.

J. P.

Correspondence.

CIRCULATING THE SCRIPTURES.

ESTEEMED BROTHER IN CHRIST,

Many thanks for monthly *Witness*, which is always welcome, and from which we draw many wholesome truths on our path homewards. We are still toiling on in the midst of difficulties of various kinds, one of them just now being the oppressive heat we have to endure. With 127° in the sun, and 111° in the shade, it makes one feel quite helpless; we walk about more like shadows than living beings, and can hardly stand upright on our feet, for pressure of heat. There is also a serious epidemic of small-pox in its most virulent form. In all this trouble we don't look on the circumstances around, but up to our God. He knows how to lead and help His people.

During twenty-nine years in the Lord's service He has enabled me through His grace to circulate nearly one million of His precious Word, in thirty-seven languages. All has been done during many a day's and many night's toil; with many a prayer, many a tear, and apparent danger to life and limb, besides conscious knowledge of shortcomings and weakness. I am looking forward to the Lord's return, when He will make up His peculiar treasure, and then we shall see the fruit of seed sown. The tool is nothing in itself apart from what use the Master makes of it.

Why I wish to state these facts is not in a spirit of boasting, but to encourage younger brethren to lay this matter on their hearts, and say before the Lord, "What can I do in the way of circulating God's Holy Word? That Word which shall remain when 'heaven and earth shall pass away.'

Think on this. The Bible is translated in two hundred and seventy-three languages and dialects. Fifteen hundred millions of human beings on the earth, and of this great number between eleven and twelve hundred millions who don't possess it; and every second a human soul enters into eternity, and I and my fellow-saints on earth going down to the grave.

Some friends might ask, "What can we do?" You can begin in a small way, if only with a few Gospels in your pocket to distribute them when opportunities are open for you to do so. But you will say, "If they are refused when offered; what then?" Well, you have only done what the Lord has bidden you to do, leaving the consequences in His hand, for the responsibility lies on the individual to whom it is presented, and not on you. If he accept it, he becomes responsible to God, his Maker, for that Word of His. If he reject it, equally so. Neither you nor I can fathom God's manifold ways of reaching the human heart and conscience. It is God's Word as a witness to the truth, and we have to obey His command.

G. A. EOLL.

PORT SAID, EGYPT, August 9, 1892.

MISSIONARY TRAINING.

DEAR SIR,—I have been thinking a good deal about the number of young men who are being stirred up about missionary work. It is most blessed to hear of it, and those who are older in the service must be delighted to hear of so many desiring to lay themselves on the altar for such work.

Yet, as one who has been for nearly twenty years in the work of the Lord—not in the *regions beyond*, such as India and Africa, yet, perhaps, in as trying circumstances as many of those who are—I have been wishing to express my mind to such young men. Would it not be well for them to begin *first at home*? They take the place of those who go out, taking nothing of the Gentiles, and simply trusting the Lord for all their spiritual and temporal needs. Would it not be well that their faith should be tested in these home districts? Are there not many villages in Scotland and England where few go and preach the simple Gospel? Let them go there, with little in their pocket, in simple trust in the Lord that He will supply all their need; and having proved their Master in home districts, and He having proved them, they would have their FAITH TRIED, and therefore strengthened, and would thus be the more able to step out into the *regions beyond*. I am sure this is necessary, that both the Master and servant should be proved. We see the two sides in Deut. viii. 2 and Ps. xcvi. 9. I fear this has been much overlooked in the case of many who have gone out. We have seen them visiting churches in the United Kingdom, which may be very good in its way, yet we want to see men who have been tested at home, and have been able to stand the test in the hidden path.

I have often said to other labourers with us, "If those who speak of going out would come over to Ireland for a year or two, with little or nothing in their purse, and take what they may get, it would be a good college training for them." It has been done by all who are labouring here more or less, taking their bag in their hand and travelling on their feet six, ten, and fourteen miles, to the places where they were to labour, and sometimes with no money in their pocket. What has it done? It has put backbone into the labourers. Let any look at the fruit that has been brought forth by such hidden service. The North of Ireland is a witness to it.

* I am afraid this way of proving men either has not been known, or lost sight of, and the consequence will be a weak testimony of no depth or Divine worth. The spirit of the age is to make much of men and intellect, but the hidden path of faith, that "no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen, the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it," I fear is not known by many who profess to be the Lord's. For one to say he is going out trusting the Lord only, is a matter that should be weighed well, and proved in the testing path, in the path of faith. I am sure of this, those who do will find it *no easy path*.

Having trusted the Lord for all my spiritual and temporal needs for many years, I write with some measure of experience, and I have been careful to say nothing in this letter that I have not practised. I write this with no other intention but to lead others into the ways which be of Christ.

WM. M'LEAN.

39 Atlantic Avenue,
Belfast.

MINISTRY AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE article in the August *Witness* over the signature J.R.C., suggests my sending you a few lines as to the method we have for years followed here. When once

we had perceived the importance of limiting the Lord's Supper proper to the subject therein set forth, it became manifest to all that another opportunity should be provided for general edification, teaching, exhortation, intercessory prayer, reports of the Lord's work, &c. For a full year, therefore, we held the meeting for these purposes on Thursday evening; but not successfully. Several of our number had some miles to travel to attend the meetings, and when the day's work was done were unable from fatigue or want of time to be present, and the numbers dwindled steadily. Then after much prayer and consultation it was determined to hold the two meetings on Sunday mornings, the Lord's Supper first, and the other afterwards.

The result has been remarkably blessed, happy, and fruitful. The meetings are longer than they would otherwise be, but heaviness, weariness, and such lamentable evils as J. R. C. refers to, are almost if not wholly unknown. Especially is this the case with regard to the Lord's Supper. Contrary to the expectations and fears of some, there is no monotony, and little repetition or commonplace. The Spirit of God owns the obedience of the disciples to the Lord's command, and makes our meetings full of life, power, blessing, and gladness.

ARDFERT, IRELAND.

G. F. T.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers. Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45 (the unclean spirit).

Does any scripture teach that the Holy Spirit is present to rule, in an especial manner, at the meeting for remembering the Lord?

Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

What is the scriptural way for an assembly to raise money for the Lord's work and workers?

"The voice of a majority."—Does 2 Cor. ii. 17, rendered by Rotherham the "majority," not favour ruling by majorities; and are we not socially and morally ruled by the voice of the majority in municipal and parliamentary affairs, affecting all our church, home, business, and general interests?

If a servant of the Lord is invited to visit an assembly or meeting which is not "recognised" as being in "the fellowship," is that of itself a scriptural reason for his declining to go and help them?

Please explain through *The Witness* Leviticus xxi. 17, &c., and the difference between the blemished priest and the believers now.

What is the teaching of the expressions, "sprinkled with blood" (Heb. ix. 21), and "blood of sprinkling"

(Heb. xii. 24)? Do they convey the same meaning, or different, from the "shedding of blood" in Matt. xxvi. 28, Heb. ix. 22?

SINGING AT THE LORD'S SUPPER.

QUESTION 420.—Are there definite scriptures to warrant the singing of hymns when the church is gathered together on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread?

Ans. A.—The singing of hymns seems to have been the practice of Christians in apostolic times when gathered together to break bread. See Matt. xxvi. 27-30, where the meeting ends up with praise. We need not expect to find hard-and-fast lines on the subject in the Scriptures, for this time is specially one of grace, and the love of Christ should constrain us in whatever we do. Praise must be spontaneous, and surely if we are gathered together to "keep the feast" fresh recollections of the sufferings of Christ will lead us to make melody in our hearts to the Lord, and to sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Eph. v. 19). We are exhorted to offer up the sacrifice of praise to God continually (Heb. xiii. 15), and this means at the "breaking of bread" as well as at other times. The danger is that we sing hymns without exercise of heart, and this may be pleasing to ourselves, for music is entertaining to the natural heart (Gen. iv. 21), but it is not praise to God. "Judah" means praise, and the pre-eminence of that tribe in the nation of Israel (Judges i. 1, 2) would appear to show the significance that we should attach to "praising the Lord." Oh, for exercised hearts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If this were so every hymn given out in our meetings would symphonise with the object of our coming together.

R. S.

Ans. B.—On the occasion of the institution of breaking bread in remembrance of the Lord it is written, "And when they had sung an hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives" (Matt. xxvi. 30, Mark xiv. 26). Also 1 Cor. xiv. 15-17 clearly refers to the same meeting. See also Psalm xxii. 25, Psalm cxi. 1, Psalm cclvii. 1. When or where would the singing of praise be more "comely" than when the redeemed of the Lord are gathered to "remember" HIM who hath redeemed them?

G. A.

LEAVENED BREAD.

QUESTION 421.—Is it scriptural to use leavened bread at the Lord's Supper?

Ans. A.—The use of unleavened bread was enjoined for the Passover feast only, illustrative of sin put away from among them. The significance of the bread in the Lord's Supper lies in the sentence, "This is My body, *broken* for you!" The bread which we *break* is not the communion of the body of Christ. The shadow gives way to the reality.

A. O. M.

Ans. B.—"He took bread, and gave thanks." Leavened bread was to be offered with the sacrifice of thanksgiving (Lev. vii. 13). It has been believed that Christ and the eleven sang Psalm cxvi. 17: "I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving" (Matt. xxvi. 30). We are not told how or where He got the bread. See also John xxi. 9, where He had bread and fish for them.

Ans. C.—To Israel in Egypt God gave this commandment, “Ye shall eat nothing leavened” (Ex. xii. 20); “there shall be no leaven found in your houses” (ver. 19); but to us in this dispensation God directs His testimony not to leaven in the *bread*, but to leaven in the *life of the believer*. “Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. v. 7). “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the *unleavened bread of sincerity and truth*” (1 Cor. v. 8). In this same epistle it is stated that “we being many are one bread” (1 Cor. x. 17), and we are convinced that it is in *this bread* that God condemns the leaven, and not in the *symbol bread* upon the table. The fornicator in their midst was the leaven in the lump at Corinth, and his retention there was not only a *silent* condoning of his iniquity, but must have lowered the moral tone of the whole assembly. The expulsion of the wicked person (v. 13) answers to the “purging out the old leaven” (v. 7), and gave God freedom to say “In all things ye have approved yourselves clear in this matter” (2 Cor. vii. 11).

T. B.

Ans. D.—The use of leavened bread at the Lord’s Supper seems quite scriptural. Doubtless it was unleavened bread that was used by the Lord Jesus when He instituted the ordinance (Luke xxii. 19, 20), yet He made no allusion to the nature of the bread, nor yet did the apostle Paul. In Acts xx. 7 it is simply stated that the disciples came together to break bread. We thus notice that no command has been given as to whether leavened or unleavened bread is to be partaken of, and we thus judge that it matters not which we use. It may be argued that leaven was forbidden at the feast of unleavened bread (Exodus xii. 15); but we must remember that the “breaking of bread” is a feast peculiar to this dispensation, and quite distinct from any of the feasts of the past economy. While we are not called upon to consider the kind of bread we use, yet on the other hand let us not forget the important injunction, “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.” And while the bread may be leavened, let us see to it that our hearts are not leavened. “Let us therefore keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. v. 8). R. S., G.

SANCTIFICATION AND SUBJECTION.

QUESTION 422.—Are we to understand from Eph. v. 26 that the Church will be sanctified and cleansed apart from the responsibility of those who compose it to own and subject themselves to Christ as Lord?

Ans. A.—There are various aspects of sanctification taught, but I will notice only two. These I would call *positional* and *practical*. There are also two aspects of cleansing. These are typified in Exodus xxix. 4, and xxx. 17-21. The one washing was done for the priests, and was never repeated; the other they were responsible to do for themselves as often as they needed it. We get both these washings in John xiii. 10, where the Lord said to Peter, “He that is washed (bathed) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.” In Eph. v. 26 it is that washing which never needs to be repeated which

is evidently taught, as we have the same word in Titus iii. 5. As with the priests of old, so with the believer now. The one cleansing we received once for all when we passed through the “laver of regeneration”; the other we are responsible for ourselves, and that can only be by a wholesome use of the word (Psalm cxix. 9-11, 59, 60). So with sanctification. “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. x. 10), and this sanctification must needs be as perfect as that one offering (see also Numbers viii. 17, and also Hebrews xiii. 12). Nothing can be added to or taken from our sanctification in this sense, either by our obedience or disobedience; but practical sanctification, or practical separation from evil unto God, can only be produced or carried on *through the truth* (John xvii. 17), and that can only be in the measure of our intelligent obedience to the will of the Lord. “Subjection to Christ as Lord” is a very comprehensive thing, and cannot be put on on Lord’s-day morning like a suit of clothes; to be laid aside at night or even before night come. The Lordship of Christ takes cognisance of our behaviour every day of the week as much as on Sunday. Would to our God that we all knew more of what it really means to “own and subject ourselves to Christ as Lord.” G. A.

Ans. B.—This scripture teaches us the Lord’s purpose and way of cleansing *His Church*. He takes His own way with each member, and disciplines them—according to Hebrews xii. He will eventually present it to Himself “a glorious Church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” “Let every man prove his own work.” A. O. M.

Editor’s Note.—The literal translation of this passage affords us help. Verse 24, “But even as the Church is subjected to the Christ, so also,” &c.; verse 25, “Even as also the Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water by the Word.”

As shown in answer A, there are two aspects of sanctification and cleansing. The “washing” here is clearly a completed work, answering to the once washing of the priests at the door of the tabernacle, and to the Lord’s word in John xiii., “He that is washed (bathed) needeth not,” &c.; corresponding also to John xv. 3, “Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you,” and to Titus iii. 5, “The washing of regeneration.”

Having thus “cleansed” once for all by His death (see Heb. i. 3, Rev. i. 5) the Church—every member of it, individually and collectively—He, as the Great High Priest also sanctifies or sets apart to God in Himself the whole of the blood-washed, the whole of “the Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood.”

Based on this, we next find the responsibility to be practically conformed to the heavenly pattern, laid upon the individual, “*So ought husbands*,” &c.

In the will of God the Church has been subjected to Christ, as Eve was to Adam. Her obedience to the will of God in keeping the place of subjection is another matter. Here Eve failed, and here the Church has failed. But Christ has not failed in His responsibility, as will be manifested by-and-by when He presents to Himself the Church, glorious.

THE THREEFOLD HEAD-SHIP OF ADAM.

From Addresses by the EDITOR on "Old Testament Characters."

I PROPOSE to search a little into the Scripture in connection with the three different aspects of the head-ship of Adam, viz., first, as head of the race; secondly, as head over the creation; and thirdly, as head of the woman.

In Rom. v. we have a remarkable parallel drawn between the two Heads. This passage clearly teaches that God looks at the whole Adam-race as having fallen in the person of Adam, their head. Adam as the head of the race having sinned, the whole human race in Adam has fallen and become subject to condemnation and death. That is to say, sin having come in by the first man, Adam; sin and its consequences, condemnation and death, are fallen on all that have sprung from him. Man may cavil, and reason may rise up in rebellion against this truth; and one may indignantly say, "Am I to suffer for the sin of Adam? Is this justice?" But let man reason as he will and cavil as he may, the fact remains that all Adam's descendants have inherited his fallen nature: all are subject to death as the consequence of sin. Even those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression—for example, infants, who have not committed actual sin—are nevertheless subject to death. God reckons the whole race to be one, and regards all as having sinned and fallen and come under the judgment of death in the man who is its head. But God did not stop there. He spoke to Adam of the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15), the One who was yet to come of whom Adam was the figure. The object of this passage in Rom. v. is to show how the grace of God in Christ acts on the very same principle as the judgment of God in Adam. Christ becomes the Head of the new race; as the First-begotten from the dead, He becomes the Head of the New Creation; and also He, as the Risen One, becomes the Head of the woman—the Church. Most precious teaching this is for our souls. As certainly as we are ruined in the first man, so certainly are we saved in the Second Man. God only sees two men and two races all

summed up in their respective heads, the Adam-race in its head, Adam under sin, condemnation, and death; the New Creation-race in their Head, Christ, in righteousness and life eternal. Such is the teaching of this passage. Observe, in verse 14, Adam's sin is called "a transgression." "Where there is no law there is no transgression"; but it does not follow that there is *no sin*. That is the point of this passage. Adam when he sinned transgressed a specific command of God, therefore his sin is called transgression. But from Adam till Moses God gave no law, therefore there was no transgression. But was there no *sin*? Was there no judgment or death? Yes, there was *sin*, judgment, and death for those who transgressed no expressed command, but who nevertheless inherited the fallen nature of Adam and whose whole life was consequently a life of *sin*. There is thus a difference between transgression and *sin*. The two things are distinguished all through Scripture. Trespass or transgression is a breach of a known command; *sin* is the natural outcome of a corrupt nature.

Verse 16 goes to show how the grace of God transcends His judgment. The one sin of Adam brought the whole race under condemnation, but the grace of God comes in to justify from "many offences." We could not answer God for one sin of a thousand. But grace transcends judgment. Grace comes in with pardon not merely for one sin, but for the thousands of sins which we have committed.

Verse 17, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Christ's death upon the cross is the one effectual act of righteousness which makes the sinner just before God. The whole life of Christ, and all His precious and beautiful acts could never have availed to wash out one single stain of *sin*. The one effectual righteous act that justifies a sinner was His death upon the cross. We are justified by His death, not by His life. God's grace has provided justification for all men. Let us hold fast that blessed truth. Not that all men are justified; only those are justified who are in Christ, just as all are condemned who are in

Adam. We see how that is borne out in Rom. iii. 22. "The righteousness of God which is by faith in Christ Jesus unto all, and upon all them that believe." This gift of righteousness is "unto all," offered to all. Christ is presented to all, but God's righteousness in Christ is only "upon all them that believe." When I believe in Christ I become identified with the Second Man—the New Man. Just as by virtue of my connection with the first man I became a sinner, condemned, and dead, even so by virtue of my relationship to the Second Man I become righteous before God, alive unto God, and an heir of eternal glory.

Verse 19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made (or constituted) sinners; so by the obedience of the One shall the many be made (constituted) righteous." The obedience referred to here is "His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 8). His obedience, if it had stopped short of death could never have constituted us righteous before God. He became "obedient unto death," that is obedient all the way along up to death. Because His life was poured forth in satisfaction for our sins, therefore all who believe in Him become partakers of the result of His obedience unto death, and are reckoned righteous in Christ; He is made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Just as I look back to Adam and see that I have fallen in him, and inherit through my connection with him sin, condemnation, and death, so the moment I trust Christ I have in Him life and righteousness. I have all that He has, and all that He is, in virtue of my union with Him. As in Adam I have lost everything that God gave to him, in Christ I have gained everything that God gave to Christ. God's purpose is to make us like Him. "As we have borne the image of the earthly" (1 Cor. xv. 49)—how truly we have borne the first man's image—so surely, so certainly shall we bear the image of the heavenly. "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was a quickening spirit" (verse 45). He communicates life to all that believe in Him. "As by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (verse 21). As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Let us beware of the error of

Universalism which is based upon this verse. It is not, "even so in Christ shall all be made alive whether they believe in Him or not"; that is a lie, the offspring of ignorance. It is only those who "are in Christ," who having believed in Him are vitally united to Him, who will be quickened when He comes. It is those and those only who have received the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness that shall reign in life by Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 17). Have we not received abundance of grace, the pardon of all our sins? And have we not received the gift of righteousness in Christ by faith? What is the consequence? We shall "reign in life with Him." Not a word of that applies to the gospel rejecter. The Universalists' gospel is false: it is a Satanic delusion. The Scriptures teach us that there shall be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust; but the resurrection of the just is Christ's resurrection, the resurrection of the unjust is only the bringing of body and soul together by the power of God to receive sentence of death. Rom. viii. 11, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." That is the resurrection of the just. But this is not said concerning the resurrection of the unjust. The one is called "the resurrection to life," and the other is called "the resurrection of judgment." God does not recognise that those who are raised from the dead to receive their sentence, are raised to life. He says they are raised to judgment, but the believer in Christ is raised to life eternal (1 Cor. xv. 45). Here we get the first and last Adam. In verse 47 we get the first and Second Man. Don't let us confound these two things. It is not "the first Adam and the second Adam"; it is "the first and last Adam." The last of the Adam race; the last one born of a woman. The woman's seed was Christ; and His death was the end of the Adam race in the sight of God. The one who died, but was quickened by the Spirit, the one who had power to lay down His life and to take it up again, has power to give eternal life to all that the Father has given Him. What about the "Second Man"? The world has never seen Him. He, as the last

Adam died upon the Cross. The next time He comes it is as "the Lord from heaven." God's "Second Man" is coming to take dominion over God's creation. We wait for the day when He shall come as "the Second Man" from heaven to take possession of His rightful inheritance.

This brings us to the second part of our subject. Not only was Adam head of the race; God set Adam in dominion over creation: God "put all things under his feet."

Psalm viii., "What is man that Thou art mindful of him," &c. The word "man" used here in Hebrew signifies "frail mortal man." We saw when we were considering Gen. ii. that God made Adam to have dominion over the works of His hands. But sin came in and dashed the sceptre from his hand. Adam as he came from the hand of God was king over creation. He was also a priest as to his intercourse with God, and a prophet as to knowledge evidenced in his naming of the creatures. But all was lost to Adam through sin. His dominion, his wisdom, his priestly intercourse; sin entered and dispossessed him of all. He was no longer capable of holding dominion over the creation because he had disobeyed God. Dominion over the creation was again intrusted to Noah after the flood: but he also proved himself incapable of holding the honourable position God put him in. He was found drunk and uncovered in his tent. He could not exercise control over his desires and was therefore incapable of exercising dominion for God.

Unto Nebuchadnezzar also was given dominion, but his heart being lifted up with pride he was cast down from his throne and made to dwell with the beasts of the field, and to eat grass as oxen, that he might know that the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men.

In Heb. ii. 6-9 we have the Spirit's commentary on Ps. viii. "We see not yet all things put under Him: but we see Jesus, who was made a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." Six thousand years have nearly passed over man and God has not yet put creation in subjection to him. Is God's purpose going to be frustrated? Verily not. It fails in the first man, but it is established in

the Second Man. "We see Jesus," the Second Man, who "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour." He came down and became partaker of flesh and blood that He might suffer death in the body prepared for Him. "Having become obedient to death, even the death of the cross, God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name," &c. (Phil. ii.). In Eph. i. we see that Christ having been raised from the dead, God hath set Him at His own right hand far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and "hath put all things under His feet"; the very same words the Spirit in Ps. viii. uses about Adam, "Thou hast put all things under His feet." There is the Second Man up on the throne of God, and all things under His feet. So that the dominion of the second Adam does not extend only to this terrestrial ball,—only to this little bit of creation, there are principalities and powers, thrones and dominions innumerable. There are these millions of worlds that we see in the darkness of night scattered in the sky. Christ the Second Man is Lord of all. All authority in heaven and on earth is committed unto Him. He is wielding that authority just now for the Church which is His body. The power that God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand is the power that worketh in us to sustain and uphold and control us amid all external circumstances. So that nothing can hurt a member of the body of Christ. He is kept secure and safe in the Second Man, the Lord from heaven.

In considering the other part of our subject, viz., Christ as the Head of the woman read Eph. v. 21-24. Eve was created from Adam while he was in that deep sleep which prefigured the death of Christ. Just as Eve could point to that side of Adam, to the spot where the Lord had taken out the rib from which she was formed, and say, "That side is my birth-place," even so we can point to the spear-wound in the side of Christ and say, "That was my birth-place." Every believer received life from the death of Christ. Eve was not only made from Adam, but she was made for him, and presented to him and put in subjection to him. It has been quaintly

remarked by an old writer—"Eve was not made out of Adam's head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled on by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him." All this is true of Christ. Just think of poor wretches like us being

"Meet companions then for Jesus,
From Him, for Him made."

Yet that is the teaching of Scripture ; that is the relation into which God has put us. As Adam looked upon that fair companion that God had made for him would he not praise God ? And what will be the joy of the Lord Jesus when He comes and takes that Church, which He has cleansed, sanctified, nourished, and cherished, and presents it to Himself a glorious Church without spot of defilement, or wrinkle of decay, to be for ever the partier of His glory ! That is our hope. That is what we are looking forward to and waiting for. May we know the purifying power of this blessed hope. God's object concerning Christ is to exalt Him ; and God's object concerning us is to make us like Him. Fellowship with God is to fall in with His purpose to exalt Christ by obedience to His will, and to seek that day by day we may grow in likeness to Him in all things.

J. R. C.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD.

"I have declared my ways, and Thou heardest me"
(Ps. cxix. 26).

• WHAT a beautiful description of the simplicity of the believer's walk with God ! He spreads his whole case before Him, declaring his ways of conduct with filial confidence, his ways of difficulty with holy friendship, and his ways of sinfulness with deep contrition. It is his delight to acquaint God with all his undertakings, to tell Him all his distress, that he may be guided by His counsel, confirmed by His strength, and delivered by His power. Every child of God, in the same spirit of ingenuous confession, can testify to the more than parental tenderness with which he is heard, and his transgression is forgiven and his sin covered. Thus he gains confidence, and pleads that God would teach him to know more of Himself.

THE LIFE WHICH IS LIFE INDEED.

1 Tim. vi. 19, R.V.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON PSALM xxvii. 4.

THE writer of this psalm knew much of God. He had made progress in the knowledge of the divine, the heavenly, the unseen, the eternal. God was no mere phantom to *him* ; he had become acquainted with Him, and could speak of Him in the language of assurance, in tones of certainty. "The Lord," he exclaims, "is my light and my salvation, the Lord is the strength of my life" (verse 1). He knew these things in the hidden depths of his personality. He was not only "THE light," but "MY light." Not only "THE salvation," but "MY salvation." To his faith the darkness and the condemnation had passed away since his soul had been enabled to grasp the mighty truth of Jehovah as his light and salvation. Though living in the dispensation of types and shadows, of legal ceremonies, imposed until the time of reformation, he looked beneath them, above them, beyond them, to a *Person* in whom all his salvation was wrapped up. The wondrous work was as yet unaccomplished as to fact (though not to divine foreknowledge), but his soul was blessedly linked with the wondrous *Person* who, he knew, would in God's "due time" accomplish it.

But though thus favoured and in a position to write volumes upon these three truths, "light," "salvation," and "strength" in the God of Israel, he longed for more. He did not content himself with a cupful, however rich the draught, when there was an ocean full. Why take a mere nibble when his soul might delight itself in fatness and in the abundance of the heavenly banquet ? Thus if verse 1 tells us what he knew he possessed, verse 4 gives us what he desired, what he longed to possess. Doubtless he had many stimulants to prayer in his life, but the breathings of his soul were all condensed into one sentence. "One thing have I desired." He might have asked for wealth, health, and fame, he might have craved for power, earthly glory, and deliverance from trouble, but there was this "one thing" which eclipsed everything else. All his petitions were concentrated upon this one thing ! The Syrian captains were to fight with none else,

great or small, but with the King of Israel ; after this manner did David set his eye upon the pearl, the gem, the king of blessings ! It was the single eye upon a single object. It was the all-consuming thirst of his heart, the one aim, object, choice, and ambition of his life.

And he desired it of "the Lord," the same Person in whom he possessed so much already. It was a bold request, but he took the place of the *suppliant* because he well knew His ability and readiness to *supply*. No fear entered into his mind of draining the resources of the King's treasure-vaults. He went straight to the fountain-head, he desired it of "the Lord."

But his ambition became also his *pursuit*, his *business*, his *search*. "One thing have I desired of the Lord," he says, "*that will I seek after.*" He did more than *wish* it, he sought to *win* it. It was a mighty thing he had set his heart upon ; but difficulties in the way, though by no means underrated, looked mere grasshoppers in comparison with the living God from whom his expectations were. Thus what his heart prized, his eyes fastened upon, his hands were stretched out to lay hold of, and every nerve strained to obtain.

He desired nothing short of *uninterrupted communion* with God. "That I might dwell all the days of my life in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple," was the fervent supplication that welled up from his heart. There he perceived was the soul's true home. No noxious gases or pestilential airs there ! There was the native clime of the heaven-born spirit, where it could expand and develop in most favourable and prosperous circumstances. He longed for the *highlands of God*, the uplands of eternal light and love, where the flowers attain their richest tints and emit their sweetest fragrance.

There, he knew, he could have face-to-face communion. "My heart said unto Thee, *let my face seek Thy face*" (verse 8, marg.). There he would behold Jehovah's beauty, and feast upon Jehovah's vision, and contemplate Jehovah's glories. And "ALL the days" of his life he desired to be thus" occupied. Never would he tire of it and desire a change of employment. 365 days every year, and I

am sure they would be good days, happy days, peaceful days, sunshiny days, useful days, "DAYS OF HEAVEN UPON THE EARTH."

"And to inquire in His Temple." He who could easily have sat in the teacher's chair was willing to occupy the disciple's stool. He would be a learner evermore, and the House of Jehovah his inquiry-room, where he could unpack his hard questions, tell out his difficulties, confess his ignorance. The mysteries of life, the riddles, and the strange tangled web of his past experiences, would get their true and satisfactory explanation there. He had gone for sympathy to man long enough. Doubtless like many more he had been misunderstood, misinterpreted, misjudged, whenever he poured into human ears the tale of his woes, the story of his life. Now he resolved to get away from the busy haunts of men, away from the noise and hubbub of earth, into some quiet corner of the Temple, where *sanctuary light* would be thrown upon what seemed so inexplicable and contradictory in the desert journey behind him.

Thus he "asked," thus he "sought," and thus he "knocked" at the Temple door.

How much better to lead *this* life than to dwell continually in the ding-dong of ecclesiastical strife, or in the atmosphere of corroding care. This is the life which is life indeed. Seeing we are now privileged to walk in the full blaze of Calvary, the power of the resurrection and the glory of the ascension ; seeing that our lot is cast in the dispensation of the grace of God, the full revelation in the Son of the Father, the wondrous age of Pentecost, the indwelling, the filling, the teaching, the leading of the Holy Spirit, how much deeper should be our soul's experiences than of those who walked in the comparative twilight of the 27th Psalm.

M. I. R.

I DO feel sure that we have lost our true power by decking ourselves out and prosecuting our plans according to the spirit and principles of the world, whereas I am sure we ought to stand in *contrast* with it at *every point*. Whenever I can literally follow Scripture I feel easy as to the act ; when I cannot, or fancy I cannot, I feel weak in proportion to my distance from it.

A. N. G.

SHOULD GOD'S ASSEMBLIES APPOINT DEACONS?

IN the precious Church of God there are the gifts and graces of the Spirit that are common to all saints—such as Divine life, and sonship, and power of worship, and the love which leads to the mutual care and aid one of another, &c. And there are also the special gifts and endowments of *some* which distinguish them from others—such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers (see Eph. iv.), all which are summed up in 1 Tim. iii. as bishops (overseers) and deacons; or, more concisely still, all are named “*guides*” in Hebrews, (ch. xiii., marg.), and “*elders*” in 1 Pet. v.; and again in 1 Thess. v. as those who *labour* among you, and are *over you* (overseers) in the Lord.

On the broad basis therefore of the Divine life, worship, and mutual loving service common to all saints, these other special gifts do sooner or later manifest themselves, and, we are assured, will go on manifesting themselves, more or less, *till* the day when all are come “into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God” (see Eph. iv. 13), and these special gifts and their godly services are then no more needed. Such the love of Christ to His whole Church, and such His unwearied care of it!

Within the last sixty or seventy years it has graciously pleased God to draw some of His saints to meet and assemble themselves to His “*Abba, Father*” Name, and to His Son’s Name, on this blessed basis of common Divine life and worship and love to Himself and to each other, and in happy obedience to the “ordinances” of baptism and the Lord’s Supper; and, from the first till now of their thus humbly assembling, God in Christ by the Spirit has raised up amongst them these special gifts also, and has set them in active exercise, more or less. Not indeed the miraculous gifts such as those of “tongues,” and “healing,” and exemption from injury by “poisons” or by “serpents” (Mark xvi., &c., in the *absence* of which we may perhaps see His loving wisdom), but the spiritual edification gifts. These are found in the small believing assemblies of the present day, by God’s grace, and are to be “coveted,” prayed for, expected, and the

development of them helped by the public reading of the Scriptures respecting them, and by all of us owning and acknowledging them, and by profiting through the godly exercise of them, in whomsoever we see the gracious use of them.

The apostle’s command in 1 Thess. v., already quoted, “We beseech you, brethren, to *know them* which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord,” is as *authoritative* from the Lord now as it was then when Paul wrote it to the Thessalonians. Assemblies of saints have now to “*know*” these holy labourers as truly as they did then, and have as much *now* to acknowledge such as *being* “over” them in the Lord as the Thessalonians had. See also Paul’s mention of “the house of Stephanas” in 1 Cor. xvi. 15, 16, that they were “the first fruits of Achaia” (the earliest converts), and that they had “addicted themselves (*i.e.*, ordained themselves, see Acts xiii. 48) to the ministry (*servant-work*) of the saints; that ye *submit* yourselves to such, and to *every one* that helpeth *with us*, and laboureth.” Peter also in the same simple and informal manner says, “The elders that *are among* you I exhort—Feed (*i.e.*, shepherd) the flock of God which is among you, *taking* the oversight thereof . . . of a *ready mind*; the words “*taking*” and “*ready mind*” implying how *spontaneous* it had been on their part, and still must be. Also Heb. xiii. 17, “Obey them that are your guides (see Greek), and submit yourselves: for they are watching for your souls, as,” &c. All this individual zeal for oversight work, and *appointment of themselves* to it, distinct from any ordination or authorisation into it by others, is the more to be noted because it was in the days of the still living and beloved apostles, and was by them regarded as quite sufficient credential for all such in their work; and, so far as it was a Divine grace in such, and the saints around them saw it to be so, it was to their soul’s loss, and also at their peril, that they did not “*submit*” themselves to such. Also, as respects Timothy and Titus, the two church labourers whom the apostles left so prominently behind them for care of the saints, it is plainly true of Timothy (perhaps also of Titus) that he was already “well reported of,”

both at Lystra and Iconium, before Paul laid hands on him for a wider sphere. Thus apostles' ordination, when in its earliest and highest exercise, was based on their discernment of a divinely-wrought endowment already seen and known by fellow-saints in the persons whom they ordained.

Surely all this was to prepare us for these days when there would no longer be apostles to ordain, but when Christ's ceaseless love to His redeemed would still be causing some to ordain themselves, Stephanas-like, to this toilsome and self-denying, but truly blessed work. We all feel that, as then, so now, it is by the work they do, and their steadfastness in it, that those who are "in oversight" (to quote a modern phrase) and are "over" us in the Lord, are to be known.

Then, is it not by a perfectly natural (*i.e.*, spiritually natural) further step that such overseers (bishops) know each other, and come together as such (periodically or occasionally) to help each other in their work? For just as saints by a Divine instinct know who are fellow-saints and who are not, so also do those who labour amongst the saints (whether by lowly words in the assembly or by house-to-house visits) also get to know each other, and appoint a time and place for *meeting together* for prayer and counsel. And thus an "oversight meeting" comes to pass, and it thrives as long as the grace of "taking the oversight" (1 Pet. v.) continues warm in their hearts.

As time moves on, an oversight band thus formed is always ready and thankful to add on to their number any other brother in the Lord in whom they see even the beginnings of love to the same oversight work in which they are themselves engaged; just as a band of saved sinners is always glad (or should be) to add on to their number any other saved one they newly find. But the little band of those "taking oversight," will do well to be in no haste to join others with them, for Paul says, 1 Tim. iii., of both bishops and deacons—let them "first be proved"; and again, 1 Tim. v. "Lay hands suddenly on no man." Bring in saved sinners to the Church's fellowship directly you are satisfied they are such, leave them not out on the outside, unsaved world of the unregenerate; but as to "overseers" or "elders," or "guides," let them "first be proved"; for

how can it be known that they are "over" their fellow-saints "in the Lord" (see 1 Thess. v. 12) except as they have first of all "laboured" amongst them? just as a carpenter is known to be such by our having seen him at his tools, and a boatman by his habit at his oars.

In 1 Tim. iii. these spiritual labourers are in two classes—bishops (*i.e.*, overseers) and deacons. Judging by the derivation and signification of the two words, Overseer would be the more public and prominent of the two classes, and the critical and weighty matter of speaking in the public assembly would chiefly come on them; whilst the deacons would be doing the same work from house to house. This distinction seems the more warranted the more closely the apostle's qualifications for the two are examined: "aptness to teach," and a "good report of them that are *without*," which are said of bishops, seem to point to assembly work. Whilst as to deacons, "not double tongued" fits well to one whose work was "from house to house"; especially also the mention of "deaconess," in ver. 11. to whom "house to house" labour could fitly belong, whilst God's Word forbids even godly women any voice in public assembly.

But it is to be noted that both these ministries in God's Church are equally spiritual in their nature, judging by the apostle's portraits of them, and are such, therefore, as only the Lord Himself can raise up, or authorise, or appoint; this seems as true of deacons as it is of bishops; hence in Phil. i. 1, Paul places the two side by side in his letter to the whole Church.

Also, it should be remembered that there is no word "office" in the original; the word "work" only should be used in English, whether of the overseeing or the diaconal kind. Consistently with this *spiritual* character of deacon and deaconess work in the Church, it is to be noted that the "seven men of honest (*i.e.*, good) report," in Acts vi., whom the assembled saints were to look out from amongst them and were to appoint to the stewardship and management of the Church's money, are never called "deacons." In our day there is always need of some faithful brethren who will attend to the alms of God's assemblies; and since the assembly, as a whole, has made these offerings to God, their duty concerning it does not end with giving it; they are responsible to God to

see (so far as they can do so) that it is not hoarded up, nor yet wasted, but applied to assembly expenses and to the poor; and since all the donors cannot take part in "this business" (Acts vi. 3), they do well to choose a suitable number of brethren to whom they believe that "business" may wisely be committed. But this is surely a very different thing from the assembly being invited, or allowed, to choose (and therefore to instal into "office" and authorise) its own spiritual leaders—whether they be called "overseers" (bishops), "deacons," "elders," or "guides," or "shepherds." In all such "spirituals," God Himself, in Christ, and by the Spirit, is the source of such gifts to His people, and God alone installs such, authorises them, and locates them as and where He wills; and all that God's people can do is to *recognise* them, and to own them as being from God and to "submit" to them (Heb. xiii. 17), as far as they can with good conscience, and on the ground of profit gained through them.

Surely sheep might as well be called on to choose their shepherds, or children their "tutors and governors," as the whole assembly of saints, "fathers, young men, and babes," be asked to name who they wished for as their spiritual guides. And is it not for this reason that nowhere in the Holy Scriptures are the churches of Christ bidden to do so?

The filling up of the Apostolate after the apostasy and death of Judas Iscariot was, of course, a thing quite by itself, and supplies no precedent for subsequent church action as regards gifts of eldership; but even in that solemn business the 120 did but cause two to stand up (see Greek), and left it to God to appoint one of the two by Divine action through the lot.

True, Paul speaks, in Timothy's case, of the "laying on of the hands of the presbytery," as well as of his own hands; but this only the more plainly differs from any command to the Ephesus church to themselves authorise Timothy, or any other, to be over them.

We have, therefore, to conclude that the alms money of the saints is the one only business on which they can be scripturally, or wisely, or safely called on to choose certain brethren of their number to act for them. And as in our small assemblies this is not a large or burdensome "business," as it was in the

Jerusalem Pentecost days, when thousands of the saints were from other countries (see Acts ii. 9-11), and therefore had to be supported if they remained in Jerusalem, for the sake of the "apostle's doctrine" (teaching), it certainly does seem best in our day that these "secular" affairs should be part of the spiritual overseers' work, along with their more directly spiritual work of supplying the ministry of the Word, and of discerning as to fitness for Christian fellowship, and of visiting those who are in it. And thus we may avoid those jealousies and strifes which now-a-days too often arise in the denominations where "deacons" are put into office by popular vote.

EVOLUTION AND THE BIBLE.

(SECOND PAPER).

THE late Dr. Burges well said, that "the plain and emphatic teaching of St. Paul shuts up this entire question in a very particular and conclusive manner. The door is absolutely bolted and barred against the admission of any other account of the origin of the great human family but that given in Genesis." The statement of 1 Cor. xv., that "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive"; and the profound doctrine of Rom. v., are based upon the original position of Adam as "the figure of the coming One"—Adam, the natural head of the race, being a type of Christ, the federal or covenant Head of a redeemed race. These utterances of the New Testament would be without meaning apart from the account of the creation and the fall of man which is given with such detail in Genesis i.—iii. Indeed, there is no room in the theory of evolution for the *scriptural* teaching of the fall of man and his *redemption* by Christ. If there was no first Adam to sin, there can be no last Adam to redeem.

Many, of course, absolutely deny these great truths of *sin and redemption*; others make feeble attempts to harmonise them with the new ideas. It is not for us to say which course is most dishonouring to God; but we say unhesitatingly that the open denial of Scripture by the avowed infidel is productive of less harm than the perversion of its teachings by professing Christians. It is instructive to notice the muddle one of the latter class gets into in

seeking in the theory of evolution some *analogy* with the teachings of Scripture. He says: "Analogy would lead to the suggestion that there is as much above us as below us, as much *before* as *behind*." He then appeals to the Bible teaching touching the existence of "angels and archangels, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers in heavenly places." Where, we may ask, is the *analogy*? He surely cannot mean to imply that these heavenly beings have been *evolved* from man! But, having dilated upon their life, he adds: "For ourselves, it [i.e., *evolution*] tells us that such a life is before us in the coming periods of our development, and that all the present and past of our being are but stages of growth and preparation." If this has any meaning, it can only be that the idea that our *having evolved* from tadpoles to men, is the pledge that we *shall evolve* from men into some other class of beings. That this is no forced inference the following shows: "We now look forward to the experience of death as simply the form in which we are to pass into the next and higher stage of our development, and enter upon a new environment . . . a new environment of beauty and sublimity, adapted to a *further evolved humanity*." Perhaps even a professor may be pardoned for ambiguity of language when writing upon a theme which is so far above prophets and apostles as this; but, certainly, if we are to pass into the next stage of our development in *the form of death*, the prospect is not very cheering.

We might say, Surely the writer of the above has no place in his system for the doctrines of the fall and redemption! Yet he considers that he has. We will give it in his own words: "We find, then, that by the *operation of a very natural process*, the *development at this point went wrong*, and the whole grand scheme, after all its ages of preparation, was about to sink into failure and ultimate ruin." He then speaks of Christ as "the atoning and restoring Deliverer, through whom all that was lost may be fully regained by every one who chooses to accept." So all the teaching of Scripture on the solemn subject of sin is to be diluted till it comes to this, that at a certain point the development went wrong—and this by "the *operation of a very natural process*!" Who that is accustomed to bow to Scripture as the

Word of the living God will accept this as an explanation of Gen. iii.? The inspired statement is, "By one man *SIN entered into the world*, and death by sin."

There is not an atom of Scripture to support the notion that Adam in innocence had *any* prospect of *evolving* into any other condition of being; and so far from fallen man being *under probation*, as is so often asserted, he is *under judgment*, and as a sinner has no natural prospect but death, and after death the eternal consequences of sin. By no process, nor in connection with any process, of evolution, but by an act of sovereign grace God "gave His only begotten Son," and all who receive Him as the One who died and rose again, receive eternal life. All such, instead of being left to seek in speculation concerning the past some basis of hope for the future, are called to cherish the hope given to them by "the God of hope." That hope is nothing less than the blessed assurance of being raised or changed at the coming of our Lord Jesus, and having these bodies of our humiliation conformed to the body of His glory by an act of His own almighty power.

And here we would remark that all God's ways with men are in decided antagonism to this doctrine of evolution. We have stated that God's gift of His beloved Son did not grow out of any process of evolution, and the same thing is true of the regeneration of a sinner by the Holy Ghost. There is no mere development of what previously existed, but the positive impartation of what is altogether new, for "except a man be *born again* [born from above] he cannot see the kingdom of God."

But there is one doctrine which above all others is affected by these new speculations—that is the grand truth of the *resurrection of the body*. Even a Christian professor, when writing about the future under the influence of the doctrine of evolution, absolutely ignores this truth. We are to look for *death*, he says, as "the form in which we are to pass into the next and higher stage of our development," in "a 'kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world' for the abode of redeemed *spirits* in the presence and communion of God." Is this accidental? Is it not rather a necessary part of this system of error? There is no room

in the system for the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; it would be a too definite bringing in of God's power. The very assertion that the bodies of the redeemed are, by resurrection or change, to be conformed to the glorious body of Christ, and that they will be MEN for ever, annihilates all theories about evolution touching the future, as truly as the statements of Scripture concerning creation forbid them with reference to the past.

We should take to heart the fact that the enemy is ever seeking to bring the Word of God down from its proper place of supremacy, and the opening chapters of the book of Genesis have of late years been the special objects of attack. It is not long since the deductions of geologists were all marshalled against the scriptural account of creation, and now by means of the fancies of evolutionists a fresh assault is made, which seems to be marked by still greater satanic subtlety. God allows these tests for the fulfilment of His own purposes. Of old He tested the faith of His saints in various ways, and He does the same still. That there are mysteries connected with the great subject of creation we must all acknowledge, but to what extent God may have wrought in such a manner as to test His creatures we cannot tell. Any way, we have the test whether we will bow to the plain statements of His Word in spite of all appearances, or whether we will turn from that Word at the bidding of the wise men of this world. The day is coming when God will make all things plain to His people, and will commend those who have held to His Word when many have turned from it. It must be remembered that the leaders in these paths of error are men who simply ignore the Scriptures, and care not how much they contradict what God has written. But the fact that men who evidently *wish* to hold to the Bible with some degree of reverence, and yet not to be behind the times in other respects, are obliged to deal with the sacred truths of Scripture in the way we have indicated in order to accept the theory of evolution, may help to convince us of its folly. Our only safeguard lies in refusing to receive anything that requires the straining of Scripture for the sake of harmony. We may sometimes misunderstand Scripture, where symbolical language is used, but we cannot err in taking

the historical statements of the Bible in their simplest and most literal meaning. May we all be able to say with one of old, "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way"!

W. H. B.

TWO CHARACTERISTICS OF SECTARIANISM.

WHILE sectarianism has various forms, it exhibits two main characteristics.

(1) It demands as a title for fellowship the recognition of things not contained in the Word of God, or (2) while making the Word the basis of fellowship it requires an understanding of, and submission to, truths which God has not made essential to fellowship. In the former case the Word is virtually set aside as God's all-sufficient guide, and in the latter the Word, wrongly used, is made the occasion of schism. Of the first we need say but little, for it is open and palpable. It is seen in the Church of Rome, in the national churches of Europe, and in dissenting bodies generally. Even in spite of the boast that the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants, subjection in matters of doctrine and practice is claimed in things of which the Word of God knows nothing. This we would designate as *worldly sectarianism*. The second description of sectarianism is more subtle, and therefore more seductive. Accepting the Bible only as the rule of faith, it is not content with those fundamental elements of truth which God has made the basis of our fellowship, and on which He would have us build one another up, but it binds the conscience in things in which God would have each one responsible to his own Lord.

This sets aside the ground common to all saints, on which the Father in Christ and the babe in Christ stand together. The practical, though not intentional, result is the spirit that finds expression in the words, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou" (Isa. lxv. 5). This we designate *Pharisaic sectarianism*. It takes it stand, read in the letter, but not realised in the Spirit of Christ. Instead of seeking that lowliness with which grace and true wisdom can alone be associated, it nourishes pride standing on a pinnacle of its

own, and claiming for itself the exclusive right to say, "I am of Christ." This is very natural to us, and we see it in John when he said, "We forbade him, for he followeth not with us." Whatever zeal or godliness may be displayed in connection with it, the heavenly characteristics of Col. iii. 12-15 are lacking, and the tendency is to be cold, hard, and self-assertive. There is also a proneness to despise others and circulate evil reports concerning them, and an indisposition to bow together with them at the throne of grace. It is against these things we have to watch lest our hearts deceive us.—*Extract.*

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—V.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL in Marble Hall, Glasgow.

Continued from page 136.

THE future recompense for faithful service here is specially set forth in connection with the servant. "Whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (Eph. vi. 8); also see Col. iii. 24, "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance."

Let us ever remember that we have a Master to whom we are responsible, and to whom we must surely give account. Our life is like a web in the weaver's loom. It has to be brought in and examined by the master, and when our web of life is woven and our Master has examined it, we shall receive a recompense for each thread that is done rightly therein. But each one shall also receive for the wrong that he has done at the judgment seat of Christ. The nature of the receiving for the wrong will not be the receiving of punishment; it is not being sent to purgatory. That is not the idea; nevertheless there will be a suffering of loss. I do not know whether there may not be present recompense in the Lord's providential dealings in this world, as we saw in the case of the behaviour of children to parents. I believe the child that dishonours his parent will not be prospered by God; and so it may be with the servant and his master, those who do not obey the Word will not be prospered and

blessed here, as God will bless in His faithfulness those that please Him. But whether this be so or not they will certainly receive for wrong-doing at the judgment seat. Another point I want you to look at is in Titus ii. 9, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things." That is the very same word which Paul uses in 2 Cor. v. 9, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of (well-pleasing to) Him." The servant is to make it his business to please his master well, because in so doing he is pleasing his Master in heaven. Now, mark the next word, "Not answering again." Not gainsaying. It just means taking patiently what may be said, even quick, unreasonable, or angry words. Is it not the case in daily life that many Christian servants have no idea of fulfilling this word, but treat their master or mistress with disrespect, "answering again" and "giving as good as they get," and perhaps a trifle better? Thus they disobey the Lord's command, as effectually as if they lied, or stole, and yet never think of confessing it to God as sin, but go on the next day as if nothing had happened. Yet they have sinned against the Lord, dishonoured His doctrine, and brought His gospel into reproach. Ought not such erring ones to have sought His forgiveness and restoration? We need the Lord to enable us by His grace to serve Him acceptably. It is written in Heb. xi., "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness"; it requires the same faith to do the one as to do the other, and that means it requires GOD. You cannot expect the grace, help, and comfort of the Lord Jesus in your work if you have been displeasing Him, and not exercising self-judgment concerning these things about which God has thought fit to write so particularly.

Verse 10, "Not purloining." This is not exactly *stealing*, it is just not being strictly honest in little things. That is the idea in the word "purloining." I doubt not you have heard the children's rhyme, "It is a sin to steal a pin." Who would think seriously of stealing pins, or sweetmeats? Yet a conscience exercised before God would no sooner take a pin, or a sweetmeat, than they

would take a sovereign. They would show "ALL good fidelity in ALL things."

And remember that those who are employed by time, that is paid by the hour, or by the week of so many hours, are "purloining" every time they waste their master's time. To leave your work when your master's back is turned, even if it were to preach the gospel, would be defrauding and disobeying him. I remember a servant girl sent out with a child in a perambulator on a fine summer day, instructed not to leave the child. She disobeyed, left the child in the perambulator to go round the field with tracts where many persons were, and before she got back the child had taken a fit. The girl may have meant well, but God could not bless her in disobeying her mistress. She was serving the Lord best when doing her mistress's will faithfully. Do I say that in order to discourage giving away tracts, and speaking to fellow-workmen? Nay, verily! But there is a time for everything. If you are paid by time it is your master's time, and it is "purloining" to employ it for anything else than your master's work. "That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Everything I have to do, from the time I get up till I go to bed, affords me an opportunity to ornament or adorn and so to commend the gospel of God. I ought to let men see how good is His doctrine by my good works. In conclusion, glance at 1 Pet. ii. 18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

Verse 19, "For this is grace, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." Did you ever notice that it is in this very connection, this hard position for a servant to occupy, that the sufferings of Christ are brought in?

Verse 21, "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." The example of One who was wrongfully accused, who got laid to His charge things that He knew not of; they charged Him falsely, and watched every word that came from His lips that they might wrest it, and turn it against Him. He "endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself."

Yet He endured them patiently, and thus He left the example for us. And does He regret it now? Does He regret that He did not turn round and wither them? No. In the midst of it all He was a joy to His Father's heart, and God has recompensed Him with the honours and pleasures that are at His right hand for evermore! Dear friends, if you can get your eye off your earthly master or mistress however froward and hard to please they may be, and only see that it is the Lord putting upon you the honour of being unto God a sweet savour of Christ, then the Marah bitterness of your lot will be turned to sweetness, and when the time comes for the recompense you will find that He has marked every smart, every bitter word, every sigh, and every tear that you weep in secret, for eternal recompense. Then instead of a murmur at the hardness of your lot there will be a thanksgiving that He called you under such a hard master. A story is told of one who was falsely accused to the king and put in prison and in chains. But one day his innocence was brought to light, and the king commanded his accusers to bring him forth. "Take off his chains and weigh them," said the king; and when it was done he commanded to give him their weight in gold! Would he not wish that the chains had been ten times heavier then? We will wish, perhaps, in that day of recompense that our opportunities of suffering for Christ were ten times more. Such sufferings are a reproduction of the grace that dwelt in fulness in the Son of God. God delights in seeing that grace reproduced in His people. O may He give us to see how these precious teachings of the Spirit lift up our work from the mire of drudgery, setting us as free men, serving the King of Glory, and waiting for the day of recompense.

Very little is said to masters, but what is said must not be overlooked. (Eph. vi. 9), "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them." That means that the master is to act upon the same principle, for he also has a Master in heaven, who sees him, who has His eye upon all his behaviour, and to whom he, as well as the servant, has to give an account. "Ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatenings." In those days, I suppose that masters were at liberty to use

corporal punishment to their bond servants. That might be limited by law, but anyhow there was no end to their threatenings. It is a poor thing to be always threatening. It is not God's way. God would have masters and mistresses to show patience and gentleness to their servants, after the pattern of the patience of God with us. We serve Him so imperfectly, and yet He patiently instructs, again and again teaching us the same lesson. Thus God would instruct us by His example in the capacity of masters or mistresses not to threaten, but to forbear. There may be a point at which an unruly, disobedient servant must be dismissed; as I have said before, there is liberty of contract. And the proper warning being given, whether by the master or by the servant, the contract terminates, and the relationship is dissolved. But in that matter also there must be walking before God, and seeking to have the mind of the Lord. Whatever step is taken it must be in the fear of God in order to have His blessing.

"Knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with Him" (Eph. vi. 9). As to "respect of persons," look at Col. iv. 1, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal." Now, that which is just, I presume, is that which is agreed upon. Perhaps it had a fuller meaning in the days of bond servants. Such were not paid weekly wages, but under unscrupulous masters were often subject to great injustice. The servant then was not in a position to bargain. But in our days the servant is as free as the master when entering upon an agreement. Whatever is agreed upon that give fully and freely, for that alone is just. As the Lord in His parable. At the eleventh hour the first says, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day." But he said, "Didst not thou agree with me for a penny?" (Matt. xx.). That was justice. So that it is as much the master's responsibility to give every penny agreed upon, as the servant's to serve every minute of the time he is employed. "Give that which is just and equal." Now I put that alongside of Eph. vi. 9, "No respect of persons with Him." Not that an unskilled servant is to be paid the same wages as the

skilled, the diligent servant the same as the slothful, a short-time servant as much as one who works many hours per week. The idea in "respect of persons" is favouritism, and giving undue preferences, thereby raising a spirit of envy and jealousy that is hurtful to all concerned.

Giving that which is "equal" as well as that which is "just," implies no "respect of persons." The repetition of the word, "Your Master in heaven," is most solemn. It tells us that He takes cognizance of our business affairs, and marks each contract entered into, each servant engaged and dismissed, and that concerning all these things account will have to be rendered to the Lord. How important, then, that all be done in the fear of God.

Well is it for that master who habitually sets himself at the bar, examines his own work in the light of the Word and in the presence of God, and so anticipates the judgment seat?

And this applies to every relationship. For whatever position God has put us in, that is the sphere in which we are to be serving the Lord.

Some have the idea that serving in the Gospel, and that only, is "the work of the Lord." God forbid that I should disparage that most glorious work, but let it not be forgotten that there are many departments in the blessed service, and that God is to be served and honoured as much in the household, the workshop, and the business, as on the platform or at the open-air meeting.

TESTIMONY OF THE PERFECTION OF GOD'S WILL.

DR. MOON, the well-known blind philanthropist, gives his testimony to God's goodness as follows:—"My testimony in reference to the goodness and perfection of the will of God, and His dealings toward us as His children, is that He is infinite in both. There are many things that are mysterious to us at first, but time and circumstances alike prove that all is ordered aright and in love. He is ever too wise to err and too good to be unkind. In reviewing all the way by which He has led me, and His gracious and loving dealings with me during my forty-four years of blindness, I must exclaim with the poet, 'I am lost in wonder,

love, and praise.' It was at the close of my twenty-first year that He took my sight and gave me a new heart and *blindness as a talent to use for His glory*. How different were the qualifications that He gave me to fit me for the work He called me to do from those that would be considered necessary by man. Light, above all things, would have been thought needless; but my Heavenly Father saw otherwise. Through my blindness I learnt to know what were the wants and deprivations of my fellow-blind, a lesson I could never have so thoroughly known had I not been blind myself. This blindness also served me as a fetter to bind me to the work; and the new heart which was given me made me submissive to His will, and use the talent 'He had given me for His glory.

"Our losses are frequently called afflictions; but are they not rather mercies in disguise? And can we not, when they are sanctified to us, write upon them 'God is love'? On my blindness would I ever have this inscribed, and through eternity my song of praise shall be, 'He hath done all things well.'

When I think of the honoured instrument He has made me, enabling me to put portions of the Word of Life into two hundred and fifty-one languages and dialects, and when thousands of the blind have borne the testimony that these precious truths have been made a blessing and salvation to their souls, I feel that it would more than compensate for a thousand eyes had I them to give.

"What patience, what forbearance our Heavenly Father manifests towards us when we murmur against His will! How lovingly and graciously He moulds our stubborn wills to His. His watchful eye and guardian care is ever over and around us. The gracious Shepherd, when we stray in murmuring paths, lovingly brings us back and restores our peace.

"In trials sent to purify us, the fire is not allowed to kindle upon us nor the floods to overflow."

ONE of the devil's temptations is so to occupy our minds with the *past and future*, as to weaken us for the *present*.

NEVER look back except to say Hallelujah, and then press on in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving.

Correspondence.

DEPARTURE TO BE WITH CHRIST OF MR. J. WARDROP, OF WISHAW.

DEAR BROTHER.—There has passed from our midst one who has truly been an example of Christian consistency in daily life, which all who knew him could thank God for.

Trained from his youth in a reverence for holy Scripture, to the end of his life the Bible was his treasure.

His child-like faith in his Saviour was in abundant evidence, and in all his sorrows, and disappointments, he looked off unto Jesus.

As a servant of Christ, his one characteristic was an intense love for the perishing; and nothing gave him more joy than when sinners passed from death unto life; and nothing pained him more than when gospel-work languished.

In writing thus, I forget not that God alone was the source of any grace seen in him; and while sensible he would put his hand on mine to stay my fear, saying, "Remember I am only a poor sinner saved by grace."

It seems fitting to record a few words in Memoriam of the late Mr. John Wardrop, Wishaw, who entered into rest on the morning of Wednesday, 31st August, at 4 a.m. Aged 83.

He passed away with these words on his lips :

"I will love Him in life, I will love Him in death,
And praise Him as long as He lendeth me breath,
And sing, while the death-dew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, Lord Jesus, 'tis now."

May we follow him in so far as he followed Christ.

I remain, yours sincerely,
GLASGOW, Sept. 7, 1892. T. COCHRANE.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following :—

Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45 (the unclean spirit).

Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

"The voice of a majority."—Does 2 Cor. ii. 17, rendered by Rotherham the "majority," not favour ruling by majorities; and are we not socially and morally ruled by the voice of the majority in municipal and parliamentary affairs, affecting all our church, home, business, and general interests?

If a servant of the Lord is invited to visit an assembly or meeting which is not "recognised" as being in "the fellowship," is that of itself a scriptural reason for his declining to go and help them?

Please explain through *The Witness* Leviticus xxi.

17, &c., and the difference between the blemished priest and the believers now.

What is the teaching of the expressions, "sprinkled with blood" (Heb. ix. 21), and "blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24)? Do they convey the same meaning, or different, from the "shedding of blood" in Matt. xxvi. 28, Heb. ix. 22?

RAISING MONEY.

QUESTION 423.—What is the Scriptural way for an assembly to raise money for the Lord's work and workers?

Ans. A.—"Of every one that giving it willingly with his heart shall ye take My offering" (Ex. xxv. 1; see also 2 Cor. ix. 7). If this principle is to be carried out, there must be an opportunity for saints to give spontaneously. That is, without any pressure whatever being put upon them.

"At the commandment of Joash the king they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord" (2 Chron. xxiv. 8; 1 Kings xii. 9). The Lord Jesus "sat over against the treasury" (Mark xii. 41), which would imply that the people had an opportunity of giving freely, "as they purposed in their heart."

As to the time of giving, the "first day of the week" is pointed out by the Holy Spirit as the most fitting season (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

It would also appear that the saints in apostolic days knew the special object for which they were contributing. Compare Acts xi. 29, 2 Cor. viii., Phil. iv. 14-18. All this would imply that a box should be set in some convenient place of the meeting-room, so that saints can put in their offerings on the first day of the week; and that it either be intimated beforehand or put on the box for what object the collection is being taken, so that believers can give *intelligently*.

The practice of putting all the offerings into one box, and then leaving it to be dispensed by two or three according to the best of their judgment, or according to their individual preference, is most unsatisfactory, as well as *unscriptural*, and prevents anything like real fellowship in the matter of giving and receiving.

If it is for workers in other lands, then let this be distinctly intimated, so that all may know. If for one who has been labouring in connection with an assembly, the practice of giving him when he leaves so much money for so much preaching cannot be too strongly condemned. It is true, "The labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke x. 7). Also, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn" (1 Cor. ix. 9; see also Gal. vi. 6). But these passages of Holy Writ teach a very different principle from the tacit or unexpressed understanding that a servant of the Lord is to be paid for his ministry as a labouring man would be paid for so many days' work, and that he is never to be thought of again until he pays another visit. The effect of this principle is disastrous. Assemblies of saints who act on this principle need not wonder that few workers come their way, or that those who do come have little of the power of God about them.

The evils of this obnoxious practice are manifold, and not the least is that if the worker himself is not right with God it tends to sink him still lower; and when a *pinch* comes, instead of repairing to his closet to find

out in the presence of God why the supplies have been withdrawn, he is tempted to go where he expects to get his need met by *his brethren*; and this temptation being repeatedly yielded to, the poor man sinks down to preach for a livelihood, instead of being constrained by the love of Christ, and will ultimately be less careful about being right with God than he is about being right with *his brethren*. Another evil is that those workers who are exercised about keeping a "single eye," and are endeavouring in these days of declension to go on with God, will shrink from visiting assemblies where they expect to be paid for their ministry on the principle I am condemning, and as a consequence the "spiritual man" is often forgotten, whilst the "carnal man" may be well supported. Only it must ever be remembered that the faithful servant will never be forgotten by God, although he may be called to "suffer with Christ."

If a servant of the Lord is invited to visit any place, surely those who invited him ought to see to his comfort and to his travelling expenses. This might and perhaps ought to be done under any circumstances, where there is ability to do so, if his ministry be acceptable.

If one has been used of the Lord to the blessing either of saints or sinners, it would be a comely thing to have *special* fellowship with him. He may have a home to care for, and many expenses which are often forgotten. I also believe there are many dear saints who have got blessing through one's ministry, who would like to have fellowship with him; but their means are so limited that they can scarcely offer him their small "mite" *directly*. Whereas, if after he is gone, or at any other convenient time, a box were set down and his name mentioned, these dear saints would gladly give, and be richly blessed in giving; and the worker himself would have the joy of knowing that he was remembered in his absence, and that the gift when it came was the spontaneous offering of willing hearts. Moreover, he would be thus led to give thanks to God on their behalf, and to remember them in prayer. In closing, I would commend to those who desire to learn a careful study of Phil. iv. 10-19.

A CHRISTIAN WORKER.

Ans. B.—It has been found to be a good thing to have a separate box for this purpose at the meeting to remember the Lord's death. This we conclude to be a Scriptural way, from 2 Kings xii. 9, and 1 Cor. xvi. 1. The thought in 2 Kings, the chest beside the altar, would remind us how the cross of Calvary ought to regulate our offerings. If we apprehend the truth aright, that giving to the Lord is real worship (Heb. xiii. 15, 16; Phil. iv. 18), there would not be so many threepenny pieces, or sixpenny pieces either, when many who give them could give eight times as much very well.

While we do not believe in taking from the Gentiles, we must remember that God does not in this dispensation supply His servants' need miraculously, and a little self-denial on the part of us who are His children would gladden the heart of many a lonely labourer, as well as be a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God and fruit to our own account. In order to satisfy all in fellowship and maintain confidence, letters acknowledging receipt should always be read in the meeting. J. L.

Ans. C.—The Scriptural way for an assembly to "raise money" (an unhappy expression) for the Lord's

work, is "let *every one* of *you* lay by him in store as God has prospered" (1 Cor. xvi. 2), and out of this portion allotted to God let us "send *once* and *again*" (Phil. iv. 16) to the necessity of some servant of the Lord, whom we know to be "working the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xvi. 10). This would constitute us "fellow helpers to the truth" (3 John 8). What we need for this service is the same grace of God that was bestowed upon the churches of Macedonia (2 Cor. viii. 1), which grace made them willing *beyond* their power (v. 3), so that their "deep poverty" only served to make brilliant the "riches of their liberality" (v. 2). Instead of the apostle begging them for money "*they prayed him with much entreaty to receive the gift*" (v. 4). Oh, that God would *begin* and *finish* in all assemblies of His saints this "same grace also" (v. 6), and that we might "abound in this grace also" (v. 7). Four things would flow from this, viz.: The saint's needs would be supplied (2 Cor. ix. 12); God would be glorified (v. 13); We would prove our subjection to the gospel of Christ (v. 13); and the saints who were supplied would pray for us, and long after us, for the exceeding grace of God in us (v. 14). Thanks unto God for *His* unspeakable gift (v. 15).

T. B.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN AN ASSEMBLY.

QUESTION 424.—Does any Scripture teach that the Holy Spirit is present to rule, in an especial manner, at the meeting for remembering the Lord?

Ans. A.—We never read in Scripture that the Holy Spirit was present to rule an assembly in the way of being *president* of the assembly. He does not control *meetings* but *men* (1. Cor. vi. 7). "The Holy Ghost which is in you," not in a meeting. The ministering saints, gathered on the first day of the week to remember the Lord, have most important functions to fulfil on that solemn occasion, and when each member of the body of Christ, energised by the "same Spirit" who not only divides the gifts but also works them (1 Cor. xii. 11), when each, we say, is consciously enjoying the love of God and is subject to His will, then the commandment of the Lord is kept, and the glory of the Lord appears in the hearts of the saints by His Spirit in edification, exhortation, and comfort. For the Old Testament analogy see God's acknowledgment of the honouring of His commandment in Lev. ix., 1 Kings viii. Compare 1 Cor. xiv. 24-35.

W. P.

Ans. B.—The Lord Himself said, "Where two or three are gathered together to My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). And if the heart is occupied with Christ, and not with "vain thoughts," He will, by the Holy Spirit, rule the heart, for He said "I will pray the Father [Rotherham, "I will request the Father"] and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the *Spirit of Truth*" (read John xiv. 12-27). When we meet in obedience to His command to remember His death, and if we remember in spirit and in truth His dying love for us, surely that is the time when the promise given in John xiv. 21 and 23 will be most abundantly fulfilled; and if we are filled with the Spirit, undoubtedly that same Holy Spirit will in an especial manner rule

the meeting for remembering the Lord; but, "without observation." If we are reading a book, our thoughts are not occupied with whether we are reading it or not, but with the subject matter contained in the book, and if the heart is occupied in questioning whether the Holy Spirit is present to rule in an especial manner, it evidently is not occupied with the object for which the assembly is met together.

W. D. B.

Ans. C.—Not that I am aware of; nor do I know of any Scripture where "*rule*" is said to be the prerogative of the Holy Spirit. Of the Lord Jesus it was prophesied: "And the government shall be upon *His* shoulder" (Isa. ix. 6), and all Scripture which speaks of rule or government seems to me to be in harmony with this prediction, whether in the Church or in the world. See Matt. xxviii. 18, John v. 22, 23, 27, Eph. i. 22, Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. The Holy Spirit dwells in every child of God (1 Cor. vi. 19.; Gal. iv. 6). He is the teacher (John xiv. 26). He is the guide (chap. xvi. 13). He is the power of ministry (Acts i. 8); also of worship (Eph. ii. 18). He is also the uniting bond of fellowship (Eph. iv. 3). It is by the Spirit that the Lord Jesus bestows the gifts (1 Cor. xiii. 7-10); the Spirit also works these gifts (verse 11). When the saints gather to remember the Lord there is a special opportunity for the Spirit's operation in worship, fellowship, and in ministry, but *His operation will be experienced only in proportion to the spirituality of the individual saints who compose the meeting.*

G. A.

Editor's Note.—The fact that every believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God is clearly and abundantly taught in Scripture. This indwelling is permanent and not merely occasional. His gracious operation may therefore be experienced at any time and under any circumstances.

When the whole assembly has come together into one place with the express object of remembering the Lord and showing His death, we are not taught that the Spirit is present in any other sense than as dwelling in each individual; nevertheless His presence is, on such an occasion, more manifest, and His operation in ministry and in worship is more abundantly realised.

Many pieces of coal, each on fire, so long as they remain apart burn dimly and slowly; but gather them together into a grate and soon the fire in each communicates fresh energy to that in every other, and the result is one common blaze in which the whole participate. Similar to this is the assembly; one common object attracting every heart and one Spirit leading out in adoration of Him by presenting through the individual in ministry to the whole the excellencies of His person and work, the result is an access of warmth and vitality, an ascending incense of praise kindled by the altar fire, a measure of refreshment, edification, and joy rarely experienced on other occasions.

Were the Spirit ungrieved in each individual what a flame of worship would ascend to God from assembled saints!

It is noticeable that in 1 Cor. xiv. directions are given for regulating in an orderly and comely way the operations of the Spirit, showing that His work is not to rule or preside but to energise: the orderly exercise of gift, depending upon attention to divine principles and spiritual understanding.

"BEFORE THE LORD."*2 Sam. vi. 21.*

IT is a marvellous dignity to be brought to stand consciously in the presence of God, without any fear of judgment, or even of rebuke. Yet such is the standing into which the believer in Christ Jesus is brought, "according to the riches of God's grace," and "the good pleasure of His will." The thought of such a standing brings forth from the heart of the Apostle that burst of thanksgiving—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame *before Him* in love." We know the infinite complacency with which the Father rested, and ever rests in His beloved Son. But He rests in complacency also in the result of that work which his Son finished on the cross. There He can contemplate what His own grace has effected, "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, *to the praise of the glory of His grace*, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through His blood according to the riches of His grace." We, indeed, are "slow of heart" to enter into the revealed thoughts of God respecting our own standing *in and through* Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has suffered *once* for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us *unto* God; but being brought there, we stand *before* God in Him. If our standing be *in* Him, as well as through Him, how can God see us there otherwise than according to the thoughts of His heart? Of old, it was written of Christ as the Wisdom of God, "I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." (Prov. viii. 29, 30.) And has not God His delight too in that which is accepted in Him? And when the Lord Jesus comes to be glorified in His saints, then the world will know that the Father hath loved them, even as He has loved Jesus Himself. (John xvii. 22, 23.) It is one of the most precious blessings of the believer to know the manner of love wherewith he is loved of God. "We have known and believed the love that God hath to

us;" and such is its perfection, that it has rested in nothing short of making us to be in Christ *before* God, even while we are in this world, as Christ is in the presence of God in heaven. This is the perfect love which casts out fear. (1 John iv. 16-19.) One grand characteristic of apostolical teaching is the anxious endeavour to maintain, in the souls of the saints, the consciousness that, by the work of Christ, they are *brought into God's presence, as the object of God's delight*. In the presence of God, they are in the region of love, but of light also. The Father's presence is the large and wealthy place, the place of fulness of joy, but the place of holiness also. If the souls of the saints are kept in conscious nearness to God, then will they walk *before Him*; but the more they recede in spirit from that nearness, the more will their walk be *before men*. And the self-exercised Christian knows experimentally the difference between walking in the presence of God, and walking before men. When we are walking before men, *we are scrupulously exact in answering what they expect from us, and are satisfied if we please men*; but there is a freedom when we are walking before God, because we are not seeking to please men, but God that searcheth the heart. *When we are seeking to please men, we are prone to judge others*, but when we are before the Lord, we can only judge ourselves.

A passage in the history of David may illustrate the importance of being practically before the Lord. When David heard that the Lord had blessed the house of Obed-edom, "because of the ark of the Lord, David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. . . . And David danced *before the Lord* with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod." He had strip himself of his royal apparel, as unseemly for him to appear in *before the Lord*. There was no commandment for him to do this, but the presence of Him before whom he was, instinctively taught David that it was not the place for him to make a show of the glory which the Lord had given him, when he was before "the ark of the Lord of the whole earth." For David to have been prominent on such an occasion would have been entirely out of place. "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest; Thou, and the

ark of Thy strength." (Ps. cxxxii.; Numb. x.) So it ever must be. The sense of being in the presence of the Lord, and " beholding His glory," will instinctively lead the saints to " cast their crowns before Him." And even now the realised sense of being in the Lord's presence makes us feel the becomingness of the linen ephod, even of being " clothed with humility." King David in the linen ephod, according to the fleshly judgment of Michal, is demeaning himself as one of " the vain fellows "; for human reasoning is entirely at fault in this respect; it cannot connect " access with confidence " into God's presence, upon the assured ground of being accepted in the Beloved, with the greatest possible self-abasement. David, before the Lord, must needs cast away every thought of self-consequence, being lost in the admiration of that grace which had preferred the ruddy shepherd-lad before all the goodness of Saul, and therefore could easily bear the rude taunt of Michal ; true type is she of that religion which vaunteth itself, and utters hard speeches against the humiliating confession of those who, before God, can only see their sin and vileness. " And David said unto Michal, It was *before the Lord*, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel; therefore will I play *before the Lord*; and I will yet be more vile than this, and will be base in mine own sight."

But David, even as others, lost in some measure the sense of the happy place of being *before the Lord*. " The king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies." How natural to be occupied with all these benefits, and to look now " on the house of cedar," in which he dwelt, and to compare his own stately dwelling, with the dwelling-place of the ark of God, " within curtains." How ready the thought, what shall I do for the Lord ? and it requires that chastened state of soul, which being before the Lord alone can maintain, not to let such a thought supersede or dim the thought of what the Lord has done for us. The state of David's heart, when he sat in his own house, was very different from what it was when he was before the Lord. It was well that it was in David's heart to build an house

unto the name of the Lord (1 Kings viii. 18), but God would teach His servant something more blessed than this, even that He Himself would build David an house (2 Sam. vii. 11-16). This was the lesson which David needed to learn, and which, indeed, we all need to learn, before our service to the Lord can be healthy to our own souls. The last words of David have respect to this (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-5); and under the " strong hand " of God's teaching and instruction, we, each of us, have to learn how very secondary is that which has called forth our most hearty energy in the service of the Lord, compared to that " covenant, ordered in all things and sure," by which God secures us. But see David again before the Lord. After Nathan had rehearsed to him all God's goodness and grace, with the blessed addition, " Also the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house." " Then went in King David and sat *before the Lord*, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God ? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto ? And this was yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord God ; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God ? "

It is not the manner of man ; for man has always the idolatrous thought in his heart, that God is to be served by men's hands, as though He needed something. It requires some training in the school of Christ to keep down this thought. The saint of God is only, and always a recipient, and if he does anything for God, it is of the ability which God Himself giveth. And blessedly did David learn this truth, and enunciate it at the close of his career. " But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort ? for all things come of Thee and of Thine own have we given Thee " (1 Chron. xxix. 14).

Blessed close of an eventful career, when giving most liberally from his " affection to the house of his God," which his eyes never saw, to lose the sense of his own liberality in the more overwhelming sense of the grace of God.

But ere reaching that close, David had learnt a most humbling and bitter lesson under the strong hand of God. Disgrace in his own eyes, and in the sight of others, exile from his

own city, and the unnatural rebellion of his own son, followed the fearful sins of adultery and murder as the chastening of God for David's sin, when even that sin had been forgiven, in order that God might do him good in his latter end. *But was not David's fall into these foul sins preceded by David's having got away from the presence of the Lord?* Then it was David tarried at Jerusalem, while the host of Israel and the ark were in tents, and encamped in the open field (2 Sam. xi. 11). David, who could not rest till the ark was brought to Jerusalem, is now content to be far from it. He had willingly lost the opportunity of being before the Lord, preferring ease to conflict. And are we ever in greater danger than when we are "at ease," ceasing to watch and to pray, as if we were secure from all temptation? "The lust of the eye" leads David first to commit adultery, then to practise deceit, and failing in that, to commit murder; and the consequence was that he was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and gave speedy evidence of the distance into which he had departed from God, by his keen perception of the wrong of others. *How often does righteous indignation burst forth from the heart which is unjudged before God!* "David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity" (2 Sam. xii. 5, 6). We have to watch in ourselves the motives even of apparent honest indignation, lest in passing sentence on another, we, as David did, pass sentence on ourselves. How often, when before God, do we find righteous indignation against others turned against ourselves, the effect of "godly sorrow" (2 Cor. vii. 11). David confesses his sin, and his sin is pardoned; but nothing will satisfy David short of conscious nearness to God, "the restoration of the joy of His salvation" (Ps. li. 12). And by God's grace abounding over David's sin, he was brought into that nearness to God which he craved, or even into deeper consciousness of being before the Lord, than ever he had known before. In the fifty-first Psalm, we find David again before the Lord, and so before Him that David could only see Him and himself as in His sight;

and how was the sense of his sin aggravated by seeing it in the light of God's presence. "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil *in Thy sight*, that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest." It may be that David was never so truly before the Lord as on this occasion. When he went in solemn yet joyous procession before the ark of the Lord, or when he sat before the Lord after the Lord Himself had rehearsed to him His own gracious dealings with him, there was room for the entrance in of some natural, yet allowable, elements of human joy. But now there was no room for such kind of joy; nothing could be joy to David, till he knew again the joy of God's salvation. And this could only be known under the deep and searching touch of Him before "whom all things are naked and open." And not till now had David been laid naked and bare before his own eyes. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." We accept the doctrine of original sin, but it is only before God that we learn what it really is to be born a sinner. He who will "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ in that day," judges those secrets now, in those who are exercised before Him, and makes them learn that God "desires truth in the inward parts"; and that there has been inward declension from Him before we have been suffered to fall grievously. It may be comparatively easy to gather sufficient wisdom by observation, and experience, and imitation, to walk in a measure blameless before men. But it is "in the hidden part that God makes us to know wisdom," and often, as in David's case, this wisdom is dearly purchased by some sad and grievous failure on our part. What depth of wisdom did David learn before the Lord, to enable him to say, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt-offering."

All outward demonstrations of penitence, of which one at a distance from God would have recourse, are seen to be vain by him who stands before God in confession of sin. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise!" But how despicable in the eyes of men is this sacrifice of God. It is in the hidden part that this wisdom is learnt of what, under

special circumstances, is pleasing to God. David, before the Lord, had learnt this so deeply, that he submissively bows his head under the unrighteous cursing of Shimei, and accepts it as part of God's discipline on himself (2 Sam. xvi. 5-11). And he knew how to check the indignation of Abishai, who would have resented this insult on David; *for nothing, however keenly felt, and unjust in itself, at the hand of man, will be regarded by one confessing his sin before God apart from the righteous discipline of God.* David, for many a long year subsequently, was made to know in his own exile, and the unnatural rebellion of his son against himself, that it was indeed an evil and bitter thing to depart from God as he had departed. But it was not this that broke his spirit and gave him the contrite heart, and taught him to know in his inward part that this was the sacrifice of God. The broken heart and contrite spirit had been produced by seeing sin in God's sight in all its hatefulness and blackness, and in seeing God's grace abounding over it. *We are never Antinomians before God.* To learn before Him that where sin has abounded, grace has superabounded, is indeed wisdom. And how growingly precious is the cross of Christ to him who is consciously brought by it into God's presence. He learns his need of it to maintain him in God's presence, as well as to bring him into it. It is only under the shelter of the cross that he can have fellowship with God, who is light, and at the same time bear to see what sin is in the light of His presence. And we may lay it down as an axiom, that conscious and realised nearness to God must necessarily be accompanied with deep self-abasement. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly; but the proud He knoweth afar off." May we know in our hidden part that wisdom, that the walk answering to the high and heavenly calling wherewith we are called, must be "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love!"

"Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

THE TEST QUESTION.

IN September, 1891, we wrote as follows:—

"But whilst all care and patience and discernment, especially on the part of those who are the guides, is requisite, the principle must never be departed from that, every believer has a *prima facie* right to the fellowship, and that once the assembly is satisfied that the person is a believer, he cannot be either expelled or rejected, except there is a plain scripture warranting such a course. Let this simple, and we believe divine basis of reception be departed from, and it will soon become painfully evident that there is no middle course between it and the narrow and ever narrowing demands of implicit and absolute subjection to the latest dogmas and sentences of the cleverest and strongest willed of those who aspire to be leaders. Nay, more: the latest 'question' which has arisen and been used by Satan to split an assembly into two or more fragments, will become a universal superadded test, by which to determine the possibility or impossibility of fellowship."

The above was written, little thinking that this forecast of what, in the nature of things *must* happen, was so soon to be verified in fact!

The test question has arisen, which is being forced upon assemblies 'far and near for decision.

The charge of "railing" against one of the oldest and most respected of the brethren, was maintained by some and rejected by others, the assembly being nearly equally divided about it.

Had the course been followed in this case, which has been counselled by all most esteemed among us, and in many cases adopted with helpful results, viz., before pressing the matter to division to wait upon God for oneness of mind, and seek the help of brethren whose experience and discernment fitted them to give counsel at such a juncture—the present division would in all probability have been averted in so far as it was based upon the said charge of railing.

Those who refused to adopt this course, preferring to press the matter to a division, over-riding the consciences of so large a proportion of those in the fellowship, and declaring them to be no longer "in or of the fellowship of the Church of God," have the responsibility of the havoc that has resulted.

If every such difference of judgment amongst brethren on difficult cases of accusation is to be thus dealt with, viz., first made the occasion of division locally, and then forced upon other assemblies without limitation for their decision on one side or other, there remains no prospect but perpetual propagation of roots of bitterness and endless divisions and sub-divisions, eating the vitals out of the gathered saints, and stumbling every godly soul who might be seeking after the truth in these days of difficulty.

Surely it must already be evident to opened eyes that this is not the path to a unity that is divine, and in which the fruit of the Spirit can find congenial soil.

Is it not rather the biting and devouring which calls forth the urgent warning, "Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another?" A cause that cannot be propagated or upheld without resort to slandering all who do not go in with it, bears its weakness on the face of it. That which is of God needs no such help. The ministry of His Word in the wisdom, love, and power of the Spirit is the only divine means for the furthering of divine ends. Personalities betray the working of the flesh, and results attained by means of insinuations and misrepresentations will in the end manifest their true character.

J. R. C.

SATAN'S DEVICES.

"It is hard to discern the workings of Satan from our own corruptions, because for the most part he goes secretly along with them. He is like a pirate at sea, he sets upon us with our own colours; he comes as a friend; and therefore it is hard to discern, but it is partly seen by the eagerness of our lusts, when they are sudden, strong, and strange, so strange sometimes that nature itself abhors them. The Spirit of God leads sweetly; but the devil hurries a man like a tempest, that he will hear no reason. He joins with our passions, and so leads them on further. He broods upon our corruptions; he lies, as it were, upon the souls of men, and there broods and hatches all sin whatsoever. All the powers of darkness cannot force us to sin. He works by suggestions, stirring up humour and fancies; but he cannot work upon the will. We betray ourselves before he can do us any harm, yet he ripens sin."

"WHY SPEAK YE NOT A WORD OF BRINGING THE KING BACK?"—(2 Sam. xix. 10).

Why speak we not of bringing back Earth's true anointed King?
Sin reigns, death follows in its track;
All things are withering.

Imperial states are intermixed,
Part iron and partly clay,
E'en thrones that seem most surely fixed
May totter in one day.

Great legislators stand aghast,
Perplexed on every side.
Shall law subdue the lawless blast,
Or stem the rising tide?

Men's hearts are failing them in fear
For what time yet may bring;
But who with watchful eye and ear
Awaits the coming King?

Saul's house is waning weaker still,
God's Word is there despised;
Man's learning, intellect, and skill
Alone by them are prized.

Rage against God's anointed One
High culture scarce conceals,
And as the heavenly lamp they shun,
Hell's darkness o'er them steals.

But David's house is stronger grown,
See gathering to His name
Increasing multitudes who own
In heart His royal claim.

Then why are we not speaking more
Of bringing back the King,
Who Eden's sweetness will restore
And cause the wastes to sing?

When He holds sway, hard times shall all
Have past with bygone days.
Earth's princes on His name shall call
And celebrate His praise.

The poor and needy ever shall
Be His peculiar care,
Pride and oppression then shall fall,
Lies shall no more ensnare.

War and its horrors shall become
Dreams of the troubled past,
Stilled then the thundering cannon's boom,
And hushed the clarion blast.

Let each and all with one accord
Lift up the voice and say,
"Come quickly! Jesus Christ our Lord,
O'er earth Thy sceptre sway." AMEN.

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—VI.

SUBJECTS AND RULERS.

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL in Marble Hall, Glasgow.

READ in the Epistle to the Romans xiii. 1-8. Verse 2, "Receive to themselves damnation," or, properly, judgment; verse 5, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake,"—not only because if you are not subject you will suffer for it, but also for "conscience' sake," because it is the will of the Lord; verse 6, "For they (that is, the tax gatherers) are God's ministers," &c. 1 Peter ii. 13-17: note on verse 16, "servants of God," read "bond servants."

In these relationships which we have been considering, we have seen that God addresses words of counsel both to those who rule and to those who are to be in subjection. He addresses husbands as well as wives, parents as well as children, masters as well as servants; but here it is noticeable that we only have in this relationship the one class addressed—only subjects—and I think it devolves upon those who think that a Christian should be a politician to explain how it is that in the New Testament, whilst God has revealed His will fully concerning every other relationship in life, He has given no instructions to Christian rulers. I shall take that up (God willing) later on, but in the meantime let us look at the instructions given to us as subjects. Turn again to Romans xiii., and bear in mind that at the time this was written the government was in the hands of the Roman emperor: power belonged to the Romans. The head of the Roman empire was a heathen, and his government was anything but what we should call a good government. In fact, to us who are accustomed to the peace and liberty of this land, it would have been considered intolerable. Yet it is of that government then existing that the apostle writes, "Let every soul be subject unto the Higher Powers; for there is no power but of God. The powers that be the presently existing powers—(the Roman Government) are ordained of God," so that this passage is not at all to be qualified by the nature of the government, which may be good or it may be bad. I think it is generally

admitted by thinking people that any form of government is better than no government; because man left to himself, uncontrolled, is in the condition most favourable to the development of the evil that is in him. Lawlessness leaves man to develop his worst instincts. Even in those days God had so appointed that the Roman government for the most part condemned the outward evils of life,—robbery, murder, and so on—and so stood in the defence of those who were honest and upright. Thus all government in God's providence has more or less the features of what government ought to aim at, viz., the protection of the rights of the subject, and the condemnation of the vicious, the cruel, and the guilty. If subjection was inculcated in those days of Roman dominion, how much it becomes us as subjects under the best government that ever existed in the world—the government under which is found most liberty for good, and most repression of evil—how much more it becomes us to be implicitly subject to the existing authorities. And remember that this passage teaches us that it is God in His providence, as we read in many other scriptures, Proverbs, Psalms, &c., it is God who raiseth up one to authority and power and putteth down another. It is God by His providence that permits certain forms of government to pass away, and other forms to come in, and even in our own land the changes that take place through the votes of the people are by no means uncontrolled by the hand of God. As Christians, we have to recognise the government now existing. Next year if a Liberal government comes into power instead of a Conservative, to us, as Christians, it is the same. The Queen is on the throne by the will of God. It is by God's providential dealings that we have such perfect protection to person and property; and it is our privilege to recognise this as of God, and give Him thanks for it. Moreover, a government involves a revenue, therefore, as a necessary result, the payment of taxes.

The government of this country is very expensive, but, nevertheless, very cheap in comparison to many other countries, although it takes a revenue of £90,000,000 a year to maintain it. Here, however, we are taught that it is not a hardship but a privilege that,

God puts upon us, to pay the tribute, the tax, the dues that the government exacts for its support. It is not our business as Christians to question what purpose these are put to ; but it is our business to be subject to the powers that be, and to recognise the collector of taxes to be "God's minister attending on this very thing," whether it be for water or gas, for army or police, for poor or for education. I don't believe we get better value for our money in any article we buy than we do for the taxes we pay. We have no conception of the value of the liberty we enjoy, the protection to lives and property in this highly-favoured land, where the murderer is searched out and executed, the thief and the robber apprehended and punished—and where every law-abiding subject, however poor, has the whole power of the government to protect him. Unlike other lands there is not such a thing known in this kingdom as a judge being bribed to give, unjust judgment. Trial by jury is an additional safeguard and guarantee of equity. The Queen lives in the affections of her subjects ; her character remains, after so many years, untarnished, and her influence in favour of what is just and pure is incalculable. Oh, the blessing, the inestimable blessing, that neither you nor I ever heard the sound of war ; we never heard a gun fired for destruction within this realm. Let us thank God for such a blessing, and not forget the request that God has put into our lips in 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2.

Looking at the whole of this chapter and what follows, I take it chiefly to concern the public assembling of God's people. This I gather partly from the words, "prayers, intercessions," &c., being in the plural, and also from the next chapter which treats of rule and order in the Church. It appears that it is one of our first privileges and responsibilities, that the Church should make prayer to God for all classes and conditions of men. Prayer is to be made for "all men," whether it be King or Queen, cabinet minister, or magistrate; all that are by the providence of God in authority claim our prayers. "*For this is good,*" &c. It is possible to be under a government where we might be quite at liberty to live "in all honesty," and not "in all godliness." We might be where to carry out the word of the Lord would involve persecution even unto

banishment or death. At this present time, in some other lands, there is scarce permission at all for God's people to come together in the name of the Lord. If we were in Russia, we might, for so assembling, be transported the next week to Siberia. We are under a government which permits us to live "in all godliness and honesty," bearing testimony to the truth, even in the open-air. It is sad and pitiful when God's children abuse such a privilege, and make themselves a nuisance to their neighbours. I grieve that Christians should be so foolish as to insist upon marching a brass band through the streets on the Lord's day. Our brethren who do such things at the command of a human leader are sadly mistaken, and are doing damage thereby. It is only raising the wrath of man—it is not the reproach of the cross, neither is it following in the footsteps of our rejected Lord. Of Him it is written, "He shall not strive nor cry, nor lift up His voice in the streets." That does not mean that He would not preach at the street corner, but He would never raise a tumult ; He would never go about contending for His rights. So did our blessed Master, and so ought His servants. Then glance again at Romans xiii. Notice the expression, verse 4, "For He beareth not the sword in vain." Now remember that "the sword" is a different thing from "the rod." The rod pertains to the family, the sword to the government ; and the sword means nothing more nor less than the power of life and death. It is well that God's children should be clear about this. "He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," was God's appointment when He constituted government in the hands of Noah. It was not an arrangement that originated under Moses, under the law ; it was continued under the law, but it was God's appointment when He first ordained government in the earth. The reference to the sword signifies the power of life and death ; and all government in the world must have this power as its ultimatum, or else it would be no government. When our Lord Jesus comes to take the power and to reign, this power will be His. The modern sentimentalism that would do away with capital punishment is the thought of man and not of God, confounding rule in the Church and

rule in the world. Some think that the world ought to be governed on the principles of grace. But the thing is a contradiction. The world can never be governed on the principles of grace. When the Lord comes to reign it is written, "Let the earth rejoice," but also "A fire goeth before Him and burneth up His enemies round about Him" (Ps. xcvi). "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet" (Isa. xxviii. 17). It is evident, therefore, that government on the earth involves the power of life and death; and it is not for us to wish it otherwise. Our business is not to do anything that will make us obnoxious to a good government, but "by well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter ii. 15). "And who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?" (1 Peter iii. 13). Peter said that, well knowing he would suffer as a martyr for Christ. Although the Lord told him he would be lifted up on a cross, yet Peter says, "Who is he that will harm you?" That word of Christ to Peter was as the chariot to Elijah, as the whirlwind that lifted him up to heaven. So then, apart altogether from the character of the government, it is our business to be subject, to pay what is righteously laid upon us for its support, to pray for those in authority, to fear nothing, but be followers of that which is good. And notice again and again we are exhorted to give *honour* as well as *tribute*. The Lord Jesus affirmed the principle by saying, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's" (Matt. xxii. 21). What an opportunity for the Lord Jesus, if He had been a patriot after the world's ideas, or a politician, to tell the Jewish people they ought not to be subject to the Roman power. Roman coin was circulated in the country, and they ask, "Is it right to render tribute unto Cæsar or not?" (Matt. xxii. 17.) The answer is, "There is no power but of God." And so also as to "honour." In these days there is little honour given to those in authority. Nevertheless, it is a privilege. The apostle said, "I magnify mine office," not "I magnify myself." It is their office, not their personal character, that demands honour. If it be the King, I am bound to honour him. If it be the sheriff, I am bound to honour him. It is our privilege to

honour those who by God's providence are put in a position over us, and to show it by our manner and ways as well as by willingly paying our taxes. I counted it an honour some time ago, when in the North of Scotland, as well as a duty, to take off my hat and salute the Queen, which she acknowledged as any other lady would do.

J. R. C.

(To be concluded in our next.)

FAITH IN GOD.

IN these days, when so many are going out to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, on the principle of faith in the living God, that is, trusting Him and Him alone to supply all their need,—when also some of those labourers in the Gospel, who have been for years acting on the same principle, are likely to have their faith severely tested, it might be helpful to try and find out from the *Word* what faith in God really is; as also how it is *begotten*, and how it is *sustained*. The question is asked by the Spirit of God: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. x. 14). Again, it is written, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (verse 17). Some translators render this passage, "So then faith cometh by a report, and the report through the *spoken* Word of God." (See Newberry's notes.) Let us look at this first in relation to the salvation of the soul from condemnation. The truly awakened sinner looks everywhere for a way of escape from coming wrath but to the right source. And even when the truth of God is pointed out from the Word, and the sinner is pressed to rest upon it for salvation, all is dark and hazy, until the Spirit of God sheds light on some special verse or truth in the Word, and by a divine illumination makes that truth or verse as if it were a "spoken word" from the living God to that soul. Then the Spirit, by His quickening power, imparts grace to the sinner to lay hold on the Word of God, so making it his or her own. Thus by the Spirit, through the Word, the soul is united to the living Saviour. Faith is not the result of effort, or of trying to believe; faith is produced by the power of truth. It is also sustained in the same way. Hence many a one who has been divinely quickened, into

whose soul the Spirit of God has dropped the Word of Life, by neglecting to feed on that Word becomes in his experience almost as much a creature of sense as he was before his conversion.

As it is with spiritual things, so it is with temporal things. Trusting in the living God for time implies the same nature of faith as trusting in Him for eternity. It must be an individual thing. Every soul that is safe for eternity must have had personal dealing with God, by His Spirit, through His Word. And so must everyone who really trusts God for his daily bread. If a believer in giving up his or her secular calling, and devoting all their time and talents to spiritual work, has not had a conscious settling of the matter in the presence of God, very much akin to the experience of a soul at conversion, there is sure to be a breakdown in some way when the time of trial comes. Either the work will be given up, or the worker will turn aside from the path of simple faith in God, and begin to lean on an arm of flesh in some form or other. It is said by those who understand literal warfare, that the commander of an attacking army should always see to have a *base* on which he can fall back if he meets with a reverse; where he can take shelter, and gather up fresh strength for a renewed attack on the enemy. So it ought to be with every worker who has given himself unreservedly to the service of the Lord. Such ought to be able to look back to a time when they were called by the Lord Himself to leave all and follow Him (see Matt. iv. 18-22; Mark iii. 13-19; Acts xiii. 2), when they were so sensible that He was touching their hearts that they could do nothing else but go out in His service without entirely losing the sense of His presence in their souls; and when they were afraid to launch out lest they and those depending on them should come to want, the Spirit of God led them to some verse, or verses, in the Word, and gave them power to lay hold on them. When the trial comes, such can go direct to the throne of grace and say, "Lord, remember the Word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope" (Ps. cxix. 49). There is no such thing as faith in God apart from His Word. How far our God may in His infinite grace condescend to the ignorance of His people, we cannot say;

but one thing is clear, there can be no intelligent faith in God apart from His truth. And those who would trust in the living God for their temporal supplies, as they trust Him for their eternal salvation, must have His own Word for it, and that a *spoken* word to their own hearts by the Holy Spirit. Nothing less, and nothing else, will bear the strain that sooner or later is to be met with in the path of faith. And the worker who is to go on in these days without stumbling must also have his faith sustained day by day from the written Word of the living God.

G. A.

"THE COMING CRISIS."

"THE snares laid for us by Satan, as an angel of light, are more subtle and more terrible than those by which he seeks to lead us astray as the prince of darkness. Not only as the God of this world does he endeavour to entangle us, but as the advocate of thought and liberty and breadth; strangely confounding the liberty of the flesh with the liberty of Christ; the freedom of faith with the freedom of unbelief; self-will with independence of thought; audacity of assertion with manliness of speech; speculation with truth; conjectures with discoveries; 'ease in Zion,' with peace which passeth all understanding.

"The errors of 'the world' are now becoming the errors of the Church; for the world has in all ages leavened the Church with its evil, and produced a Christianity after its own mind and fashion. Everywhere now we hear it said that the difference between truth and error is a mere matter of opinion; that he who affirms that there is but one way to the Kingdom is bigoted and illiberal; and that God will not think the worse of man for thinking for himself; nor will the judgment of the great day take cognizance of any cases or questions pertaining to belief or unbelief. Good and evil are said only to differ in degree; light and darkness are interchangeable words; and the 'universal Fatherhood' of God will secure all His creatures against the consequences of their own misdoings or misbelievings. Thus 'the lie' is put into the man's right hand by him who was a liar from the beginning; and 'the truth' by which alone the soul can be purged from sin, is treated as a restriction on human liberty,—a yoke no

longer to be borne. It is reckoned illiberal to be tenacious of creeds and doctrines.

“Thus unbelief is fostered; backsiding is made easy; and departure from the faith honoured as the evidence of a ‘liberal’ mind. In the midst of all this, is it any wonder that the Cross should be subverted; the blood trampled on; the one righteousness set at naught; sin underrated; regeneration scoffed at; the Bible dishonoured; inspiration denied; the judgment to come represented as a thing that can never be? . . . The evils of the last days, as predicted by the apostles, are unfolding themselves surely and swiftly.”

PERSONAL TYPES OF CHRIST.—XI.

JONAH.

THE distinctive incident in Jonah’s life was on two occasions referred to by our Lord as foreshadowing His own death and resurrection (Matt. xii. 38-41, xvi. 1-4), and, though by many in the present day the whole story is scouted as an historical fact, the endorsement thereof by the Son of God satisfies every loyal believer of its literal truth.

HIS NAME.

Jonah means a *dove*, though some have thought *hawk* would have better suited him. But we are chiefly concerned with “the greater than Jonah,” and *Him* the emblem well fits. From its use in Scripture we would say the dove symbolises *purity, meekness, harmlessness, and beauty*; all of which characteristics and graces were blessedly combined and manifested in the life of the Son of Man, for He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners”; and, though He was greater than the greatest ever born of woman, yet He was esteemed as “the least in the kingdom of heaven,” and of Himself He speaks as the One who was “meek and lowly in heart.” Yet God and every God-taught soul see in Him a beauty beyond compare. *To* Him we exultingly cry, “Thou art fairer than the children of men!” (Ps. xlv. 2). *Of* Him we say, “My beloved is white and ruddy, the chieftest among ten thousand. . . . Yea, He is altogether lovely”! (Cant. v. 10-16).

JONAH’S MINISTRY BEGAN WITH ISRAEL.

We have the briefest possible mention of the prophet before he was commissioned to go to the great Gentile city, yet we read enough

to establish the above point. He prophesied in the days of Jeroboam II., and his word from the Lord was fulfilled (2 Kings xiv. 25). And the Lord Jesus, as a man, was distinctly a Jew and a Prophet to the elect nation. It is as connected with the seed of Abraham that most of the Old Testament scriptures speak of Him. His own words on this point are emphatic: “I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. xv. 24). But Israel, His own people, received Him not, and in resurrection He turns to the nations.

JONAH’S DISOBEDIENCE.

This stands in marked contrast to the perfect and continuous obedience of the Son to the Father who sent Him. His one object in coming was to do the will of God, and that will He carried out, right on to the bitter end. He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross” (Phil. ii. 8). Yet we may well rejoice that this fulfilling of God’s will means our eternal salvation. “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. x. 10). As we have seen, it was mainly in death and resurrection that Jonah typified Christ. The prophet was obliged to confess, “For I know that for MY SAKE this great tempest is upon you.” The exact opposite was true of the Lord Jesus. In looking back to Calvary, believers say, “We know that for OUR SAKES that great tempest was upon THEE.”

Jonah offered himself and was cast into the sea to allay the storm, thus becoming the means of saving all in the ship from temporal death. The Lord Jesus stepped forward and endured the waves and billows of Jehovah’s wrath, which otherwise would have swallowed up all of Adam’s race. And thus He has become the procuring cause of the eternal salvation of all who on Him believe.

In the purposes of God, for His glory and our salvation, the death of Christ was absolutely necessary. The high priest in Christ’s day perceived the necessity “that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.” It is significantly added, “And this he spake not of himself: but being high priest that year, he PROPHESIED that Jesus should die for that nation” (John xi. 49-52). His words, as given by God, doubtless had a deeper meaning than he knew or intended.

How truly did Christ make our sins His own. God reckoned them to be His. He confessed them as His own and put them away. In that wonderful portion, Psalm lxix., we are permitted to listen to the heart-utterances of the Redeemer when atoning for sin. Some of His language is startlingly forcible, and can only be true as we perceive the vicarious character of the death of Christ. Listen to His words: "O God, Thou knowest My foolishness ; and My sins are not hid from Thee" (ver. v.). Thus really did the Lord identify Himself with His people. The language of the type fits beautifully the antitype, "All Thy billows and Thy waves passed over Me" (verses 2, 3). Now we may sing :

"Our sins, our guilt, in love Divine
Confessed and borne by Thee ;
The gall, the wrath, the curse were Thine,
To set Thy members free."

JONAH IN RESURRECTION.

But the hour came when the * fish had to disgorge its victim, and Jonah was cast forth unhurt on dry land. In God's providence the very destroyer becomes the preserver. All through the ages death had been the great conqueror : with two exceptions the grave had swallowed up all the millions of the human family. But Christ in His death robbed death of its sting ; in rising from the grave He wrested from it the victory. Oh, how much is involved and implied in the great fact that *Christ is risen!* The work He came to do was accomplished ; atonement had been accepted of God ; sin, satan, death, the grave, for the believer all are nullified ! With us the devourer, death, has become the deliverer. In view of all this there is peculiar force in that ancient riddle, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

We read that Jonah was a *sign* to the men of Nineveh ; but we may ask, a sign of what ? Surely of the *judgment* and *mercy* of Jehovah. From his experience the Ninevites might learn how speedily and effectually God could bring judgment on the disobedient ; and from His dealing with Jonah they could learn something of His tender mercy and compassion for the

sons of men. Wicked as they were, though judgment was imminent, yet there might be hope for them. As a nation they repented, and the Lord graciously restrained wrath. In this they were a standing rebuke to the Pharisees of Christ's day, as to many since. *They* repented at the preaching of a mere man who wrought no miracles among them ; the Jews repented not at the preaching of the Son of God, though He again and again, by signs and miracles, demonstrated that He was from heaven.

In the matter of the three days the analogy between type and antitype is striking. In both we have a remarkable judgment from God annulled in three days, and followed by a mission of mercy to the Gentiles. Since His resurrection, through the Church, Christ has carried on a glorious work among the nations, for this has been characteristically, though not exclusively, the Gospel age for the Gentiles. Though Jonah was successful in his mission, in the spirit if not in the letter, yet he was angry with God for sparing the people. The reason for this dissatisfaction we do not stay to inquire ; sufficient for us here to contrast the Lord Jesus. He wept over guilty Jerusalem, and in the most impassioned outburst that earth has ever heard, He mourned the infatuation of the wicked but much-loved city (Luke xiii. 34, xix. 41, 42).

But not only has Christ risen from the dead, we, too, have been *raised in Him* ; and as dead and risen persons we are sent to witness for God in this great Nineveh world. We, also, must be standing proofs and evidences of that which we preach. Having been delivered from so great a death, we must tell of this salvation to others. Knowing ourselves indeed to be monuments of Divine mercy it behoves us to tell of that mercy to our fellows. A greater judgment than that which threatened Nineveh hangs over guiltier Christendom. Let us do what we can not only to warn men but to beseech them to be reconciled to God. Should any who read these lines be led thereby to live more in the power of a resurrection life, to have more compassion for a perishing world, to witness more faithfully for our Lord and Master, it will not be in vain that we have thus briefly traced "Jonah as a type of Christ."

* The popular notion, often laughed at, that it was a *whale* which swallowed Jonah comes from a mistranslation of Matt. xii. 40. Competent scholars have often pointed out that the words used in the Old Testament and New Testament simply mean a *great fish*.

FIRST PRINCIPLES FOR LAST DAYS.

WE find in the history of Abraham that after sojourning in the land he was driven by famine into Egypt; but on his restoration "he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there *at the first*" (Gen. xiii. 3, 4).

And it will ever be found in the history of God's people that true restoration is always connected with going back to the point of departure, to that which was "at the first." And we will find the facts connected with Abraham's sojourning very instructive in the present day, when, through the mercy of God, there has been a "return" on the part of many from a human order of things to the divine and original order of the house of God.

It is to be noticed in Abraham's history that what characterised him from the beginning of his sojourn in the land was "the tent" and "the altar." He was a pilgrim and a worshipper. We need not say the Church of God was pre-eminently characterised by these in the beginning. The early chapters of the Acts show how distinctly the Church "pitched the tent" and "builded the altar." Even while as yet her full portion had not been revealed, the unhindered power of the Spirit of God wrought in her morally; and, sad to say, when the full truth of her heavenly position was revealed, she had begun to fall from her first estate. It is in keeping with this we find Abraham pitched his tent first at Sichem, in the plain of Moreh, and afterwards removed to the mountain lying between Bethel and Hai.

The Church of God "pitched her tent" at Sichem, the shoulder or "place of strength" (as the word signifies), in the plain of Moreh (the plain of the archer), right in the very face of the enemy. But two things came hand-in-hand together. The full truth of the Church as the body of Christ was revealed, and practical failure set in, and so the Church pitched between Bethel, "the house of God," and Hai, "heap of ruins." And as Abraham returned to the altar between "Bethel" and "Hai," so now any true restoration must be connected with these.

First, as to Bethel. To Paul was revealed the truth that all the saints of this dispensation

were baptised by the Spirit into one body, and so each true believer is livingly united to the Glorious Head in heaven, and to one another down here. And therefore in 1 Cor. xii. the relation of the saints to each other is shown to be closer than on the ground of redemption. All saints of all ages stand upon the blessed ground of redemption, but in this age is given to the saints the wonderful place of association represented under the figure of the human body. Connected with this truth was also brought out the responsibilities of the Church as the assembly of God, to walk worthy of her high calling and to maintain the purity of her communion. This is fully brought out in 1 Corinthians. All the evils that would work disaster in the assembly are there shown in germ and dealt with. One called a brother, who was a wicked person, must be put out from her fellowship. Other things had to be borne with. Party spirit had arisen. "I am of Paul," "I am of Apollos," had become the cry. But the cure for this is not "putting away." Those who had this spirit were babes, and were to be fed. The apostle seeks to correct the moral state. And surely this commends itself to anyone who has the mind of Christ, and who knows His heart.

But now "Hai" comes in. Right in the apostle's day ruin sets in. The closing epistles are all full of a ruin that had already set in, and instead of prophesying any complete restoration, exhortations are given to the faithful, and the pathway shown to become more difficult as the days of the dispensation advanced. No exhortation is ever given to set up the assembly of God again; but instead, individuals are exhorted (2 Tim.) to separate from the evil and to go on together. From 1 Corinthians we learn the assembly of God in any place is composed, in the sight of God, of all the members of the body who are not wicked persons. All such had the right to gather; and to refuse any member of the body who was not "a wicked person," was to disown the Lordship of Christ by acting in disobedience to His Word. But the assembly, as such, was giving up gathering together. And those who were led to act in separation from evil were told to "Follow with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." And so to-day we go back to first principles. The assembly of

God is scattered. The germs of sectism of 1 Cor. have borne fruit; but in these days we (thank God) can gather simply to the name of the Lord Jesus, owning Him as our centre, and walking according to the principles He gave at the first. On the one hand we are to recognise the whole Church of God. We are to own practically every member of the body of Christ. We cannot go *with* them into forbidden paths, but we can seek their good, and if they come with us, even though they do not yet see their way completely and finally to break with all other associations, surely we can welcome them, excepting, when by practice or wilful association, they become "wicked persons." And while, in a general way, those gathered thus are assemblies of God, for any such assembly gathered as a remnant to claim for itself the title of "*the assembly of God*," would be arrogance and presumption of such a character that it must necessarily call down the judging hand of Him "who behelde the proud afar off." Oh, that in these days of sad confusion there might be wrought in our souls a mighty humbling before our God, and such a spirit of confession that the Lord could bless us as He fain would bless us were we not so exalted in ourselves! "We have sinned," should be our cry. The failure of the Church is our failure. Its shame is our shame. And in a little moment that Church that as to its testimony for God has become a "heap of ruins," shall be shown to be "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." "Bethel," the Church of God, is being builded, and shall be the joy and delight of His heart for ever, "who loved it and gave Himself for it." "Hai," a "heap of ruins," down here, as man has ever been; but let us with the light of God's Word, in brokenness of spirit, owning the ruin, seek to walk as pilgrims and worshippers in separation to our Lord, acting on first principles, even in these last, sad dark days of strife and division.

J. J. S.

[A Paper, by this writer, on "CHRISTIAN BAPTISM in its various aspects, with reference also to Household Baptism," will shortly be inserted.]

NEVER occupy a young Christian with the faults of others. It is dangerous for the most humble and prayerful, but *ruinous* for the novice and the weakly.

THE HYPOCRITE.

THE hypocrite *knows* that he is only pretending to love Jesus. It is the knowledge that he only *affects* to be a lover of Christ that constitutes him a hypocrite. He puts a beautiful mask on an ugly face. With his own hand he puts it on, and he never takes it off so long as he remains a hypocrite. If he say, "I *was* a hypocrite, I *had* the thoughts of a hypocrite, *did* the deeds of a hypocrite, I have sinned!" Then God is faithful and just to forgive. He is no longer a hypocrite. He is a pardoned sinner; and going to God, saying, "I have sinned," God receives him as a son—his sin is blotted out.

A man may think he has been a hypocrite. The best thing for him is to tell the Lord Jesus what his thoughts are. Jesus died on the Cross for hypocrites who have found themselves out, and are weary of being hypocrites, who say, "We are miserable sinners, and without Christ undone." Jesus died for such hypocrites.

If a hypocrite do another any good, he blows a trumpet. He tries to hide his sins by publishing his deeds; and backbites his neighbour to preserve his own character. Hypocrites make long prayers, but they never desire the fellowship of those who really pray. They seek after ceremonies, but avoid the company of true worshippers, lest, coming to the light, they should be discovered and exposed. The hypocrite never contemplates the Word of God, unless to deceive others by pretensions to the knowledge of Christ. The moment he contemplates the Word, to know God and Christ, and himself, he ceases to be a hypocrite.

Let the vilest hypocrite, or the sinner who has sinned ever so much, look to Jesus and His cross—not to himself, but to Jesus crucified—and all is well. Then he may say,

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me."

Satan in malice would persuade a real child of God that he is a hypocrite, just as in his guile he would persuade a hypocrite to attempt to pass for a Christian. Satan has many masks for many faces. He would put the mask of the hypocrite on the weak in faith, and persuade such that they are hypocrites, and he would put the mask of religion on the

hypocrite. Satan attains his end, when in any way God is dishonoured. The Spirit of God, by the cross and resurrection of Christ—through the word of truth—convinces and comforts the believer, showing him that Christ his Portion *was* his Substitute, and *is* his High Priest, and that his desire to be like Christ springs from above. With respect to the hypocrite who never confesses his hypocrisy, God in due season will make him manifest to all. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

NEAR THE GLORY.

Extract from a letter written by a lady one week before her departure to be with Christ.

BELOVED Mrs. ——, I have been wishing and intending to write to you, but to-day I feel as if my time were so very short I will postpone it no longer.

Dear friend, you know how near *the glory* I am! You will rejoice because I can humbly say with my precious Saviour, through His infinite grace, "I go to the Father." Oh, just think what that is! We can form no idea; only adore, adore. I never suffered more than yesterday; but *He* was sufficient, He was enough. That verse in Psalm xxxi. was a comfort, as showing how my beloved Lord could sympathise by experience in far worse pains. "I am poured out like water; all My bones are out of joint." Oh, what agony, and all for me. What a relief to come to His burst of praise for resurrection deliverance in verse 21, and His reward—"All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord." I shall be waiting in heaven for that inconceivable glory of His coming with His saints.

Dearest Mrs. ——, I wish I could give you any idea of the great peace my God has poured over my soul. Oh, His promises are true to the very utmost. There is not a trace of exaggeration in the very strongest expressions which some people call Bible hyperboles. Oh, how we shall say, "The half was not told us." No, nor the half of what He can give in *this* world of joy and peace. His name be praised for ever. Our redemption draweth near. Only for this miserable physical weakness, what a song of triumph I could sing! Oh, the unspeakable value of the precious blood! Oh, the love *before* the foundation of the world! What an anchor! How is a Christian *ever* cast down? How does he ever wear a spirit of heaviness? Oh, many a day I wore it, and was a miserable backslider under its chilling influence—a lukewarm and, therefore, unhappy Christian. Nothing is truer than that it is the joy of the Lord that is our strength. . . .

How deeply drawn I feel to all the Lord's children. Sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. What a dignity! Let us bear ourselves as princes, and no longer scrape together straws and dust with our muck-rake—disregarding the crown hung over us. Not that we want a crown. Oh, no: only to cast ourselves at His feet, His pierced feet. . . .

Dearest Mrs. B.—, farewell till the morning breaks and the shadows flee away. Surely it is coming. Surely we shall see the King in His beauty.—Your affectionate friend eternally, because He has linked us, C. H. W.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

"The voice of a majority."—Does 2 Cor. ii. 17, rendered by Rotherham the "majority," not favour ruling by majorities; and are we not socially and morally ruled by the voice of the majority in municipal and parliamentary affairs, affecting all our church, home, business, and general interests?

If a servant of the Lord is invited to visit an assembly or meeting which is not "recognised" as being in "the fellowship," is that of itself a scriptural reason for his declining to go and help them?

Please explain through *The Witness* Leviticus xxi. 17, &c., and the difference between the blemished priest and the believers now.

How are we to discern the sin of covetousness? (1 Cor. v. 11).

If a believer kept his place of business open until Lord's-day morning, could he be charged with covetousness according to 1 Cor. v. 11?

What are we to understand by the "glory of the celestial" and the "glory of the terrestrial" in 1 Cor. xv. 40?

What will be the *object* of the war in heaven? (Rev. xii. 7). Will Satan oppose his being ejected? Is it not on his being cast out into the earth that he will raise up the antichrist. What heaven is it he will be ejected from?

Is it scriptural for the redeemed of the Lord of this dispensation to speak of the Son of God as being "our King" or "Elder Brother"?

Please explain who the two kings mentioned in Isaiah vii. 16 refer to.

Will some of our brethren please explain, through *The Witness*, 1 Samuel xxviii. 7-20?

How should we (Christians) regard Christmas?

THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT.

QUESTION 425.—Please explain Matt. xii. 43-45 (the unclean spirit).

Ans. A.—The Lord had healed (verse 22) a demoniac, and this led to the evil disposition of the Pharisees manifesting itself (verses 24-38). The Lord then utters a solemn warning, under form of a parable, describing their condition. They, as a nation, had

been so far cured of their idolatrous habits, but their reformation had gone no further. The strict outward worship of the only God prevailed; but within their state was evil. The Lord warns that where true godliness does not take the place of forsaken evils, the heart may become a prey to worse forms of sin than before. There is a filthiness of the spirit as well as of the flesh.

A. O. M.

Ans. B.—It is the solemn judgment of the Lord against the people who were rejecting Him. The unclean spirit of idolatry had gone out of them for a time; but can find no rest outside Israel, and will in the end return there again with seven other spirits (the perfection of evil) more wicked than himself, and will find that house, which should have been the habitation of Jehovah, fully prepared for his reception, who enters in and dwells there. Israel thus receiving Him who shall come in His own name, will, like the possessed swine in chapter viii., be hurried on in hostility against God, and will receive their fitting judgment from His hands.

G. A. S.

Ans. C.—Our A.V., as often, fails to translate the little but important connecting particle, *So, but*, which warns us of a close connection with what precedes. The closing words of the parable make it clear that the force of the application is to the nation of the Jews. Our Lord had just cast out an unclean spirit. The one who had been possessed might, or might not, "follow Jesus in the way"; but if he did not his "empty, swept, and garnished" soul would indeed be a fitting abode for evil spirits, the man's responsibility would indeed be terrible. But be that as it may, the leaders of the nation, as usual, find fault and cavil, and the Lord takes occasion from the individual to pass on and pronounce the fearful sentence on the nation—the "generation of vipers," the "wicked generation."

What "unclean spirit" has ever yet gone out from that nation, except that of *idolatry*, as has been seen and acknowledged from early days, from Chrysostom down to our own day? The presence of Jesus among them, working "the works which none other man did," is the crucial test; they refuse Him and attribute His works, which they could not deny, to Beelzebub. The house remains "empty, swept, garnished," ornamented with pharisaic scrupulosity and rabbinical niceties. If Israel, through all these ages, has wandered seeking rest, "as the tribe of the weary foot," so has the unclean spirit; but the awful sentence must yet be executed—that same spirit of idolatry shall yet find an acceptable abode in them—more to his taste, because more hateful to God than all the idolatry of the nations, and shall take with him the sevenfold completed power of satanic energy.

I. G. H.

Editor's Note.—We would call attention to the words, "Even so shall it be to this wicked generation." In Scripture the word "generation" designates moral characteristics rather than persons living within a certain period.

John the Baptist had described them as a "generation of vipers"—the Lord here endorses that judgment, and elsewhere calling it "an evil and adulterous generation."

The passage implies that such will continue to be the character of that nation until the time of its final apostate idolatrous worship, seven times more wicked and blasphemous than any that had gone before.

Nevertheless, a remnant, according to the election of grace, has always been reserved by God and kept true to His name, and will continue till the end.

SHED BLOOD—SPRINKLED BLOOD.

QUESTION 426.—What is the teaching of the expressions, "sprinkled with blood" (Heb. ix. 21), and "blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24)? Do they convey the same meaning, or different, from the "shedding of blood" in Matt. xxvi. 28, Heb. ix. 22?

Ans. A.—That the above expressions do not teach the same truth, will be evident when we consider that,

I.—Shed blood has to do with Redemption, and is connected with making satisfaction to God (Matt. xxvi. 28, Heb. ix. 22).

II.—Sprinkled blood has to do with Propitiation, and is connected with our cleansing and standing before God (Lev. xvi. 15, 30, Heb. ix. 13).

III.—The order of God required the *offerer* to shed the blood, in Lev. i. 5, iv. 24, &c.

IV.—The order of God required the *priest* to sprinkle the blood, in Lev. i. 5, iv. 7, &c.

V.—The shed blood speaks of remission and "no condemnation" (Heb. ix. 22, Rom. viii. 1).

VI.—The sprinkled blood speaks of our cleansing and standing, and "no separation" (Lev. viii. 30, Deut. xviii. 5, Rom. viii. 39).

VII.—The shed blood of the Paschal Lamb (struck upon the door posts, &c.), kept God in judgment *out* from man (Ex. xii. 13, 23).

VIII.—The sprinkled blood (on and before the mercy seat) brings the redeemed *nigh* to God (Heb. x. 19, ix. 12, 24, Eph. ii. 13).

IX.—The blood of sprinkling thus speaks better things than Luke xxiii. 34, Ex. xxv. 22, Heb. x. 19.

X.—The (shed) blood of Abel, which cried for judgment (Gen. iv. 10, ix. 6).

S.

Ans. B.—"The shedding of blood" betokens the life taken, "the sprinkling" the application of the virtues derived through the shed blood. Heb. ix. 21 shows the application to an earthly people of the virtues of the blood of sacrifices slain to ratify the Old Covenant. Heb. xii. 24 shows the application (by faith) to believers of the virtues of the Blood of Christ, whose shed blood ratifies the New Covenant.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—The "blood of sprinkling" is the instrument, "sprinkled with blood" is that on which the instrument has operated; and the "shedding of blood" is how the instrument was obtained. Christ gave His life, "a ransom for many," shedding His blood. By this precious blood our hearts are "sprinkled from an evil conscience," and the heart thus operated on, having this "blood of sprinkling" upon it, has "no more conscience of sins," and enters into God's rest in respect of sin: not that it is not conscious of having

sinned, but that it is conscious of the divine worth of the precious blood "shed for you"; that God accepts such, and justly, as a complete atonement for the sin that was there. "Sprinkled with blood" is the application of the blood to the conscience. This is not the fruit of mere intelligence, it is the work of the Spirit of God on the heart. The "sprinkling" is the act of the High Priest, Christ, as faith lays hold of Him, which faith is imparted by the Holy Spirit, true repentance being there, also His work. God on the ground of justice is now the justifier, the repentant soul is forgiven in the Son, the accuser being silenced by the "blood of sprinkling."

H. E. S. E.

Ans. D.—As matter of fact the two things are necessarily distinct, the blood was *shed* first, and *afterwards sprinkled*; so in Ex. xxiv., *shed* in verse 5, *sprinkled* in verses 6, 8; so in Lev. viii. 19, so in Lev. xvi. 14, and so universally; and so, however closely connected, the meaning of the two actions cannot be quite identical. And yet the two consecutive verses of Heb. ix. 21 and 22, imply a close connection. In each case the *sprinkling* seems to be that which applies the blood already *shed* to the individual heart and conscience, or that *brings it in*, into heaven itself, into the presence of God. Through that sprinkled blood, if we may so say, the eye of God can not, will not penetrate to behold the claims of a holy law within the ark, or the vile unprofitableness of the justified sinner, and so He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob.

I. G. H.

"BAPTISED INTO CHRIST."

QUESTION 427.—Does Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"—refer to water baptism?

Ans. A.—There are two distinct senses in which one may be "baptised into Christ." In the first, *all* believers participate, that is, baptism into the *body* of Christ by the *Spirit* (1 Cor. xii. 13). The second is baptism into the *name* of Christ by *water*, as Acts viii. 16, which more correctly reads, "They were baptised into the *name* of the Lord Jesus." In submitting to this, they "put on" Christ; that is, they became identified with a rejected Christ before the world, by taking upon themselves His name. So the apostle writes, "As many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ."

F. H. S.

Ans. B.—The baptism *into* Christ, here spoken of, is the same as in Rom. vi. 3, Col. ii. 12, where (though allusion may be made to water baptism) the essential thought is our incorporation, spiritually, into Christ—in His death and resurrection. Of this fundamental truth, baptism in water is a sign, not a means thereto. 1 Cor. xii. 13 shows the same truth.

A. O. M.

Ans. C.—In answering this question we must distinguish between a "*certain reference to*" as compared with the direct teaching of the Spirit in any passage. If the inquiry be as to the latter, the answer must be in the negative, and for reasons that will now be given; but firstly, we would do well to get the exact

reading of the passage. The Revised Version thus stands: "For as many of you as were baptised into Christ did put on Christ." But this is ambiguous, as there is no "of you" in the original; and the "for as many" is equivalent to "*all who*," and the passage would thus stand: "All who were baptised into Christ did put on Christ." The 27th verse being in direct antithesis to the 10th verse. The "*all who*" of one class, *i.e.*, works, being contrasted with the "*all who*" of the other, *i.e.*, faith, or those who have been actively put *into Christ* by faith; for observe, the passage tells of something done to the individual, and leading into Christ, for the verb is in the passive voice, aorist tense, and the preposition is *en*, and not *in*; the word "actively" has been used above on account of this. But who is then the agent? If we refer the passage to water baptism, then priestly "*baptismal regeneration*" in some form or other is what we are driven to. This of course we recoil from, albeit the darkest region of shade is often nearest the light. But does not the analogy of Scripture lead us to seek the meaning of the passage from such verses as Luke xii. 50, Mark x. 39, and refer it to the baptism of His precious body on the cross, His burial in the grave and His triumphant resurrection, and as He is now crowned with "glory and beauty" (see Heb. ii. 9)? So are those as seen in Him who are formed into the one new man in Christ (see Eph. ii. 15, and Gal. iii. 28), while the operations of God, whereby He accomplishes all this, is clearly shown us in Titus iii. 15; but see marginal reading of R.V. *in loco*. Reference should have been made to Rom. vi. 3, where the wording is almost identical—and the teaching the same as the passage under consideration; but then follows (to suit the subject there in hand) the 4th verse, which is the immersion of the believer, who in his water grave, and raising up out of same, shows forth how His Lord united him to Himself, and also that he is called to walk in newness of life. Beside the foregoing, the whole tenor of the Epistle to the Galatians would lead us to see that Paul would not touch on or enforce anything (no matter how scriptural in itself), which was material or tangible; his then object under the Divine Spirit was to seek that Christ (the heavenly and anointed aspect of their Saviour) should be formed in them; see Gal. iv. 19.

G. C. F. B.

Editor's Note.—Alford renders Gal. iii. 27, "For all ye who were baptised into Christ did put on Christ." Verse 10 exactly corresponds.

Similarly Rom. vi. 3. "All we who were baptised into Christ."

It does not, therefore, lend any support to the idea that some of the believers were baptised and some not.

We cannot accept any explanation that excludes a reference here to the baptism in water. The language of the typical ordinance is used by the Spirit whilst enforcing the great truth symbolised.

The principle is the same where the Lord says of the loaf, "this is My body." The carnal mind imports the idea of "transubstantiation," understanding His words in the letter and not in the spirit. So "*baptismal regeneration*" arises from applying such words as we have in the text about baptism in the letter and not in the spirit.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

Notes of an Address at the Glasgow Half-yearly Conference.

BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

THE subject for this evening's ministry is one very near my heart. For years I was in a spiritual bondage which few know much about. I found the law to be a yoke of bondage which neither I nor my fathers were able to bear.

The Epistle to the Galatians might be called the epistle of liberty. We have here the charter of Christian liberty laid down by the Spirit. It is full of this blessed subject. Like a golden line, it runs through it from beginning to end. In the opening words the apostle strikes the key-note: "He gave Himself for our sins, *that He might deliver us*" (that He might give us liberty) "out of this present evil age."

In chap. iv. the apostle enlarges on this liberty. "The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world" v. 1, 2). Then he shows how they were freed from this: "God sent forth His Son to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (v. 8). That we might be introduced into the place of sonship. Then consequent upon the accomplishment of the glorious work of redemption, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying *Abba, Father.*" "God sent forth His Son." What a depth of meaning is in these words! In a past eternity He dwelt in the bosom of the Father, and He was sent forth into this world which had been marred and defiled by sin; which had grown hoary in its iniquity. After having completed the mighty work of redemption, justice having been satisfied and sin put away, He ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Then we find another thing connected with liberty, in verse 26: "Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all." That is as to our heavenly origin. We have been born from above (John iii.). We have been born in a free city. The apostle could tell the Roman centurion that he was "free-born"; he had inherited the freedom of the city of Rome, but the centurion had to purchase it with a great

sum. We were free-born at regeneration. Jerusalem the free is the mother of us all. Then in verse 31, we read "We are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free." Therefore, in verse 1 of chap. v., the apostle exhorts them to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Then he proceeds to show what *God* thinks of legality. He likens it to "leaven," which, in 1 Cor. v., is applied to the worst kind of moral evil. They were not standing fast in their liberty; they, Gentiles as they were, were allowing themselves to enter into a bondage out of which Paul and other Hebrew Christians were glad to have been brought.

Then in verse 13, he says, "Brethren, ye have been called into liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh." We are to have done for ever with prison-life. The Lord Jesus is the great Liberator of His people. At the beginning of His public ministry He stood up in the synagogue of Nazareth and read these blessed words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach *deliverance* to the captives to set at *liberty* them that are bruised." He breaks the captive's chains, and sets him free. Liberty has been brought to the captive bound by sin and Satan, through the person and work of the great emancipator, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are six things involved in Christian liberty which I would briefly call your attention to. The *first* is that *justice has been satisfied*. In connection with this, turn to Leviticus xxv. 9. "Thou shalt cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound in the day of atonement." Jubilee means loud, joyful sound. The day of atonement was the day when the high priest took sacrificial blood into the holiest, and sprinkled it before the eye of God once, and seven times before the mercy-seat; therefore on that day the trumpet was sounded, and liberty was proclaimed from Dan to Beersheba. Historians inform us that liberty was proclaimed all the year round till the next day of atonement —every day the trumpet was sounded, so that there might not be a single captive but would hear the joyful sound. The claims of outraged justice having been typically satisfied, every rusty chain may now be struck off, the prison doors flung open, and the exile return to the

NOTE.—We are printing extra copies of December Number as Specimens; if anyone will kindly distribute as samples, we will forward from 5 to 50, entirely free of charge, to any part of the world. Please apply early.

embrace of his family. "Ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family" (v. 10). It was an acceptable year, and liberty was the happy meaning of that loud, silvery trumpet sound. We are now living in "the acceptable year of the Lord." Only twice in a century the typical year of release came round. This acceptable year—the day of grace—has been lengthened out to well-nigh two millenniums, the fruit of the accepted redemption work of the Son of God. As the Great High Priest of His redeemed people, He has carried His blood through the heavens and sprinkled it upon the heavenly mercy-seat. The blood of bulls and of goats could not put away sin, therefore a fresh sacrifice was always needed in the dispensation of law. But "by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14). The blood is upon the mercy-seat, justice has been satisfied. The resurrection of Christ is the demonstrative proof of this. He has been set at liberty and His people in Him. Our chains are snapt, we have been brought out of the house of bondage, and we are standing on the resurrection side of the cross. "Stand fast, ye freedmen, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free."

Rom. vi. 6: "He that is dead is freed from sin." There liberty is connected with *our standing in and through Christ*. We are free from the condemning power of sin. We are no longer its captives. We are not under any obligation to it. We belong to a new Master. We are united to a new "husband." "We are become dead to the law through the body of Christ; that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit to God" (Rom. vii. 4). We are in a totally new kind of world now.

Another thing connected with liberty is *the ministration of the Spirit* in contradistinction to the ministration of condemnation. 2 Cor. iii. 17. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The Spirit gives us unhindered liberty to gaze upon the glorified Son of God with the eye of the soul. A great change from that time when Moses put a veil over his face, "that the children of Israel should not look steadfastly to the end of that which is abolished" (v. 13). There is no veil to interfere with our beholding the face of the Son of God. Where

the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty to gaze upon Him. "We all, with unveiled face beholding as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed, or transfigured, into the same image" (v. 18). When Moses came down from mount Sinai, where he had been with the Lord for forty days and forty nights, his face shone, and they were afraid to come nigh to him. Before he could talk with them and give the commandments delivered unto him in the mount, he had to veil his face. There was a restraint and a sense of distance, a feeling of being ill at ease, in other words, bondage. But 2 Cor. iii. gives us to contemplate the mighty change between now and then. No more veil, either on our hearts or on the transcendent countenance of the great Mediator of the new covenant. The glory shines in undimmed splendour and brilliancy in the face that was once "marred more than any man." He is "fairer than the children of men" (Ps. xlv. 2). He eclipses all, and we may with all confidence look upon Him, admire Him, feast our eyes upon Him to our hearts delight. We have both the liberty and the nature to enjoy the sight of Christ. And the more we thus study Him the more we morally approximate to Him. We are being "*changed*" by the Spirit who gave us not only "*life*," but also "*liberty*" (verses 6, 17, 18).

Another thought connected with liberty is *ACCESS*. Into the innermost circle, into the holiest of all, the blood of Jesus gives us perfect, unquestionable "*LIBERTY*" to enter (Heb. x. 19, marg.). The way is "new and living," newly made, freshly shed (verse 20, marg.), for the sprinkled blood of Jesus never loses its efficacy, though the ages roll by. Over 60 years after the death of Christ, John had a vision of Him as the Lamb "as it had been slain," as if fresh from the slaughter, the perforated hands and feet still told their own sweet tale of redeeming love. Calvary was unforgotten. Thus we are not only saved *from* hell, but also brought *to* God by the cross (1 Peter iii. 18). And what a welcome we received! And what assurances, never to be cast out again! For the glory of John vi. 37 is, that *after* crossing the threshold and coming into the house, we shall never be turned out again. Hallelujah! The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.

There is another liberty, but it is future. Rom. viii. 19-21: "THE LIBERTY OF THE GLORY." Now it is grace, then it will be glory, the full ripe fruit of grace. And our very bodies shall be brought into it. The fetters that bound them to the old creation shall be snapt for ever. They shall be fitted for the palace and to endure the blaze of the glory from the throne, suited tabernacles for redeemed spirits. Our tongues will never tire then in celebrating the praises of the Lamb, nor our minds wander when musing on His love. And the whole creation shall be brought into liberty. It will groan and travail no longer. It will be one vast temple, every whit of it uttering His glory.

"We wait to see
Creation, all, below, above,
Redeemed and blessed by Thee."

But now a word for our consciences. Scripture speaks of a liberty, the result of obedience. "Ye shall know the truth and THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE." Are we treading this holy and happy path? Many of God's children are still wrapt up in the garments of the tomb, out of which the resurrecting voice of the Son of God has called them. Human traditions hinder the progress of many. Others again are in the bondage of fleshly habits; and of what use is a professed separation to God as to church-position which does not go hand in hand with soul-condition? Again, with pain we notice the rebound of many who professed once to have escaped the fetters of denominationalism into submission to *human* authority in "the Church of God," putting their necks under the iron yoke of an ecclesiasticism much more difficult to detect, because it often employs the language of unsectarianism. Satan has many ways of beguiling the dear saints of God from the simplicity that is in Christ, the eternal lover of our souls.

"Keep us, Lord, O keep us cleaving
To Thyself, and still believing,
Till the hour of our receiving
Promised joys in heaven."

THE women's sacrifice of their mirrors, where all is so plainly typical, may represent the willing giving up of our own self-estimates—in general some form of self-flattery—to find in the Word of God our true mirror, and fashion ourselves by it.

THE EARTHLY RELATIONSHIPS OF THE HEAVENLY FAMILY.—VI.

SUBJECTS AND RULERS.

Address delivered by JOHN R. CALDWELL in Marble Hall, Glasgow.

(Continued from page 168).

TO be a politician involves necessarily entering into the discussion of the many questions which form political parties. To discuss them involves being well informed upon them all, otherwise the only course open is blindly to follow the party leader. If it is a Christian's duty to take part at all, then it must follow that if so qualified he should publicly as well as privately seek to advance the views he contends for. If he enters the arena upon one subject, he cannot avoid entering upon other subjects. If he is to be a politician at all, then he should be an all-round politician, whose wisdom, force of conviction, and determination to carry forward what he deems right, will give him weight and leadership.

Now if God had meant a Christian to become a politician and to aspire to positions of influence or authority under the world's government, I am right well assured He would have given instructions as to how to attain such ends, and how to behave under such conditions.

But God is silent. Not a syllable of instruction has He given to show a saint how he is to conduct himself as either helping to constitute a government, or co-operating with a government, or in any way acting as a political agent.

I take that silence to be very significant, seeing that it forms so marked a contrast to the two-fold instructions given concerning all other earthly relationships. I contend that this divine omission is not accidental but intentional.

Remember that in the past dispensation God had a nation—the nation of Israel—and a king appointed by Himself over that nation. There was no such distinction in Israel as political government and ecclesiastical government. The nation of Israel constituted the congregation of Jehovah. There was but one statute book in Israel—"the law of the Lord." Neither the people nor the king had power to make a law. God was their Law-giver; the king and the judges were but the administrators of the law as given in the divine statute book.

But when Israel had utterly failed to carry out the will of Jehovah, dominion was taken from them and put into the hand of the Gentile.

From the time that supreme authority in the earth was given by God to Nebuchadnezzar, political power was separated from religious statutes and ordinances. Israel were to own in their captivity the dominion that God had given to the Gentile, they were to "render unto Cæsar the things that belonged to Cæsar"; but by so doing they never surrendered their allegiance to Jehovah, but were bound to "render unto God the things that belonged to God."

Therefore the godly captives in Babylon would not "defile themselves with the king's meat." Whilst owning the political power to be of God, they made no surrender of their responsibility to obey the law of the Lord in all that pertained to religion and morals.

With Nebuchadnezzar began what our Lord calls "the times of the Gentiles" (see Luke xxi. 24); that period during which Gentile power was in the ascendancy. From Nebuchadnezzar till the appearing of the Lord Jesus as King of kings, the Gentile has dominion in the earth; and Israel as a nation is either captive, or granted, as in the days of Ezra and until Christ, a certain degree of liberty and self-government, or else as now "scattered and peeled."

The character of Gentile government is shown by God in the Book of Daniel in two distinct visions; the one to Nebuchadnezzar, the other to Daniel. To the king it takes the form of a glorious image of which he is the head. To the prophet it is four wild, monstrous, ravenous and destructive beasts. And these representations are characteristic, for to the carnal mind, world-government still appears glorious and attractive, whilst to those who have the secret of the Lord it is monstrous, arbitrary, and oppressive, from first to last, whether autocratic or democratic.

That in our day, and in this country, government allows such liberty and secures so many blessings is of the overruling providence and mercy of God, but it is by no means the general character of Gentile dominion.

This is attributable mainly to the fact that Christianity became a mighty force in the earth, and allied itself with the world power, thereby

introducing into government many righteous and beneficent principles. But this ascendancy of Christianity was only gained at the cost of surrendering its heavenly character and hope. The Church ceased to be an unworldly stranger and pilgrim passing on to a heavenly city, and settled down to be a citizen of earth, allying itself with earthly power in order to reform and renovate the world that rejected her Lord.

The first three kingdoms represented by the first three beasts in Daniel's vision each passed away before the power of its successor.

The fourth continues to the end, and only passes away at the coming of the Lord in glory. Therefore the details given regarding this kingdom are more abundant.

In the Book of Daniel, distinct reference is made to the Babylonish, the Medo-Persian, and the Grecian or Macedonian dominions.

The fourth kingdom had no existence; but if we turn to the Gospel by Luke we are left in no doubt as to what the fourth kingdom is.

In Luke iii. 1, 2, we read, "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, . . . the word of the Lord came unto John," &c. The particulars here given suffice to fix the date without controversy. Here, then, the fourth kingdom is definitely pointed out by God. Under the Roman power the Lord Jesus was born. In Revelation it is seen as a dragon standing ready to devour the man-child on whom earth's hopes depend. Under that power Messiah is cut off; under it Jerusalem is reduced to desolation and trodden down, and we know assuredly that the same power will continue and attain its greatest dominion under Antichrist, until "the stone cut out of the mountain without hands"—the stone rejected by the builders, but made the head-stone of the corner--falls upon it and reduces it to powder.

This kingdom having the longest duration of the four, also passes through various stages, and finally is formed into ten kingdoms, some in which the monarchical form of government, represented by the iron, prevails, and some in which the democratic, republican, or socialistic forms prevail, as represented by the clay. But whatever its form, its principles are such as to be a preparation for the final apostasy. The whole ten kingdoms will agree to give universal authority to the "lawless one,"

who, utterly spurning the will of God, the Word of God, the people of God, and the Christ of God, shall exalt himself, do according to his own will, and claim universal worship and universal dominion in the earth.

By no leavening process, therefore, is the world's government to be transformed into the reign of Christ. Ripe for judgment,—it shall be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel, and be made as the chaff upon the summer threshing floor.

Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, the seed of David, is raised from the dead, according to the gospel Paul preached (2 Tim. ii. 8).

For His coming and His kingdom we wait; our hope to be for ever His associates in His everlasting reign.

It was no vain boast which Satan made when he offered the Lord all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, saying, "That is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it" (Luke iv. 6), for he actually does give it to the man of his choice, as we read in Rev. xiii. 4, "And they worshipped the *dragon* which gave power unto the *beast*." Thus, in a deeper sense than is generally supposed, is Satan the "god of this world" and the "prince of this world."

The Saviour would accept no promotion from Satan, either directly or through the people (see John vi. 15). He detected Satan's voice in Peter's suggestion to evade the cross, and doubtless He detected the same inspiration in the people's desire to make Him king. He would accept dominion from none but His Father, though well He knew that the path to His crown must needs be by the cross and the grave.

Under what form, then, of the world's government is the Christian to enter into politics? Under which of the wild beasts shall he take office? Where does he find in the Word of God his warrant to ally himself with government or party to attain ends which he supposes will be for the general good? Where in Scripture prophecy is there a trace of a "Christian government," any more than of a reigning church? As well might we speak of a Christian seven-headed wild beast!

Who will venture to deny that the alliance of the Church with the world power, however plausible and apparently advantageous, cost

the Church its heavenly character, and that not as an accident, but as the necessary consequence of the position?

And can the individual become a politician, and bend his energies to further the views of government or party, and not likewise surrender his heavenly character and citizenship?

Are we, therefore, powerless? Have we no resource, as we see how Christian liberty is endangered and lawlessness gaining the day? Yes; we have the place of priestly power, the place of intercession and prayer. Who can tell how God in His wisdom may find out ways to order the current even of this world's politics, for the continued and increasing liberty for the Gospel to be preached, and for His people to carry out His will in public and private assembly?

Let us, therefore, be subject to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; let us be thankful to God for the liberty and peace we enjoy, and make our individual and united prayer unto God to overrule all political movements for His glory, the good of His people, and the furtherance of His Gospel.

Then, as strangers and pilgrims here, let us confess our heavenly character and citizenship, and in no wise ally ourselves with the world in its earth-born movements and world reformation schemes, whether political or social, but wait for His appearing who shall be to this poor, sin-stricken earth the fulfilment of every hope, whose eternal Kingdom shall be "righteousness, and joy, and peace."

[We hope in our next to refer again to this subject, taking up certain correspondence and objections relative thereto.—ED.]

"THE LORD'S PORTION IS HIS PEOPLE"
(Deut. xxxii. 9).

BELIEVERS are associated in thought, feeling, affection, and interest with Him who is the object of the world's determined enmity; they are subjects of another kingdom, and are ruled by the King whom the world will not have to reign over them. The world around them was convicted of rejecting all light and truth by the Lord Himself when He said, "Now is the judgment of this world." In the act of His crucifixion was their judgment sealed. Believers are walking through a condemned world. Alas! how often in association of pursuits, in feelings and desires, as well as in appearance, are they with the world which crucified their Lord—associated with His enemies.

THE TRUTH THAT SANCTIFIES.

THREE is one thing absolutely certain: no truth can be known to any sanctifying purpose that is taken up as a mere dogma. Christ Himself is the Truth. The truth, therefore, can only be learnt to purpose as *He* is known. The word reveals Him; but the word is only understood through the Spirit, while in the new man only can that be received by faith which the Spirit opens up.

The truth, in fact, is *life*; for Christ is life as well as truth; and in the harmony in which truth is presented to us in the word, it is intimately connected and interwoven with our daily life and walk in Christ.

The truth is *sanctifying* only as it is *thus* known; and *thus* known, it *will be* sanctifying. What the *Spirit teaches* is received in the channel of experience; the heart is *prepared* to receive it. Nothing is put there by God (who *only* can put it there) that does not make manifest its Divine origin, and lead to communion with Him from whom it came. The heart, however, is not simply *prepared* to receive it, but *needs* the truth for which it is prepared. Nothing can satisfy, nothing still the conscience that is awakened to a sense of shortcoming and need, but the fitted truth, known in power, about which it is exercised before God. When the matter of forgiveness of sin through the blood of the cross is settled, the Holy Spirit having demonstrated in the conscience the present and eternal efficacy thereof, the craving of the new man is after conformity to Christ. Like water, it never can be still till it has found its level; hence, in the healthy action of the new man there is a continual growth, continual growing up into Christ, though struggling with the flesh notwithstanding. There is *satisfaction*, indeed, with the measure attained, so far as that which is reached is truth, and, therefore, real gain; yet what we know through the unction received, only seems to show us how little we do know. Hence there is a forgetting of the things which are behind, and a reaching forth to the things which are before. But in the day in which we live—and that is the day, practically, which we have to do with—it is well to consider what a vast amount of that which is really the truth of God, and which we talk of “holding,”

is only picked up on the authority of some teacher (I object not, surely, to human instrumentality; “Feed my sheep” was the chief Shepherd’s charge to His servants), and not being carried to God, and weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, and then fed upon in the inner man, it is held in the head apart from living communion with Him whose truth it really may be; the consequence of which is, that it puffs up, and devours with spiritual pride, those who make their boast in it; and then, with lowly words on the lip, practical lawlessness in the life is the wretched result.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children *walk in truth*” (3 John 4).

THE MANNA AND THE “TRUE BREAD.”

Ex. xvi.

THREE were certain blessings which God gave to Israel, that continued all through their wanderings in the wilderness. Though their sins often called down God’s severe judicial interference, still there were some special blessings which, without any change, remained among them till they entered the promised land. The pillar of cloud and fire was an instance of this, as also was the daily supply of manna. With regard to the former, we read, “The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the day; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night. *He took not away* the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Ex. xiii. 21, 22). As regards the manna, we are told, “*The manna ceased* on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel *manna any more*; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year” (Josh. v. 11, 12).

These blessings were set up in grace, hence their continuance. Man always fails in everything that depends in any way upon himself. The Law of Moses had not been given when the pillar of cloud and fire, and the manna were granted. The mercy and goodness of Jehovah, who had redeemed the children of Israel from Egypt by the blood of the Lamb, abounded toward them in the gift and continu-

ance of these blessings. No merit on the part of the people either procured or retained them. God, who is rich in mercy, gave and continued these mercies all through the wilderness journey.

And so now, we have many unchangeable blessings continued to us all through our pilgrimage, the free gift of the God of all grace. We fail, we faint, we sin, we doubt; nevertheless, these blessings perpetually abide. The eternal storehouse of grace is as full as ever. The river of Divine love is as deep and pure, and flows as freely as ever, only appearing clearer, deeper, and broader, as we trace its various windings, and mark its wonderful outflowings, always telling us of Him who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, is given to abide with us "for ever." The word of the Lord also endureth "for ever"; and will not pass away, though heaven and earth will. The eternal purposes and counsels of God stand "for ever," and each must have its accomplishment in God's "due time." All the exceeding great and precious promises of God are unalterably sure, for they are in Christ, yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. The priesthood of the Lord Jesus is likewise everlasting, for it is written, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec." And another link in the chain of our unchangeable blessedness is the Lord's abiding presence with His people—"Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Is it not most pleasant, beloved, in a day of failure like the present, to reckon up these never-failing mercies of our faithful God? and do we not find, in so doing, an unceasing cause for thanksgiving and worship? Surely, at such a moment, we exultingly cry out with the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; *according* as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

We are not only, like Israel, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, but our God having made us His people, He provides for us by the way. We do not go a warfare at our own

charges. He never leaves nor forsakes us. All through our journey, our necessity is God's opportunity for doing us good. Because He careth for us, He bids us cast all our care upon Him,—to be careful for nothing. Unworthy as we often prove ourselves of the least of His mercies, still He loads us with benefits, He leads us about, He instructs us, He keeps us as the apple of His eye.

We see a sample of the Lord's gracious ways with His people in Ex. xvi. The children of Israel were in great need. They had no bread. Their necessity was very great. Then they sinned against God, for they murmured, and said, "Would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt." But what was God's answer? Did He, in righteous judgment, cut them off? Did He upbraid? Did He threaten them? No. The people were not as yet under the Law. According to God's *promise* to Abram, they had been brought out of Egypt. The answer of the God of Abraham therefore was, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. . . . Ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord *your* God." How blessed this is! What a heart-cheering manifestation of the abounding grace of God! When the people were under Law, the "murmurers" were "destroyed of the destroyer"; but when not under Law, whether we see them at Marah, or in the wilderness of Sin, or at Rephidim, we see the reign and triumph of grace; for "where sin abounded grace did much more abound." How happy, dear brethren, should we be in the knowledge of the testimony of the Holy Ghost, "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace!"

To whatever part of the history of God's people we turn, we perceive that the way of God is always to bring them into a position of dependence on Himself; and we can easily understand that such a relation is alone becoming to us, or worthy of the Most High. The flesh, however, is always opposed to this; to be "as gods," is more congenial to the natural man than obedience; because "the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." But the regenerated soul readily acquiesces in the reasonableness of acknowledging its dependence upon Him who hath redeemed

us by the blood of His beloved Son, and who is above all, through all, and in all. The new-born soul instinctively takes this ground, for he is born of God ; and, however contrary to human thought it may be, he finds that the more he walks with God, the more he experiences that all his springs are in Him ; hence he subscribes to that wonderful paradox of the apostle's "having nothing, and yet possessing all things." He who lives most *dependent* on the living God, finds himself most *independent* of men ; for he knows that the Lord is his helper, and he will not fear what man shall do unto him. Our blessed Lord taught this life of faith, or entire dependence of His people upon Himself, when He said, "Without Me ye can do *nothing*" ; and again, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so He that eateth Me, even he *shall live by Me*."

We find the same principle set forth in the *daily* supply of manna, which God gave the people in the wilderness ; which gave them an opportunity of learning deep and precious lessons of the faithfulness and power of Jehovah, and that it was not a vain thing to rest on His promises, as He so touchingly said, "Ye shall know that I am the Lord *your* God." It was also a test of their allegiance to their Redeemer : "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you ; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate *every day*, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in My law, or no" (see also Deut. viii.). And so now, the life of unfeigned reliance on God marks the obedient heart, as well as proves the faithful love of Him "in whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning." What a glorious example of this we have in Jesus, who "took upon Him the form of a Servant. . . . and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God hath highly exalted Him."

We are instructed, that when our Lord Jesus, in His preaching at Capernaum, referred to the manna in the desert, He spoke of Himself as the "True Bread"—the life-giving, soul-sustaining Bread from heaven. "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever ; and the bread which I will give is *My flesh*. . . . he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me" (John vi. 51-57). Hence it is plain,

that we not only have redemption through the death of Christ, but that He Himself is the daily Bread, the continual strength and sustaining power of our souls ; and that while we are saved in Him with an everlasting salvation, still we need daily personal communion with the Lord, both for inward joy and strength, as well as for outward service.

The people were commanded to gather *manna*—not ashes, but manna—"bread from heaven." They had nothing to supply its place. God always sent it down, and they were to "gather it." He never failed. And so with us ; Christ is our Bread from heaven. Nothing can strengthen our souls but communion with *Christ Himself*. Nothing can make up for the lack of this. It is not ordinances, but Christ. Not the letter of the word, but Christ. Not religious services, however needful or scriptural, but Christ. Not dry doctrines, but Christ. He alone is the "True Bread."

The manna must be *gathered up*. It did not come into their tents, but round about the camp upon the sand of the desert. Time and patience (and most likely bended knees and stretched out hands) were needful for gathering it up. Every man also was to *gather*, not only for his own necessity, but for them that were in his tent. But it was what God gave that he gathered. If he failed to gather, others suffered as well as himself. Oh, the vast importance of leaving our tents and circumstances, to gather up blessing for ourselves and others, out of Christ's fulness ! The Spirit of God testifies of Christ, the written Word testifies of Christ ; we must then search the Scriptures, in dependence on the Spirit's teaching, if we would gather up "True Bread."

The Israelites were to gather it every morning ; the seventh day, or day of rest, was the only exception ; and our rest is at hand, when we shall no longer know wilderness fare, but the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and lead us unto living fountains of water. Now, however, "the inward man is renewed *day by day*." Like our Lord, we should "meditate" in that law, which testifies of Him "day and night." We are leaky vessels, and need constant renewing. And if we would "seek *first* the kingdom of God," or be "thoroughly furnished" for daily walk with God in service and trial, what time can be more

appropriate for gathering up heavenly supplies than "the morning"? It is remarkable, that if there was much delay in this respect, they could not succeed in gathering manna, for "when the sun waxed hot it melted"; and have not God's children often proved in their experience, that if they failed in secret intercourse with God, through Christ, *in the morning*, they have felt the withering effect of the privation all through the day. (Read prayerfully, Mark i. 35, and Ps. lxiii. 1.)

The manna was to be gathered only for *eating*. This, I believe, reads us an important lesson. There was such a thing in those days as an Israelite gathering manna, and not eating it, and "it bred worms, and stank." It is *feeding* upon Christ, *eating* His flesh and blood, holding *personal intercourse and fellowship* with Him, getting *soul supplies* from His fulness, living upon Him, that we have in this instruction concerning the manna. All in the tents, fathers, young men, and children, needed food to *eat*, and manna was sent from heaven for their "eating." All the children of God need food. "Feed My sheep," "Feed My lambs," said our blessed Lord; and to this end we need not only to *find* the words of Jesus, but, like the prophet, to "*eat them*"; and then we shall find them sweeter than honey or the honeycomb, to the sustainment and joy of our hearts. The priests of old were not only called to serve in their exalted office, but were commanded to "*eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them*" (Ex. xxix. 33); and the prodigal son was not only welcomed back to the father's bosom, but he was to "*eat and be merry*." This is no vain philosophical reasoning, nor poetical imagery, but it is the deeply solemn and momentous subject of soul-sustainment, through living, personal fellowship with God. We are called to *eat* bread at the king's table continually. (2 Sam. ix.). There is no lower ground provided for a believer than this, no other food for our souls to *eat*, than the flesh and blood of Jesus. The formal professor feedeth on ashes, the wandering prodigal on husks at the swine trough, but let us remember that there is Bread enough in our Father's house, and to spare. It is not the knowledge of the letter of Scripture, nor interpretations of difficult passages merely, nor intellectual gratification

at the discovery of mysteries that will meet our necessities, or satisfy our hungry souls, but *food*; not that knowledge which puffeth up, but *nourishment* for our inward man. Have not many of us sadly failed in this respect? And, if so, can it be wondered at that we are all so weak and poor? Oh, for more power in the Spirit to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us!

"Compar'd with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
My heart's desire, all-gracious Lord,
Is to be one with Thee.
Lov'd of my Lord, for Him again,
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of Thee ere time began,
I choose Thee in return.
Less than Thyself will not suffice,
But Thou art ample store;
More than Thyself I cannot crave,
Nor canst Thou give me more.
Whate'er consists not with Thy will,
O teach me to resign;
I'm rich to all the intents of bliss,
Since Thou, O God, art mine."

THE soul that, in very deed, casts all cares for the future on Him who careth for us and has told us that our Heavenly Father knows our necessary wants, so that He would not have us careful or anxious about them, is of all created beings the happiest upon earth. . . . The state of mind most to be avoided by a searcher after truth, is deciding with the understanding that a course is right, but with the will and affections determining against pursuing it: it destroys all honest dealing with God.—A. N. GROVES.

Correspondence.

EVOLUTION AND THE WORD OF GOD.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I was very pleased to notice that space had been found in the *Witness* for an article on evolution. Only they who have to grapple with it know what a subtle doctrine it is, and what an incalculable amount of damage it is doing among a certain class.

In these perilous days when men are allowing reason to exalt itself against the knowledge of God, Christians should be doubly careful that they are not dragged into the same error. Reason (sanctified) is capable of approving, appropriating, and applying the knowledge conveyed to us by the Word of God, but not of anticipating it, and it is a disgrace to the Church of God upon earth

that anyone bearing the name of Jesus should pose as a *Christian evolutionist*.

There is a scripture which strikes at the root of all attempts to harmonise evolution with the Word of God:—Gen. ii. 4, 5: “The Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field *before* it was in the earth, and every herb of the field *before* it grew.” Also, Gen. i. 11: “And God said, Let the earth bring forth the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself.” God did not begin by evolving seed or first principles from the earth.

The evolutionist’s order of creation is first the seed and then the tree, but God’s order was first the tree bearing fruit and in it the seed for future trees. In this we see how God’s work of creation was finished. He created every plant of the field *before it was in the earth* and every herb of the field *before it grew*, and then He established the laws that should regulate their growth, continued fruit-bearing and propagation.

To say that the processes of *creation* are daily going on around us is erroneous, and the error arises from their imagining that they have discovered the origin in the law of development. Eccles. i. 10: “Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.”

Our brother mentions the marvellous flexibility of the Hebrew language. We are assured that the word translated “day,” may, in the Hebrew, either mean a day of twenty-four hours or a period of any length. But supposing we substitute the word period for day, it does not change the meaning, for the Holy Spirit was careful to limit the period to twenty-four hours, by recording that the evening and the morning constituted the day. (With the Jews the civil day began at sunset and ended at sunset, hence the evening is mentioned before the morning).

Another argument for the creative days being of twenty-four hours and not a long period, arises from the fact that God sanctified, or set apart, one of the creative days, which we afterwards find to be a day of twenty-four hours. Christians should also be careful that they do not put the speculative in the place of the regulative. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”—Sincerely yours in His Service, ABDI.

Questions and Answers.

We desire to express our thanks to all who have sent answers. Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We again urge the importance of replies being *short*; it is essential, in this particular line of things, to be *concise*.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

When more than one question is replied to, let the answer to each question be upon a separate piece of paper. THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

Explain the earthen vessel and running water of Lev. xiv. 5—“And the priest shall command that one

of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water.”

What are we to understand by 1 Cor. iii. 17—“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are?” Does it refer to the destruction of the flesh?

Is there any difference between elders under the law and elders under grace, or Old Dispensation elders and New Dispensation elders?

Please explain the meaning of the word, “prophesy,” in 1 Cor. xiv., especially verse 39; also in Acts ii., verses 17, 18.

A Colonial brother would value help as to how to act towards one in an assembly who has been *proven* to be a *persistent liar*; some saying there is no scripture for dealing with an acknowledged liar.

How should we (believers) regard Christmas?

“The voice of a majority.”—Does 2 Cor. ii. 17, rendered by Rotherham the “majority,” not favour ruling by majorities; and are we not socially and morally ruled by the voice of the majority in municipal and parliamentary affairs, affecting all our church, home, business, and general interests?

How are we to discern the sin of covetousness? (1 Cor. v. 11).

If a believer kept his place of business open until Lord’s-day morning, could he be charged with covetousness according to 1 Cor. v. 11?

What are we to understand by the “glory of the celestial” and the “glory of the terrestrial” in 1 Cor. xv. 40?

What will be the *object* of the war in heaven? (Rev. xii. 7). Will Satan oppose his being ejected? Is it not on his being cast out into the earth that he will raise up the antichrist. What heaven is it he will be ejected from?

Is it scriptural for the redeemed of the Lord of this dispensation to speak of the Son of God as being “our King” or “Elder Brother”?

Please explain who the two kings mentioned in Isaiah vii. 16 refer to.

Will some of our brethren please explain, through *The Witness*, 1 Samuel xxviii. 7-20?

THE UNRECOGNISED ASSEMBLY.

QUESTION 428.—If a servant of the Lord is invited to visit an assembly or meeting which is not “recognised” as being in “the fellowship,” is that of itself a scriptural reason for his declining to go and help them?

Ans. A.—No Lord’s servant should go to any assembly with the understanding that certain truths, clearly revealed in the Word of God, are not to be mentioned. But should he find a company prepared to say, “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear *all* things that are commanded thee of God” (Acts x. 33), surely the servant has liberty to

go to such a company without *human recognition*, and beginning with "the first principles of the oracles of God" (Heb. v. 12), endeavour to "lead them on to perfection" (Heb. vi. 1).

Did the apostle Paul wait till the twelve men at Ephesus were *recognised* before he instructed them, and baptised them in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts xix. 1)? Nay, verily, and a more ignorant company, methinks, could nowhere else be found, for they had "not so much as *heard* whether there was *any Holy Ghost*" (Acts xix. 2). Those assemblies who are "*recognised as being in fellowship*" should lay Rom. xiv. 16 severely to heart, and act with discrimination and compassion toward "*unrecognised assemblies*," and thus prevent their *good* from being *evil spoken of*. T. B.

Ans. B.—The Lord Jesus has been particular to give us our commission (Matt. xxviii. 18-20), and to define the sphere of our service in plain terms (Mark xvi. 15). The apostle Paul (a pattern servant) carried out the injunction to the best of his ability, wherever there was an open door; whether it was the Jewish synagogue or the thoroughfare. He conferred not with flesh and blood, not even with the apostles chosen before him (Gal. i. 16). He asked not *their permission*, but was glad to have their fellowship. As the Lord's "*freedman*" (1 Cor. vii. 22, marg.), he made it his aim to "*please God*" rather than conciliate *men*. Good for us to-day if we can so add courage to our faith as to go forth on similar terms at the bidding of the Lord, lending a helping hand wherever we find a company of the Lord's people willing to *learn* and *do* the mind of the Lord. We must be careful at all times to discriminate between those who manifest wilful resistance to the truth and companies desiring to follow the Lord. It was my privilege recently to be one of a number who laboured amongst a company of Christians not "*recognised*" by some, and we had the joy of finding them willing to *hearken to* and *do* the commandments of the Lord. The result is that genuine fellowship is now established between them and saints composing various meetings in the district. What we need is the Christian spirit and the patience to lead such as are weak in the faith softly (Gen. xxxvii. 13, 14), and give out the Word as they are able to hear it. Who can estimate the amount of havoc that has been made through sheer over-driving? R. S.

Ans. C.—This question gives rise to several others. The word "*recognised*" suggests the query, *Recognised by whom?* By the Son of Man who "walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. i. 31), or by certain brethren who have assumed a place of superiority and lordship over God's heritage?

Again, the expression "*the fellowship*" suggests the inquiry, *What fellowship?* Is it the fellowship of saints who in the midst of much failure are honestly endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit, and to carry out the whole truth of God as far as they know it; or does "*the fellowship*" mean inside a line which has been drawn by some *human authority*? The servant of the Lord must needs weigh such questions carefully and prayerfully before he decline to visit those who desire his help. If there is room for the ministry of the "*whole counsel of God*" under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there must be something utterly wrong in any "*system*"

which would interfere with the liberty of the servant of the Lord.

On the other hand, those who are serving in the fear of the Lord will seek to carry with them the fellowship of their brethren, as far as they can, consistently with their allegiance to the Lord Himself. A gracious man will never grieve his fellow-saints by acting in a regardless spirit as to how *his* liberty may affect *their* consciences. But to seek the fellowship of brethren is a very different thing from becoming subject to their authority. It is a deeply solemn thing for some brethren to endeavour to "*outlaw*" their fellow-servants because they refuse to be bound by man's authority. It is an unspeakable relief to look forward to the "*judgment seat of Christ*," where such high-handed, unholy actings will be manifested in their true character.

It might be well to remark that "*invitations*" from brethren are sometimes very misleading. They may be of the Lord, or they may not. There are some cries for help which bear no resemblance to the "*Macedonian cry*," which led Paul to go to that country (Acts xvi. 9, 10). That cry came to Paul from the Lord, not from the people. The Lord may put it into the hearts of His people to invite one of His servants to help them, or the desire on their part may be of the flesh; and whilst an invitation is not to be disregarded by the Lord's servant, yet he needs to be on his guard lest he should be led out of the path of true fellowship with his Lord and Master.

In the gospel by Mark, where the Lord Jesus is revealed as the "*Perfect Servant*," we have in chap. i. 34-38 a most instructive example. After a time of great blessing, the Lord "*rose up a great while before day*, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." "*Simon and they who were with Him followed Him*," and said, "*All men seek for Thee*." But the Lord was not affected by circumstances; He had got His path marked out for Him when alone with His God; and what serving ones need is to know more of this "*closet*" fellowship. And as we grow in the exercise of such holy communion, we will the better know when an invitation is of the Lord, and when it is not.

G. A.

Editor's Note.—It cannot well be denied that there are many kinds of meetings and associations who would be glad to have the ministry of certain of the Lord's servants, provided they could be fairly assured that certain very plain teachings of Scripture, whereupon they hold their own opinions, would not be expounded. It is quite possible, without *an expressed agreement*, to be *tacitly bound* to keep back unpalatable truth.

In such a case the Lord's servant would surrender in measure his allegiance to the Lord by going. On the other hand *many are far more open to receive simple, gracious instruction from the Word than we give them credit for*.

Wisdom and grace are needed as well as boldness and decision, so that openings that are of God may not be despised or neglected, whilst openings that involve compromise are resolutely declined.

Bondage to fellow-servants may hinder some from going in at the doors the Lord has opened; whilst a regardless, independent, and self-willed spirit may lead others to go where the Lord never led them.

THE BLEMISHED PRIEST.

QUESTION 429.—Please explain through “The Witness” Leviticus xxi. 17, &c., and the difference between the blemished priest and the believers now.

Ans. A.—Under the Levitical economy God demanded perfection in priest (Lev. xxi. 23) and sacrifice (Lev. xxii. 21). Anything superfluous, or anything lacking, disqualified them—the one as an offerer, the other as an offering. “Let him not approach to offer the bread of his God” (Lev. xxi. 17), but this prohibition to offer is speedily followed by God’s gracious provision for the blemished one, “He shall eat of the bread of his God” (verse 22).

These *body* defects in a priest of Israel typify *spiritual* infirmities in a present-day believer, so that in our assemblies there may be many believers who can legitimately eat the bread of God, but who, by reason of unevenness in life and walk, render themselves unfit to lead in the matters of the assembly. But should doctrinal or moral evil be found in the life of a New Testament priest, *he forfeits even his right to eat* (1 Cor. v. 11).

T. B.

Ans. B.—There is a difference here made between the blemished priest and the unclean priest. The blemished priest was never to officiate, but he was to feed on priestly food. The unclean priest could neither officiate nor eat of the priestly food *until cleansed* (Lev. xxii. 1-7). I judge that the blemished priest affords rather a *contrast* than a parallel to the priestly ability of believers now (1 Peter ii. 5-10); for the law made nothing perfect, and the blemished or imperfect priest could not be a fitting type of the one Perfect Offerer. Now, in Christ, no mere natural disqualification hinders from priestly service. Was Benaiah a blemished priest? (See 1 Chron. xxvii. 5, and compare.)

A. O. M.

Editor’s Note.—Every son of Aaron was a priest by birth. The privileges and responsibilities that attached to priesthood were various, such as ministering at the altar of burnt offering on behalf of others, entrance into the holy place before the veil, discerning between things clean and unclean, &c., and eating of the holy things. In order to minister at the altar, offering the “bread of his God,” and to have access to the holy place, it was necessary that the priest be *undefiled* and *unblemished*. The same applied to the offerings—they too must be not only clean animals, but also without blemish. (See xxii. 21.)

In short, both priest and sacrifice *must be perfect to be accepted*.

It is evident that this divine appointment applied to both priest and sacrifice as representing the Lord Jesus and Him only. He was the Lamb, “without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter i. 19), and the Priest, “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” (Heb. vii. 26), who “offered Himself without spot to God” (Heb. ix. 14). He alone could offer the bread of His God: He alone could present Himself as the Perfect Priest and Sacrifice to God to be accepted on the ground of His own excellence: He alone could

enter by His own blood and in the sweet savour of His own merits into the holy place, there to appear in the presence of God on behalf of others. In one aspect there is now only one Priest and only one Offering.

It is true that all believers are now “priests unto God,” a “royal” and a “holy priesthood.” As such they have priestly privileges answering to the typical privileges of the house of Aaron. They have all the privileges that are possible to those who are indeed purged from defilement, but nevertheless in very many respects imperfect.

The priest who was defiled by the dead or otherwise was not deprived thereby of his priesthood—that was unalterable—but he was deprived for the time being of every priestly function and privilege. He could neither minister at the altar nor eat of the holy things. Provision was made for his cleansing (see Lev. xxii. 6, 7), but so long as defiled he was debarred from all that pertained to him as a priest. We are thus taught that a *defiled conscience* (compare Heb. ix. 14 and x. 22) debars a child of God from every priestly privilege and function. In this condition communion, worship, intercession, discernment of things that differ—all of which are priestly functions—are impossible.

But there may be “a purged conscience” and yet many defects or blemishes. James says, “In many things we all offend;” “If any offend not in word the same is a perfect man.” John says, “If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves.” The Lord Jesus had no “infirmities,” nevertheless He is “touched with a feeling of our infirmities.” Paul glories in his infirmities.

Defilement could be avoided and, when contracted could be removed. Many of the enumerated blemishes could never be removed, and, moreover, were not the consequence of personal failure, but born with the priest—e.g., a dwarf; others must have been accidental. They all point to infirmities of nature which wholly disqualify for the exercise of such priestly functions as are blasphemously assumed by priests of Rome and which pertain only to the **PERFECT ONE**, but nevertheless admit of the enjoyment of eating of the holy things, dwelling in the courts of the Lord, discerning His will, and lips that keep knowledge and teach it to others.

That saints now as priests are offerers to God is unquestioned, but it is only “by Him” (see Eph. v. 20; Col. iii. 17; Heb. xiii. 15) that a prayer, a gift, or a thanksgiving from such blemished priests as we are can be accepted. Only “by Him” is there access to the holy place (Eph. ii. 18) for such deformities as we are.

The thought that this passage teaches the disqualification of certain persons on account of moral defects from ministry in the Church is, we believe, quite erroneous, and arises from confounding two things which widely differ, viz., priesthood and ministry.

It is easy, but most unsafe, to construct a theory out of Old Testament types. We must have definite New Testament scripture for our doctrine, and then search for illustrations amid the shadows.

Nevertheless it is plain enough that certain conditions do debar from the exercise of certain functions. For instance, one who has not a good report among those that are without is debarred from taking the responsibility of an overseer.