

THE WITNESS:

An Unfettered Monthly Journal.

OF

Biblical Literature, Expository Papers,

Notes of Addresses, Conference Reports,

Questions and Answers, Intelligence,

Poetry, Correspondence, &c.

EDITED BY

J. R. CALDWELL,

Author of "*Shadows of Christ*," "*Things to Come*," "*Earthly Relationships*," &c.

NEW SERIES—VOLUME VIII.

CONTAINING PAPERS ON ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE BIBLICAL SUBJECTS.

Glasgow :

PICKERING & INGLIS, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS.

London :

S. BAGSTER & SONS, LTD., 15 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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Index of Special Articles.

ARTICLES BY THE EDITOR.

	PAGE		PAGE
CHRIST IN HEBREWS—		Whose Faith Follow—George Müller, ...	57
The High Priest,	12	The Godly Bringing Up of Families, ...	85, 105
Author and Finisher of Faith,	39, 53	The Blessed Hope,	121, 136
Forerunner and Coming One,	72	Strength in Weakness,	151, 167
Because ye Belong to Christ,	5, 29	Food of the Priestly Family,	192
Substitution according to the Scriptures, ...	21	Christians and the Army,	202
The City and the Bride,	33		

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.

By THOS. NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

The Rich Landowner,	22	The Lost Piece of Silver,	113
The Watchful and Unwatchful Servant, ...	48	The Prodigal Son,	133
The Great Supper,	55	The Unjust Steward,	176
The Lost Sheep,	89	The Rich Man and Lazarus,	193

ADDRESSES SPECIALLY REPORTED FOR "THE WITNESS."

Because ye Belong to Christ,	J. R. Caldwell 5, 29	Godly Bringing Up of Families,	J. R. Caldwell 85, 105
Christ the High Priest,	J. R. Caldwell 12	Till He Come,	Dr. Neatby 104
God our Father,	Dr. Neatby 23	How to Walk in Paths of Peace, G. Müller	107
The Author and Finisher of Faith,	J. R. Caldwell 39, 53	The Command and Promise to Prayer, ...	James Wright 117, 138
Mr. Müller's Last Address,	58	The Blessed Hope,	J. R. Caldwell 121, 136
How to Live a Happy Life,	Geo. Müller 69	Strength in Weakness,	J. R. Caldwell 151, 167
In Christ—a New Creation,	Dr. Neatby 74, 92	Trial and Reward of Faith, J. G. M'Vicker	154

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

By Dr. J. NORMAN CASE, of China.

I. A Soldier,	111	IV. A Husbandman,	173
II. An Athlete,	125	V. A Steward,	195
III. A Slave,	160		

Questions and Answers.

Christian Warfare,	19	Living by Faith,	99
The Lord's Two Commands,	20	Sin Against the Holy Ghost,	115
The Cause of Christ's Death,	35	Abib: First or Seventh Month?	116, 147
Conflict and Freedom,	36	Labours of Women,	130
Shares in Joint-stock Companies,	51	Jewish Months,	116, 147
"This Cup" and "This Hour,"	51	Feet-washing: Literal or Spiritual? ...	148
Baptism and Resurrection Life,	52	Renewing of the Holy Ghost,	163
The Two Resurrections,	66	Will there be Faith in Heaven?	164
Faith: is it Involuntary?	67	Substitution in Relation to the Unconverted,	179
The Filling of the Spirit,	68	Jesus Christ Preached—When?	179
Blind and Deaf—Who?	68	The Christian's Relation to the Army, ...	202
Unconscious Dead,	83		

Original Poems.

Go Talk with God,	Wm. Luff 12	The Christian's Time,	110
He Showed them His Hands,	Wm. Luff 29	Baca's Well and Zion's River, M. M. Davis	123
Colossians i. 12-14,	T. Newberry 44	Behold I come Quickly,	H. M'D. 140
Jerusalem which is Above, W. H. Bennett	48	How long Halt ye?	M. M. Davis 158
In Memory of George Müller, M. M. Davis	58	In Deed and in Truth,	A. W. P. Strong 172
The Death of Polycarp, A. W. P. Strong	80	Life's Ocean,	F. R. W. 197
Whose I am—Whom I serve, Dr. J. N. Case	92		

Correspondence.

The City and the Bride,	17, 33	Ratio of Missionaries,	Dan Crawford 96
Sowing the Seed,	T. M'Laren 18	Visit to Bible-Lands, A. Marshall	96, 114, 123, 145
An Assembly Experience,	P. W. 18	Palestine for the Jews,	I. I. Aschkenazi 162

General Index.

	PAGE	PAGE	
A Message for Me, ... W. Shaw	8	Immeasurable Love, ... John Dickie	28
Agent of Love, ... Jas. Wright	9	In Christ—a New Creation, Dr. Neatby	74, 92
Abiding in Christ, ... Wm. Collingwood	15	Justifying Ourselves before Men, W. Shaw	60
Author and Finisher of Faith, The		Jonathan's Service and Saul's Decree, ...	162
	J. R. Caldwell 39, 53	Learning Christ, ... J. S. Anderson	10
Alleged Errors of the Bible, Dr. Brookes	149, 170	Life, Walk, and Fruit, ... T. D. W. M.	25
Because ye Belong to Christ, J. R. Caldwell	5, 29	Look out for the Blessing, ... Geo. Muller	44
Blessed Hope, The, ... J. R. Caldwell	121, 136	Liberty of the Spirit in the Assembly,	
Baptised for the Dead, Geo. F. Trench	189	Geo. Adam 64, 82, 94	
Brief Narrative of Facts—Muller,		Lost Sheep, The, ... T. Newberry	89
	A. Marshall 197	Lost Piece of Silver, The ... T. Newberry	118
Bible Readings, ... 25, 33, 41, 50, 56,	127	Light and Truth of God, The, A. Stewart	137
Christ's Love, ... C. S. Blackwell	11	Muller, George, Death, 57; Last Address,	58
Christ the High Priest, J. R. Caldwell	12	Last Report, 197	
City and the Bride, The, ... 17,	33	Must Come Down, ... Wm. Shaw	112
Christ's Ability, ... 41		None but Christ, ... Max Isaac Reich	42
Christian Service, ... Dr. J. N. Case	45	On the Threshold of Central Africa—Coillard,	26
Church, The, ... W. H. Stanger	50	Preaching the Kingdom of God,	
Command and Promise to Prayer,		Wm. Collingwood 119, 141	
	Jas. Wright 117, 138	Prodigal Son, The, ... T. Newberry	133
Centre and the Circle, The, M. I. Reich	143	Perfect Love gives All, ... John Dickie	144
Christ our Object, ... Alex. Stewart	156	Questions and Answers. <i>See Special Index.</i>	
Call to Action, A, ... T. Baird	178	Rich Landowner, The, ... T. Newberry	22
Correspondence. <i>See Special Index.</i>		Rich Man and Lazarus, ... T. Newberry	193
Death of Christ, The, ... F. E. Marsh	33	Substitution, ... J. R. Caldwell	21
Demand for a King, The, ... Wm. Shaw	42	Suffering—a Bible Reading, E. A. Hewitt	50
Discipline, ... Max Isaac Reich	106	Strength in Weakness, J. R. Caldwell	151, 167
Day of the Lord, The, ... F. C. Bland	178	Song of Songs, The, ... Wm. Collingwood	165
Exhorting One Another, ... Wm. Shaw	32	Separation and Unity, ... Geo. Adam	174
Faith, Hope, and Love, ... 14		True Token, The, ... T. Newberry	79
First Division in the Church,		Till He Come, ... Dr. Neatby	104
	Ephraim Venn 37, 61, 77, 90	Trial and Reward of Humility and Faith,	
Forerunner, The, ... J. R. Caldwell	72	J. G. M'Vicker 154	
Figures of the Christian, By Dr. J. N. Case. <i>See Special Index.</i>		To Finish my Course with Joy, W. Shaw	172
Food of the Priestly Family, J. R. Caldwell	192	Unreal Conversions, ... Wm. Shaw	76
Father's Tender Love, The, John Dickie	201	Unity—a Bible Reading, Dan Crawford	127
God's Witnesses, ... R. C. Chapman	17	Unjust Steward, The, ... T. Newberry	176
God our Father, ... Dr. Neatby	23	Value and Fulness of the Scriptures,	
Great Supper, The, ... T. Newberry	55	W. H. Bennett 101, 123	
God and all Things, ... D. T. Bass	56	Watchful and Unwatchful Servant, The,	
George Muller, ... J. R. Caldwell	57	T. Newberry 48	
Godly Bringing Up of Families,		Whose Faith Follow—Geo. Muller,	
	J. R. Caldwell 85, 105	J. R. Caldwell 57	
God's Grace, ... John Dickie	157	What went ye Out for to See? G. F. Trench	86
How to Live a Peaceful, Happy Life,		Why the Singing ceased, ... Wm. Shaw	153
	George Müller 69		
How to Walk in Paths of Peace, G. Muller	107		
He was a Good Man, ... Wm. Shaw	109		
Heavenly Calling of the Church, Geo. Adam	158		
Heavenly Place of Worship, Geo. Adam	199		

THE WITNESS:

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

"BECAUSE YE BELONG TO CHRIST"

Address by JOHN R. CALDWELL.

TURN with me to the Gospel according to Mark, chap. ix. Read from verse 33 to 42. The subject announced for this meeting is taken from verse 41—"Because ye belong to Christ." And I would at the outset inquire, What is the force of this word? What is included in this "belonging to Christ?" I would like you to look at it from three points of view. The first is, that all who are Christ's belong to Him as the gift of the Father; the second is that they belong to Him as the purchase of His blood; and the third is that they belong to Him, as the members of His Body, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. So that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit have all co-operated in bringing about this result, that we belong to Christ.

Now, will you look at the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel by John, the second verse—"As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to *as many as Thou hast given Him.*" Then 6th verse—"I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which *Thou gavest Me* out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." 9th verse—"I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but *for them which Thou hast given Me*; for they are Thine." 11th verse, middle of the verse—"Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name *those whom Thou hast given Me.*" 24th verse—"Father, I will that they also *whom Thou hast given Me* be with Me where I am." Seven times in this chapter the Lord's people are called "those whom the Father has given Him."

Now look at the sixth chapter of the Gospel

of John. Verse 37—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Here, again, we have the same aspect of the truth. All those who came to Christ, those who saw the Son, and believed on Him, are those whom the Father has given to Him. And note that remarkable word—"Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." It is usually brought before an unsaved person or an anxious soul, to encourage them to trust Christ; and it is blessed to use it so, but I think there is more than that in it here. Mark the force of the previous word—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." That is His confidence, His assurance. It seemed as if He was to be totally rejected; it seemed as if no one was going to come to Him, but His confidence is this—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me;" and whenever He saw a poor sinner coming to Him, believing on Him, it mattered not whether they were high or low; whether it was Nicodemus coming by night, or the poor, wretched sinner that came behind His feet, washing them with her tears, He saw in each of these one that the Father had given Him; and when they came to Him He would in no wise cast them out; or rather, He would "in no wise surrender" or "give up." He could not give up, He

could not surrender, He could not cast out, one that His own Father had given Him, given Him from eternity, given Him from before the foundation of the world, given Him in the bond of the Eternal Covenant. How could He cast them out? "Nay," He says, "for I came down from Heaven not to do My own will, but the will of My Father."

He came, not to make an election for Himself, but to receive the *election* of His Father. He came not to pick and choose for Himself, but to receive every one that the Father gave Him.

"Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out," is a blessed verse to give to a convicted sinner, but it is also a blessed verse for one that has come and trusted, for it tells that He will never give you up. Why? If He failed to bring those who have believed on Him to His eternal glory, He would fail to accomplish the Father's will. "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing (not even a hair of their head), but should raise it up again at the last day." But, in order to accomplish this, it behoved Him to go down to the very depths of the waves and billows of the wrath of God, and bear the curse on Calvary. "Having loved His own, who were in the world, He loved them to the end." He loved them till He could say, "It is finished;" and He will love them until He has them in His own image, made glorious for ever, and has presented them to the Father as the fruit of His own obedience unto death.

Now I want to impress upon you this thought, that the Lord Jesus Christ ever looked upon each one who came to Him, and believed in Him, and ever does look upon such, and looks upon every one here this afternoon who has believed on Him, as one "whom the Father has given Him."

Now, I ask, How do we value a gift? We value a gift just according to the love we bear to the giver. We will not set much value on a gift from a person we do not care for. But if it is some one that I love very much that has given me a gift, it may be a very little thing, a mere trifle, but I will set a very high value upon it. I have one or two little things in a drawer at home, that were given to me on certain occasions by my little children—little

things that they had worked at and tried hard to make, keeping it a secret while they were doing it, and then, when the time came, they gave it to me. Well, they are not worth a farthing, but I value them according to the love I bear to the little ones that gave them to me, and that is the measure by which we value a gift. Now, how will the Lord Jesus Christ value those whom the Father has given Him—the Father in whose bosom He dwelt from eternity—the Father whose love He knew? Why, when He wants to convey the thought of how the Father loves me, loves you, He says, "He loves you as He loves Me." The blessed Lord Jesus Christ could say nothing more than that. O, the Father's love to Him! It was infinite love, and He knew it; and according to that love of the Father to Him, and that love that He bore to the Father, and which He proved by obedience unto death—according to that love He values "those whom the Father has given Him." Now that is the first sense in which we belong to Christ. We belong to Him as the gift of the Father.

Let us now look at the second sense. Turn to Matthew, chapter xiii., 45th verse—"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Now, will you turn to the first epistle of Peter, chapter i., 18th verse—"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

When a thing is given to us we value it according to the love we bear to the person that gave it; but, when we buy a thing, we value it according to the price we pay for it. If I paid a very big price for it, then I set a very high value on it. What value does our Lord set upon those He has bought? He has bought us with the price of His own most precious Blood. The Church is the pearl that He sold all that He had to buy. He parted with everything, parted with His glory, parted with His kingdom and with His royal claims for the time being; laid down His life on Cal-

vary's Cross; He was cut off, and He had nothing! Who was so poor as He—Who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor? He sold all that He had, that He might buy us—the pearl. Then, what a value does He set upon those that He has purchased with His own Blood—those that were the Father's gift to Him! But before He could secure them for Himself, eternally to lavish all the treasures of His love upon them, He must first cancel their debt, clear them of guilt, set them down blood-washed and sanctified in the presence of God. He had to “bear their sins in His own body on the tree;” and yet such is the love He bare to us that He paid down His own life's blood on the Cross of Calvary, in order to win us and purify us unto Himself. O, what will He not give? “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

Who has loved us to the laying down of his life? Do you know any friend that you could say of him—“I know that, if I were in trouble, he would spend his last penny for me?” I don't think you know anybody you could say that about. Do you know of any one of whom you could say—“I know that, if it was to do me good, he would lay down his life for me?” That friend is the Lord Jesus Christ. “He loved me, He gave Himself for me,” said the Apostle Paul; and it is your privilege, and it is my privilege, thus to know that the Lord Jesus has loved us personally—not in the slump, but personally and individually; that He does at this moment love you and me with the same love that was burning in His heart when He went for us to the dark Cross of Calvary. That is the eternal, unchangeable love of Christ.

Now, let us look at another aspect of it. Turn to the first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xii., from the 11th verse—“But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” Now, I want you to notice that this passage concerns the operation of the Holy Spirit. We have been looking at the gift of the Father, and at the purchase price paid by the Son, and now we look at the operation of the Holy Spirit.

12th verse—“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of

that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body; whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

27th verse—“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

Now, look at chapter vi. of this same epistle, at the 15th verse—“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?”

19th verse—“What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price.” Now, I don't intend to multiply passages; they are very numerous. These teach us that everyone who has believed, everyone whom the Father hath given Him, everyone included in that covenant, sealed by His own precious blood, is constituted by the operation of the Holy Spirit a member of the Body of Christ. The body would be incomplete without the smallest member. Cut off my little finger; it is an incomplete body. The Body of Christ is to be eternally complete. There will not be one member lacking, and this is the operation of the Holy Spirit. It is the mighty power of God that links the believer in a vital union with the Head—Christ Jesus—so that he continually regards His people as Himself. As we read in Ephesians v., “No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it even as the Lord the Church.” So that He looks upon the members of His Body just as I look upon the members of my body, and I nourish them, and I care for them, and defend them, and clothe them, and keep them warm. Why? Just because they are a part of myself; and don't you see what folly it would be for you to say that you love, and honour, and esteem my head, and yet, forsooth, you think nothing of tramping upon my toe, as if that were not a part of myself. Don't you see how absurd it is? We recognise that the head and the members are one, and, what is more, the head feels everything that is done to every member. In fact, it is one of the discoveries of modern science that all sensation is located in the head. Every touch is communicated from the farthest extremity to the head, and it is the head that feels everything, and if one member of the body is paralysed, so that it

does not feel, what is the cause of that? It is generally traceable to some defect in the brain. Everything we feel is felt by the head. All the care that is bestowed upon the body is devised by the head. When the hand goes quickly to the help of any other part of the body which is hurt, it is directed to go by the head, and if the communication between the head and the arm is not in proper working order, then the arm is a paralysed arm, and it does not obey the will of the head. Now, all this is just a spiritual allegory, an illustration divinely constructed to show us the intimate relationship between every believer and the Christ that is at God's right hand. Now, this is a great fact, and another truth flows out of that which is very often forgotten. You will get it in Ephes. iv. 25. Now, mark, it is not, "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour, because it is a sin to tell a lie." That is true, but not what is here. It is, "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour, for what is the good of deceiving one who is a member of the same body." What is the use of my right hand deceiving my left? What an absurd thing! Why, dear friends, if you and I looked upon one another who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as "members one of another," then we would just feel one for another as one member of my body feels for another, and one member of my body will be very slow to injure another; indeed, not if I can prevent it. Ah! have we not practically denied this truth, that by being members of Christ we are members one of another? We dare not speak an evil word of a child of God; we dare not hurt a child of God; we dare only seek their blessing; we dare only seek to do them good, if we realise the truth that is here, that being members of Christ we are members one of another. And, dear friends, how plain it is that that pertains to no sect. Sects—what are they? Man sees many bodies. God sees only one. Man has them divided up into sections. Christ knows only one. The Father knows only one. The Holy Ghost knows only one. Members of Christ, and members one of another. "That they all may be one, that the world might believe that Thou hast sent Me," was His prayer, and if all God's saints were one, one in the mighty love of God, one in recognition of this truth, that we are one with Christ, joint-heirs

with Christ, sharers of His sufferings here, and sharers of His glory to come, O what a change it would make in the aspect of the Church as presented to the world. There is not one unconverted professor in that body—not one—not one who has not been born again and washed in the precious blood of Christ; but every one—*every one* of those members that were written in God's book from eternity, every one is in that body—every one are members one of another. Dear friends, our business is every hour of the day, as we come in contact with God's children, to give the lie to sectarianism, and make it felt by love that we are one in Christ—a love that dare not speak evil, that dare not do harm to one that belongs to Christ, a love that will respect, and cherish, and seek to bless them because they belong to Christ.

(To be continued.)

A MESSAGE FOR ME.

IT was an address to believers—an address that I shall not soon forget. Where was it delivered? It matters not. When? It matters not. By whom? It matters not. That the preacher was *sent*, I had not the slightest doubt. And that he had a *message*, must have been evident to all who had ears to hear. Of this much at least I was certain—he had a message for *me*; and, after all, this must ever be the final test of ministry. Does the messenger reach *me*? Has he a word for *me*? I may listen to an eloquent address, and yet hear no message. I may sit down to an intellectual repast, and yet remain in undisturbed possession of my idols. I may have my ear delighted with the melodious flow of chaste and beautiful language, and yet hear no voice echoing down the corridors of my soul with the words, "Thou art the man." Not after this pattern was the preacher of whom I speak. I felt I was in the presence of one who was in the presence of God. A voice seemed to say, "You need not expect an entertainment here; you are about to be brought into the light." And this verily came to pass. I was brought into the light. I was searched, as with a lighted candle. Why was I not able to roll back in my seat and "view" the address as an artistic performance, and observe how it

was done, and watch for startling points that had never been heard of before? After this fashion I had listened to many an address to believers. Why was it so different now? I am convinced it was because I was listening to a man who was *sent*—one who was speaking out of the depths of a wilderness experience, and burning with a message from the Throne! I listened—I could not help listening. “Ah,” I said to myself, “Christianity is no child’s-play. It is a solemn thing to have to do with God. Where have I been dwelling of late? Have I been *all* for Him who gave Himself for me?” These, and questions such as these, rushed through my mind in rapid succession. “He is smiting me,” I said, “although he knows it not. Nor is it needful he should know.” It was a time of bringing down; and truly I was brought down, even to that spot where the sword of self-judgment is unsheathed, while before the raptured vision there rises up the boundless possibilities of that life which is “by the faith of the Son of God”!

That solitary preacher had the stamp of *reality*. He traded not on other men’s experience, and was a stranger alike to strange lore and counterfeited zeal. The very simplicity and artlessness of his style told me I was listening to one who was all he seemed to be. To listen to such a preacher is in itself an inspiration. Surely we have here the secret of his power. He was a man who manifested in his life what he proclaimed on the platform. He had power with man because he had power with God. Without doubt in touch with Heaven, it seemed, if I may so speak, an easy matter for him to rouse men from “the dull dream of a sense-bound existence.” In him the life spoke and the manner of spirit bore testimony. In conscious enjoyment of the unseen glories, he presented a sharp contrast to those professors who seem to find it toilsome work travelling to the celestial city. In his case service for Christ was a luxury, and self-denial a song of praise. How he enjoyed his Christianity—or rather the Christ whom he loved to extol! Believers saw this—felt it—compared notes—weighed themselves in the balances, and found themselves wanting. They were compelled to see that Christianity was something deeper, and higher, and grander than anything they had conceived it to be. Thus they were allured to a purer and a truer

life—to go forth to the desert place, to rest in the Master’s presence, and learn of Him. From that hallowed retreat they returned with strength renewed, and enlightened vision of eternal things, to bear a savour of His name, and to reflect something of the glories of His person. I know not whether many shall *hear* what these may speak in public ministry for Christ; but this much I know, that “many shall *see it*, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord” (Psalm xl. 3). When you thus *see* that the one who serves at the altar is already a partaker of the altar—that he is immersed in the atmosphere of the secret place—it is only then that you are prepared to receive his message.

W. S.

THE AGENT OF LOVE.

By JAMES WRIGHT, Bristol.

IN connection with the truth of the infinitely higher privileges which we have in this dispensation, of having the Holy Spirit sent into our hearts, read a verse in Romans v.—“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts BY THE HOLY GHOST which is given unto us.” He is the great Agent in pouring forth this love of God into our hearts, enabling us by faith to focus the rays of that Sun of Love—that great Sun from Whom the beams of love are continually pouring forth, upon our own souls, and to appropriate this love as affecting ourselves individually, so that we can say with Paul, “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me,” because it is in the Cross of the Lord Jesus that the love of God is so manifested.

And it is as the Holy Spirit brings this home to our hearts, that we do really apprehend what AN INFINITELY LOVELY BEING this blessed God is, Who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all! This is the connection here—“For, when we WERE YET WITHOUT STRENGTH, in due time CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.” Such is the MANNER of His love. We find no such expression of love between man and man—a love that sets itself on an object utterly unworthy of that love, in which there is nothing fitted to call it out. That is the nature of the love of God (Eph. ii. 4, 5).

And it is this love that the Holy Ghost “sheds abroad in our hearts,” enabling us personally to apprehend, and then to live in the sunshine of it.

LEARNING CHRIST.

"Ye have not so learned Christ."—Eph. iv. 20.

By J. S. ANDERSON, Florence.

WHEN Jesus was in the world He could say, "Come unto Me . . . learn of Me"; but when He went back to His Father, He, the Teacher, became the lesson, the subject of all our learning, and the Spirit of Truth became the Teacher. There is a beautiful distinction, fraught with meaning, in Paul's use of our Lord's title and name: *Christ* and *Jesus*. In learning *Christ* to-day as the truth is in *Jesus*, we become liker and liker what He was as He walked this earth.

We often wonder why His disciples learned so little of His inner life, why they *learned Him* so little. They could not understand why He slept so calmly in the storm. They could not watch and pray while He was alone with His Father for them. They could not enter into His patient, tender dealings with the sinful and sick. And in His relationship to His Father, and His perfect devotion to the Scriptures, they did not *know* Him. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"

"He ordained twelve, that they should be

WITH HIM,

but although they were witnesses of "all that Jesus began both to do and teach," they did not *learn Christ* until the Spirit of Truth dwelt *with* them and *in* them (John xiv. 17), testifying of Him (xv. 26), guiding them into all truth (xvi. 13).

The apostle has been exhorting the Ephesian saints to walk worthy of their heavenly calling, with which he contrasts their past *walk* (verse 17). What a dark picture that was! The vanity of the mind, the understanding darkened, the heart blinded! The whole moral and intellectual nature alienated "from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them."

"But ye have not so learned," exclaims the apostle, "if so be that ye have heard Him and have been taught by Him; as the truth is in Jesus." "But," one may reply, "how could these Ephesian believers be said to have *heard Christ*? They heard the Gospel for the first time at least twenty-five years after he had ascended to God's right hand."

Well, it is just here that we find the secret

of "learning Christ." He is at once our Teacher and our lesson. It is indeed the Spirit of Truth who "reveals unto us" the things of God, but by His teaching Christ is brought so personally before us that in learning Him we *hear* Him and are *taught* by Him. What a perfect work of the Holy Ghost this is! Only He can do this. All human aids and efforts leave us at such distances from Christ that we can only hear *about* Him and be taught *about* Him. What a divinely blessed work of the Holy Ghost, to bring Christ so near, to make Him so real to us! He is now seeking to glorify Christ in us, as Christ glorified the Father for us.

It will help us to

"LEARN CHRIST"

if we connect these two little, but very precious and important words, "so" . . . "as"—"*so* learned Christ . . . *as* the truth is in Jesus." And this leads us to ask and answer the question, "How is the truth in Him?"

I. The truth is inseparably, perfectly, eternally identified with Him. "I am the truth," He said, and in coming to Him the sinner turns from the error of his ways and comes to "the knowledge of the truth." "In Christ" we do not learn by the Spirit what is called *scientific* truth"; we are taught something far more profound, far loftier than that. The moment we believe on the Son of God we receive "eternal life," and He defined eternal life before His Father thus: "That they might know Thee, the only *true* God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." "In learning Christ," then, as the truth is in Him, we learn the truth of truths. No indefinite, abstract idea of "truth," but the *knowledge* of the only *true* God and of Jesus Christ, sent to save, come to save, dead to save, buried, raised, and ascended to the Father's right hand, having saved us who believe. This is *the* truth, *the* truth which shines out brighter than all others, glorifying God, rejoicing His children: this is *the truth as it is in Jesus*.

II. In "learning Christ" as the truth is in Him, let us never forget that He is the reality, the end of all the shadows and figures of the law. If we are taken up merely with judging ourselves or others for eating or drinking, or in respect of holy days, new moons or Sabbaths,

we have not learned Christ as the truth, the reality—the end of all law is in Him. Let not feasts nor fasts, forms nor figures, come between Christ and our hearts. Let us learn Him as the *reality* of all the types, shadows, ceremonies of the law : our true light, our true bread, the true vine.

III. All this is practical, living truth. He who has “learned Christ” has “put off” the *old* and “put on” *the new man*. People may talk about Church truth, dispensational truth, separation truth, needed truth, but it is only vain talk unless it proves itself to be the “holiness of truth.” Would to God that all who profess to have “learned Christ” gave more diligent and submissive attention to what the Scriptures teach about the Church, and the times and seasons, past, present, and future, and about the believer’s separation from the world. But let no man stop here, saying: “I have learned Christ,” while living, acting, speaking “as other Gentiles,” according to his “former manner of life.”

Many who have learned

ABOUT CHRIST

have reformed the “old man,” and are making mere negative efforts not to do this nor say that. But it is all in vain, for the “old man” is still there, holding his ground. How different the walk and work of him who has really “learned Christ.” He puts off, concerning the former manner of life, the old man, he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and puts on “the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and the holiness of truth.”

And what is this putting off the old and putting on the new man? The apostle gives us some very clear and practical examples :

THE OLD MAN.

Lying.
Stealing.
Corrupt speech.
Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking, malice.

THE NEW MAN.

Speaking the truth.
Labouring to give.
Edifying with grace.
Kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another *as* forgiven.

So that if we have “learned Christ,” and are living in the “holiness of truth,” we must not be content with saying: “We have given up lying.” That is merely putting off the old man. Have we put on the new man? Do we

dare, do we love to speak the *truth* in business, in public and private.

Some people, again, think that they “learn Christ” by merely giving up the modern forms of stealing in quality and quantity. But the man who is renewed in the spirit of his mind, the man “born again,” who has died and risen with Christ, does not stop, as does the reformer and reformed, with *half* of the truth ; “let him that stole steal no more.” He finds in “learning Christ” a *but*; “but rather let him labour, working with his hands (which once stole) the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

It may be one gives up “evil speaking” simply because he finds out what bitter consequences follow his clamour. But the man who has “learned Christ” forgives and speaks kindly, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven him. O blessed work of the Spirit of Truth! In learning Christ the liar becomes a truthful friend, the thief an honest benefactor, and the bitter tale-bearer a tender-hearted forgiver.

CHRIST’S LOVE AND LOVELINESS.

His love seems one thing, His loveliness quite another. We know the love first. We must be the sinner of Luke vii. before we can be the worshipping believer of John xii., Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv. Tears mingle with the sinner’s anointing, for her sin was the commanding thought rather than the grace that puts it away. But no thought of self comes in when the worshipper breaks the box and pours it on His head. “Christ is all and in all.” Is it not better to have our wills crossed and broken, and our hearts emptied out, if indeed we be only driven in our emptiness to get filled at the fountain of living water? Is it not wonderful that while we can admire so unfeignedly this beauty and that grace in the saints and others, our whole souls are not bowed in wonder at the combination of all in Jesus? This dear one has so much grace, so and so distinguished in zeal, so and so in humility, another in love for the saints, another in love for the Master, another as a teacher. But in Him, grace, love, lowliness, wisdom, all shining in fullest measure. O for the anointed eyes just to see Him, and Him only. c. s. b.

*GO, TALK WITH GOD; BUT WAIT
FOR HIS REPLY.*

“MY God, why has Thy love forsaken me?” (Psa. xxii. 1.)
And then there came His own sweet, cheering voice—
“I have not left thee, child, I never leave
The object of My love. Rejoice! rejoice!” (Heb. xiii. 5.)
“The floodings overflow me, gracious Lord.”
(Psa. lxix. 2.)
“Nay; when thou passest through the rivers, I
Will find a ford; they shall not overflow,
While I am near; thou shalt not sink nor die.” (Isa. xliii. 2.)
“I am in trouble,” was my short response.
(Psa. cii. 2.)
“Then call on Me,” He said, “in trouble’s day;
I will deliver, will deliver thee,
And thou shalt honour Me. In trouble,
pray.” (Psa. l. 15.)
“Lover and friend are far from me,” I said.
(Psa. lxxxviii. 18.)
He whispered sweetly, “And there is a Friend
Who sticketh closer than a brother can.
Is He departed? On His Love depend.”
(Prov. xviii. 24.)
“Then, why art Thou so far from helping me?” (Psa. xxii. 1.)
“I am not far,” He answered; “with thee now,
I am thy God, and will thy helper be—
Uphold and strengthen, as I o’er thee bow.”
(Isa. xli. 10.)
“Lord, I am weary of my tears.” (Psa. lxix. 3.)
He said,
“My Hand shall wipe thy every tear away.”
He touched mine eyes, His hands upon me laid,
And I looked up to see a sunny day.
(Isa. xxv. 8.)
Go, talk with God awhile, speak out thy heart;
Fear not to tell Him all the bitter tale;
But wait for His reply; thou shalt depart
Cheered and refreshed, for God can never fail.

WILLIAM LUFF.

CHRIST THE HIGH PRIEST.

(Continued.)

Revised Notes of Addresses on “The Lord Jesus as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” by J. R. CALDWELL.

“FOR every High Priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God” (Heb. v. 1). We have our needs, but God has his claims. The high priest was appointed to act for man as his representative, but he must act so that the claims of God are respected and honoured as well.

So long as we continue in our present imperfect condition, having, so to speak, a two-fold nature, flesh and spirit—having that which is corrupt still cleaving to us, God could have no direct dealings with us. He must deal with us through a representative, a mediator, an high priest.

If I go to God in prayer, or thanksgiving, or worship, I must go to Him through the High Priest whom He has appointed. There is no other way to the Father. God has given us no other access but through His Son. But, blessed be His Name, that way is always open for us.

Aaron was chosen because he was one who could have compassion. He was thoroughly acquainted with wilderness difficulties and human weakness, and so he could look with pity on the ignorant and the erring. As to his own character, what was he? At the very time that Moses was in the mount with God receiving instructions regarding the garments of glory and beauty that Aaron was to wear and the offices he was to fulfil, Aaron was down on the plain forging and fashioning the golden calf, the very ringleader in that apostacy from Jehovah. Truly he was no better than others, and yet that is the man chosen by God to be the representative of Israel. God chose him in sovereign grace, as one out of the people who, knowing the weakness of his own heart and his own liability to err, was therefore able to have compassion upon others.

But though there was no weakness or liability to err in our High Priest, yet was He “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” He knows what sorrow and pain obedience may cost, for He “became obedient unto death.” He is therefore fitted to enter with all the sympathy of His compassionate heart, into

all the struggles and sorrows of His tempted and suffering people.

And not only so, the High Priest must be able to present an effectual offering for sins (see verse 3). It is not enough that He should have compassion upon me in my sorrows and sufferings. What would that avail me if He had not compassion upon me even in my sins? It was His look of compassion upon Peter, when he had denied Him, that broke Peter's heart. For that very *sin*, that drew forth not His wrath but His compassion, He offered Himself. And that one offering is as effectual to-day as the day that the Lamb was slain on Calvary, and the compassion of His heart unchanged.

Let not, then, the ignorant or the erring faint; let them be encouraged to avail themselves of the grace of this Great High Priest.

"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (verse 4). The honour of being high priest in Israel was higher than that of being king. What was there on earth to compare with the honour of being the one man who alone had title to enter into the immediate presence of God?

Such is the honour conferred upon the Son of God. His title, Man though He be as well as God, is incontestable, to enter in not only to the presence of God, not only to stand before the Throne of God, but to take his place on "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Even the Eternal Son esteems it an honour to be there as the representative of the people whom He has redeemed, and whom He will soon make altogether worthy of the place of nearness to which His blood has entitled them.

The Lord Jesus is, as we have thus seen, High Priest after the pattern or type of Aaron, but He is also Priest "after the order of Melchisedec." He was not of the order of Aaron. Aaron was of the tribe of Levi; Christ was of the tribe of Judah according to the flesh. If He were on earth He could not be a priest, for God never called any of the tribe of Judah to the priesthood. (See chap. vii. 13, 14, and chap. viii. 4.)

In chapter vii. we have a wonderful display of the glories that pertain to Him as Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Melchisedec

was both a priest and a king. In the record given of him in Genesis, there is no mention of either his birth or his death, therefore in applying this to the Antitype, it is said He had "neither beginning of days nor end of years." His was therefore a perpetual priesthood, and in this it differed from the Aaronic priesthood, upon which the man entered officially at thirty years, and ceased at fifty.

Thus it is said in chapter vii. 24, He hath "an unchangeable priesthood:" that is, a priesthood that does not pass from one to another; perhaps more literally, "an untransferable priesthood." "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost (or evermore) who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Now we have seen somewhat of the One whom God has appointed to be our High Priest. We have seen how He qualified Himself for His office by sufferings, how He bears the names of His people each one on His heart and on His shoulder, how He is full of sympathy and compassion not only in sorrow and suffering but even when fallen into sin, and we have seen how He is able to save to the uttermost, because He is alive for evermore.

There is no point, no crisis in all our history, in health or sickness, wealth or poverty, life or death, at which our Great High Priest is not able to save us. There is no power that can reach us of world or devil which He cannot control, and from which He cannot deliver.

Now let us look at chapter viii. 1, 2. We have here the heavenly sanctuary where Jesus is. In the book of Revelation the veil is drawn aside for a moment, and we get a glimpse of the throne of God, and the Lamb is in the midst of the throne. There are redeemed ones round about the throne, and the heavenly order of worship is going on within the veil. Well, it is our privilege in spirit, though not yet bodily, to join in that heavenly worship; it is ours to enter into the true sanctuary where the Lord Jesus is, and to be worshippers there. As to our bodies, for the present, we may meet in a nameless place, some "upper room," but as to our spirits, we anticipate the day of our glory, and enter within the veil and join the circle of worshippers around the throne.

John was in the isle of Patmos a suffering

exile for the testimony of Jesus Christ. But he saw this heavenly vision which he records, and he heard the song which the elders sang. But John in Patmos recognises that he is of that company, though not yet there, and he takes up the strain, and at the beginning of the book he makes it his own. "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory."

It is our privilege, in like manner, to join the worship of the heavenly sanctuary, knowing that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we may be caught up, literally bodily, to form a part of the circle of worshippers that surrounds the throne.

Again, in chapter ix. 24-28 we have it stated that "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us." The order of worship has been transferred from earth to heaven, from the shadows to the realities. The Sacrifice, the Priest, and the altar are no longer on earth; all are transferred to the heavenly sanctuary, and that is our place of worship.

The last passage I will ask you to look at is Hebrews x. 19-24: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest," *i.e.*, the immediate presence of God, without a veil between. When the high priest of old entered within the veil once in the year, upon the 10th day of the seventh month, "not without blood," I don't believe he ever could be said to have entered "with boldness." I believe it was a trembling day for him. He never could forget how Nadab and Abihu had been consumed by fire from the presence of Jehovah, because of their error in offering strange fire. What if he, too, has offended in some point or failed to carry out some part of the ordinances as commanded? How could he have boldness? But it is ours to enter in, not on the ground of our own obedience but on that of another, even in the name and by the precious blood of Him who is our High Priest, the "holy, harmless, undefiled" One, "separate from sinners," and "made higher than the heavens."

He is the way, the "newly-made," or "newly slain and living way," telling us of the Cross and the resurrection of Him who is Himself the Way. All is new. It is a new way, a new

covenant, a new creation, and a new man who enters in to sing a new song!

The veil in the temple, which was rent by God from the top to the bottom, was a type of the flesh of the Lord Jesus rent on Calvary's Cross, that you and I might draw near.

Having, therefore, an High Priest over the House of God, it is ours to draw near "with a true heart." In chapter iii. we read of "an evil heart of unbelief" which departs from the living God. The unbelieving heart departs. Like Adam, it runs away to hide among the trees—to hide from God. But "let us draw near with a true heart;" that is, a believing, trusting, confiding, loving heart; a heart that has taken God at His word, and trusts in the faithfulness of the Great High Priest. "In full assurance of faith." Some think that "doubts" are the proper thing! It is not so here. Doubts are not proper Christian experience; they arise from unbelief. Clouds don't come from the sun—it never changes; they arise from the earth. Such are unbelieving doubts and fears. That word "full assurance" has in it the idea of a ship coming into the harbour in full sail, well knowing that there there are no shallows or sunken rocks.

Faith lays firm hold of all the grace that God has revealed and treasured for us in Christ, and draws near in full assurance. And this assurance is not foolhardiness or impudence. It is consistent with the deepest humility and self-abasement, with a true sense of absolute worthlessness and badness; but it is in the knowledge that God has made us all that His heart desires in the Person of His beloved Son.

FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE.

FAITH, Hope, and Love were questioned what they thought

Of future glories which the gospel taught;
Now Faith *believed* all firmly to be true,
And Hope *expected* so to find it too;
Love answered, smiling with a conscious glow,
Believe! expect! I KNOW it to be so.

WE are justified by faith *alone*, but not by the faith *which is alone*. Unless it be a heart-purifying and a work-producing faith, it is spurious—it is not wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God.

ABIDING IN CHRIST.

By WM. COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

WHEN we read in 1 John iii. 6, "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; he that sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him," it must be evident that the words "abide," "see," "know," have a meaning here beyond what we attach to them in our common English. Taking them in their ordinary sense, this Scripture has been to many a soul a message of darkness and despair, making the righteous sad, whom the Lord would not make sad. It is therefore important to examine the sense in which the inspired apostle here and elsewhere uses the words "abide" and "know."

First, briefly of "know." "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Compare with this Jeremiah xxii. 16: "He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him." "Was not *this* to know Me, saith the Lord?" Or ix. 24, the "understanding and knowing Him, that he delights in loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness," is evidently in their exercise of them. And so in Hosea vi. 6, the knowledge of God means practical conformity to His ways. Thus John uses it here.

In like manner, "abide" has habitually in the writings of this apostle a sense far deeper than that of a passive maintenance of a position—or even the conscious enjoyment of it. With him, it implies practical obedience, so abiding as to fulfil the purpose for which it is there placed. We shall see that when we come to the "Vine and its branches." But first let us examine it in the epistle.

JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE.

1 John ii. 6: To "abide in Him," we must "walk as He walked."

Verse 10: "Abiding in the light," means "loving his brother."

Verse 14: "The word of God abideth" effectively, so as to overcome the wicked one.

Verse 24: "Let that abide in you," *i.e.*, the *new commandment*, in practical fruitfulness. Thus we shall "abide in the Son and in the Father"—shall be conformed to the character of love set forth in this divine relationship.

Verse 27: "The anointing . . . abideth in you." "Ye shall abide in Him."

Verse 28: "Abide in Him, that we may have confidence." Compare these with chapter iii. 14-21, showing that in each case it means nothing less than the active exercise.

Verse 29 explains that in this and what follows he is referring to *practical conformity* to Christ, as a distinct thing from being *in* Him through passive faith. It is a Sonship of likeness, as in Matt. v. 9, 45, or John viii. 39, 42, 44, or Gal. iii. 7, &c., &c.

Here, then, we have the solution of the difficulty in the text first quoted.

Chapter iii. 6: "Whoso abideth in Him sinneth not." That is, he who is fulfilling the purpose for which he is so placed, sinneth not. This is far from true of us as merely saved by grace through faith. It describes a believer as exhibiting, "manifesting," the character proper to a child of God, by a consistent walk of righteousness and love. In this sonship of likeness, sin can have no place.

Chapter iii. 9: "His seed abideth." In the popular sense, it remains in every believer. But it is impossible to understand this verse except of the active operation of the Divine seed.

Verse 14: "Abideth in death," "Eternal life abiding in him." In neither case could it be read "*existing*," but only as being there in practical operation.

Verse 17: Evidently the same "abiding."

Verse 24: It is not said of all who have justifying faith that they abide in Him, but of those who keep His commandments. It is the Spirit which He hath given us, the Spirit of Love, by which this is known.

Chapter iv. 12: Not "if we believe in Jesus," but "if we love one another, God abides in us."

Verse 13: He hath given us *of* His Spirit; therefore not the Holy Ghost in His Personal aspect, but the same Spirit as His—the Spirit of Love.

Chapter iv. 15: "Confess," as in verse 2, not with the lip, but by a life of conformity (see verses 9 and 14, and compare Titus i. 1, exhibiting His character and ways). Thus "He abides in us and we in Him."

Verse 16: "Dwelleth, abideth in love." Certainly not here of the enjoyment of God's love, but in the exercise of it. For,

Verse 17, *Herein* is the love of God, as to us, perfected, *i.e.*, come to maturity, bearing its proper fruit; so as that (compare chap iii. 19, 21) we have the confidence toward God arising out of conscious fellowship with Him in His love, showing in this world His likeness, representing Him in the dearest feature of His character.

JOHN'S SECOND EPISTLE.

2 John 2: The truth "abiding" in us.

Verse 9: Abiding in the doctrine of Christ (not the "doctrine" about His Person, but *His teaching*, as set forth in verse 5). John says "*love*" is to *walk* after His commandments, and this commandment, which was from the beginning, is that we should love *one another*.

How constantly we hear it taught that if God so loved us, we ought to love Him in return. True; that goes without saying. But what these Scriptures teach is that if He so loved us, we ought to love *one another*. That does *not* go without saying. It needs all the earnest teaching of John xiii.-xv., and elsewhere; all the earnest pleadings of this epistle, all our earnest exhortations and instructions in detail, thus to carry out the purposes of His love toward us. If the Revised Version is right in omitting "*him*" from 1 John iv. 19, the change is very important. "*We love*, because He first loved *us*." Such, at least, is the burden of the teaching here. Are we not too prone to pick out and dwell upon the passages which set forth God's love toward us, and overlook the entirely practical character of the epistle?

The above examination may help to throw light upon

THE FIFTEENTH OF JOHN'S GOSPEL,

where it is in danger of being lost sight of, because of another truth which lies nearer the surface of the first few verses—that of our vital union with Christ, figured in that of a vine and its branches. All our blessings and hopes come through this union—salvation, life, peace, power over sin, fruit-bearing, and coming glory. This is true of every believer actually, though not always experimentally. Would that we all knew more of its power! We cannot too highly estimate or cherish this precious truth—*unless*

it be that we stop there, resting in the enjoyment of our blessings and privileges, as if that were the great end, instead of seeing that it is given as the stepping-stone to the teaching that follows about fellowship with Him in the exercise of that love—"abiding," in the sense we have seen it in the epistle.

To take the passages in their order:

Verse 6 does not say such a one *will be cut off*, but that not "abiding," that is, not being fruitful, it is like the dead branch of a vine, which men can use for nothing but fuel. See Ezekiel xv.

Verse 7: If "abiding" means practical obedience to the new commandment, it agrees with the conditions so often elsewhere associated with similar promises of answer to prayer: Matt. vi. 14; Mark xi. 24, 25; Luke xvii. 6, where love takes the shape of forgiveness. So in John xiv. we must connect verses 13, 14 with 21, 23, 24; and 1 John iii. 22 is contingent on what precedes it. He will withhold nothing from those who walk thus in practical fellowship with Him.

Verse 8: "Herein is my Father glorified"—not spoken of the passive enjoyment of His love, but by our "bearing much fruit." To "be His disciples" consists in "keeping His commandments"—this new commandment.

Thus the parable, while showing our dependence on Christ for life and fruitfulness, has a further and deeper meaning.

God, who is Love, had planted in the earth a Vine—LOVE, embodied in His Son, who could say: "I have glorified Thee in the earth"—manifesting His Father's character of Love by all His words and works, and finally by His atoning death. Thus "the True Vine" had borne its own full clusters of fruit. Now that He is going away, He charges His disciples to carry out that great purpose, as branches in the true Vine, each to bear its cluster of the same fruit, by manifesting the character of His Father in the same way that He did, and "showing themselves to be His disciples by loving one another." This would be "glorifying His Father."

Verse 10: If we keep His commandments we shall therein be "abiding in His love;" that is, continuing in the exercise of it, as He fulfilled His Father's commandments by exercising *towards us* the love of His Father to

Him. For it can hardly mean here that the Son secures or maintains His Father's love by obedience; rather it must be that, in obedience to Him, He exercises toward us the same love that He enjoys from His Father.*

Verse 11. His joy was not in the passive apprehension of His Father's love, but in the passing on of that love to us. He wants the same joy to be "abiding" in us, in the exercise of the same love one to another.

Verse 12 shows what commandment He specially refers to. He is coming back to, and enforcing the command in xiii. 34, after the digression forced on Him by their questions, and their slowness to take in what He wanted to say to them.

Verse 16: Your fruit should *remain*; continue to be *borne*; *active* continuance on their part.

IF THE APPLICATION OF THESE TEXTS

to a passive "abiding," an enjoyment by faith of our union with Christ, as commonly interpreted, has helped to a better apprehension of that precious truth, it might be well, so far. Only when we hear it taught, and, especially from this portion of Scripture, that the fruit-bearing will intuitively follow upon the apprehension of that truth; and under this idea the subject of our standing takes a place so far out of proportion to that given to it in Scripture, as compared with the practical teachings, it is time we examined the ground of such teaching. Granted that, when in living power, it will result in fruit. But, where do we find that the Spirit in the Word is satisfied to tell us of God's love to us, and leave us to the result it should intuitively produce? On the contrary, it habitually uses every declaration of His love as a foundation on which to build up the necessary full directions for the superstructure in all its parts. And here the union of the believer with Christ in life is given us, not to rest in that, but to teach us how we are called to be one with Him in the fruit-bearing of love.

* NOTE.—If this verse be read of us, that, as we walk in obedience, we shall enjoy His love to us, that is, doubtless, true; and it may be applied to Him in the sense of John x. 17; but the evident use of the word elsewhere in this connection rather points to the other meaning. Observe the parallels in the following:

"He that abideth in love,	abideth in God,	and God in him."
"Abide ye in My love;	abide in Me,	and I in you."

GOD'S WITNESSES.

Notes of an Address by R. C. CHAPMAN, author of "Choice Sayings," "Hymns and Meditations," &c.

SUPPOSING the family of God did but remember that the ungodly world has rejected Christ, and that in this land they have corrupted the Gospel, setting Christ aside, and calling God their Father, when they are of their father the devil: what manner of spirit should be ours who are saved from Satan's power, and to be God's witnesses in the midst of an unbelieving world? "Among whom shine we as lights in the world?" Are we considering the wherefore we are saved, and the wherefore we remain in this world? Is it to be first seeking the things of the world, or seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness?—we having the promise of everything needful in this life, all that He in His wisdom accounts good.

Correspondence.

THE CITY AND THE BRIDE.

It may occasion some surprise to Mr. Trench and others, that his able reply and Dr. Anderson's letter still fail to carry conviction to the minds of those who hold opposite views.

There are still some points on which it appears to us there is confusion of thought, *e.g.*:

Is the City the Bride, or is it the dwelling-place of the Bride?

Is it literal or figurative, or both?

Is the same City referred to in Rev. xxi. 2 and 10 and xxii. 1, 2? Or are different cities spoken of?

Is it at the beginning of the Millennium or at the beginning of the eternal state that the City of Rev. xxi. 2-10 descends out of heaven from God?

If some of our correspondents could *very briefly* give conclusive evidence on these points, we think it might help to the further elucidation of the question, and we should not grudge devoting a little space yet to so interesting a subject.

Dr. Anderson draws attention to two errors in his letter in our last number. Page 195, 9th line from bottom, "mummeries" should be "nunneries." Page 196, line 26, "relationship" should be "nevertheless": "The argument is that the word 'nevertheless' in Eph. v. 33 negatives the Church-Bride theory." We greatly regret these errors.

SOWING THE SEED.

To the Editor of *The Witness*.

I have been exercised about the need of greatly increased effort in wise and prayerful scattering of gospel books and tracts. You may find space for this notice in your valued monthly.

While thankful for all that is done, are there not many in our assemblies who could take part in this work with much profit? Business firms are untiring in using the post in sending into our families circulars and advertisements, but how feebly and fitfully do gospel messengers press in with their heavenly treasures.

It is well known that for one halfpenny, two oz. of gospel tidings can go to any part of the world, and for one penny four oz. of letters or books over the United Kingdom. Only yesterday I learned from a Christian that he took his stand with books and tracts at the gate of the shipyard in which he was employed. Now, if this could be extended a hundred times over the land, what a blessing it might be—viz., at the gates of shipyards and engine shops, factories (large and small), coal pits, warehouses, &c. It is a noble service, yet such as will cast the worker upon God in earnest prayer for faith, and courage, and humility, and all backed up by a consistent life. In cases where females are employed in public works, what a blessing it would be if sisters could band together in giving away tracts and books to their own sex. Many a noble woman is ready to give up her life for work in Africa and India, but here are fields at home "white unto harvest," and full of promise and blessing.

Then as to books and tracts by post. Here is a marvellous opening for the skilful readiness of our sisters, whether they are in the families of humble toilers, or daughters at home, usefully employed, yet free from daily engagements taking them elsewhere. A list of friends, young and old, could be made out, to which a suitable book could be sent monthly, or oftener. And who will limit the blessing of such a service?

A difficulty comes up—viz., the expense—as nine out of every ten are unable to meet the outlay; and even an offer of books, at half price, will debar the greater number of willing helpers; but surely those who are able and willing could provide supplies, to be given to approved workers free, or at a tithe of the cost. The painstaking labours of willing workers is no small sacrifice, while postage and stationery for the postal work would be tax enough for others.

Small books and tracts, such as "Salvation Messages," &c., printed on good paper, can now be got. Lengthy books only suit special cases.

The gospel is not a strange sound in our land. Most of those who would receive such papers know it in letter, but they need to be wakened

up to their need and danger, and to be pressed to decision, and to a personal acceptance of a full and free salvation through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May the Lord give all of us to redeem the time, and to "work while it is called to-day." We have no to-morrow!—I am, in Christ Jesus,
THOS. M'LAREN Sen.

AN ASSEMBLY EXPERIENCE.

To the Editor of *The Witness*.

You will, I am sure, be glad to hear that the work of the Lord is prospering in our little assembly at C— T—. In former years this assembly was in a very prosperous condition—about sixty in fellowship. They used to meet early on Lord's-day morning, and then, after breaking bread, they went forth two-and-two giving out tracts, visiting and preaching in the lanes, slums, and streets of the town. They were simple, humble, loving, and red-hot in the gospel. I often hear them speaking of the happy days of former years. They became acquainted with Christians known as —. Their knowledge increased, and so did their love, fervency, and earnestness in the gospel decrease. For some years back certain ones have been trying to build a wall of separation around them, by such Scriptures as, "In the fellowship," "Outside the camp," "Come out from among them," &c., separating them from other Godly believers. This kind of teaching put such a damper on them that the love for souls was well-nigh quenched, and the gentle, tender care one for the other almost disappeared.

About five years ago the Lord sent a brother into their midst who took a leading part in the Bible readings, and who explained the Scriptures with their contents, and led them on to see not only the true position of believers, but also the true condition of heart for worship and service. The brethren began to see that this condition of heart was what they had enjoyed in former years, and ever since they have been gradually getting back to that simplicity which they once enjoyed; but not without a struggle, for two in their midst seemed bent on keeping up this stagnant order of things. . . . Harmony, love, and peace have reigned in the assembly ever since these two brethren went out. The meetings are increasing in numbers, and that heavenly atmosphere which is truly blessed to the soul. Last night we had a love feast, or social gathering if you like; between twenty and thirty came together. We first sang a few hymns, and then had tea and cake. After tea, nine brethren spoke shortly and to the point out of full heart. One aged brother got somewhat like Billy Bray; he could not keep his seat. Tears of joy ran from the eyes of many, and more than once was

heard, "The old times have come back again." Opportunity was taken to ask all present how many would open their homes for a meeting one night in the week. All gave consent except one, who has sickness in his home; his heart is in fellowship with the proposed meetings. Little by little this assembly is getting back to the simplicity it once enjoyed; soon (d.v.) we hope to get out preaching on Lord's-day mornings like of old.—Yours in truth and love, P. W.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

TWO RESURRECTIONS.—Please explain Daniel xii. 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

"THIS CUP," AND "THIS HOUR."—What is the CUP to which the Lord alluded? (Matt. xxvi. 39-42; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42); and what is the HOUR alluded to (Mark xiv. 35; John xii. 27)? Was the prayer answered, and how?

SHARES IN JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is it contrary to the teaching of Scripture for a Christian to take shares in a joint-stock company of which most of the shareholders are unsaved?

TENT WORK—COMMUNICATING WITH LABOURERS.—If an evangelist writes to a meeting that he intends to pitch his tent in their city, what would be the responsibility of such an assembly while he thus labours in their midst? Would it be right to send money away while a series of meetings are going on? or should it be the duty of an assembly to communicate with a servant of Christ whenever he is labouring among them?

FAITH: IS IT INVOLUNTARY?—Is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (by which we are saved) an involuntary action?

LIVING BY FAITH.—From 1 Cor. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to "live by faith," and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.—Is it according to the Scriptures to teach that the Lord Jesus died of a broken heart?

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT.—Is the last clause of Ephesians v. 18 as in the Authorised Version a correct translation? or should it be, as some render it, "Be filled in Spirit?"

BLIND AND DEAF—WHO?—Kindly explain who the blind servant or deaf messenger is in Isaiah xlii. 19. Is it Christ, the true and faithful servant, or Israel, as in Matt. xiii. 14, 15?

BAPTISM AND RESURRECTION LIFE.—Will you

kindly give us an explanation of Colossians ii. 12? "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." Are we not risen with Him until we are baptised?

CONFLICT AND FREEDOM.—If the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit still goes on (Gal. v. 17), how am I made free from the law of sin and death? (Rom. viii. 2).

CHRISTIAN WARFARE.

QUESTION 553.—Please explain 2 Timothy ii. 4: "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

Answer A.—Roman soldiers were not allowed to marry, engage in husbandry or trade, or act as tutors or curators, therefore, say some, "ministers" should not engage in secular callings. From same facts, celibacy (separation from domestic affairs of life) might as well be deduced. This is taking the literal meaning of a word in a mere illustration, and missing Paul's *intent*. Exhorting Timothy, the Christian servant, he refers to two outstanding facts as to the soldier (verse 4) and athlete (verse 5), and the reasons therefor. He did not mean Timothy *literally* not to engage in business, but to be as Christ's soldier, a man of one object, loose to the world, and wholly for God. The affairs of this life are the things which really drag down and away from loyalty to Christ, viz., desire for worldly aggrandisement, popularity, or position in society, cares of this world (Luke viii. 14; xxi. 34), &c. The pollutions of this world in which our life is spent are ever seductive to evil (1 John ii. 15-17). We have notable instances of Christian preachers who remain in business and yet serve in the Gospel with undoubted ability; yet others might be diverted away in heart by things *incidental* to business life, or find both beyond their powers. Heb. xii. 1 is almost parallel to this passage. G. H. H.

Editor's Note.—It is one thing to be *occupied* with the affairs of this life, and quite another to be "entangled" in them.

From Eph. vi. 11, Rom. xiii. 12, 2 Cor. x. 3-5, we learn that every saint is a soldier, and is called to engage in the spiritual warfare, whatever his position or occupation in life.

Those who, in the providence of God, have been called to devote themselves wholly to the service of the Lord in the Gospel, may be tempted to look back, or to turn aside to an easier path. For such to be occupied with the affairs of this life might be inseparable from entanglement, and might be evidence of a heart departing from the living God. In other cases, like Paul working at his tents (Acts xviii. 3,

xx. 34, 35), occupation with trade or business might be the very path the Lord had chosen for them; and as Paul was no more "entangled" than then when he was receiving support from the Churches, no more need any other servant of Christ so situated.

The great thing is so to resist every opposing force—be it world, flesh, or devil—that our life may be well pleasing to the Lord.

THE LORD'S TWO COMMANDS.

QUESTION 554.—In pondering the last command of the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel," in comparison with His pre-resurrection command: "Do this in remembrance of Me," I have been greatly impressed by one thing, and that is *the ill-balanced obedience of the Church to these two commands*. To what cause do you attribute this?

Answer A.—The Lord's Supper, regarded as a "command," is within the reach, generally, of all disciples. The "going into all the world to preach the Gospel," cannot be for all disciples, but only for such as are called by Him thereto. This may partly answer the question, though, doubtless, much has to be attributed to lack of love to Christ and to souls. w. c.

Answer B.—In Luke xi. 42, we get an exhortation to Pharisees we do well to ponder, for in the outward things we are apt to neglect the weightier.

Though I observe all the ordinances, and have not love, it profiteth nothing.

Faith, that *worketh by love*, alone is pleasing to God.

"This do in remembrance of Me," is truly a pre-resurrection command, and also a command spoken from Heaven *after* the Resurrection. "I received *from the Lord*," says Paul (1 Cor. xi. 23). Now, love to God is *the spring of all obedience*; the decline of love is *the root of all disobedience*.

Moses first of all sets before Israel the love of God (Deut. x. 12-22), ere he counsels their obedience in chap. xi. 1. God, ere He gives the law in Exod. xx. 1-3, does likewise.

The same principle attaches to all the exhortations in the New Testament (see 1 Pet. i. 13-19); and, as showing how the Holy Spirit urges us to abide in God's love, turn to 2 Pet. iii. 17 (Rotherham)—"Ye, therefore, beloved, understanding beforehand, be on your guard, lest, with the error of the impious being led away, ye should fall out of your own steadfastness. But be growing in favour and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Then in Jude the Holy Spirit points out what will keep us in the midst of Laodicean lukewarmness—"But ye, beloved, upbuilding yourselves with your most holy faith, in Holy Spirit

praying, yourselves in God's love keep, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Lord Jesus says—"If a man love Me, he will keep My words" (John xiv. 23). "*Thy Word* have I hid in mine heart; that I might not sin against Thee." Christ's obedience the standard; as Paul puts it—"Filled with the full knowledge of His will, that ye might walk worthy unto all *pleasing*."

To the Lord Jesus none of His Father's commands were grievous—*love to His Father* made them easy.

Thus it appears that the reason of "ill-balanced obedience in the Church" is *departure from first love*. Beloved, let us "keep ourselves in the love of God," and obedience will follow. T. C.

Answer C.—There may be various causes for this. Some Christians have a real heart for testifying in the Gospel who have no exercise of heart as to remembering the Lord; and some are very zealous as to the "breaking of bread," who have little heart for the Gospel. This may be partly accounted for by the religious associations in which they were converted, and got their first start in the Christian life. It is often no easy matter to outgrow the effect of early or first impressions in spiritual things.

Then there are some whose hearts are more drawn out by the Spirit of God in Gospel work; whilst others are more exercised by the same Spirit as to the Christian's obedience in Church order and ordinances. This is to a certain extent as it should be, and as God designed it to be. But what is right in itself may be so fostered by an "ill-balanced" study or use of the Scriptures as to produce a very one-sided Christian character. It is a great blessing to be enabled, in some measure, to give to the ordinances, doctrines, and precepts taught or enjoined in the Scriptures their due relative importance, and not exalt one to the neglect of others, even although that one may belong to that department of service which the Lord has specially allotted to me. Due attention to 2 Tim. iii. 16 would help to put us right, and to keep us right, in these things—remembering that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and no part of it can be neglected without much spiritual loss. G. A.

Editor's Note.—Generally, little of the Cross, little reproach, attaches to the observance of the Lord's Supper. It is a command that is easily obeyed outwardly, if not in the spirit. But to witness for Christ in daily life, and testify the Gospel to all, in season and out of season, involves continual denial of self—taking up of the Cross and following Christ. Carnal and unexercised souls may rigidly observe the one, but such a condition paralyses all power for testimony.

SUBSTITUTION:

ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ," &c.

EVERY doctrine of the Word of God is now being questioned, and the enemy is seeking to undermine the foundations of all truth.

The fact that such questions should be raised among Christians is of itself solemnly significant.

But it is an instance of the feebleness of the grasp with which the truth is often held.

STATED IN SCRIPTURE.

The following Scriptures seem to us indisputably to teach "Substitution." We do not know how the doctrine *could* have been more definitely expressed.

"Christ hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust" (1 Peter iii. 18).

"He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21).

"That one Man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not" (John xi. 50).

"He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. liii. 5).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13).

TAUGHT IN TYPE.

But not to multiply Scriptures, we would refer to only one of that numerous class which are fashioned after the language of the Levitical offerings, and the full bearing of which is only apparent when type and antitype are compared.

"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

Here the reference is doubtless to the scape-goat in Lev. xvi. In that deeply significant type the two goats (like the two birds in Lev. xiv.) represent one person and one work in two different aspects:

1st. The satisfaction of God's claims on account of sin by death.

2nd. The satisfaction of the conscience of the worshipper on whose heart sin lay as a stain or a burden.

The blood (or the death)* of the divinely appointed Substitute satisfies God's claims against those who through sin had incurred the penalty of death. The transaction was between Christ and God. Next, there is a transaction between the sinner and God. He confesses that of which in the light of God he has seen himself to be guilty, and receives the assurance that God is satisfied on His behalf with the death of the Substitute. Thus by the one substitutionary death two results are effected. The sin is borne away from before God, and it no longer stands as a claim against the believing sinner. On the other hand, it is borne away from the conscience of the believing sinner, and no longer stands between his heart and God as an undischarged liability, a liability that only his death under the judgment and wrath of God could settle.

Nothing but substitutionary death could effect this, and it is abundantly witnessed in all the offerings, the language of all being, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). Nothing could be plainer than the Passover (Ex. xii.). The first-born exposed to judgment, but saved from it by the substitutionary death of a spotless victim.

So also the firstling of an ass (Ex. xiii.)—its neck to be broken. But let a lamb be substituted for it, and it may live. So in the provision of the ram for Isaac (Gen. xxii.). Isaac is about to die, the knife is lifted up, but Jehovah-Jiréh has found the ram caught in the thicket to be the substitute. It dies, and Isaac lives.

TWO ASPECTS.

Many who deny the doctrine of Substitution dwell much on the satisfaction given to God in the holy obedience in the life and death of His beloved Son. This is the burnt-offering aspect of His work—the aspect in which He is represented by the "sweet savour" offerings. As the holy One and the Just He suffered martyrdom at the hands of wicked men, yet He resisted not, neither opened He His mouth, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. Surely here is "the whole burnt-offering." But was that all? Does Scripture not teach another aspect of His sufferings? Did He not suffer the forsaking of God? Did

* Not the blood or life coursing through the veins of a living animal, but the blood "poured out" or the death of the victim was that which atoned for sin.

not the sword of Jehovah smite Him? Did not the billows and waves of wrath go over Him? Was he not made a curse from God? And is this not the aspect of His death that is borne witness to in all the sin offerings? And if so, did not He suffer thus as the Substitute for the guilty?

AN OBJECTION.

But one objection is raised by these rationalists which must be answered. They complain of the *injustice* of the Just being made to suffer vicariously for the unjust.

Clearly the quarrel is with the Word of God itself, and not merely with a doctrine deduced from the Word. But human law admits the principle, and no injustice is charged against it. If one who is poor is sentenced to pay a fine or go to prison the law recognises the principle of another paying that fine for him. The sentenced one is thereby justified in the eye of the law, and yet the law is upheld and magnified.

Where is the injustice? Injustice it would be to *compel* one to pay the fine for another; but if done *voluntarily* there is no injustice, and if done from love, the release of the loved one is love's reward!

Away, then, with the charge of injustice against the doctrine of Substitution. "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it" (Eph. v. 25). He "loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

THE RECOMPENSE.

But not only was there in the case of the Lord Jesus love's recompense in the saving and transforming of its object into His own character and glory, there is also the recompense from the Father of a special love on account of that obedience unto death: "Therefore doth My Father love Me" (Jno. x. 17). And a special exaltation: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him" (Phil. ii. 9).

The joy that was set before Him was, in His deliberate estimation, sufficient to warrant His obedience and all the suffering it involved. And yet further, there was the delight yielded to God the Father both in His obedience and in the result of it as opening the way for the outflow of grace in all its abundance and munificence to those who were rebels and enemies, and that consistently with the claims of infinite

holiness and inflexible righteousness. This is the character of God revealed for the instruction and rejoicing, the praise and adoration of all intelligent beings throughout the universe—a revelation surpassing infinitely every previous revelation of God, whether His wisdom, power, love, or any other attribute. These are seen in creation; but in the Cross of Christ He is seen as "the God of all grace."

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XXIV.

THE PARABLE OF THE RICH LANDOWNER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

LUKE xii. 13-21.

Verses 13-15. "And one of the company said unto Him, 'Master [or Teacher], speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me.' And He said unto Him, 'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?' And He said unto them, 'Take heed, and beware of [keep yourselves from] covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.'"

CHRIST was born King of the Jews, and He came a Light into the world, to communicate among men the mind and will of God. But He took no official place under the existing government of the world, nor in the general affairs of men. Hence He refuses to interfere in this matter. But He gave to the company, or multitude, a solemn word of warning concerning covetousness. He reminded them that there was something more worth living for than the accumulation of riches.

Verses 16-18. "And He spake a parable unto them, saying, 'The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought [was reasoning] within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow [gather together] my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.'"

Human reason was consulted, but there is here no inquiry of the mind of God for Divine direction, and human will is acted upon and human policy followed. Treasure is laid up on earth, and there is no provision, or desire, for heavenly riches.

Verses 19. "'And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'"

What intense selfishness is here! All the thoughts of this man are centred in self. His

ground had brought forth plentifully, yet it was God who had given the rain and the fruitful seasons, but there is no recognition of God, or grateful return to Him.

We read in Psalm xlix. 6, "They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches (verses 11-13), their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man, being in honour, abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve their sayings."

God created the soul for Himself, and nothing but Himself can satisfy it. The soul is destined for an eternal existence, and neither the riches of earth nor the things of time can fill its boundless capacities. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," said the wise man, much less of a long succession of to-morrows, lasting for many years, "for thou knowest not what a day," or night, "may bring forth."

The rich man, with Lazarus at the gate, fared sumptuously every day, "but the end of that mirth was heaviness." It is generally found that those who share their wealth with the needy enjoy their own portion far more than those who spend all their riches on themselves.

Verses 20, 21. "But God said unto him, 'Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

Though this man had nothing to say to God, yet God had something to say to him, for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. The folly of human wisdom is strikingly shown in this parable in five particulars:

1. The substitution of human reason for Divine direction.
2. The will of man for the will of God.
3. In preferring the riches of the world to laying up treasures in heaven.
4. In desiring things which are seen and temporal rather than those things which are unseen and eternal.
5. In seeking satisfaction in selfish enjoyment rather than in the favour and love of God. As Christ expressed it, "So is every one that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."

"GOD OUR FATHER."

An Address on Ephesians i., by Dr. THOMAS NEATBY;
Author of "Our Lord's Coming Again."

IT is the beauty of this chapter that it contemplates God acting in grace from Himself. What God does for us is because of His own eternal love and according to His own heart. This gives a peculiar charm to the Epistle. Even in chapter ii., which contemplates us in our misery and distance from God, it is God's full grace *according to what He is in Himself*.

The blessed God is introduced to us here as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" acting towards us according to this character; acting in the fulness of His power, majesty, and divine grace, and of His own will according to these blessed relationships. First, He acts according to what He is in Himself as God, then according to what He is in His relationship as Father.

Verses 4 and 5 just answer to these two characters, to the nature of God and to the relationship in which He has revealed Himself to us. God was known to the Patriarchs of old as the almighty God. After that He reveals Himself to Israel as Jehovah, the Great and blessed "I am." He has never lost this character. He is revealed to us in the same relationship. But He has taken in addition to these

A WONDROUSLY NEAR RELATIONSHIP

toward us—He is "Father" to us. He is not only "Our Father." I can say and you can say a great deal more to God than that He is our Father. He is our Father according to the character of the relationship He bears to Christ. He takes that very relationship with us. What simple faith (not merely intelligence, but faith) is needed to enable us to enter into this blessed relationship!

But take first God as such. He is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of our souls. To be a Saviour He has become a man, and He is God. O do ponder for a moment the dignity of His person. His having become a man and changing His place shows that He is God over all. You cannot change your place, no more can I. Can you, can I, take a higher place than God has put us into? Neither can we take a lower place: we cannot become one of the lower animals. But

God, the very God, God over all, became a man, thus showing Himself to be God in His very human nature. That God is revealed to us as our God. Think of it, my brethren. It is not a light matter. Once we were without God. Don't I know it? We were in this world without God. But now we have a God (blessed be His name!) every hour of the day: in every circumstance of joy and sorrow we have a God—a God to whom our hearts arise in adoring worship.

WE ARE HIS OWN CHILDREN—

not only adopted, that's true; but it is also true that we are of the same nature. God has begotten us again. And His purpose is that we should be like, fully like, our Father as that Father is made known to us in Christ.

We have a God. We don't always look like it. Sometimes I am conscious I don't. We have a God, the God of the universe, while also the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You have read Psalm lxxiii. with worshipping hearts, I know: "O God, thou art my God." He was not the God of Saul except in name, but He was David's God: "My God." Would that we might walk henceforth in the consciousness that God is our God.

The 4th verse is in connection with this, and bears out the thought. We are brought to the holy One, the mighty One. We are brought to God. "According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

We go back to our conversion, and we thank God with joyful lips. But God goes back before the foundation of the world to a purpose in the ages which was all divine.

Is it not refreshing, in this changing scene with a poor, fickle heart within, to go back before the foundation of the world and see that God chose us in Christ: in Him who was His delight, who was daily with Him?

HE CHOSE US IN CHRIST.

O how precious! How precious, in the daily circumstances of life, whatever they may be, to go back before the foundation of the world and to see ourselves chosen in Christ.

"He chose us in Christ that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

This is the choice of our God. O it is passing sweet! It is precious beyond all words. O God, speak to our hearts of what it is! I don't want to dwell on the mere words. I want our hearts, yours and mine, to be touched by the grace of our God, and to be drawn practically nearer to Him—to be drawn practically into the circle of God's thoughts about us. He has chosen you and me that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, according to His own character, who is infinitely holy.

If He is to have a people near Him they must be holy, so He has chosen us that we should be "holy," according to His own character. Also, He has chosen us in Christ that we should be "blameless," as He is blameless in all His ways of wisdom and of grace; and that we should be "before Him in love," because He is love in His very being and nature. O it is priceless in value! That we should be before God—brought there according to His character. It is the opposite of what I was and of what you were. But it is what He chose in His blessed counsels before the foundation of the world—that we should be in His presence answering to His character. O let our hearts bow down before Him. Let them be open to Him in any measure in which they answer to this choice: it is all the work of His hand. In any measure in which they don't answer to His choice there is work to be done. May He do it. "That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" is essential to the very nature of God. Then there is another thing: As God He will have worshippers; as Father He will have children. As brought into God's presence to enjoy God, and in the character of worshippers, it was essential that we should answer to our God. Besides that, He has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. Observe that when it is bringing us

AS CHILDREN TO HIS PRESENCE

it is according to the good pleasure of His will, which is not so said of us in verse 4 in connection with God having chosen us from before the foundation of the world. If God were to bring us to Himself at all He must bring us according to His holiness: it is essential to His glory. He might have given

us any place He saw fit. The angels are not children: they are holy, but they are not children; but when it is relationship as children it is "according to the good pleasure of His will." How well for you and me that it was the good pleasure of His will that you and I should be children. He has predestinated us to be children. "And because we are sons, He has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our heart, crying, Abba, Father." It is a real relationship, and there is a real, living power within you and me, within each Christian, to make it good and to make the relationship real, and to enable us to say, "Abba, Father," as expressive of a conscious nearness of relationship. As parents, you know how you feel towards your children. But our God loves

EACH ONE OF HIS CHILDREN

far beyond a parent's love. Do you believe it? It would make a revolution in our lives, if you and I believed that the "Holy and Mighty One, who inhabiteth eternity," looks down upon us, upon me, with the same affection that I have to one of my children, but infinitely above mine.

"Having predestinated us." It is taken out of our hands. It is His predestination, it is not ours. God has predestinated—it is absolute and fixed for all eternity—that you should be a child, and that you should be consciously in that relationship. It is the will of God that it should be to us every hour of every day a living reality. May God make it so.

In John iv. these two things are united, and that brings it a little nearer to us. When we see the wearied Man on Sychar's well, the God Man—don't let us forget Him—we hear Him speak to a poor sinner in her sins as He might have spoken to you or to me. It comes very near. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 23, 24). We have here the God that will surround Himself with worshippers, and, therefore, chose us before the foundation of the world. Here we have worship in its true filial character. We have the two combined. We know God as God, and

we know Him as Father, and the Father seeks worshippers. How precious is this! We are worshippers in the presence of our Father; and, not only in the presence of the holy and mighty God, but the worship takes the character of the place and relationship in which God has set us.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Etymologically it is the ascription of honour and worth to God. But, practically, it is our souls before the Holy God, and in the relationship of children to that God receiving everything from God, and telling it back to Him in unfeigned praise and thanksgiving. "Thus will I bless Thee while I live." We don't half know what that word means—"Thou' will I bless Thee." Is not He the blesser? Does not all blessing come from Him? How, then, can I bless God? It is the heart receiving of the communications of the Living God—His precious Grace in Christ Jesus, and pouring it back to Him in heartfelt worship. That is the highest thing in heaven or upon earth—the enjoyment of God for what He is, for what He has revealed Himself as. That is the highest state that any creature will ever be called into the enjoyment of. May God give it to us now in the circumstances of sin and sorrow in which we are found. By the precious Blood of Christ He has at once revealed Himself and met our deepest need.

LIFE, WALK, AND FRUIT.

- LIFE—Christ the source of it (1 John v. 12).
 "Abundantly the measure of it (John x. 10; John vii. 38-39).
 Christ risen, the supply of it (John xiv. 19).
- WALK—Worthy of God, who called us (1 Thess. ii. 12).
 Worthy of the Lord, who died for us (Col. i. 10).
 Worthy of the vocation, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. iv. 1-3).
- FRUIT—Holiness, the character of it (Rom. vi. 22).
 Abiding in Christ, the secret of it (John xv. 1-8).
 The Holy Spirit in us, the power for it (Gal. v. 22-23). T. D. W. M.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF CENTRAL
AFRICA.*

YEAR by year we are getting to know more and more of the "Dark Continent." When we remember that it is about three times the size of Europe, with a population of 250 millions of souls, it is no wonder that Christians are becoming exercised about its evangelisation. It is a sad and an appalling fact that millions of its inhabitants have never had the privilege of hearing the wondrous story of God's matchless grace. The "marching orders" of our risen Lord to His Church, "Go ye unto all the world and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE," have not been obeyed, and there are to-day 800 millions of persons who have not heard "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Worldliness is eating at the vitals of some who were once hearty, happy, Christian workers. An easy-mindedness has crept in among believers. It is to be feared a fatalistic spirit has laid hold of many, which finds expression in the oft-quoted saying, "If they are to be saved, they will be saved; if they are to be lost, they will be lost." When this thought is accepted as true, gospel fire is quenched, evangelistic enterprise is strangled, and the purses of God's stewards are tightly closed. Yet God in His Word declares that it is His wish that ALL MEN be saved (1 Timothy ii. 4-6.). It is surely, therefore, His longing, yearning desire that every sinner under heaven should hear the glad tidings of great joy ere he passes into eternity. It is our sin and our shame that we have not yet launched out into the "deep," and "let down" our gospel nets in every ocean, sea, lake, river, and streamlet inhabited by the "fish."

Thank God, there is an awakening among the children of God as to their privileges and responsibilities in relation to the multitude who are sitting in midnight darkness. Let the love of God fill our souls, and *worldliness*, which is the great hindrance to self-denying, persistent, aggressive gospel effort, will be powerless to keep us from saying in God's presence:

"Nought that I have mine own I'll call,
I'll hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my strength, my life, my all,
Are His, and His for ever."

The secret of *detachment* from the world, as one has pertinently remarked, is *attachment to Christ*.

We are delighted to see this new book of M. Coillard's. Doubtless, a number of our readers know something of M. Coillard's work among the Barotse on the Upper Zambesi. In Mr. Fred. S. Arnot's "Seven Years' Pioneering Mission Work in Central Africa," frequent allusion is made to M. Coillard, whilst in the appendix there are several interesting letters from his facile pen. "On the Threshold of Central Africa" is a handsomely got-up volume of 650 pages, with portraits of M. Coillard and his heroic wife, a map of the country, and forty-four beautiful illustrations from photographs taken by the author.

M. Coillard has the pen of a ready writer. His book is an exceedingly stirring and thrilling one. There is not a dull page in the whole of it. Our French brother is a worthy successor of Moffat and Livingstone. His love for the people, his interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare, his courage and faith, tact and patience, are abundantly evidenced in the simple, unvarnished story that he tells. M. Coillard was blessed with a wife — the daughter of an Edinburgh Baptist minister — who was as brave and devoted to the Lord as himself. For thirty long years she bravely shared his toils and hardships, and at last fell asleep in Barotse. The volume is dedicated to her "beloved and blessed memory," and gives a graphic picture of the lights and shadows, sorrows and joys, of a pioneering missionary's life.

Previous to their going to the Barotse the Coillards had for years laboured in Basutoland, and God had graciously helped and blessed them. Through a visit paid to the station at Leribè by the late Major Malan, the missionaries received great spiritual help and stimulus. The native Christians of Basutoland, as well as the missionaries, became exercised about spreading the light among the Banyai, a people living south of Matabeland who were utterly ignorant of God and His Gospel. In April, 1877, Mons. and Mme. Coillard started for

* On the Threshold of Central Africa: a Record of Twenty Years' Pioneering Work among the Barotse. By Francois Coillard. Witness Office, price 15s.

Banyai, accompanied by M. Coillard's niece, four Basuto catechists, with their wives and families, and four waggon leaders and drivers. They journeyed north-west, passed through the Transvaal, and after crossing the Limpopo river, plunged into a trackless forest. They had several narrow escapes from death. A Mashona chief nearly succeeded in murdering the whole party, but the angel of the Lord, that encampeth round about them that fear Him, delivered them. After escaping from the bloodthirsty Mashona, they were captured by the Matabeles and taken to Buluwayo, the capital of Lobengula's dominions. They appeared before the Matabele king charged with the crime of entering his territory without obtaining his royal permission! The party were kept in prison for four months. After their liberation Lobengula positively refused to allow them to settle in Banyai or any part of his possessions. Discouraged and disheartened at being refused permission to preach Christ to the Banyai, they visited Shosong, in Khama's country. Khama and his people gave them a cordial welcome, and invited them to labour among them. The ground having been already occupied by a devoted missionary of the London Missionary Society, they declined the invitation. Khama being on friendly terms with the Barotse king, offered to do what he could to pave the way for their settlement in that land. The party, accompanied by Khama's representatives, journeyed to the Barotse capital. King Lewanika, on being spoken to, expressed his willingness to receive them, and gave them full permission to open a station. This matter having been satisfactorily settled, the return journey to Leribè was commenced. After an absence of two years they reached their old station and were cordially welcomed by the Basuto Christians. Subsequently M. and Mme. Coillard visited Europe and sought to interest Christians in France and Great Britain in the evangelisation of the Zambesi tribes. Their furlough having expired, they returned to their friends at Leribè and commenced preparations for their long and dangerous journey. "The country," we are told, "was generally believed to be the unhealthiest in South Africa, and it was inhabited by seventeen different tribes, nominally under the sway of the Barotse kings, but per-

petually at war with one another." In January, 1884, the caravan started. The party consisted of M. and Mme. Coillard, their niece, M. Jeanmiret, a young Swiss missionary, two Basuto evangelists and their families, and two artisans, Middleton and Waddell, the one an Englishman and the other a Scotsman. Six months afterwards they reached Leshoma in safety, and were about to cross the Zambesi when news arrived that Mr. F. S. Arnot (who had for two years been labouring at Lealui, Lewanika's capital), had left for Benguela, and that a revolution had broken out and the king had been driven into exile. On Lewanika's restoration to power he sent for M. Coillard and gave him a site for a house, school, &c.

A school was started, meetings were commenced, and the Word was preached. For a considerable time there was but little apparent blessing. The king was a weak, unstable man, and, like most of us, greatly influenced by circumstances and surroundings. As the sins and evil customs of the nation were exposed—covetousness, idolatry, lying, murder, theft, adultery, polygamy, &c.—Lewanika and some of his headmen became troubled. M. Coillard again and again dealt faithfully with the king, as did Mr. Arnot before him, about his ungodliness. He appeared impressed and concerned. When told of judgment and eternal punishment, like Felix of old, he trembled and procrastinated. His headmen, fearing that if he became a Christian he would abolish polygamy and other evil customs, opposed the missionaries in every possible way. Sometimes the king appeared to favour the preaching, and at other times he persecuted those who attended the meetings. On one occasion he gave orders that all M. Coillard's workmen should be strangled. Eventually the hearts of the people were reached; the Gospel was received, and souls were saved. Litika—Lewanika's son—who was Mr. Arnot's first scholar, professed conversion.

The encouragements and discouragements, failures and successes, trials and troubles of the mission party will be read with deep interest. Two years ago M. Coillard, with enfeebled health, visited Europe. When he left Barotse, there were five stations at which the Gospel was preached. As we pen these lines, although over sixty years of age, he is at present in

England preparing to return to the Zambesi. May he be long spared, and much used of the Lord in spreading the name and fame of the Lord Jesus among the perishing multitudes in Central Africa.

THE YELLOW HEART.

Covetousness among the Barotse—as in Britain—is not at all uncommon. It is not inappropriately called by them the “yellow heart.” “By day, as by night,” says M. Coillard, “we are exposed to the most barefaced thefts. They respect neither our waggons, our folds, nor our houses. . . . I knew very well that they coveted everything, from the shoes on your feet to the hat on your head; that they could, without the slightest remorse, cut a man’s throat for the sake of seizing his coat; that they are masters in the arts of ruse and dissimulation.”

MISSIONARIES LEWANIKA DESIRES.

The Barotse king’s ideal missionaries are somewhat different persons from most heralds of the Cross. When a Methodist missionary asked the permission of his royal highness to commence a mission station in a distant part of his country, he refused, and said to him—“The French missionaries have given me all that they have to give, and that is nothing. What have I to do with their gospel and their God? Had we not gods before their arrival? Have they seen their God, of whom they talk so much? What *I* want is missionaries of all kinds, working side by side at Lealui and Nalolo, especially missionaries who build big workshops, and teach us all the trades of the white men. What *I* want is carpenters, armourers, masons, blacksmiths, and so on. . . . *We laugh at all the rest.*”

Much valuable information regarding the habits and customs of the people is given. This will be especially useful to those who are thinking of carrying the Gospel message to Central Africa. Let us daily remember at the Throne of Grace all true servants of Christ who have gone forth into the “regions beyond” (as well as the regions *around*) to win souls for Jesus, our soon coming Lord. “Nothing to-day is to the Church its shame and its crime as is this,” says Dr. A. T. Pierson, “that since Christ gave this last command, nineteen centuries have struck on the clock of the ages, and more

than sixty generations have lived, suffered, and died, with an aggregate population of from ten to twenty times the present number of the human race; and yet, with this positive command standing before us like Christ Himself, and pointing to the great world-field, and with the facts of awful spiritual destitution staring us in the face, the great bulk of the human family has perished, and will, in this century continue to perish, not unsaved only, but unwarned! For such a state of things no adequate apology or excuse is possible.” “Occupy till I come,” are the Lord of the harvest’s words to His servants. Praise God, that, though there is a hell for every sinner out of Christ, there is a Christ for every sinner out of hell. Let us remember the dying words of dear Reginald Radcliffe—“I want—I want—I want Christians to go all over the world and preach the Gospel.”

“O’er the Negro’s night of care,
Pour the living Light of Heaven;
Chase away his wild despair,
Bid him hope to be forgiven.

“Sound aloud Jehovah’s call,
Visit every soil and sea;
Preach the Cross of Christ to all—
Christ, whose love is full and free.”

A. M.

IMMEASURABLE LOVE.

WHAT a satisfying portion the Lord Jesus is, with all the unsearchable riches of His love, and of His sweet communion! Let us try to search out the unsearchable wonders of His grace and His glory; to measure the immeasurable lengths, and breadths, and depths, and heights of His infinite love. We cannot do it! Well, but let us try our utmost, just that we may find out that it cannot be done; and that we cannot do it, not because we are so very small, but because Christ and His fulness of grace are so inconceivably great. And now, when we have worn out ourselves with our unsuccessful effort to comprehend Him, let us refresh our weary hearts with the delightful thought that this same Christ, with ALL that He is, and ALL that He has, and ALL that He can do, is actually God’s amazing gift of love to us. Yes, God has given us His beloved Son, because He so LOVED us, that no smaller gift would have sufficed to express the greatness of that love. We need nothing more.

J. D.

"HE SHEWED THEM HIS HANDS."

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John xx. 19, 20).

HE shewed them His hands imprinted

With stains of His precious blood :
His hands that were bruised and broken
In lifting our awful load.

His hands where the nails had written
Receipts for the debts He paid :
He shewed them the full acquittal,
As "Peace be to you," He said.

He shewed them His hands of power,
The hands of His mighty arm :
The hands that He once uplifted,
And the hurricane hushed to calm.

The hands that gave life and healing,
The hands that had touched and blessed :
The hands that were free and mighty,
Though once to the hard cross pressed.

He shewed them His hands ! My brother,
Have you ever seen them spread :
And spelled your name in the crimson,
As with weeping eyes you read ?
Have you ever felt their shadow :
The blessing that from them fell,
As you found in their palm a hiding,
A nest where your soul might dwell.

O sweetly the sight would cheer us,
When thinking our Lord is dead,
If again He would stand before us,
And His hands of mercy spread.
Come, shew us Thy hands, Lord Jesus !
The hands that once bled their love :
Then cover us in their hollow,
Like a canopy spread above.

WILLIAM LUFF.

**"BECAUSE YE BELONG TO
CHRIST."**

Address by JOHN R. CALDWELL.
(Continued.)

LET us turn again to Mark ix. 33-42, the passage we have read. There are two things prominent in the character of the Lord Jesus, viz., love and lowliness. On the only occasion on which He describes His own heart

He says—"I am meek and lowly in heart." One of the words that the Lord Jesus frequently repeated was—"He that humbled himself shall be exalted." The one thing that is common to mankind is pride. It is the very nature of the flesh. Pride—personal pride, party pride, purse pride. Antichrist is the man that "exalteth himself above all that is called God." He will be just the full development of the old corrupt Adam nature. What is the Lord Jesus Christ? The One that "humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Now, which are you and I the likeliest? Do you and I, in our daily life and character, most resemble Christ or Antichrist? Are we most concerned about exalting self or abasing self? The true path to exaltation is self-abasement.

What were those disciples disputing about by the way? There is a word in the book of Proverbs that we are apt to forget: "Only by pride cometh contention." There never yet was dissension amongst saints that the root of it was not pride. There is pride lurking in some corner, if you can only find it out. The Lord Jesus knew all about it, and how it was withering their spiritual life; and so, when they came into the house, He asked, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" He always put questions that just brought out the very thing that was needed. "But they held their peace," or held down their heads. Perhaps they got red up to the ears. Oh, they were ashamed that the Master—the lowly Master—should know that they had been degrading themselves by disputing about who should be the greatest.

Has the Lord Jesus Christ ever seen us, perhaps not openly, but yet secretly and practically striving who shall be the greatest. May the Lord help us to be true to ourselves about these things. "And He called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first the same shall be last of all and servant of all. And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them; and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My Name, receiveth Me; and whosoever shall receive Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent me."

Now, here is a verse upon "receiving." Some of us have heard a good deal in our day about "receiving." Here is a verse from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ upon it. How did He receive that little child? He called the little child to Him, and set him in the midst—an object lesson for the twelve disciples. But He did not stop there; He did not begin to point the lesson until He had taken the little child up in His arms. Oh, look at that little child in the arms of the Lord Jesus, and his head upon His breast. That is "receiving." Is it, that on a certain day, at a certain hour on the clock, a certain person is recognised as received into a certain assembly? Well, I say nothing against that; I leave that aside, but I say, all that may be done, and yet there may have been no Scriptural reception. What the Lord Jesus Christ loves is a heart reception of one whom the Father gave Him; one that is a member of His Body; one for whom He bled and died—reception to the heart's affections, *because they belong to Christ.*

That is reception. Have we received God's saints that way? Do we receive one another that way—not only on first entering a local assembly, but daily, hourly, as we have opportunity, to meet and to greet a child of God wherever he is, simply because he is a child of God, and because he does belong to Christ? O that God would give us to see that He cares for nothing but the whole heart's affections. He wants to see His own love flowing out from us first to one another, and then in compassion to a guilty world.

I would like to stay and linger, looking at that picture of the little child in the arms of the Lord Jesus, and hear Him saying—"There is the way to receive the little ones that believe in Me." Receive them to your hearts. Are there not believers received into meetings, and, perhaps, a year after you don't know their faces! You have never once thought of inquiring about them, perhaps; took no interest in them whatever; just like a man received into a trade's society—"Oh, the secretary will look after them." "The elder brethren will look after them; what is that to me?" But "receiving" is "receive ye one another." It is a practical thing. It is the receiving to the heart because they belong to

Christ, and, in doing so, we are receiving Christ. He that receives one such little one—one of the feeblest, one of the most ignorant—He that receives one such little one that believes in Him, because he belongs to Christ, receives Christ.

It may be we begin by loving one another because we belong to Christ; but there is a tendency in our nature to degenerate, and by-and-by we love one another, not simply because we belong to Christ, but because we belong to the meeting. I know how much easier it is to love those that are of one mind with myself than to love those who differ from me. But God loves those that differ from us just the same as those who are amongst us. It is not that we are called to countenance evil. Nay, love will be faithful; love will speak the truth; love will seek the blessing of its object; love will do that which is right and pleasing to God. But Divine love will never do anything that will injure one that belongs to Christ.

But let us pass on. Verse 38—"And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils [demons] in Thy Name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us."

Now notice, John did not merely say, "We saw one casting out demons," but "we saw one casting out demons in Thy Name." This was a person who knew the power of the Name of Jesus. He might have known little else, but he knew the power of the Name of Jesus, and he was casting out demons in that Name. Well, there may be men, ignorant and in many respects foolish men, and yet they may know the power of the Lord Jesus to save their own souls, and they know His power and willingness to save others.

I was going along Argyle Street, in Glasgow, one Sunday lately, and there was a crowd at the corner of one of the streets, and in that crowd was a working man—a man that could not put many words together, and there was no attempt at oratory, but he was telling them that the Lord had saved him; that he had not the sore head he had in the morning when he used to frequent the whisky shops. He said—"I am now a happy man, and the Lord Jesus Christ is both able and willing to do the same for you." It was a simple testimony, but that

man knew the power of the Name of Jesus, and he was making it known to others.

What follows? "We forbade him, because he followeth not us."

Now, you notice in this passage there are two kinds of pride. The previous kind was *personal* pride—"Who should be greatest;" this is *party* pride—"He followeth not us." "He does not belong to our party." What does the Lord Jesus say? He did not say, "Go you after him;" nor did He tell them, "Go and leave Me and join his company." No, but He said, "Forbid him not." Why? "For there is no man that shall do a miracle in My Name that can lightly speak evil of Me." You see the Lord Jesus reduces it to a personal matter. Is he a man that loves Me? Is he a man that would speak evil of Me? It is personal. It is not whether he follows with us, but, Does he love Me? Would he speak evil of Me?

Perhaps the Lord may give him more light by-and-by, but meantime do not hinder him. And let us take care that we do not speak evil or speak disparagingly of those who are, it may be, casting out demons in the Name of the Lord Jesus, though they don't see what we see and don't follow with us.

God forbid that I should fall in with the ways of some, which, however well meant, are bringing the glorious Gospel into disrepute, and this in connection with what is supposed to be the Lord's work in these days. God forbid that I should have fellowship with such practices as young girls with their collection boxes in front of them begging from the world for collections for the work of the Gospel. I blush to think of such things being done in the Name of the Lord Jesus. But shall I speak evil of them? No; those of the so-called "Salvation Army," have been the means of casting out many a demon. I may not speak evil of them. I respect their love to Christ and their love for souls, and God has blessed them. But it is one thing to follow with such, and it is quite another thing, whilst respecting them for the good that is in them, to seek rather to help them into "the ways that be in Christ."

The Lord Jesus does not need the coppers of unconverted people. Let us be clear about that. We need not go to the enemies of God for collections to carry on His work. But there

are many who do not see that, and who think they are doing a good thing, and are denying themselves to do it. Well, do not let us speak evil of such, but pray for them that God would lead them into the light, and bless them and make them a blessing.

But let us hurry on. 40th verse—"For he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My Name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

Only a cup of water! Why not a loaf of bread? Oh, well, a loaf of bread might cost fourpence; a cup of water does not cost anything. He is looking on the heart; He is looking on the love of that heart. He sees the readiness with which that heart went for the cup and drew the water, and brought it to the person; and He sees there is a special alacrity about the service, because it was done for one that belonged to Christ. It is that which gives value to our service one to another, when we do it for those who belong to Christ, *because they are His*, and it is this that rejoices the heart of the Lord. Why, He marks it down for a prize at the crowning day! He marks it down for a high certificate in that day of recompense to His people for their service to Him. A cup of water given to one because he belongs to Christ shall not be forgotten.

God would have us do all that we do for one another on that ground, and to love one another for no other reason than that we belong to Christ. Why, the hypocrites love those that love them. Tories love Tories; Radicals love Radicals. There is nothing in that. It is an easy matter to love one who is of the same mind as themselves; but when some dispute arises, such love quickly turns to vinegar. It is not Divine love. Divine love is like the Apostle Paul's—"I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." That is the love we are called to have one to another.

Now, in conclusion, in the next verse—"And whosoever shall offend [or cause to stumble] one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were cast about his neck, and he were cast

into the sea." What does that mean? The Lord looks with tenderest compassion and care upon those that believe in Him. His desire is that they might go along joyfully—happily in His ways and in the light of His countenance, receiving His blessing. But you and I, by our careless walk, by our hard and unloving ways, by our bitter words, by our misrepresentation of the truth, by our want of obedience to His new Commandment—you and I may be stumbling little ones that believe on Him. The Lord Jesus says—"I would rather you were at the bottom of the sea than that you should live to be a stumbling-block to a little one that believes in Me."

Beloved friends, have our ways stumbled Christ's little ones? Has our want of love one to another, our personal pride, our party pride, stumbled Christ's little ones? Has our love of pleasure, and our love of being uppermost, stumbled Christ's little ones?

Ah, has not many a one, when they came in amongst God's people, expected to find it a very hot-house of love; but they have been chilled and repelled, and, perhaps, the first thing they got was a lot of evil stories poured into their ears. Have not the little ones been stumbled?

Perhaps there are some of us here to-day of whom the Lord might truly say—"I would rather you had been at the bottom of the sea ten years ago than that you should have lived to stumble My little ones." Not that one who has been given by the Father, and quickened by the Holy Spirit, and washed in the Blood of Christ, could be lost; but, alas, alas! they might lose, and be eternally losers of, recompense and honour at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The reward that He would have delighted to bestow they have lost, for they were stumbling-blocks to the little ones.

Beloved friends, let us take heed how we walk. Let us seek to love one another for Christ's sake. Let us get rid of personal ambition. Let us get rid of party pride and strife. Let us seek to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and then we will know the blessing of the Lord upon us, and there will be power in the testimony and in the Gospel such as we have not seen.

CHRIST in heaven is our standing before God; Christ on earth is our pattern.

EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

IT is the mark of an evil day when that word in Heb. x. 25 becomes a dead letter—"Exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." To exhort one another implies a certain degree of spiritual vigour in those who are ready for this great service. We do not refer so much to platform exhortation as to individual exhortation. The platform exhortation is not a difficult work. Vague generalities do not alarm those who are at ease in Zion. It is altogether different with personal exhortation—one believer taking another aside and enquiring how the soul is prospering, or perhaps pointing out certain tokens of departure from God. This work is not so simple as a general exhortation to the assembly as a whole. To lay hold of a believer and deal with him as to his ways and doings, throws you open to the risk of being attacked in turn. Many shrink from this. And thus it comes that the exhortation to exhort one another is so largely neglected. Besides, to exhort another believer may be a disagreeable duty. To point out where a brother is departing from God may make that man your enemy! The devil whispers, "Why should you needlessly render yourself unpopular?" You accordingly leave the work for some one else to do. When considerations such as these are allowed to have weight in a company of believers, a state of things is reached similar to that which prevailed in the days of the Judges, concerning which time we read that "in those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Jud. xvii. 6). When this is true of a company of believers, their condition may well give cause for alarm to all who watch for souls. When believers have arrived at that point when they virtually say to one another, "Don't find fault with me about anything, and you may be sure I won't find fault with you," it means that they are joined to their idols, and want to be left alone. Such a state of things should not be allowed to continue. Let praying hearts lay hold on God. Let there be an individual searching of ourselves—yea, a cleansing of ourselves—so that we need not fear to have the "tables turned"

upon us when we seek to turn some one from the error of his way. Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence. This luke-warm age, if allowed to have its way, would quench the voice of testimony and proclaim the gospel of universal licence for the people of God. But we have been called to holiness. We have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son. Each one of us is in some measure his brother's keeper. Therefore, let that word lay hold upon us—"Exhorting one another." Am I found saying, "But I am not in a condition to exhort anyone"? If so, it is time I was getting down on my face before God as to the state of my own heart. A conspiracy of silence as to how each other's souls are prospering is no part of God's provision for the sanctification and building up of His people. Even in Malachi's dark and cheerless day "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." And this speaking must have had some special connection with the spiritual condition of those God-fearing ones, for we read that "the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name" (Mal. iii. 16). Let us pray that the Lord may unite our hearts thus to fear His name—that the ministry of personal exhortation may have free course among the assemblies of His people, to the blessing of many and the glory of His great name.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST IS

1. The *record* of the greatest sin that was ever committed (Acts ii. 23).
2. The *exhibition* of the greatest love that was ever seen. (Rom. v. 8).
3. The *manifestation* of the greatest victory that was ever achieved (Heb. ii. 14).
4. The *introduction* of the greatest force that has ever operated (1 John iii. 16).
5. The *unlocking* of the greatest problem that has ever engaged man's attention (1. Pet. i. 11).
6. The *supply* of the greatest incentive that has ever been given (2. Cor. v. 14).
7. The *making known* of the greatest example we can ever imitate (Eph. v. 2). F. E. M.

Correspondence.

THE CITY AND THE BRIDE.

IN response to the questions on above subject in January *Witness*, we have received no less than fourteen letters, mostly long, and, if printed, they would more than fill the whole *Witness* columns.

We have pleasure, however, in printing the clear and concise answer given by our venerable friend, Mr. Thomas Newberry, as it covers most of the points taken up at greater length in other letters.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

In response to your invitation in *The Witness* of January, permit me to reply to your

Question I. "Is the City the Bride, or is it the Dwelling-place of the Bride?" *Answer*. What saith the Scripture? Revelation xxi. 9—The angel does not say, "I will show you the habitation of the Bride," but "THE BRIDE, the Lamb's wife."

Question II. "Is it literal or figurative, or both?" *Answer*. In Rev. i. 1, we read that Jesus Christ sent and *signified* these things by His angel to His servant John. Thus we learn that the character of the book of Revelation is symbolic—that is, spiritual truths are made known by signs or symbols. The signs given are to be taken as symbols, but the interpretation is to be understood literally. The angel shows the City, but explains it to represent the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Question III. "Is the same City referred to in Rev. xxi. 2 and 10, and xxii. 1, 2, or are different cities spoken of?" *Answer*. The same City is referred to in Rev. xxi. 2, 10, and xxii. 1, 2, as emblematic of the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Question IV. "Is it at the beginning of the millennium or at the beginning of the eternal state, that the City of Rev. xxi. 2, 10, descends out of Heaven from God?" *Answer*. Both. In Rev. xxi. 2 the Bride is seen associated with the Bridegroom at the commencement of the eternal state, when in vision the City is seen descending from God, out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, in connection with the new heavens and the new earth. In verse 10 the same City in vision is seen descending in connection with the millennial earth. That this is so, is clear from Rev. xxii. 2, where the leaves of the tree are said to be for the healing of the nations. This can only refer to the millennial earth, because in the new earth the former things will have passed away, and there will be no more pain.

THOMAS NEWBERRY.

We entirely concur with Mr. Newberry in holding that the City symbolically represents the Bride. In Rev. xvii. and xviii. there is seen a woman and a city, and in xvii. 18 it is stated "the woman is that great city," &c. It is generally admitted that the woman and the city both symbolise a great apostate religious system, though many contend also that the city is literal. The name on the woman's forehead is the name of a city. Similar to this is the language used of Jerusalem—see Gal. iv. 25, 26—"in bondage with her children," "the mother of us all." The two figures, woman and city, seem to converge in one and represent *the Covenant*.

Similarly, in Rev. xxi. the woman and the city are one, and represent a redeemed and glorified people. Whether it represent Israel or the Church, it is figurative language to call a multitude of persons a city, and equally so to call them a bride. We are not prepared to assert or to deny that some kind of literalness may attach to the city of Rev. xviii. (Babylon), and also to that of Rev. xxi. Indeed, Heb. xi. 10-16, xii. 22, Phil. iii. 20 ["citizenship," not "conversation"] and other passages, seem to necessitate a glorious habitation answerable to a city. But the literal tabernacle was in every part symbolic, and so might a literal heavenly city be altogether symbolic. There is almost insurmountable difficulty, however, in accepting the literalness of the wonderful details given in Rev. xxi., both as to the construction and the dimensions of the city. They rather are fitted to convey every idea of magnificence, costliness, glory, blessedness, and permanence, that it is possible for finite minds to form any conception of. And He who thus raises our expectations to the very highest pitch will in no wise disappoint them.

We also concur with Mr. Newberry in holding that the city of Rev. xxi. 1, 2, and 10, and xxii. 1-5 is one. Rev. xxi. 1-5 appears to be post-millennial, and takes us on to the eternal state. But xxi. 10 to xxii. 5, we conclude, must be millennial, from the fact that the leaves of the tree are for the *healing* of the nations.

If this, then, as we hold, be a millennial scene, how is it possible that she who comes down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, being the dwelling-place of God and of the Lamb, and having in it the throne of God and of the Lamb, can be Israel?

That Old Testament, or Israelitish, terms and phrases abound in the book of Revelation is obvious, but this no more excludes from it teaching concerning the Church than do similar features in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And it cannot be denied that this characteristic feature of the book is as much in evidence in chapters ii. and

iii., where the churches are specially named, as in any other part.

If the marriage relationship was inapplicable to the relationship existing between Christ and the Church, we do not see how the Apostle Paul could have made use of it as he does with perfect freedom in Rom. vii. 4, 2 Cor. xi. 2, and Eph. v. From these Scriptures we seem to be fully warranted in appropriating to ourselves (not thereby necessarily excluding others of a different dispensation from cherishing similar ideas) the joys of mutual love and confidence that such a relationship suggests.

Is it not apparent that the reference to Eve in 2 Cor. xi. 3 is suggested by the espousal and presentation of verse 2? And is it not evident that in Eph. v. 31 the mind of the Apostle reverts to the same event?

That they two became one flesh did not constitute them one body. The husband is the head of the wife (1 Cor. xi. 3), but it is headship in a different sense from being head of a body, for it does not annul the individuality or hinder the peculiar joys that only two distinct personalities are capable of—viz., of communion and affection.

We cannot concede, after all that has been written, that Eph. v. resolves itself into the body relationship only. It appears to us to teach quite as clearly the marriage relationship. And here one of our correspondents quotes appropriately from Alford: "But I (emphatic) say (allege it) with reference to Christ and the Church—that is, my meaning in citing Gen. ii. 24, is to call your attention, not to mere human marriage, but to the high and mysterious relation between Christ and His Church, of which that other is but a faint resemblance. Nevertheless (not to go further with the mystical bearings of the subject), you also (as well as Christ), everyone, let each so love his own wife as himself."

The city is the place of the throne of God and of the Lamb; it is His dwelling-place, and is irradiated by His glory. It is therefore a temple, and more than a temple, for it answers to the HOLIEST OF ALL, with the mercy-seat and the cherubim and the shekinah glory. Can this be anything else than that which even now "groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. ii. 20, 21)?

We have endeavoured in these remarks to embody a number of the leading thoughts in the letters received, and we must ask the forbearance of the writers for not publishing them. They are nearly all most interesting, and must have been the result of no small amount of labour and thought; we therefore greatly regret not being able to give our readers the benefit of them.

We conclude by giving a short extract from an address by the late Mr. William Lincoln, of Beresford, London, which we judge will be found profitable by all, whatever view they hold as to the City and the Bride.—Ed.

Extract from an Address delivered by the late Mr. LINCOLN.

But now comes the sixth division of this epistle (Ephesians). Again the Spirit shows how love is to be maintained, and it is very worthy of observation that God always puts the weakest first, when He is dealing in Grace. It is the wife before the husband, the children before the parents, the servant before the master, and so on. And it is whilst enlarging on these relationships, and the correlative affections, that the display of Christ's love to His Church is brought in, as it were, though in a by-way, yet to a grand climax. That is the usual way in the New Testament of bringing in, in an apparently incidental way, the grandest truths. So in verses 25-30, we have seven truths as to Christ's way with His Church. First, He loves it; secondly, He gives Himself for it; thirdly and fourthly, He "sanctifies and cleanses it by the washing of water by the Word;" for once purged, there is no more conscience of sins. Next, we read that the Lord Jesus Christ nourishes and cherishes the Church. He has never resigned His office. In the seventh place we have the ultimate object—"That He Himself might present her to Himself, the Church, glorious." Not "a glorious Church," but "the Church, glorious." You see the value of the exact reading there.

It seems that the thought of the Church being the Body is here put in subordination to that of her being the Bride. Eve was literally taken out of the body of Adam; but, observe that, while the Lord brought Eve to Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ brings His Bride to Himself. It is an argument for the Divinity of Christ—the reference to Genesis ii. is unmistakable. So there is our position—"We are members of His Body," being taken out of His flesh and out of His bones. These words "out of" are valuable. The ties of relationship in the Old Testament were always expressed by flesh and bones; now in these days we have got down to flesh and blood. But "we are members of His Body—out of His flesh and out of His bones." Then, for a moment, the writer, coming back to the love of the husband for the wife, rouses us from all insensibility as to the grandeur of the love entertained by Christ for His Church, by the declaration that all this is a great mystery, since he is speaking of the love of Christ and of the Church. Then this sixth part is continued down to chapter vi. 9.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

TWO RESURRECTIONS.—Please explain Daniel xii. 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

"THIS CUP," AND "THIS HOUR."—What is the CUP to which the Lord alluded? (Matt. xxvi. 39-42; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42); and what is the HOUR alluded to (Mark xiv. 35; John xii. 27)? Was the prayer answered, and how?

SHARES IN JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is it contrary to the teaching of Scripture for a Christian to take shares in a joint-stock company of which most of the shareholders are unsaved?

FAITH: IS IT INVOLUNTARY?—Is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (by which we are saved) an involuntary action?

LIVING BY FAITH.—From 1 Cor. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to "live by faith," and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT.—Is the last clause of Ephesians v. 18 as in the Authorised Version a correct translation? or should it be, as some render it, "Be filled *in* Spirit?"

BLIND AND DEAF—WHO?—Kindly explain who the blind servant or deaf messenger is in Isaiah xlii. 19. Is it Christ, the true and faithful servant, or Israel, as in Matt. xiii. 14, 15?

THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S DEATH.

QUESTION 555.—Is it according to the Scriptures to teach that the Lord Jesus died of a broken heart?

Answer.—Fifty years ago, a Christian physician sought to find some "physical cause" for the speedy death of the Lord Jesus, as compared with ordinary cases of crucifixion, and concluded that the immediate cause of His death was the rupture of the heart through the intensity of His mental suffering. This conclusion he regarded as the simple and only explanation of the fact that when the Lord's side was pierced, "blood and water" flowed therefrom. Nearly forty years ago, this theory was adopted by a well-known expositor of Scripture, and two eminent physicians supported it. All four treated the subject as a *sacred* one, and dealt with it in a *reverent* manner. Yet, if we give to the word *reverent* its highest sense, is there not something essentially *irreverent* in seeking for any "physical cause" of the death of Christ? Is it not like presuming to look into

the ark of God (1 Sam. vi. 19), or dealing with matters that are too high for us (Psalm cxxxi.)?

Those referred to as supporting the theory that the "physical cause" of the death of Christ was "a broken heart," all speak of His great sufferings as the Bearer of sin; and yet quote the words of Psalm lix.: "*Reproach hath broken My heart.*"

Now, the special sufferings which the Lord endured as the Surety of His people were from the hand of God; but *from Him* He had no "reproach." *That was from man.* Therefore, unless we are to say that the greatest sufferings of the Lord—those which caused His death—were from the reproaches of men, we must take the words "Reproach hath broken My heart," like the words about the "deep waters" in the same Psalm, as metaphorical, though meaning far more than we can understand.

The *mode* (Gal. iii. 13), and the *place* (Heb. xiii. 12) of the death of Christ are both specially noted, and also what they signify. The *speediness* of His death is also carefully recorded; but of the *final cause* there is no mention. This is surely not without instruction. His death was not *from crucifixion*, though he was crucified, nor was it from physical exhaustion. We must ever remember that while from one point of view it is true that men "killed the Prince of Life"; from another it is equally true that no one took His life from Him. To His God He could say, "Thou bringest Me into the dust of death" (Psalm. xxii. 15), and in Mark and Luke we have that death described by the ordinary word for expiring. But of Himself He laid down His life (John x. 18), and this seems specially marked by Matthew and John, who both say that He yielded, or gave, up His Spirit. In the face of these plain statements, which mere reason can never harmonise, may all curious questions give place to adoring and grateful worship!

W. H. B.

Editor's Note.—We entirely concur in the foregoing answer. The words (John x. 18), "I have power [authority] to lay down My life," appear to be a sufficient explanation of the phenomena of the Lord's death. This power was never given to the creature. A man may forcibly take his own life, and commit the sin of suicide, or he may yield himself to others to be killed for Christ's sake, but the power voluntarily to yield up his spirit has never been given to any but the Son.

CONFLICT AND FREEDOM.

QUESTION 556.—If the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit still goes on (Gal. v. 17), how am I made free from the law of sin and death (Rom. viii. 2)?

Answer.—Romans viii. 2 speaks of our judicial position; Gal. v. 17 of personal experience. It is always needful carefully to distinguish between these.

The conflict is owing to the fact that the law of the members and the law of the mind, as matters of experience, remain in us, though the law of sin, and of death as its penalty, is no longer in force against us, for we are under a new law—that of the Spirit, the law of life in Christ Jesus.

Romans vii. exhibits the three "laws" at conflict in the awakened soul. 1st, "The law in the members"—the evil within, and the inability of ourselves to present a perfect righteousness. 2nd, "The law of the mind"—the consciousness of right and wrong, striving in vain to attain that righteousness. And, 3rd, "The Law of God"—bringing the soul under condemnation, claiming the penalty—death, for every transgression. Such is the "wretched" condition of the man so long as under bondage to the law.

But now another, a fourth "law," comes in—"the law of the Spirit," that of "life in Christ Jesus"—life no longer to be sought by obedience to the law, but found in Christ's atoning work, whereby the dominion of sin (vi. 14), its power to condemn, is for ever taken away.

It is these two latter laws that have changed places, as affecting our judicial position. The two former remain. The evil tendencies of nature are not eradicated. The new birth has not destroyed the old one. As our bodily faculties remain to us, so, morally, what we are by nature is still in us, ever ready to assert itself except as it is kept under subjection by the Spirit. For now, instead of the law of the mind being utterly helpless, by reason of being under the dominion of the condemning law, we have come under the dominion of the Spirit, who, revealing pardon, life, and peace, is given to work in us *to will* and *to do* of His good pleasure. And this Divine power operates in us in so far as we walk in the Spirit, as we cherish His gracious presence and energy to rule in us and work in us. Failing this, the flesh rises and has its own way. Hence the conflict. Therefore it is written—"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

W. C.

Editor's Note.—We would add further, that liberty is not inconsistent with conflict. Liberty, often dearly bought, has almost invariably to be maintained by conflict. So long as in the conflict the liberated one is victorious, the liberty is maintained; only through defeat can the bondage be reimposed. In the case of the believer, final and ultimate defeat is rendered impossible by "the power that worketh in us," that of the Spirit of God.

"THE FIRST DIVISION IN THE CHURCH."

BY EPHRAIM VENN.

"I wrote unto the Church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not" (3 John 9).

IT is noticeable that of the three Epistles of John the first only is general, the two latter being addressed to private persons. This seems to indicate that the points touched upon in them have a special bearing on the last sad days of the Church's history on earth, and are particularly applicable to the closing moments of the last hour.

The spirit and principle of these two epistles have a general and constant application, but the questions dealt with refer rather to local associations than to the wider relationships of the first epistle. These two epistles would thus prepare us for

PARTICULAR AND LOCAL DIFFICULTIES,

just as 2 Peter and Jude help us to understand the *general* state of things in a corrupt Christendom as her last sands are sinking.

And to our hearts how sweet is the thought that He who loved the Church and gave Himself for her, loves her not a whit less in the last days of her feebleness here! His love has anticipated every difficulty, and made full provision for every peril of the last days. "He loved them unto the end." "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the age." Surely it is enough for our hearts to have the love and the presence of Him who is able to keep us from stumbling, conducting us safely through the general corruption, or the special conflicts of the end of the age, that He may present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

Blessed be God, we are not left in this scene without ample resources, not left to drift with every current, our anchor within the veil is both sure and steadfast. The Comforter remains with us *for ever*—the unbreakable link with an ascended Christ, so that, while we may be tossed by the tempest, we may always be preserved from drifting with the tide of present evils.

The First Epistle.

In the *First* Epistle of John two great truths are unfolded and enforced—the doctrine of Christ and the fellowship of saints. In this

epistle the Sonship of Jesus Christ and the brotherhood of all who are now the children of God are the two great pillars—the Jachin and the Boaz—of the house. Upon these two pillars the two commandments of the epistle hang: "This is His commandment, that we should believe on the Name of His Son Jesus Christ; and love one another, as He gave us commandment" (1 John iii. 23). When we have faith in the Son of God, and love those who are begotten of God, we can say: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ," and "We have fellowship one with another" (i. 3, 7)—that is, we have the fellowship of *truth* and the fellowship of *love*.

From the first, Satan's great object has been to separate truth and love, to attack them by open assault, or undermine them under cover of a profession of superior light and advanced truth; but this comes out specially in the two later epistles.

The Second Epistle.

In the *Second* Epistle the attack is upon the truth touching the Person of Christ. "*The doctrine of Christ*" had been surrendered by many deceivers, and the saints needed a word of warning as to that (see verses 7-11). Anything touching the honour of Christ must be guarded with jealous care by every child of God; not merely by the "elders of the assembly," but by every one who is loyal to Christ. "*For whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.*" Such an one is *not to be received*, even into the house, nor to be saluted with "God speed."

Thank God for such a warning—so much needed in our day; but let us not be led into an erroneous use of it, for we know too well how ready the enemy is to persuade us to turn the edge of the sword against those who do abide in the doctrine of Christ, and to cut off those who are walking in the truth. Therefore, before giving the warning of verse 10, the Apostle recalls the commandments which we had "from the beginning," "that we love one another;" "Walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father" (verses 4, 5).

The Third Epistle.

In the *Third* Epistle it is not the deceiver

or transgressor abandoning the doctrine of Christ, but the overbearing brother lording it over God's heritage: he receiveth not the brethren, and casteth out of the Church them that would. This is an attack on our fellowship one with another *from within*, while in the previous epistle our fellowship with the Father and with the Son is undermined *from without*.

But as this is a subject which often occupies the minds of many of the Lord's people, causing perplexity and sometimes stumbling to the godly, it will be well to look more closely into the contents of this short third epistle.

Some of the peculiarities here are most striking. Here only in John's Epistles do we get the word "Church," and it occurs three times. In the first Epistle, the common life of all God's children is the theme; in the second, family life; in the third, it is *Church life*; but in all three the life is assailed. In the *first*, the danger is a spurious profession; in the *second*, false teaching; and in the *third*, unscriptural fellowship. In each case it is something human in place of that which is Divine—the fleshly and natural seeking to rule out the godly and spiritual. Therefore, in all three epistles *truth* is the only path for our feet, and *love* is the *only* bond of our fellowship among saints.

The course of declension in the Apostle's days finds its counterpart in our days, but the remedy is a fresh laying hold of the truth given at the first.

CHURCH GROUND IS HERE RE-OCCUPIED;

Church truth is set forth, and the responsibilities and experiences of Church fellowship are brought out. Every one who understands this will know how perfectly the facts of recent years accord with this feature of John's third epistle. At the close of an apostate age our gracious Lord brings back a handful of His own to simple Scriptural teaching and order, according to Matt. xviii. 20 and kindred Scriptures. It is thus that the assembly appears here; it is rather in its *local* aspect, and not as the whole "Church, which is His Body." A number of children of God gathered together unto "His Name" (verse 7) are called "an assembly," a called out and called together company.

The next feature is particularly noticeable. Two brethren are named whose actions are

specially mentioned, and we find that they are not of "one mind and one judgment;" in spirit, word, and act they differ widely. More sorrowful still, there are now

TWO PARTIES.

The hateful seed of discord sown among brethren has produced a terrible harvest of division in the assembly. The weakening of brotherly love, at first allowed, makes way for difference of judgment; self-assertion follows, and we are staggered by the acknowledgment in Scripture, for the first time, that actual division has taken place. No longer can it be said by the Bridegroom, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one." The living Head above looks down upon the confusion among His members that should have been "knit together in love," and behold, variance, emulations, strife, heresies (sects)! And now we have the two ominous words,

"THEM" AND "US,"

to describe the two separated parties. On the one hand there is the party headed by Diotrephes, "who loveth to have the pre-eminence among *them*"—that is, the Church to which John had previously written without effect (verse 9). We have also those described by the word "*us*," including the writer, Gaius, with the "brethren" of verse 5 and Demetritus, all of whom are in happy association and love as *brethren*.

One little touch is very telling here, and should not be unnoticed. The word "Church" occurs in connection with both of these companies of saints. In verses 9 and 10 it is used twice in relation to "them," and it seems clear that in verse 6 it occurs in connection with "us." It appears the brethren who had gone forth and had received the loving hospitality of Gaius had returned to John and mentioned the action of Diotrephes, while also bearing witness of the love of Gaius "before the Church" from which they had set out. A further distinction is, that in reference to the "us" who are not received, the word "Church" is used without the definite article—it is only *an* assembly. In his book, "John, whom Jesus Loved," Dr. Culross renders it "*an assembly*." But among "them" over whom Diotrephes is pre-eminent, who "receive *us* not," it is prefaced

in each case with the definite article—it is *the* assembly. Many of us are but too well acquainted with the modern display of this ancient picture.

The central point of the letter is

“THE RECEPTION QUESTION,”

touching the brethren who *ought to be received* by one assembly from another (verses 5-8), and “the Church,” where godly brethren would not be received, is conspicuous (verses 9 and 10). John does not inculcate a peace-at-any-price fellowship, but dwells upon the character, walk, and service of such as “we ought to receive,” and then proceeds to unearth the carnal spirit that would not receive them. It is helpful to see how the character of those who are “not received” is given in detail.

First, Gaius, who seems to be of weakly bodily constitution, is in a prosperous state spiritually; of him it is said, “Thy soul prospereth.” “Ah,” it may be said, “but *that* is not everything.” No, it is not everything; but, my brother or sister, if your own soul is really prospering at this moment, you will readily admit that it is a very blessed thing, and a very great thing—a very good beginning to go on with in any child of God.

It is to be feared that some would make this a *secondary* consideration, or even one to be put last in the case of a brother to be *received*. Intelligence, gift, or perhaps a correct judgment as to the right “*assembly position*,” would be made the first qualification. All of these are valuable in their place, but they may be very prominent where the soul is in a languishing, unspiritual condition. At Corinth the saints were enriched in Christ in all utterance and in all knowledge, coming behind in no gift, and yet were impoverished in themselves, and in a carnal condition, split up into factions, and glorying in their shame. There is no word about the abilities of Gaius—though he might have had them—the great thing which he sought to maintain was *soul prosperity*.

No doubt Diotrephes looked down on him as only a simple-minded believer, and since he was so untaught and weak as to help forward the brethren objected to, he had small scruple in casting him out of the Church. But it is further testified by the brethren who came back to John, *that the truth is in him* (verse 3).

This is a matter of *great rejoicing* with John, for perhaps he had heard very different statements from another quarter. It is most satisfactory to be able to meet

EVERY “MALICIOUS ACCUSATION”

with such a testimony as this. But not only has Gaius the truth in him, he is also *walking in the truth* (verse 3). He is an exponent of the truth in his life, an epistle of Christ manifestly declared before all men. Again, this report brings with it such *joy* to the apostle that he says he has *no greater* (verse 4).

Now let us look at the way of Gaius with his brethren. He who prospers in soul, who has the truth *in him*, and who *walks in the truth*, will never become a leading man in the divisions of the Lord's people, for “every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.” Therefore it is just what we might expect in Gaius, when we read that the brethren who came and testified of the truth that was in him should bear witness also of *his love* before the Church (verse 6). His love was shown not only to well-known brethren, but to strangers likewise, *i.e.*, to brethren coming from a distance. “Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers which have borne witness of thy love before the Church.” His love was not in word only, but in deed and in truth, and the brethren were able to say that he had brought them on their way “after a godly sort.” His was no cold reception, for he was a fellow-helper to the truth. “Beloved Gaius,” would that more of us were like thee!

“THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER
OF FAITH.”

Revised Notes of Addresses on “The Lord Jesus as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews,” by J. R. CALDWELL.

WE read in Romans iv. 16, “Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace.” There are two things in this verse which God has joined, and which cannot be put asunder, *viz.*, Grace and Faith. God can suffer nothing to tarnish His grace. If He demanded of us any work of merit, any species of payment, any measure of righteousness, as helping in any degree to secure His favour, it would com-

pletely mar the glory of His grace. Therefore is it of faith and not of works. If human works had any place in our salvation, man would surely boast. But salvation by grace—free, sovereign, unaccountable grace, through faith—through simply believing the Word of God, leaves no room for man to boast. “By grace are ye saved through faith.” Such are God’s terms, and because of this—because it is altogether of grace, therefore is the promise “*sure to all the seed*” (Rom. iv. 16). If I had one single hand’s-turn to do in my salvation, then the promise of God could never be a certainty to me: I might fail in my part of it. But it is all grace, grace first and last, grace that begins and grace that finishes, grace that has laid the foundation, and grace that will bring forth the top-stone. Therefore the promise is “sure to all the seed.” But who are “the seed”? “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” And how do I become Christ’s? Simply by believing on Him—that is all. “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent” (John vi. 29). “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 26).

So it is clear that faith in Christ Jesus brings us into the sphere of God’s eternal, sovereign grace; grace that was in the heart of God for me before the foundation of the world, manifested in the gift of His beloved Son, brought to me in the Gospel, and made effectual in my heart and conscience through the power of the Holy Spirit. It was the Spirit of Grace that convicted me of sin, and made me look to Christ on the Cross. Grace has operated all through, and will continue to do so until each believing one is, according to the predestinating counsel of God, perfectly and eternally conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29).

But why should God be so concerned about the display of His grace? I think we get a clue to this in Eph. ii. 7: “That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

You see God’s manifestation of His grace does not end with our salvation. Our salvation is only a step toward the display of His character. God has saved us in order that He

might reveal Himself. “That in the ages to come”—not one age only, but eternal ages—“He might show”—show to whom? To “angels and principalities and powers,” to every intelligent being in the universe. Show what? That which never could have been shown until there were lost, condemned, rebel, God-hating sinners to show it to—“the exceeding riches of His grace!” And therefore it is that His grace is magnified in the saving of the very chief of sinners. He picks up Saul of Tarsus, the man of all others who was fullest of enmity to Him, with the letters in his pocket authorising him to arrest all who would confess the Name of Jesus. He takes him in the very act of “breathing out threatenings and slaughter.” The light of the glory blinds him and smites him to the ground; but he is arrested only to be saved, to be a specimen of “sovereign grace o’er sin abounding.” Thus he saves the self-righteous Pharisee, and He saves the publicans and the harlots in order to the display of that which had ever been hidden deep down in the heart of God, even “the exceeding riches of His grace.”

All holy beings knew that God was love, love to the pure, the unfallen. His judgment had been seen in the angels which fell; but GRACE, the love of God bestowed upon those who deserved His wrath, love lavishing its treasures upon those that had rebelled against Him and hated Him: Oh! this indeed is a display of the character of God such as had never before been given. But this display of grace is not given at the expense of righteousness. It is shown upon one only ground, that of the shed blood of His only-begotten and well-beloved Son. Thus, and thus alone, “grace reigns *through righteousness* unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is not “peace at any price”; it is infinite grace at infinite cost, and grace that brings from the lowest depths of guilt and vileness to the highest heights of glory. It takes “the beggar from the dunghill” and sets him “among princes” (1 Sam. ii. 8). It welcomes the prodigal and owns him a son, and sets him at rest in the favour of God to feast in the joy of His presence for ever. Now, don’t you see how it would tarnish the glory of such grace if aught were demanded of the sinner beyond the confession that he is guilty and lost, and simple

faith in the One who died and lives to save him?

Once, when I was a young man, circumstances had thrown much responsibility on me, and I had bent my shoulder to the wheel, and under difficulties had done my best. My father desired to acknowledge the services I had rendered—which, after all, were but what duty required—and so he purposed one day to give me a surprise. He took me into his room, showed me a parcel containing a number of gold watches, said he wanted to buy one, but it must be a good one, and asked my advice as to which I considered the best. I rather think I spotted the dearest one, being under the impression that he wanted it for himself. After the selection was made, he simply said, "Now, that is yours"! I believed; I took it; I thanked him. It was indeed a pleasant surprise, pleasing to me in more ways than one; it was a gift, a gift of love.

Now, suppose that my father had said, "That watch is yours if you will pay me one shilling for it." I might have been glad to get it. I would certainly have considered it the best bargain I ever made; but it never could have been called a gift. As a love-gift, the price, however small, would have spoilt it all.

"The gift of God is eternal life." It is grace, pure grace, and therefore it is of faith. "He that believeth hath everlasting life." Not to believe in such love is to add to all other sins the most detestable, damnable sin of all, the sin of making God a liar! (1 John v. 10).

I have gone over this at some length in order to illustrate what faith is, and that we may be helped in considering Him who in our present subject is called "The Author and Finisher of Faith." I have found it very difficult to define the meaning of this title, and have come to the conclusion that, like a great many more expressions in Scripture, its meaning is inexhaustible and exceeding broad. In what respect can I look at faith that I don't find that the Lord Jesus Christ is the sum and substance of it, the One upon whom it all hangs? He is the Alpha and Omega. In the sphere of faith "*Christ is all.*"

When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, one command was given them to test them. Satan comes in, and at first insinuates that in imposing on them this

prohibition God had not acted kindly. Finding that he had made some impression, he proceeds boldly to assert that what God had said was not true. First, he says "God is unkind"; next, "God is false". Eve believed the devil in preference to God. Some speak of faith as if it were a weak, powerless thing; but I know of nothing in the world so potent as faith. That which a man really in his heart believes forms his life. Eve believed the lie; the necessary result was that it determined the course of action she pursued. She looked, she coveted, she took, she ate, she gave. Thus sin entered by making God a liar. The first sin was the belief of Satan's lie, Satan's libel against the character of God. Now, don't you see the parallel? God has chosen that salvation from all the consequences of the fall shall come in by exactly an analogous way. It must be through faith, faith which sets to its seal that *God is true*, and faith which, beholding the gift of God, His beloved Son nailed to the Cross as the bearer of sin, learns and confesses that "*God is love.*"

I rejoice in the subject of faith; it is to me no mere theological dissertation, but a great, vital reality! Whom do you believe? It is written, "Abraham believed God." Appearances were against the possibility of the fulfilment of what God had promised. Perhaps Abraham's own heart said, "It's all nonsense, it cannot be"; but Abraham gave the lie to every contrary consideration and "**BELIEVED GOD**, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness." And we, too, believe God. God says He loved me and gave His Son to die for me, and I believe it. God says, "He that believeth hath everlasting life," and I believe it. God says, "All that believe are justified from all things," and I believe it. I take Him at His word, and "set to my seal that God is true."

(To be concluded in our next.)

CHRIST'S ABILITY.

1. Able to *Save*, - - - Heb. vii. 25.
2. Able to *Keep*, - - - Jude 24.
3. Able to *Succour*, - - - Heb. ii. 18.
4. Able to *do Abundantly*, - Eph. iii. 20.
5. Able to *Make Grace abound*, - 2 Cor. ix. 8.
6. Able to *Subdue*, - - - Phil. iii. 21.
7. Able to *Present Faultless*, - Jude 24.

NONE BUT CHRIST.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

WHEN God talked out of the Tabernacle, how different His communications from when He talked with trumpet-sound out of the devouring fire. Then, the Law kept the sinner at a distance from God; here, it is the revelation of the way of approach. Then, it was, "Bring Me your obedience, bring Me your righteousness, bring Me your love," for the Law expressed God's claims in righteousness, upon man in the flesh. But its demands were impossible for man, as he, being a sinner, has neither the capacity nor the will to please God. The Law could only work wrath, could only condemn, and it was its *perfection*—as a law—to do so.

But out of the Tabernacle, filled with the glory which excluded Moses, the voice sounded, "Bring Me Christ, bring Me the lamb which speaks of Him." The Israelite, if too poor to bring the bullock, could bring the dove, but what he brought had a voice in it that spoke of the obedience, the devotedness, the perfections, the glory of Christ. It was fragrant with the foreshadowing of what He accomplished for Jehovah's glory and delight. God said, in effect, "I want none but Christ" (Lev. i.).

I, a poor, empty sinner, present Him, in all the infinite worth of His atonement, and He is my righteousness, my acceptance before God. I lose myself in Him—I, who deserve to be lost eternally in hell.

How refreshing to find, in John xx., a poor woman in fellowship with the mind of God about these things. She too wanted none but Christ. Apostles might come and go, she lingered at the grave. Angels might talk to her, but could not fill her affections; Christ, dead or living—it must be Christ, nothing and no one short of Himself.

And what is *heaven* without Christ to John if *earth* was a sepulchre without Him to Mary? He too wept with the glories of heaven before him, as she before the empty tomb. True, there were the four-and-twenty crowned elders in their entirety—all the heavenly saints in symbol. There were also the four "living ones," mysterious accompaniments of the throne. There were angels, too, rank upon rank, army upon army—ten thousand times

ten thousand and thousands of thousands. But the throne was not completely furnished, till the Lamb, fresh from the slaughter, filled it, still bearing the marks of the nails and the soldier's spear. Even there he must learn the lesson—none but Christ.

If it be the anxious inquiry of an Isaac, "Where is the Lamb?" or of the wise men, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" or the longing of the aged Paul, "That I might know Him!" the answer is the same. The music of the inspired Word is set to the one key in all its many parts, and that key is Christ—none but Christ.

Soon shall heaven and earth unite to sing the same song; for whether it be those saint-throned courts above, or this desert earth soon to blossom as the rose; whether for Time's brief story or for Eternity's expanse; whether for the heart of God, or for the broken heart of a poor sinner of Adam's race, it must be Christ, and Christ alone.

THE DEMAND FOR A KING.

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

IT was an evil day for Israel when they said to Samuel the prophet, "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. viii. 5). Such a request was the sure token of an evil heart of unbelief that had departed from the Living God. It involved not merely the rejection of Samuel, but the rejection of Jehovah Himself, for we find the Lord saying unto Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." Truly "the people" who were thus rejecting the rule of God, that they might rejoice under the rule of man, must have been in a lamentable condition.

But this condition was not reached in a day. With peoples, as with individuals, departure from God is a process of some duration; and, if we take the pains to search, we shall assuredly discover causes that led to declension, or at least tended to make declension easy. The inspired writer does not say in so many words that causes of a particular kind brought about the demand for a king; but immediately before that demand was made, it is significantly

recorded that a certain condition of things existed in Israel, in direct connection with which the request for a king was made. It was simply this, that when Samuel was old he made his sons judges over Israel, "and his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Matters had been in this state for some time. The strain, even upon godly patience, was great. Hearts true to Jehovah would be groaning before Him, and saying, "O Lord, how long?" The general body of the people, refusing to acknowledge rule that had not the marks of God's appointment, were ripe for revolt. The reign of Samuel's sons had become intolerable. Things had reached that pitch when *anything* will be welcomed as a relief to the grinding bondage, the weary monotony, and the awful uncertainty of that rule which is destitute alike of the heavenly call and the heavenly anointing. Rendered desperate by the hopeless character of the situation, the people resolved that "something" *must* be done. We do not say they were right. On the contrary, we have the divine testimony that they were grievously wrong. Faith could still count upon the Living God. There was no call to take the eye of expectation off *Him*, and rest their hope of deliverance on a form of rule fashioned according to the pattern of the surrounding nations. Nevertheless, we cannot fail to see that the failure of rule in the hands of Samuel's sons led to the demand for a king. Indeed, this was the avowed reason for such a demand.

Now, it is a solemn reflection that all this may be found in the history of the Church to-day. The reign of Samuel's sons may be taken as illustrative of that form of rule in the Church which is according to the flesh—rule which lacks the tokens of God's appointment, and bears marks which ought not to characterise those whom He has given for the guiding of His people. Perhaps during the reign of some godly "Samuel" the destinies of the assembly have been moulded after a godly sort. But evil times have come. The Samuel in question is either no more, or he is overpowered by an inrush of rulers who walk not in his ways. They are not spiritually-minded men. They cannot see afar off. In matters of discernment they are excelled by brethren

whose voices are never heard in the councils of the Church. As patterns of godly example it would be dangerous in the extreme to point them out as men whom it would be safe to follow. Feared but not revered, they maintain their position by strength of will, rather than by that gentleness which maketh great (Psalm xviii. 35) Failing to discern the true need of the people of God, they are ever discovering "false causes of banishment." Failing to enjoy the confidence of the saints, their rule becomes a burden grievous to be borne. Failing to walk in God's ways, they are a grief to the godly, and a stumblingblock to the unwary; while they provide a "text" from which the chronic grumbler is ever preaching. But "Samuel's sons" are deaf to the mutterings of discontent, and blind to the signs of coming revolution. Things wax worse and worse, until it is felt that a change of some sort is inevitable. The people are just in that condition in which they are prepared to welcome almost anything that will bring relief from present evils. In the history of an assembly this is

THE POINT OF DANGER.

It is at this exact point that the Absaloms and the Adonijahs rush into the breach as professed deliverers of the people of God. It is just at this point that those who have not learned the lesson of faith in God in the hour of trial, are found casting a wistful eye to religious systems around, and saying, "Perhaps we would be better to have a form of government like unto them." It is just at this point, too, that a certain class of "deliverers" arise in the assembly or come in from a distance. They profess to understand the whole trouble to its remotest detail; and they claim to have a remedy that will usher in a reign of peace, and render the rule of Samuel's sons an impossibility for all time to come. What is the remedy? It is a *new* form of Church government. It is the formation of a new ecclesiastical body—or the joining of one already in existence, in which body there is said to be such a uniformity of doctrine and discipline—such a complete purging out of evil, and jealous guarding of the table—that all within its pale shall rejoice in a millennium of heavenly rule. We need not pause to remind God's people how lamentably all such promises have been falsified by professed deliverers of the Church

in troublous times. Not a few, alas ! groaning under the reign of Samuel's sons, or discouraged by seeming departure from the way of truth, have rushed into the arms of these "deliverers," only to discover, when too late, that they had placed themselves under a form of rule more relentless and more hopeless by far than that which they had left. We must beware of all such professed deliverers. It is in the hour of an assembly's weakness that they come—when some company of believers is passing through deep waters—perhaps sighing for a morn of deliverance that seems to be far away. Yet in that dark hour let us remember that *God abides*. HE is still left to His people. In the path of rejection with our rejected Lord, seeking to own His Name, and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, let us not fancy that a new ecclesiastical system is what we need in time of trouble. Let us draw near to *God*, brethren. Let us see that in hankering after some "cut-and-dry" religious system, we come not under Israel's condemnation—rejecting the Lord, that He should not reign over us. The suggestions of unbelief may point in more than one way, but they are all at one in this—Distrust in an ever-present God. Some may be tempted to flee for refuge to the death-like stillness of some worldly system of religion. Others, travelling in an opposite direction, may seek the "land of peace" within the ice-bound shores of some ecclesiastical confederacy that boasts itself "the only true expression of the Church of God on earth." But the child of faith, enduring as seeing Him who is invisible, shall stand for God in an evil day, unmoved by conflicting voices, and resting calmly in Him who is still "the glory in the midst."

LOOK OUT FOR THE BLESSING.

By GEO. MULLER, Bristol.

"Often the clouds of deepest woe
So sweet a message bear ;
Dark tho' they seem, we cannot find
A frown of anger there."

THIS I have found verified in my life ; as this verse states, so I have found it to be. Great, many, and varied though my trials and difficulties have been, every one of them has turned out for blessing, and I have not

passed through one single trial regarding which I have not to say now, "It all worked for my good." I praise God for every one of them. I would not wish that anything had been different from what it has been, and I have verified the truth of these words regarding every one of these trials. "All things work together for good to them that love God."

Therefore, when in difficult circumstances, I say to myself, "My business is to look out for the blessing which God purposes to bestow again through this trial, for surely good will come out of it, surely it will be for my blessing in the end. Therefore my business is quietly and patiently and believingly to look out for the blessing that God has for me in this."

The work of our heavenly Father is like someone working behind a curtain ; something very good is being prepared behind the curtain, but it is not drawn back, and we do not see that good which is being prepared. But there is verily something good being prepared, and presently all at once the curtain is drawn back and then we see what a kind heavenly Father we have to prepare blessing behind the curtain. But often, to our natural eyes, the curtain is not drawn back soon enough, and we find it difficult to wait. But if we are able patiently to wait, the more blessed will appear everything when the curtain is withdrawn.

COLOSSIANS I. 12-14.

FATHER, we thank Thee for Thy wondrous love,
Which makes us meet to dwell in realms above :
Which makes us stand among Thy saints in light,
In blood-washed garments clothed, of spotless
white.

Which brings us forth from darkness and its
thrall

To find in Thy Beloved our All in All :
In whom we have redemption through His blood
And heirship with the family of God.

We thank Thee that Thy Spirit witness bears
That we are Thine, Thy children, thus Thine
heirs :

But more than this, through matchless grace
allied,

Joint-heirs with Christ, His Body, and His
Bride.

THOMAS NEWBERRY.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

The Substance of a Bible Reading at Shihtao, China.

BY DR. J. N. CASE.

THAT we are "saved to serve," is a trite but none the less important saying. Indeed, it is a truth we do well to often keep before us. To the Christian, also, there is an application of the words of Zacharias. "That we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies," the Word runs, "might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life" (Lu. i. 74-75). It is quite true that in the common round of everyday duties we can serve God; but just now we have in view *sinner-saving service*. And we use the expression in the widest sense, as including not only the work that brings a soul to decision for Christ, but also everything that helps a human being onward, upward, and homeward. We desire to present a few prominent points on this subject, gathered from our book of instructions.

1. *The summons to service*.—"Son," the call comes, "go work to-day in my vineyard" (Matt. xxi. 28). We are first sons, then servants. Man would reverse this order and teach us to serve in order to become God's children; but he who knows the grace of God in truth desires to serve because he is a son. Before there is any attempt at serving God, the sin question must be settled. "First things first." Nowhere is this principle more important than in the subject we are considering.

With the above scripture please compare Ex. iv. 23. "Let my son go," was the demand of Jehovah, "that he may serve Me." Here, in type, we have sonship and service based on election, redemption, and deliverance. These are principles that run through all God's dealings with men.

But as we again glance at our first scripture, we notice that the call to service is *definite*, *personal*, and *urgent*. Special work for God demands a special call from God; and while anxious to obey His will, we must guard against running unsest. That will be equivalent to going on a warfare on our own charges. "How shall they preach *except they be sent*?" Since we, on principle, set aside man's call or the Church's appointment to gospel ministry, we must be all the more certain that we have God's call and appointment to the

same. We may surely take it as an axiom that a special call from the Lord is necessary for every one who would give himself wholly to gospel work, no less for the regions beyond than for the homelands. It is to be feared that this simple truth is often lost sight of. The result is that not a few have found themselves in a strange land with no marked fitness or zeal for the work to which they have professed to give themselves. Such not only "lose their own lives," but they become a sad burden and hindrance to others. Here I do not stay to enquire in what consists a special call to service. I only add, we need to pray the Lord to keep back the unfit and uncalled just as we pray Him to send forth those whom He has chosen and fitted for His service.

2. *The first step in all true service*.—Read and mark Rom. xii. 1. The preliminary to all true service is the consecration of one's self—spirit, soul, and body—to the Lord. His grace and mercy expect, our privileges demand, and doomed and dying sinners call for nothing less. Have we thus yielded ourselves to the mighty magnet of God's love in Christ—to the powerful drawings of the Holy Spirit? If not, let this first, solemn, important act be done *at once*. Satan, the world, and the flesh will struggle to hold us back; but let us own and act on the simple fact, "I belong to Christ the Lord." His grace is sufficient. With the cords of a Spirit-begotten resolve and purpose, let us bind the sacrifice even unto the horns of the altar (Ps. cxviii. 27). We are not fit to live and labour for the Lord until we are willing, if necessary, to suffer and die for Him.

The act of *presenting* the body a living sacrifice God intends to be complete and final. And in the believer's *purpose* it is such. But in actual experience I judge that with the most it often needs repeating. Under the reign of grace, "God's commandings are God's enablings." This, methinks, is the open secret of a happy, fruitful Christian life. Let us be "all for Jesus," and we shall realise that He is all for us.

3. *The constraining power to service*.—"For," writes the apostle, "the love of Christ constraineth us," &c. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15). The need of sinners, the terrors of God, a sense of duty, the knowledge of one's own privileges—these may all impel us to labour for the sal-

vation of the lost ; but the real moving motive to persistent, prayerful, self-denying labour in the Gospel is the apprehension of Christ's love to me, as manifested in the death of the cross. Standing at Calvary gazing on the suffering, dying Redeemer, the question is forced home to the conscience, "Since He bore all this for me, what have I done—what can I do—for Him?" The Christian is the true philanthropist [lover of man], because he is first of all a [lover of God] Theophilus. He loves and serves men because the love of God in Christ, by the Holy Spirit, has been shed abroad in his heart. He who loves God loves his brother also. One may seem to love men without loving God, but no one can truly love God without also loving men. The Son of God did all this for my salvation ; what am I doing for the salvation of others? My reader, face the question on your knees alone with God. Were this done honestly by the young men and women in the assemblies of saints in the British Isles, there would be more to fill up the gaps in Africa and India, and to extend the work in China and other lands. "And He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again."

4. *The perfect pattern in service.*—In this, as in every other department of life, the Lord Himself is our example. Though "Jehovah's fellow," He stooped and took upon Him the form of a *bond-servant* (Phil. ii. 7). And during His sojourn here He ever acted in character as the servant of God. In that most precious and instructive portion John iv., we see Him so absorbed in winning one poor woman from sin to God that He quite forgets His former hunger and weariness. The disciples marvel at this, and can only surmise that in the meantime someone else has ministered to his needs. "But," He says in explanation, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." And to make it plain to dull understandings, He further adds, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to accomplish His work." Well may we speak of Him as "the perfect servant." He always abounded in the work of Jehovah. May we in our measure follow in His footsteps who went about doing good—who was literally consumed by His zeal for the things of His Father.

5. *The effectual power for service.*—We distinguish between the constraining motive and the effectual power for service. The former, we have seen, is the love of Christ within us ; the latter is the power of the Holy Spirit resting upon us. Compassion, or a sense of duty, might impel me to wish and work to rescue a child from a burning house, but this I may be unable to accomplish. Similarly, the love of Christ, or pity for sinners, may lead Christians to desire and labour for their salvation, but were it not for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit our labours would all be in vain.

We might have the zeal of a Paul, the love of a John, the boldness of a Peter—if we have not the Spirit of God enduing us with power, it will be fruitless toil. This, in theory, all Christians admit. Yet I am afraid that many of us practically forget it. Is it not a wonderful fact that all the work of the Son of Man on earth was wrought in the power of the Holy Spirit? And to the early disciples the word came: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts i. 8). Again and again has the Lord to teach His people that it is not by human might, or power, or wisdom, or eloquence, but by His Spirit. Let us not rest content with clear and scriptural views of the person and ministry of the Spirit. These are important. Would we be effectual workers in the Lord's vineyard, we must heed the injunction, "*Be filled with the Spirit!*" All-important as is this theme, we may not now further dwell on it.

6. *The true aim in service.*—We must cherish no lower aim than the glory of God (1 Cor. x. 31). There is nothing so deceitful as the human heart ; and it is sadly possible to be seemingly spending and being spent for God, when it is really for self in one form or the other. The praise of man, the desire for influence, the necessity to keep up a reputation for zeal—these and many other motives may influence us. As one has said, it is wise and necessary for a Christian to now and then ask himself a question such as this: "Now, soul, honour bright, is this for God and His glory?" A plain, blunt home-question such as that would often show us where we stand, and would lead to a restoration of soul and an increase of joy and power in His service. Re-

member that the injunction runs: "Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

7. *Present cheer in service.*—The faithful worker in God's harvest-field has a joy peculiarly his own. In the Christian life there are many occasions for rejoicing, but perhaps there is no joy so pure and spiritual as that which follows the leading of a soul to Christ. At such times we participate in the joy of the triune-God and the angel hosts over one sinner to whom repentance has been granted unto life (Luke xv.). We have special fellowship with Him, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame."

Our Master is ever gracious. Now and then He gives us to gather such handfuls as He has on purpose prepared and dropped in our path. Others have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. As I take it, the reference in John iv. 36. is to present encouragement in service. "He that reapeth," says the Master, "RECEIVETH WAGES, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." This is not material reward, but the spiritual joy that accompanies honest, whole-hearted service to Christ. With Paul, we realise that those who have been helped by us spiritually will be our joy and crown of rejoicing at Christ's coming (1 Thess. ii. 19). By the right use of the gospel message entrusted to us we may make to ourselves friends who will by-and-by receive us into the everlasting habitations. We, too, have the present joy of seeing or hearing of our children walking according to the truth, and living godly, useful lives in Christ Jesus; so that now and here we have much to encourage us to be always abounding in the work of the Lord.

8. *The future reward for suffering and service.*—Since the Lord has graciously set before us the prospect of a future reward for faithful service, we may well give it a place in our thoughts. We may not labour only, or even chiefly for reward. Our first aim must be to glorify God and to give joy to the Lord Jesus. Yet it is evident that the prospect has been an incentive to God's most devoted and spiritual servants in all ages. From Hebrews xii. 2 we learn that it influenced the perfect servant Himself. It also had its due effect upon the life and labours of the Apostle Paul. We get a glimpse of him as an old, worn-out warrior

sitting in his prison-cell awaiting the summons to a violent death. "I have," he triumphantly says, "fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,*" &c. May we so labour that when the time comes we, too, may hear the Master's voice saying: "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Other points on this subject we might touch on with profit, but time fails. I refer to one more only.

9. *The prospect of service eternal.*—For the Christian, service to God will not cease with this life. These are but the few years of our apprenticeship; yonder will be our life-work. And doubtless we shall occupy the place there for which we have prepared ourselves here. How important, then, to do with our might what our hands find to do. Let God choose our place of service for us. The "go ye" of Matt. x. very closely follows the "pray ye" of chap. ix. For, those who most earnestly pray the Lord to send forth labourers into the harvest-field are themselves not unlikely to hear the divine, sovereign call, "Go ye!" And may no reader of this paper hear that call in vain!

Few of us, I presume, are like the dear woman who was always so tired that she wished to go to heaven and lie on a sofa and do nothing forever and forever. That would *not* be heaven for me. So we rejoice in that word in the closing chapter of the Bible: "His servants [bond-servants] shall do Him service." From this we learn that by-and-by there will not only be the priestly service of worship and thanksgiving, but also our service as bond-servants founded on purchase and deliverance. We will gladly say, "I love my Master . . . I will not go out free!" Such shall for ever do Him service. Amen.

THE sense of Christ's love is the mightiest of all constraining motives. It embraces our whole spiritual nature, touches it in all its springs, moves it in all its affections, stirs it in all its energies. Hope will make men strive, and fear will make men tremble; but love alone will waken love. Wheresoever the love of Christ pours itself like a flood into the soul, it draws all things after it with irresistible attraction.

JERUSALEM WHICH IS ABOVE.

"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."

THOU city of our God,
Built by His mighty hand,
Our feet, which now the desert tread,
Within thy gates shall stand.

All snares and dangers past,
All toils and sorrows o'er,
We there our blessed rest shall find,
And go out never more.

No change and no decay
Shall e'er be known in thee ;
From all that hinders joy and peace
Thy citizens are free.

Beneath th' eternal shade
Of Life's unfailling tree,
They of its varied fruits partake,
And walk at liberty.

And by the holy stream
That floweth from the throne
Of God most high, and of the Lamb,
The Lord doth lead His own.

There we shall see our God,
Before His face shall dwell,
While of His ways of perfect grace
Our lips shall ever tell.

The Lamb once slain shall be
The subject of our song ;
His name shall be the only boast
Of all that ransomed throng.

How He once died and rose
To rescue us from sin ;
How He by suffering, shame, and death
Did all His triumph win.

How Christ, the Son of God,
Thus took from death its sting,
Shall all thy blest inhabitants
With joy for ever sing.

To thee we onward-look,
Cleansed by atoning blood.
In thee our feet shall ever stand,
Thou city of our God.

To Him we glory give,
The Lamb we still adore,
The Holy Ghost we magnify,
Triune for evermore.

W. H. B.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXV.

THE WATCHFUL and UNWATCHFUL
SERVANT.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

LUKE XII. 35-48.

Verses 35-37. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights [lamps] burning, and ye, yourselves, like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from [depart out of] the wedding [wedding feasts]; that when he cometh and knocketh they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching: Verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat [recline at table], and will come forth and serve them [minister to them]."

THE proper attitude of the faithful servant of the Lord Jesus is that of watchfulness.

The return here spoken of is not from the marriage supper of the Lamb; this must be kept distinct. It is rather the Lord's return at the close of the present dispensation of Gospel grace, which is set forth under the emblem of a series of wedding feasts, given in honour of the approaching marriage (see Matt. xxii. 1-14; Luke xiv. 16-24).

There is a special blessing pronounced on those servants whom the Lord, when He comes, shall find watching, waiting, and prepared to welcome His return.

When here on earth, the Lord Jesus was the faithful Servant of His Father, ever ready to do His will; now He is the girded Servant, sanctifying and cleansing by the washing of water (typical of the Holy Spirit), through the Word, those whom He hath redeemed unto God by His blood (John xiii. 4, 5; Eph. v. 25, 26). After the pattern of the Hebrew servant, whose ear had been bored, love will keep Him, even in the glory, a servant, still ministering to their everlasting blessedness (Ex. xxi. 5-7; Rev. vii. 17).

Verses 38-40. "And if he shall come in the second watch, or [and] come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants [bond-servants]. And this know, that if the goodman of the house [master of the house] had known what hour the thief would come he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be YE, therefore, ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

According to the reckoning of the Jews, their night was divided into four watches—the first from sundown to nine o'clock, the second

from nine till twelve, the third from twelve till three, and the fourth from three till six in the morning, or sunrise.

The Lord Jesus will come at the close of the present dispensation to receive the Church to Himself. This is described as "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him" (2 Thes. ii. 1).

At the end of the second watch of the night, or at midnight, the cry went forth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." The Lord does not say He will come in the second watch, but IF He come, inciting to watchfulness. After the marriage supper of the Lamb, He will come with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and His risen saints will appear with Him in glory; this always is distinguished as "the coming of the Son of Man." These two aspects of His coming must never be confounded together, and, in either case, watchfulness is enjoined, and an especial blessing pronounced.

His coming as a "thief in the night" is expressly said, in 1 Thessalonians v. 1-6, not to apply to the Church.

The day spoken of there is the day of Jehovah; the title employed is "Lord" (without the article). It is "The day of vengeance of our God," which will take the world by surprise, but still a welcome surprise to those faithful ones who, in the time of the great tribulation, will be found waiting for Him (Rev. xvi. 15).

To those saints of the present dispensation who refuse to watch He will come unexpectedly, as a thief (Rev. iii. 3), but this word is here addressed to them, not so much as a promise, but as a warning. Our true happiness is to be found watching.

Verses 41-44. "Then Peter said unto Him, 'Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even to all?' And the Lord said: 'Who then is that faithful and wise [prudent] steward whom his lord shall make ruler over [set over] his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over [set him over] all that he hath.'"

The apostles stood in a twofold representative place. They were at that time the faithful remnant of Israel, who had received their Messiah, while the rest of the nation were rejecting Him, and as such they received

instruction suitable to those who, in the time of the great tribulation, will confess Christ. But, at the day of Pentecost, these apostles were among the first living stones of which the Church of God was built, and were instructed accordingly. In His reply to the inquiry of Peter, the Lord Jesus applies His teaching to the present dispensation, and shows the connection between the fidelity in stewardship now and the awards of the kingdom in eternity. In 1 Corinthians iv. 1, 2 the Apostle Paul thus writes: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers [official ministers] of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." Even so, there are those who, not content with testifying the ordinary and fundamental truths of the Gospel, seek, under the teaching and revealing of the Holy Spirit, to search into the deep things of God, and to bring forth, for the edification of the spiritually-minded and instructed believer, those higher and fuller truths which tend for the establishment and progress of the soul. Such service will receive a suitable recompense of reward.

Verses 45, 46. "But, and if that servant [bond-servant] say in his heart: 'My lord delayeth his coming;' and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant [bond-servant] will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware [knoweth not], and will cut him in sunder [cut him off], and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."

As in the field there are tares as well as wheat, and both grow together until the harvest, so also in the "great house" there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour (2 Tim. ii. 20). Where there has been no regeneration, and where there is no indwelling of the Holy Ghost, official position in the outward Church is no guarantee for ultimate security. When the Lord Jesus comes those who are not truly His will be cut off, and have their portion with the unbelievers.

Where the heart of the professed servant is not set on the Person of the Lord Jesus, and with the hope and expectation of His return, but on present things, and pre-eminence in the professing Church, the coming of the Lord will be an unwelcome and disastrous surprise.

Verses 47, 48. "And that servant [bond-servant] which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of [from] him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

Whether for good or for evil, the measure of privilege is the measure of responsibility.

Those who in the fulness of Gospel light have walked unworthily will be cast out into outer darkness; the faithful servant found with girded loins will be ministered to by the Lord of glory; and the steward found faithful over a few things will be made ruler over all, and will enter into, and have fellowship with, the joy of his Lord, and share with Him His kingdom and His glory.

THE CHURCH.

Notes of an Old Address on the Church (found in a Devonshire Cottage by W. H. S.)

Its origin	the grandest . . .	Acts 20. 28
		Eph. 3. 10, 11
Its architect . . .	the greatest . . .	1 Cor. 12. 18
		Eph. 2. 22
Its antiquity . . .	the oldest	Eph. 1. 4
		2 Tim. 1. 9
Its foundation . .	the deepest . . .	1 Pet. 2. 6
		1 Cor. 3. 11
Its material . . .	the finest	Jude 20
		1 Pet. 2. 5
Its extent	the widest	Rev. 5. 9
		Rev. 7. 9
Its position . . .	the loftiest . . .	Eph. 2. 6
		Heb. 3. 1
Its builder	the wisest	Matt. 16. 18
		Heb. 3. 4
Its owner	the richest	Heb. 1. 2
		Eph. 5. 25
Its security . . .	the safest	Matt. 16. 18
		2 Tim. 2. 19
Its head	the mightiest . .	Eph. 1. 22
		Eph. 5. 23
Its priest	the kindest . . .	Heb. 4. 15
		Heb. 2. 17, 18
Its worship . . .	the purest	John 4. 23
		Heb. 10. 19-22
Its worshippers .	the holiest	Phil. 3. 3
		Heb. 10. 22

Its prayers . . .	the truest	Rev. 8. 3
		Jude 20
Its praises . . .	the sweetest . . .	1 Cor. 14. 15
		Col. 3. 16
Its music	the quietest . . .	Eph. 5. 19
		Col. 3. 16
Its service . . .	the longest	Heb. 13. 15
		1 Pet. 4. 11
Its doctrine . . .	the simplest . . .	2 Cor. 11. 3
		Eph. 4. 20-32
Its unity	the strongest . .	1 Cor. 12. 20-27
		Eph. 4. 4
Its duration . . .	eternity	Eph. 2. 7
		1 Thess. 4. 17

This is the Church that Christ is loving, sanctifying, cleansing, nourishing, and cherishing, and will one day present faultless before the Father with exceeding joy (Eph. v. 25, 26; Jude 24).

This glorious Church of the Living God (1 Tim. iii. 15) cannot be *compared* with, but may be *contrasted* with, any Church of nations or men. Which of them answers to the description?

SUFFERING:

AN ACCOMPANIMENT OF JOINT-HEIRSHIP WITH CHRIST.

Rom. viii. 17.

It is given us to suffer (Matt. x. 16-38; John xv. 18-21; xvi. 33; hereunto were called (1 Pet. ii. 21).

Christ was made perfect through suffering (Heb. ii. 10, 11).

(a) He suffered, being tempted (Heb. ii. 18; Luke iv. 2-14; Heb. iv. 15).

(b) He learned obedience by the things that He suffered (Heb. v. 8).

(c) He became obedient unto death (John xiv. 31; Phil. ii. 8).

Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings (1 Pet. iv. 13).

If ye suffer, the Spirit of Glory resteth upon you (1 Pet. iv. 14; Rom. viii. 17).

If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. ii. 12).

E. A. H.

CHRIST stood before God as a sacrifice on the ground of what *I* had done; I now stand before God, in Christ, justified and accepted, on the ground of what *He* has done.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

TWO RESURRECTIONS.—Please explain Daniel xii. 2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

FAITH: IS IT INVOLUNTARY?—Is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (by which we are saved) an involuntary action?

LIVING BY FAITH.—From 1 Cor. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to "live by faith," and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT.—Is the last clause of Ephesians v. 18 as in the Authorised Version a correct translation? or should it be, as some render it, "Be filled in Spirit?"

BLIND AND DEAF—WHO?—Kindly explain who the blind servant or deaf messenger is in Isaiah xlii. 19. Is it Christ, the true and faithful servant, or Israel, as in Matt. xiii. 14, 15?

SHARES IN JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.

QUESTION 557.—Is it contrary to the teaching of Scripture for a Christian to take shares in a joint-stock company of which most of the shareholders are unsaved?

Answer A.—I believe 2 Cor. vi. 14-18 ought to settle that question. This passage has been pressed beyond its legitimate scope and meaning in enforcing "separation" from believers; but, to my mind, it clearly forbids such a fellowship as a "Christian taking shares in a joint-stock company of which the most of the shareholders are unregenerate." G. A.

Answer B.—It appears quite clear to me that if I am a shareholder in a company, I am a partner in that company, and if I am a partner in any company where all the partners are not Christians, I am "unequally yoked with unbelievers." I believe no amount of words or explanation can alter this view of the question. C. C.

Answer C.—Some years back this question exercised my mind, and led me to seek the judgment of some experienced believers, amongst them Mr. George Muller of Bristol. Thinking it may help some of your readers, I send copy of his letter:

"— If there are conditions laid down in connection with such companies or societies, to which we have to subscribe, and of which we know that they are contrary to the mind of the

Lord; or, if the business carried on by such a society is contrary to the Word of God, we ought not to be shareholders, but otherwise there would be nothing wrong." H. J.

Editor's Note.—We concur with replies A. and B.; but, as many godly persons take the view expressed by Mr. Muller in answer C., we would add that, in our judgment, the "unequal yoke" consists not in the object for which the yoke is entered into, but in the fact that the two incompatible elements are bound together in action and interest. This is surely clear enough in 2 Cor. vi. 14-18, taken along with Deut. xxii. 10.

The history of Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab confirms this view. To recover Ramoth Gilead out of the hands of the Syrians was not an unworthy object; but to join hands with the ungodly Ahab in order to accomplish this, was contrary to the will of God.

Again, he entered into a joint enterprise with Ahaziah to send ships to Tarshish for gold; but they were wrecked at Ezion-gaber, the port at which they were built, and never went. The charge against Jehoshaphat in this case, as in the former, was not the nature of the enterprise, but his being yoked with a wicked man.

The terms of co-partnership may be perfectly just, the object may be in itself good and useful, but the profits in which every member of the co-partnership shares, may be secured by means that are inconsistent with Christian principle. To share the profit is, therefore, to be morally partaker in the evil. On the other hand, if the enterprise prove disastrous, it can only be regarded as the visitation of the Lord upon a course that was displeasing to Him.

"THIS CUP," AND "THIS HOUR."

QUESTION 558.—What is the CUP to which the Lord alluded? (Matt. xxvi. 39-42; Mark xiv. 36; Luke xxii. 42); and what is the HOUR alluded to (Mark xiv. 35; John xii. 27)? Was the prayer answered, and how?

Answer A.—In Scripture a cup signifies sufferings and afflictions sent by God (Isa. li. 17; Ps. lxxv. 8), and, in our Lord's case particularly, those sufferings both in soul and body endured when "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." Truly He received from the Father's hand a bitter mixture. "This hour" was that seen in prophetic vision, for which He came into the world, and which He ever had in view when He by men's hands should be put to death, and thus glorify God and give eternal life to all in the Father's gift (Matt. xxvi. 45-56; John vii. 30, xii. 23-27; xiii. 1; xvii. 1, &c.) In the light of an accomplished Cross work, we affirm safely, had our Lord's prayer been answered in the way

of removing from Him that cup, we had yet been under the just judgment of God. G. H. H.

Answer B.—This is a question which should ever be before the heart of the worshipping saint, even as the Lord has appointed that His death should *often* be showed forth till He come. To say that the “cup” is Calvary, and the “hour” is its short but awful period, only indicates to what our meditation should be directed. Eternity alone shall reveal the mysteries of the “cup” and the “hour.” Psalms xxii. and lxi. should be pondered word by word, also Isa. liii. and all portions which have the Cross as their theme, and they are many. 2 Cor. v. 21 helps us to understand that although Christ knew no sin, He yet took the sinner’s place in very truth, and so felt in taking the cup of our iniquities into his hand, and was so treated, as if he were indeed the sinner.

Again, the fact that the Son of Man expressed thrice the anguish of his soul in the suggested possibility of the removal of the cup from his hands speaks to us more than tongue can tell of the great love wherewith He loved us, the desperate character of sin, and the awful cost of our redemption. But, as we have said, the Cross appeals to our hearts first, and its sorrows and triumphs are not matters of explanation but of believing meditation. W. P.

Answer C.—That the “hour” and the “cup” were one seems very evident. John says, “They sought to take Him, but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come.” When they were allowed to take Him His hour had come, as He Himself said (John xvii. 1). But it was then that He also said, “The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” (John xviii. 11). Mark, moreover, links the two together when he tells us that the Lord “prayed that, if it were possible, *the hour* might pass from Him, and He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible with Thee; take away *this cup* from Me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt.” Though the Cross—that is, the solemn “hour” of Calvary and the “cup” He must drink there—ever cast its shadow on the pathway of the Lord, there can be no question that at times it was more vividly present to Him, and the record of His experience on two of these occasions helps us in seeking to consider what the hour itself must have been. It is sometimes said that *as man* He shrank from the suffering; but Scripture speaks not thus, and we dare not speak of Emmanuel simply as man, though man He truly was, and every sinless human feeling was His. But it was as One who, whilst possessing all the sensitiveness of a perfect Man, knew also the joy of His Father’s countenance as only the Son of

God could know it, and whose holiness was beyond that of the highest creature, that He shrank from the bearing of sin and all that that involved.

The similarity of the Lord’s experience on the two occasions referred to is very close. In the one case He said, “Now is My soul troubled”; in the other, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” In John xii. the prayer was, “Father, save Me from this hour”; in Gethsemane, “O My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me.” In John He adds, “But for this cause came I unto this hour,” and then puts up the petition of His whole life, “Father, glorify Thy Name”; in Gethsemane He adds, “Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done.” The immediate answer to the prayer offered on each occasion was the imparting to Him who had become the dependent One strength and encouragement to endure (see Isa. l.); the *final* answer was resurrection (see Heb. v. 7, where “from death” is lit. “out of death.”) W. H. B.

BAPTISM AND RESURRECTION LIFE.

QUESTION 559.—Will you kindly give us an explanation of Colossians ii. 12? “Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead?” Are we not risen with Him until we are baptised?

Answer.—The question would not have arisen had verse 12 been rendered “In Whom,” as in the previous verse, making it plain that it is in Christ we are risen, not in baptism.

The whole teaching of the passage is to show what we are and have *in Him*. “In Him circumcised; . . . buried with Him, and in Him risen together (comp. Eph. ii. 5—R.V., M. and O.) through faith.”

Baptism represents burial—the burial of the flesh, the old self. Our resurrection to a *new life* follows, because it is with Christ we are buried—“Baptised into Christ, into *His* death” (Rom. vi. 3).

The remainder of the verse wants a comma after “faith.” The statement here is not that it is by faith *of*, i.e., in the operation of God, but that the faith *is* the operation of God. The raising of Christ from the dead, and the faith through which we are raised with Him, are alike the operation of God.

Thus the passage would read as follows: “In Whom also ye are circumcised . . . being buried with Him in baptism. In Whom also ye are risen together, through faith, the operation of God who raised Him from the dead.” W. C.

Editor’s Note.—Alford and the Revisers reject this view, though it seems to us reasonable and commends itself. We should be pleased to have the opinion of others competent to judge.

"THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF FAITH."

Revised Notes of Addresses on "The Lord Jesus as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews," by J. R. CALDWELL.

BUT there is one aspect in which the Lord Jesus is set forth very specially as the Author and Finisher of Faith, and to this I would now ask your attention.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews I gather that the keynote running through it all from beginning to end is the glory of the Son. Angels are glorious, but they are only servants; angels are set aside and the transcendent glory of the Son is announced.

Moses was faithful as mediator of the first covenant, but he passes away and Christ takes his place as Mediator of the New Covenant.

Great were the official glories of Aaron as high priest under the law; but Aaron passes away, and the priesthood pertaining to his house and Christ takes his place as the Great High Priest.

Melchizedek is brought forward, and exalted as are his glories, superior far to those of Aaron, yet he also passes away as but a shadow, and Christ, the substance of all the shadows, takes his place and occupies our vision.

Thus in chap. xi. Old Testament believers are brought forward, one after another, as examples of the life of faith, illustrating as in a marvellous picture gallery the character, the power, the triumphs of faith. From their lives the Holy Spirit selects a little bit of the precious golden faith here and a little there, often finding it in a record in which you and I might search for it in vain, as, for instance, in Isaac's blessing of Jacob and Esau.

But in chap. xii. we are summoned to look away from them all—they all are set aside, and we are called to look off unto Jesus, "the Author and Finisher" or "the Beginner and Perfecter" of faith; the One whose whole life—from the manger to the Cross—was one unbroken course of perfect, implicit trust in His Father. "Thou didst make Me hope when I was upon My mother's breasts" (Ps. xxii. 9): and, hanging upon the Cross, He says, "My flesh also shall rest in hope": "Thou wilt show Me the path of life": "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." One principle ruled His life from first to last, and that was faith. If I want to see what the life

of faith is, it is the life of the Lord Jesus. Beautiful and precious are the instances of faith in lives of the saints of old, recalled in Heb. xi., but, after all, they are but broken and fragmentary.

Blessed it is to look away from them all and to contemplate the One whose whole course from first to last—from its beginning to its perfecting—was faith untarnished and unbroken.

But there is another principle with which faith is inseparably, essentially combined, and that is obedience.

In Rom. xvi. 25-26, we find the Gospel spoken of as being "made known unto all nations for the obedience of faith." Now, let us go back for a moment to the scene in the garden of Eden. Eve believed the devil. What was the consequence? She obeyed him: she acted upon his suggestion. Now, what is the gospel? It consists of glad tidings which are to every creature, and which all are commanded to believe (see Mark i. 15). This act of believing is obedience: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." It is impossible to dissociate faith from obedience. If I am consciously disobeying God, it is impossible for me to trust Him, and if I will not trust Him, it is equally impossible for me to obey Him. My faith can only be in exercise so long as I am willing to keep the path of obedience. My obedience will only last as long as I am not giving way to unbelief.

I am now speaking of the life of faith practically. There is that faith by which a sinner takes God at His word and is justified. That is a settled question with the believer for all time. He knows that God loves him, that Christ died for him, and that through believing the glad tidings he is born into the family of God. But it is another thing practically to trust God in the circumstances of daily life. It may sound a paradox, but there are many unbelieving believers. It is in this that faith and obedience are so inter-dependent. There is another aspect of faith referred to in 1 Cor. xii. 8-9: "To another faith by the same Spirit." Here is a special, miraculous gift of the Spirit which is not bestowed upon all saints. Let me give an example. There is George Müller, of Bristol. Fifty years ago God gave him faith that he would be sustained in a special ministry

on behalf of orphan children. He was enabled to believe that God would supply the means for the support of a certain number. He went on in the path of obedience and trust in the Living God, making known the needs of the work to none but to God only in constant and believing prayer. The work enlarged, and as the numbers increased the supplies increased, until now there are nearly 2000 orphans in the Institution, and never once have they been suffered to lack, though often tried to the utmost.

Now, if I or some other believer who had not this special faith attempted to imitate this work, the result would be a ruinous breakdown before a year was out!

That is a special gift of faith, in the sense of 1 Cor. xii., given to one and not given to others.

But it is the privilege of all God's children, and their responsibility, too, to trust in the Living God. Whatever their position in life, the only attitude of soul that is pleasing to God is that of trust.

Some speak of giving up their employment in order to "live by faith." I claim it as my privilege to live by faith whilst occupied in the business of this life. It is possible to see the hand of God, and to know His care in the turmoil of commercial life, as clearly as where supplies are sent directly through some steward of the Lord in answer to prayer.

There are some who speak of "faith-healing." By that they mean healing by God without the use of means. But I hold that if God is pleased to bless the means that are used in answer to prayer, it is healing by God, and faith-healing, too, as well as the other, and equally should the praise be to Him.

We hear of "faith missions," as if they only were missions of faith. But wherever a man has gone forth with his eye on God, obeying God, trusting God, to testify the Gospel of His grace, there is a "faith mission."

I repeat that this life of trust in the Living God is the privilege of all the children of God. In order to this simple faith I must have the assurance that God loves me, and that He gave His Son for me. I can argue then, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" The path of trust is the path of obedience, and that

is the path of blessing. It may be a way of trial and of difficulty, but it is there that I learn experimentally what God is and what He is to me. So it is written, "All Thy paths drop fatness." There is never a barren foot-path in the ways of God.

Now let us look at John vi. 56-57. Here is a beautiful passage, indeed, on the subject of faith! How did the Lord Jesus live? He lived "by the Father." What does that mean? You remember the devil came to the Lord and said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Mark the answer: "Man [He kept the place of the servant] shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God shall man live." Thus the Lord Jesus lived in perfect, implicit dependence upon and subjection to His Father's word. Every word of God to Him was a command and a promise. He obeyed the command and He claimed the promise. He was not dependent upon circumstances: He lived by His Father. He trusted that His Father would supply His need when the time came, and so He used not His divine power for His own deliverance. In view of His death He said: "Thou wilt shew Me the path of life." Thus He lived and died in faith in subjection to and dependence upon His Father. Now He says: "As the Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me even he shall live by Me." But what is meant by "he that eateth Me"? It is explained in this very chapter (see ver. 35): "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger: he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Feeding on Christ is believing on Him. The Romish priest would make you believe it is eating the transubstantiated wafer, which is eating His flesh, and Ritualist Anglicans would teach essentially the same in a modified form; but it is not ordinances or sacraments, it is coming to Him, and believing on Him, for the supply of my every need. It is not taking a sacrament once in six months, or once a week for that part, but a day by day, hour by hour, conscious dependence upon the living Person at God's right hand.

"He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him." He who thus habitually lives in communion with the Lord will not be found going into any place, or companionship, or occupation that involve

parting company with Christ. He who eats this heavenly bread and drinks this heavenly wine, strengthened and refreshed by communion with the Father and the Son, will not be found saying, "What harm is there in this or that"? but, "Have I the Lord Jesus Christ with me here"? His life will be lived before God, and he will be in no position where he cannot count upon Christ to be with him. This is very practical, and it is not an experience that can be jumped into—it involves the denial of self and implicit subjection to the will of the Lord. Now, the Lord Jesus is the One who, first and last, lived and died in faith. "Wherefore," we are exhorted, "consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself."

He made the very hands that nailed Him to the Cross, and yet in patience He bore it, for it was His Father's will that He should.

And now turn to the last point and consider Him, "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Does the Lord Jesus consider now that it was worth His while to endure it all? Yes, He is satisfied, He is full of joy, He is seeing of the travail of His soul, and He shall continue to see the fruit of that travail to Eternity.

And when He comes from the right hand of the Throne, and, in His mighty embrace, takes every living saint transfigured, and every sleeping saint raised from the dead, and brings them in one vast, glorious company into His Father's house and sets them down perfected through His own work before the throne of God, will He not reckon then that the joy that was set before Him outweighs the sufferings and the shame that He endured in the days of His flesh?

You and I may be called to suffering and reproach in the path of faith and obedience: consider Him! Has God suffered Him to be a loser? Verily, no. Then let us gird our loins for the work, the race, the conflict, looking unto Jesus with steadfast eye as the object of faith and the example of faith—the One who showed us how to trust by trusting God Himself; assured that the path of faith and obedience is the path of blessing here and of glory hereafter.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXVI.

THE GREAT SUPPER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

LUKE XIV. 15.

Verse 15. "And when one of them that sat at meat with Him heard these things, he said unto Him, 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.'"

IF we would enjoy the blessings of God in glory, in the future kingdom, we must avail ourselves of the provisions of His grace in time. It is in vain to look forward to the joys of eternity if we neglect the offers of the Gospel in the present time.

Verses 16, 17. "Then said He unto him, 'A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.'"

Thus the Lord Jesus avails Himself of the opportunity for giving a present application to these words of one of the guests.

This parable sets forth the abundant provisions of God's grace in the Gospel, and the largeness and freeness of His invitation. We here notice that it is not to the DINNER, as in Matthew xxii. 4, that the guests are invited, but to a SUPPER, and it is AT SUPPER-TIME, for "behold NOW is the accepted time, behold NOW is the day of salvation. In Matthew xxii. the parable especially contemplates Israel, to whom at the beginning the Gospel invitation was given. But Israel having rejected the provision made for them, the exhortation is extended to the Gentiles, as in this parable of Luke xiv. And this, according to Isaiah lxi. 2, will be followed by the day of vengeance of our God. For those who reject it there is no after provision. How then shall they escape who neglect so great salvation?

Verses 18-20. "And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused, And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

There are other things beside the love of sin which prevent the ready acceptance of the Gospel. Our Lord enumerates three of these hindrances, which are very general.

First, The possession of wealth and large estates, which are thought to necessitate much

attention, for, said the Lord, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom."

Secondly, Absorption in agricultural or mercantile occupation, leaving but little leisure or opportunity to the concerns of the soul, being busy in laying up riches on the earth rather than treasures in heaven.

Thirdly, Domestic enjoyments, cares, and family anxieties, and making provision for the future.

These are thought sufficient reasons by many for not accepting the invitation, and the reply is given, "Therefore I cannot come."

Verse 21. "So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.'"

Those who preach the Gospel are under an obligation not only to deliver their message faithfully and fully, but they have also to give an account to Him who sent them as to what they have done and what they have taught, and also the manner and extent of the reception of their message.

Not only does rebellion against God's authority provoke His anger, but also, and much more, the rejection of His mercy, and undervaluing the boundless provisions of His grace and love, in the gift of His Son, the aid of His Spirit, and the instruction of His Word. Thus they show that they prefer their own things to the things of God, earth to heaven, and the pursuits of Time to the joys of Eternity. Transgression is an offence against His holiness, but the rejection of the Gospel is doing despite to the Spirit of Grace.

In this parable the Lord divides the family of man into three classes—the higher, the middle, and the lower.

FIRST.—The higher class, contemplated in the landowner, the business man, and those involved in family cares.

SECOND.—In the inhabitants of the streets and lanes of the city, known as the working-classes, among whom are to be found the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, not as to the body only, but also as to the soul.

THIRD.—The third class comprises the very poor, destitute, and the outcast.

Verses 22, 23. "And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Not only are the respectable, the moral, the religious, and the majority of men invited and welcome, but the despised, the rejected, and those that count themselves unworthy, undeserving, and too sinful to hope for mercy, are to be urged and encouraged to accept the offers of God's grace.

In the first case the invitation is simply, "Come" (verse 17).

In the second, assistance is to be rendered, "Bring in" (verse 21).

In the third case a kind of moral compulsion is frequently needed, "Compel them to come in." So long as there is a sinner to be saved, a spiritual want to be supplied, or an outcast to be brought in, "still there is room," and not until the house is filled, all who are given to the Son by the Father, and for whom Jesus died, are regenerated, and baptised by one Spirit into one body, will the present invitation of the Gospel cease. But those who now reject so great salvation, and despise God's present mercy, are left without hope of any further provision.

GOD AND "ALL THINGS."

"All things" made by God, Neh. ix. 6; Isa. xlv. 24; Acts xiv. 15, &c.

"All things" known by God, - 1 John iii. 20.

"All things" possible with God, Matt. xix. 26.

"All things" quickened by God, 1 Tim. vi. 13.

"All things" worked after the counsel of God's will, Eph. i. 11.

"All things" God reconciled to Himself by the blood of Christ's Cross, Col. i. 20.

"All things" naked and open to God, Heb. iv. 13. D. T. B.

It is not in the glory that we are to show forth the power of a risen Christ. It is *here* where He died, and where we are dead, that we are called to display the virtues of Christ risen from the dead.

THE cross of Christ is the Christian's crown; the reproach of Christ is the Christian's riches; and the shame of Christ is his glory.

“WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW.”

MR. GEORGE MÜLLER.

THE allusion to the late Mr. George Müller's work of faith and labour of love in our article in this number on the Lord Jesus Christ as “the Author and Finisher of Faith,” was written and in type some time before the news of his sudden departure had reached us. Little did we think then that ere it should appear in print this loved and honoured servant of Christ should have entered into rest! It is a voice to our hearts to be also ready for the call, whether it be to “depart and be with Christ,” or “to be changed in a moment, and caught up to meet Him in the air.”

We do not attempt to give a biography of this remarkable life; most of our readers are no doubt familiar with his own account of his earlier years, published under the title of “The Lord's Dealings with George Müller,” and many will be familiar with his Annual Report, a record of intense interest and edification of all who value “works of faith” and “labours of love.”

His life was pre-eminent for its testimony to the power of faith and prayer. There was no special eloquence about his preaching; it was clear, definite, simple, and always scriptural and edifying. It was his life that spoke most eloquently, most widely, most convincingly. It was a continual, unanswerable testimony for God—the Living God; a testimony as to His faithfulness in hearing and answering prayer, and in never once failing to justify the simple, child-like faith that puts in its claim in the name of the Lord Jesus, and bases its expectations on the Word of promise.

Those who have read for many years the Annual Report will have seen how often faith was tried, and how under the trial the importunity of prayer became intensified, but how in the end the Lord invariably manifested Himself, as we should say, “just in the nick of time.”

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob was the God of George Müller, and He still is the Living God, able and ready to prove Himself to all who trust Him in like simplicity of faith to be the hearer and the answerer of prayer.

Most tenaciously he held, and persistently testified to the great foundation doctrines of

the Gospel. The plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, the Divine glory of the Son of God, the utter ruin and corruption of human nature, atonement by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ, justification by faith, the eternal security of the believer, resurrection and eternal judgment, and the pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus—these and other connected truths formed the subjects of his long and abundant ministry.

Thousands of the orphans reared under his care have become true believers and witnesses for Christ. Hundreds of labourers in the Gospel at home and in foreign lands have been helped by his example, his prayers, his counsel, and the supplies that, as a steward of the Lord, he was enabled to send them.

The Scriptures and Evangelical publications have been scattered by millions over all the world through his instrumentality, and the day of Christ alone will declare the fruit that shall result to the eternal glory of God and of the Lord Jesus whom he so fervently loved, so reverently adored, and so faithfully followed and served. Be it ours to be followers of his faith, remembering the end of his conversation: “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever”!

J. R. C.

The following is extracted from the Western Daily Press, Bristol, of 11th March, 1898:—

MR. GEORGE MÜLLER was yesterday found dead in his bedroom at the Ashley Down Orphanage, where he had lived. He appeared in his usual health on Wednesday evening, had taken part in services so recently as Sunday and Monday last, and had exhibited no symptom that suggested any uneasiness. Yesterday morning, however, when an attendant took to the room Mr. Müller's breakfast at the usual hour—seven o'clock—Mr. Müller was found lying on the floor near the dressing-table, lifeless. He had evidently been taking some food, which was always placed in readiness on the table, and, turning giddy, grasped the side of the table to support himself. This was shown by the tablecloth being dragged somewhat from its place, and the candlestick having fallen over on its side. Dr. Eubulus Williams was sent for immediately, and, in his opinion, death had taken place about an hour before. Some years ago

Mr. Müller suffered from weak action of the heart, and at his great age his sudden death, although unexpected, occasioned little surprise. The tidings quickly became known in Bristol, and everyone felt that one of the most remarkable careers known in the annals of philanthropy had been brought to a close. Mr. Müller was in his ninety-third year, and of late had left the burden of responsibility for the management of the great institutions he had founded upon his son-in-law, Mr. Wright, who had become his co-director.

A faint idea of the extent of Mr. Müller's labours and influence may be gathered from the fact that, *by prayer and faith alone*, during the last 61 years, he received about £1,500,000 in sums varying from one farthing to £12,000 in one gift; erected 5 large Orphanages, costing £115,000, which have never been insured; cared for over 10,000 orphans (more than 3000 of whom professed faith in Christ); circulated about 2,000,000 of Bibles and portions, and 112,000,000 books and tracts, besides travelling 200,000 miles by land and sea in 42 different countries preaching the Gospel and stirring up Christians in English, German, or French.

The funeral took place on Monday, 14th March, 1500 orphans, about 100 carriages, and hundreds of friends forming the *cortège*. "The crowds in the streets were as large as those characteristic of the progress through the city of a Royal personage, and there were probably not short of 10,000 persons within the Cemetery at Arno's Vale when the interment took place."

The orphan work, as well as the other 4 branches, will be carried on by Mr. James Wright and his fellow-workers as the Lord may lead, and they "ask the prayers of all believers," and believe that, as in the past, what God yet does "will be worthy of Himself."

IN MEMORY OF MR. GEO. MÜLLER.

"God took him," 10th March, 1898, in his 93rd year.

"FATHER of many orphans:" twice bereft
Are they who mourn George Müller's
loss to-day!
Yet God, *his* GOD, remains, ever the same—
The FATHER of the fatherless" is HE.

Long had he walked with God, and with Him talked,
Holding sweet converse with the One invisible
To mortal eye, yet to *Faith's* vision seen
Surely and certainly, without a doubt.

In front of ev'ry circumstance he saw
GOD: and so *great* he saw his GOD to be
That difficulties, towering mountains high,
Seemed but as molehills, melting soon away,
Or but becoming food on which faith fed.
He asked and had, because he asked aright;
His prayer prevailed, because *believingly*
He sought the SOURCE from whence all bless-
ing flows,

And men became the *channels* to conduct
The GIVER'S gifts, supplying all his need.
Thus showed he to an unbelieving world,
And faithless Church, "GOD IS," and still re-
wards

The man that diligently seeks His aid.

The service of his God was his delight,
And GOD HIMSELF was his "exceeding joy;"
With joy exceeding he at length beholds
The ONE he loved and served—his FATHER,
GOD!

M. M. D.

Leominster, March 12, 1898.

MR. MULLER'S LAST ADDRESS,

Given on Sunday Morning, March 6, in Alma Road Chapel, Bristol. He attended the Missionary Prayer Meeting on the Monday night, and "fell on sleep" suddenly on the Thursday morning following.

Isaiah vi. ; John xii. 37-41.

"THESE things said Esaias, when he saw
His glory, and spake of Him." This
last verse settles the matter, that what we were
reading in Isaiah vi. all refers to the glory of
our adorable Lord Jesus Christ. In the whole
Divine testimony we do not find a single por-
tion which speaks more of His majesty and
glory. We will now read it once more, verse
by verse, in reference to our precious, adorable
Lord Jesus.

Verse 1. The time is fixed when Isaiah saw
this vision: "*In the year that King Uzziah
died.*" We are reminded here of what Uzziah
passed through. All went on well with him
until he was highly exalted, until he became
mighty and powerful, and then he was lifted
up, and went into the Temple and offered in-
cense to Jehovah contrary to the mind of
Jehovah, for it was the business of the priests,

and in consequence of this he was smitten with leprosy, and to the end of his days he was a leper. A very deeply important and profitable lesson to us all, to seek for a lowly mind, and to pray that we may be kept from pride and highmindedness; this was the fault of Uzziah.

Verse 2. "*Above Him* (not 'it') stood the seraphims." He was surrounded by the highest order of holy angels—the seraphims. "Each one had six wings, with twain He covered His face." This lowly mind of these high angelic beings, forbade them to look at Him. Just a lesson to us to seek to have an increasing abhorrence of ourselves on account of our numberless transgressions, to consider ourselves unworthy to look at the Holy One.

Verse 5. "*Woe is me.*" This is the language of the prophet, conscious of his sinfulness, and being in the presence of the infinitely Holy One, he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone by reason of my great sinfulness."

Verses 6 and 7. The altar represents the Lord Jesus Christ, and the "*taking the live coal from off the altar*" represen's the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And as this "live coal," touching the lips of the prophet and taking away all vileness and sinfulness and transgression, made him clean before God, so the precious blood of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ, though our sins are numberless, removes all spiritual defilement from us, and makes us clean and spotless in the sight of God. O how unspeakably blessed the position into which we are brought by faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose death we are now about again to remember in the breaking of bread.

Verse 8. "*Here am I, send me.*" Just as it was with the prophet, at once ready to offer himself to do the work of the Lord, to go at His bidding, so it should be regarding ourselves. Whatever work the Lord may call us to, whatever business the Lord would have us do, whatever service the Lord would wish us to be engaged in, our hearts should at once respond to His desire and we should offer ourselves to the Lord like the prophet. If it is to give some food to the poor, if it is to clothe the poor, if it is to go to Central Africa, if it is to go to India, whatever work the Lord would have us to do, our hearts should be ready at once to do that work, of whatever kind it may

be. But often, often, often, it is, as in the case of the prophet, trying work. He had to shut the eyes of Israel in the way of judgment, to harden their hearts in the way of judgment, to blind them, so that they could not see the truth—trying work this. *But*, as servants of the Most High, our part is to do the work, of whatever kind it may be, pleasant or unpleasant; our business is to be *servants*, and the servant has to do his Master's work.

Verses 10-12. Of such terrible judgments we read little in the Holy Scriptures, but in this case the awful judgment came upon them, because Jehovah had sent His prophets, time after time, and they would not attend to what these prophets said to them. And this awful judgment is yet on them up to the present; nevertheless, they remain the people of the Living God, and it will yet be seen that the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have their further fulfilment.

Now, the great point regarding ourselves is this, that we should say to ourselves: "A like terrible judgment might have come upon me: I might have been left to myself, my eyes might have been shut, my ears might have been closed, my heart might have been hardened more and more in the way of chastisement, if God had been dealing with me according to my sins. O how pitifully, how mercifully, how tenderly, how graciously the Lord has been dealing with us in Christ Jesus! And what He has been doing and is doing, He will continue to do to the end of our earthly pilgrimage—He will not leave us nor forsake us, and a little while, and then He takes us home to Himself. O the bright, glorious prospect which we poor, miserable sinners have through faith in Christ Jesus! And at last taken home to be for ever with the Lord, and to see that Lovely One who laid down His life for us, ourselves being permitted to kiss His feet, ourselves being permitted to kiss His hands! O the precious prospect that awaits us! *Yet a little while*, YET A LITTLE WHILE, and all will be fulfilled.

How our hearts should go forth continually in the deepest and liveliest gratitude to the Lord Jesus Christ for laying down His life for us, for shedding His blood for the remission of our sins! And how full of gratitude our hearts should be that now, guilty, wicked trans-

gressors that we are by nature, and numberless though our transgressions have been, yet by the power of the blood of Christ we have been made as clean, as spotless as if we had never in our whole life been guilty of one sinful action: as if we had never uttered in our whole life one single, unholy word, and as if there never had been found in us a thought contrary to the mind of God. This is the position into which we are brought through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, so that during the whole of the remainder of our life on earth, and throughout eternity, never one single sin shall be brought against us. O the precious blood of Christ!

Mr. Müller then prayed: "Our heavenly Father, we come again before Thee with praise and thanksgiving for the blessings of the past week, the past month, the past year, and of the whole of our earthly pilgrimage. But above all we adore and praise Thee for the choicest, greatest, and most precious of all Thy gifts, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, in *Him* we hide ourselves: to *His* righteousness we look for acceptance in Thy sight, and to the power of His precious blood by faith in His name for cleansing. O what can we render unto Thee our heavenly Father for the gift of the precious Lord Jesus Christ.

"And now will it please Thee to help us by Thy blessed, Holy Spirit while we eat this bread and drink this wine, to enter into what it signifies, and fill our hearts more abundantly than ever with praise and thankfulness for that blessed One who died and suffered in our room and stead.

"Lord, bless us. Thou hast often done it; do it again, and poor, guilty, worthless sinners as we are, remember us for good and bless us.

JUSTIFYING OURSELVES BEFORE MEN.

IF you stop to avenge every injury you receive on your way heavenward, you will assuredly be kept busy, but it will not be with work which God has given you to do. If you stay to hunt up every breath of rumour that affects your own reputation, you need not be surprised if you find your hands full, and your spirit ruffled and chafed in such a way as to unfit you for serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

No believer should be careless as to what the world or the Church thinks about him. Serving ones must have "a good report of them that are without;" and they that would guide the saints are to be "ensamples to the flock." But if a child of God is conscious that he is *doing the right thing*, he must see to it that he does not fritter away his energies and vex his soul in the wearisome work of justifying himself before men. He must be prepared to be misunderstood, and to suffer at the hands of those who cannot understand him. He must be prepared to have his motives questioned—yea, marked down as evil. He must be ready to hear his faults enlarged upon, and his virtues minimised, and his work belittled. Perhaps—most humiliating of all—he may be compelled to listen to the taunts of men of a hard and unbending spirit, strangers alike to his experience and to that gentleness of touch which is only learned in the school of God. The man who would finish his course with joy must be prepared for all these things. Yet he need not dwell upon them. It is not needful that he take up the sword and fight it out to the bitter end with every adversary that crosses his path. To pursue such a course would only give him to understand something of the significance of the words, "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." He is called to higher work. Life is too short to spend its precious hours in establishing our own righteousness—in proving the purity of our motives and the value of our service. It is by *manifestation* of the truth that we are to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And if the life also of Jesus be manifest in us, we may rest assured that our labour shall not be in vain in Him. There are lonely hearts to cherish—there are weary ones that perish, "while the days are going by." The fields are white unto harvest. Some of us may be called to lift up our voice like a trumpet: others to carry a cup of water. But all are called to manifest the Master's spirit, and shine with the Master's light, and shed around us the fragrance of His name. If these be in you and abound, the fire of evil-speaking will ere long burn itself out. "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

"THE FIRST DIVISION IN THE CHURCH."

PAPER II.—ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

By EPHRAIM VENN.

THE *doctrine* of love was doubtless well known in the Church out of which "those that would" receive the brethren were cast. Diotrephes might have discoursed most ably on the subject from time to time, but other considerations were introduced to regulate the nature and manner of its exercise, so that when the subject was judged all round, these brethren could not be received or brought forward on their journey.

As regards brotherly love, the Apostle John and all the brethren might be loved in a sense, but this was not merely a question of love but a matter of fellowship, and here none could be received except upon agreement on certain questions considered to be of greater importance, and if Gaius or others would receive such, they must be cast out of the Church (verse 10) to preserve the peculiar sanctity of what has been called in our day

THE "PURGED-OUT" COMPANY!

This may be called "true love" exercised with great spiritual insight, but it is not according to God.

The difficulty arose in connection with certain brethren that went forth, concerning whom, it appears, John had written previously (verse 9), whom Diotrephes would not suffer to be received. It is, therefore, important to get from John's pen a further commendation of them in his words to Gaius (verses 5-8).

We see from verse 3 that John was himself associated with them, both in receiving them when they came and rejoicing in their testimony concerning the love of Gaius, which was given also *before the Church* (verse 6).

He now testifies that for the sake of the Name they went forth; not for party purposes or from selfish motives, for they were taking nothing from the Gentiles. Further, he tells us that to bring them forward on their journey worthily of God is to do well, and "*we ought, therefore, to receive such*, that we might be *fellow-helpers to the truth*" (verse 8). Truly it seems the only right course to take with such brethren, who not only have the truth, but

have gone forth in dependence upon the Lord, and for His Name's sake to spread it abroad freely among the Gentiles. But there was no room for them in the Church over which Diotrephes presided, for the ruling spirit judged otherwise, and all in it must either submit or be cast out.

Doubtless reasons could be urged for these strong measures, for

THE DIOTREPHESES SPIRIT CAN ALWAYS SUPPORT ITS OWN SIDE

of the question. It might have been objected that these brethren had nothing beyond the Gospel, and did not understand the wonderful dignity attaching to those who professed to maintain the true sanctity and character of the Assembly of Christ. Diotrephes being doubtless gifted with great insight and precision might possibly have pointed out with marked effect that these brethren had never been taught by John to put the definite article before the word Assembly (compare verse 6 with verses 9 and 10). From the spirit manifested we might conclude that small points—like mint, anise, and cummin—were insisted on, while the weightier matters were omitted. We are not told the exact ground of dissension—all we know is bitter complaints were made against John and the brethren, which he describes as "malicious words"; but, however trivial or needless, the objections urged carried weight, for the bond of love gave way, fellowship was broken, saints were sundered, and the brethren whom we "ought to receive" were shut out of that Assembly.

It only remains for us to look at DEMETRIUS (verse 12) to complete the list of *rejected ones* that John associated with himself under the term "*us*," as outside the company with Diotrephes designated by the word "*them*." Demetrius was no doubt one of those spoken against, and therefore his name is specially mentioned by John, who takes great care to free him in every detail from any suspicious charge that might have been raised against him personally.

It appears that when the brethren went back to John with tidings of all that had transpired, Demetrius had tarried at the scene of conflict until a letter should come from the Apostle to guarantee his character, and to commend him

again to any in the company of Diotrophes who would receive the Apostle's words.

"Demetrius hath good report of all men." This is no mean qualification for a servant of Christ, as we see in 1 Tim. iii. 7; but when we are further assured that he had the commendation also "of the truth itself," we should expect such a double testimony to secure his acceptance among godly ones anywhere. But John proceeds to add his own personal testimony, which he takes the precaution to assure Gaius *is true*—not for the sake of Gaius probably, but of some others who would be less ready to trust even the record of John.

We have seen that a good testimony is given to *all* the brethren in question, and that no laxity of truth or doctrine is referred to about them. It was no mere largeness of heart or liberal-mindedness in their case—

THEY HAD LOVE WITHOUT LAXITY,

and it is most satisfactory to find the word *truth* seven times in this short epistle in connection with these excluded brethren. Is it not exceedingly solemn that brethren should be *prated against with malicious words*, who, when the facts are truly stated, are found not only free from every charge, but in every way godly and commendable? Not a single flaw in one of these brethren is pointed out, yet are they all cast out as unfit for fellowship. Our Lord had forewarned His disciples that they were to expect the same treatment that He received, and now the one who had leaned on His bosom, and who could say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son," is judged unworthy of fellowship in the Church in which Diotrophes was lord; no wonder, therefore, that others are cast out with John.

He had written: "If we walk in the light, as *He* is the light, we have fellowship one with another"; but here it is: "Except ye walk in the light as *we* are in the light we cannot have fellowship together"! Could Diotrophes have charged with evil doctrine, as to the Person of the Lord, the Apostle who so guarded the doctrine of Christ? Could John have been accused of having fellowship with evil *indirectly*, when he teaches that such as bring not *this doctrine* are to be excluded, not merely from the Assembly but from the private house—"Re-

ceive him not into your house"? Yet, if John had presented himself at the Assembly where Diotrophes was pre-eminent, he would surely have been refused, as his letter had been—Diotrophes . . . "receiveth us not," and can we be surprised if, in our day, brethren of unquestioned godliness are similarly treated?

Very likely John might be assured by more than one that they still regarded him and all the brethren as children of God, and that they could acknowledge them as Christians, but they could have no fellowship with them *inside* the Assembly.

We gather from the words "*prating against us*," that there was no lack of effort in support of this new mode of procedure. What the "malicious words" were we know not, but *some* accusations were found against John and the brethren which were readily and constantly repeated till simple ones must have supposed there was truth in them.

But surely there must have been

SOMETHING TERRIBLY WRONG

somewhere to produce such disastrous results. The enemy must have sadly prevailed when the honour of the Lord, the desire of His heart, the truth of His Word, the oneness of His Body, and the reality of His Headship were so set aside by this separating process!

May we not say that the mischief arose from weakening the sense of responsibility between the individual soul and God, and bringing the believers gradually under the power of a false leader?

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even unto Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments: as the dew of Hermon that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for *there* the Lord *commanded* the blessing, even life for evermore" (Ps. 133). But all this was exchanged for the jarring notes of strife and division. Who could have so bewitched these children of God that they should not understand that the Lord not only "*hateth* putting away," but also "him that soweth discord among brethren"? He who was a liar from the beginning must have deceived them with such words as "*Let the Lord be glorified,*"

persuading them that they were doing God service (see Is. lvi. 5), although acting contrary to His plainest commands as to loving one another.

We must now look at

THE FORMATION OF A NEW COMPANY,

designated by the word *them*. "I wrote unto the Church, but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among *them*, receiveth us not." Here we have a particular Church emerging from common Church ground, and occupying a new and altogether unique position. The discovery has been made that THE Assembly, as they regard themselves, must be very exclusive, must separate from all whom they are taught to look upon as "vessels of dishonour." This is altogether new. In John's first epistle we read: "They went out from us, but *they* were not of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." But now a company is formed, claiming to be "the Assembly of God," and disclaiming all saints who are not of their fellowship—a fellowship having power to class with the heathen and the publican those who are still acknowledged to be children of God.

A clear distinction was made, in John's first epistle, between "the children of God" and "the children of the devil"; on one side were those who were "of God," and, on the other, "the whole world lying in the wicked one"; but here a *third* company rises up, not out of the world, but out of the Church, who deliberately separate themselves from those who are "of God," and glory in doing so. An inner circle is formed, having a particular basis of communion, more limited and narrower than the apostles of Christ made known as conveying the thoughts of God.

From the fact that John wrote to the Church (verse 9) it is clear that previously this very Church had been on terms of fellowship with him, occupying ground common to all the Assemblies of Christ, and, further, that John had no other expectation than to receive their fellowship as hitherto enjoyed. But now he finds

A MODERN DEVELOPMENT

of a startling nature—a company of saints

occupying a position and maintaining a circle of fellowship that excludes himself in common with many other godly saints. The very one who had warned saints of the many deceivers is himself rejected!

Does not this remind us of Paul's pathetic appeal to the Corinthians? After pointing out that there could be no fellowship with *unbelievers*, he exhorts them to come out from among them, and be separate, and then continues, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." And, as if foreseeing the fleshly way in which this might be used to cut off saints, or even himself, he exclaims, "RECEIVE US! we have *wronged* no man, we have *corrupted* no man, we have *defrauded* no man; I speak not this to condemn you, for I have said before, *ye are in our hearts to die and live with you*" (2 Cor. vi. 14; vii. 3).

John proceeds to account for this strange departure from the truth, and we are thankful to get at

THE REAL ROOT OF THE MISCHIEF

at a stroke. "But Diotrephes, *who loveth* to have the *pre-eminence* among them, receiveth us not." Ah! here it is—*Diotrephes loveth pre-eminence*—the leprosy is in the head. John had called these believers "little children" again and again, and had watched their growth from babes to young men, from young men to fathers, with peculiar joy, and still they were to him as "dear children" (1 John ii. 12-18); but to see one of them become his *master*, a lord over God's heritage, must have been grief indeed.;

John, however, had been painfully reminded of his own early leanings in this direction, when he took a prominent part in the strife among the disciples as to which should be *the greatest*. The very features so conspicuous in Diotrephes were natural to himself. *Love of pre-eminence* had led him to seek a chief place in the kingdom glory (Mark x. 35-37). Party spirit, too, had shown itself in no small measure, in *forbidding* one who was casting out demons in Christ's name—"We forbad him *because he followeth not with us*" (Luke ix. 45). And again, *the spirit of judgment* was very pronounced in the words, "Lord, wilt Thou that

we call down fire from heaven and consume them?" (verse 54). Each of these features called forth a rebuke from his Master, which had not been lost upon him. But for these faithful rebukes, and the lowly grace of his beloved Lord, who can say that John might not so have developed these fleshly features, that, instead of being a help to his brethren, he might have himself become a producer of strife and a leader of division among them?

But he had never forgotten the words of his blessed Lord, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

THE LESSON OF THE LITTLE CHILD

(Matt. xviii. 2-6) had not been learnt by Diotrophes, or was completely forgotten, and so we find him having authority in the Assembly, and ruling over his brethren, after the pattern of earth's great ones. This is Church history from very early days down to its most modern developments—whether the Pope, or the prelate, or the leading brother, who seeks priority in the meeting. Fleshly pride seeking domination has ever been the melancholy cause of strife and division.

(To be concluded in next number.)

THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE SAINTS.

THE design of the following thoughts is twofold—first, to try and help young believers who have never been exercised regarding this question; secondly, to endeavour to find out some of the causes why those who are right in principle so fail in practice.

To settle a principle is one thing; to carry out that principle is quite another. There are many Christians who hold that when the saints gather together on the first day of the week it should be left open for the Spirit of God to lead out whom He will in worship or in ministry. There are others who say that this leads to confusion, and to prevent this it is better to have the exercises all pre-arranged. Has the Lord in His Word settled this question? or has He left His people to settle it according to their own judgment or likings?

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

Many who read this may say we have settled

this question long ago. Perfectly true—many of us have; but what of those younger believers who have been what might be called "free-born." Many of us older ones had to prayerfully search our Bibles for a solution of this question, and much solemn exercise of soul some of us had. But there are many young believers in the assemblies now who seem to have no convictions of their own on this point. They have been converted through the instrumentality of those who believe in the leading of the Spirit in the assembly, and thus they *fall in* with those who have been used to their conversion—these often being their own parents—without ever asking,

IS THIS THE LORD'S WAY OR NOT?

As time goes on, and as conversions multiply, this condition of things will go on increasing, and as elder brethren pass off this scene the divine order of God's assembly will become more and more a matter of *human opinion*, and less and less a matter of *personal conviction*. Hence the importance of seeking to help young believers to have well-grounded convictions of their own, and not to take things second-hand as to how and where they worship.

When Jehovah called His people out of Egypt, He did not leave it to their choice how or where they were to worship Him. Nor has He left it to our choice. Only the principle by which obedience is enforced is different. The Israelite was enjoined to obey upon the penalty of death; the Christian is enjoined to obey on the principle of love. "If ye love ME, keep My commandments." This ought to make obedience very sweet to the Christian, and ought to lead every believer to diligently search the Scriptures in order to learn what the will of the Lord is. And on no subject should the will of the Lord be more sacred to the believer than as to how we ought to deport ourselves when we gather to remember Him on the first day of the week.

The question arises here, In what part of His Word can we find

SPECIAL DIRECTIONS ON THIS POINT?

Regarding every truth taught in Scripture, there is some passage where the Spirit of God reveals His mind on that special point. In investigating any subject we should always seek to find out where God Himself is speak-

ing on that special point and begin there. Where the same truth comes in *inferentially*, or in figurative or parabolical language, let these always be understood in harmony with that passage which will admit of only *one* interpretation. Where, then, have we *divine legislation* as to the liberty of the Spirit in the assembly?

2 Cor. iii. 17 is often quoted in connection with this question: "Now, the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." But I do not see that this passage has any reference to the assembly at all. The Spirit of God is there contrasting the two dispensations: the ministration of condemnation with the ministration of righteousness, or the bondage of the law with the liberty of grace. There is no thought there of anyone having a right to stand up and open his mouth in the assembly. Is it not rather a liberty for the Christian to enter into the presence of the Lord, and there, with open [or unveiled] face, to behold His glory? This appears to me to be the teaching of that passage—the same divine thought as we get in Heb. x. 19, so I pass by that often-quoted portion of the Word as having no bearing on the subject.

If we are to be guided into the divine thoughts on this important subject we must begin at 1 Cor., chaps. xi. to xiv. To my mind chap. xi. 17 is the starting-point. It is there we have the first notice of the saints being "*come together*." From verse 17 to the end of that chapter the Lord gives special instructions as to the observance of the Lord's Supper. In chap. xii. we get a revelation of the "*diversities of gifts*," of "*ministrations*," and of "*operations*" with the variety of members composing the Church which is the body of Christ. In chap. xiv. we see the whole Church (that is locally) come together into one place (ver. 23), with the various gifts in exercise. But between these two, *i.e.*, the enumeration of the gifts and the injunctions as to their exercise, we get in chap. xiii. the more "*excellent way*," in the love that "*never faileth*." This, as one has said, is

THE "DIVINE OIL"

to prevent friction amongst the various parts of the wonderful spiritual mechanism of the assembly of God.

Let us take these four chapters in their

scriptural order. First, there is the "*weekly feast*" in chap. xi. The essence of this feast is stated in verse 26: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." Herein might be said to be the *kernel* of the Lord's Supper. The exercises of thanksgiving, praise, or ministry all cluster around this, and occupy an important place; but without this act of eating the bread and drinking the cup in remembrance of our precious Lord, the gathering would lose its divine meaning. And mark, it is to be continued "*till He come*." We might also notice here that these injunctions are addressed to "*all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's*" (chap. i. 2). So there is no way for the *obedient* soul to get out of it, either as to *time* or *place*.

In chap. xi., 27 to 32, we get the "*solemnity*" of this feast. When we gather to eat the Lord's Supper we like to make much of His own precious words: "For where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew xviii. 20). But whilst rejoicing in the privilege, are we careful to remember the responsibility of being the guests of the Lord of Glory? Are not many of us in danger of forgetting or neglecting that self-examination which He enjoins on every one who would appear in his presence as His guest? Some may feel inclined to look down upon and pity our Presbyterian brethren with their "*fast days*," and "*preparation*" days, but is it not possible that the Lord, who looketh upon the heart, may discern more that is displeasing to His Holy eye in the *graceless* familiarity with which many of us, who think ourselves well instructed, eat the Lord's Supper, than in some whose surroundings are wrong but whose hearts may be right! Have we duly considered

THE NECESSITY OF SELF-EXAMINATION

before sitting down at the Lord's table?

From man's point of view there are three things necessary before one is qualified to eat the Lord's Supper:

1. That one be a child of God.
2. That one be sound in fundamental doctrines.
3. That one be consistent in walk.

But from the Lord's point of view there is a fourth thing necessary, and that is a right *condition of the heart and conscience*. The first three the assembly is responsible to see to; but the fourth is the believers own responsibility. And because the saints at Corinth were neglecting this, the hand of the Lord was laying many of them aside on sick-beds, and taking many of them home to heaven. In these days of want of Godly reverence, these things ought to be deeply pondered and faithfully taught.

After duly estimating all that is cause for thankfulness, there is much to be seen and heard in our weekly gatherings which every spiritual believer must deplore. If one come from the presence of the Lord, and in a real condition to worship, how much there often is in our meetings that grates upon the heart. The very exercises which ought to help us to draw near to God as worshippers come in between the spiritual soul and the Lord Himself. How much there too often is which any spiritual saint can easily discern is only

“FILLING UP TIME.”

And what makes this so sad is, that it all goes on under the pretence of being “led” by the Holy Spirit. It is no wonder that few of our fellow-saints around us come near many of our meetings, or that some who have been coming lose heart and turn away! Nor is it the want of gift, or of intelligence, which is the cause of this; it is chiefly the lack of *grace*. And, again, this lack of grace arises from the neglect of self-judgment on the part of those who ought to be in a condition to lead and help fellow-saints to the pleasing of the Lord, and to the edification of all present. Those who would lead in the assembly of God must be “spiritual” men, and with so much evil within us and around us, it is not possible for any one to maintain that spirituality which is necessary to lead in the gatherings of the saints without the strictest self-examination and the most diligent cultivation of a Godly walk through the week. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Gal. v. 25). As one has well said: “If a Christian go with the current of the world during six days of the week, he will not have much power to go against it on the *one* day.

G. A.

Questions and Answers.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

LIVING BY FAITH.—FROM I COR. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to “live by faith,” and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—I COR. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.—Is it possible for any one to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost in this age?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

UNCONSCIOUS DEAD.—Does the fact that death is often called “sleep” go to prove that the dead are unconscious until the resurrection?

ABIB, FIRST OR SEVENTH MONTH?—It has been asserted that the month Abib, which from the institution of the Passover (Ex. xii.) was reckoned the first month of the year, is the same that previously had been the seventh month, and that, consequently, it was on the 17th day of that same month that the Ark rested on Mount Ararat, synchronising with the day that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Can any proof of this assertion be given from Scripture, or any conclusive historical evidence?

LABOURS OF WOMEN.—In what sense were the women in Romans xvi. “My helpers” (verse 3), “much labour on you” (verse 6, R.V.), “who labour in the Lord” (verse 12), or if we have any Scripture authorising women to go forth as labourers in the Gospel, and the Church's responsibility to them?

TWO RESURRECTIONS.

QUESTION 560.—Please explain Daniel xii. 2: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”

Answer A.—In giving any exposition of the latter visions and revelations of the book of Daniel, it is well to guard against being dogmatic, as the words are shut up and sealed to the time of the end. Although we could not venture to give the exact sequence of events, the predictions of our verse will no doubt be accomplished about the time the antichrist confirms a covenant with many for one week, or between that and the time when “He shall enter into the glorious land” and “plant the tabernacles of His palace between the seas, in the glorious, holy mountain.”

The passage, I believe, is highly figurative, and is connected in my mind with Ezek. xxxvii.

—the vision of the restored and revived bones, which had been so very dry. These bones were the whole house of Israel (verse 11). Then, in expounding the vision in the next verse, the Lord God says: "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Then leaving off figure, vision, and allegory, the Lord God says at verse 21: "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Gentiles, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." This whole portion is so analagous to our verses in Dan. xii. that, I judge, the exposition of the one is the exposition of the other. They sleep in the dust of the earth (ADAMAH). That is, they are so mixed with the Adam race that they have lost *their consciousness of being children of Abraham* and their relation to God—dead to God and Abraham. But by Sovereign Divine power they shall awake, some to everlasting life, to be the nucleus of the millennial glory and blessing of Israel, and to die no more; and some to shame and everlasting contempt, because they take part with the Antichrist (see Dan. xi. 32-35, and Matt. xxiv. 48-51), and so will have their portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. J. S.

Answer B.—Scripture clearly shows that there will be two resurrections, but, like many other subjects, it is gradually unfolded, till we get the fuller light of New Testament revelation, ending with the definite statement of Rev. xx. 5, 6, "The rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection," &c. Daniel xii. 2 simply states that there will be a resurrection, including just and unjust, but it does not say they will be raised together; there will be an interval of althousand years, as the above passage shows. A like interval occurs in connection with the year of grace and day of judgment mentioned in Isa. lxi. 2. Yet who would gather it from the Isaiah scripture? In Luke iv. 19 the Lord stopped in the middle of the sentence, for it was only "the acceptable year" that He was at that time come to proclaim. At least two thousand years would elapse ere He would usher in the day of judgment. With New Testament light we understand this interval. In the same way the New Testament reveals the interval and other points concerning the first and second resurrections. With the "key" in our hand, the "lock" is easily turned. Such a "key" we have in the Revelation to many Old Testament mysterious prophecies.

M. M. D.

Editor's Note.—We give two replies to this question, one viewing it as a spiritual resurrection and the other taking it literally.

We have difficulty in accepting the spiritual

view, and so making it analagous to Ezek. xxxvii., for there the spiritual resurrection is clearly throughout this chapter not merely a national restoration as from the dead, but a spiritual operation in the souls of the people, bringing them nationally into the blessings of the New Covenant. A spiritual resurrection to shame appears to us to be a contradiction in terms.

The real difficulty in the verse is that the resurrection here spoken of is partial. "Many of those that sleep," and yet "some" of them awake to shame, &c.—an awaking that we elsewhere learn does not take place till the final resurrection at the end of the millennium.

But it is pointed out by competent authorities that the translation might as literally run thus: "These" (that is those who awake at that particular time) "to everlasting life; those (that is the rest of the dead) to shame and everlasting contempt." The sequence of these events is given in Rev. xx.

FAITH: IS IT INVOLUNTARY?

QUESTION 561.—Is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (by which we are saved) an involuntary action?

Answer A.—Faith is the voluntary act of the renewed will. All sinners who hear the Gospel are invited to Christ, that they may freely have life and salvation by Him. But of the many that are called by this preaching of the Gospel and reading of the Word, comparatively few come to the Saviour, for "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"—or "judged," R.V.—(1 Cor. ii. 14). "Ye will *not* come unto Me," says Jesus Christ, "that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

It is when by the Spirit of God we are convinced of sin and its terrible consequences, by being led to believe what God says in His law about sin and the sinner, that we are brought to that point when the cry of the heart is—"What must I do to be saved?" Then the Spirit, taking of the things that are Christ's, and showing them to us, persuades and enables us to believe in Christ, whom we see to be a Saviour exactly suited to our case—all-powerful, and, therefore, able to save: "the end of the law for righteousness;" "a curse for us."

Thus we see how God operates on our wills by His mighty power. The sad tidings must be believed before the glad tidings will be acceptable. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). "Unto you it is given to believe on Him" (Phil. i. 29). "Ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God" (Col.

ii. 12). "To them that have *obtained* like precious faith," &c. (2 Pet. i. 1). "Looking unto Jesus, the *author* and *finisher* of our faith" (Heb. xii. 2). Faith is "born of God" (1 John v. 4). "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me, *draw* him" (John vi. 44). "No man can come unto Me, except it were *given* unto him of my Father" (John vi. 65).

J. M., Jun.

Editor's Note.—God never deals with man as a mere machine. His way is so to operate by His Spirit, through the Word, or by His providential dealings, or both together, as to show man his guilt and need, and so to make him willing to believe what otherwise, owing to the innate enmity of his heart against God, he would treat with indifference or contempt, and in any case with unbelief.

The first motion towards salvation is, therefore, of God's grace, and not of the will of man.

But the full guilt of unbelief is charged against the sinner. "Though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him." And again—"If I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?" Unbelief is the sin which above all others demonstrates the revolted will, the enmity of the carnal mind, and it is "making God a liar."

THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT.

QUESTION 562.—Is the last clause of Ephesians v. 18 as in the Authorised Version a correct translation? or should it be, as some render it, "Be filled in Spirit?"

Answer A.—Most certainly the Greek preposition *ἐν* is used. We are persuaded God means something by using it. It is quite in the way of the Greek language to use a genitive for a simple inward filling, as in John ii. 7 "Jesus said, Fill the waterpots," *ὕδατος* (the genitive of water). Sometimes a simple dative is used, as in the first limb of this verse (Eph. v. 18): "And be not drunk" *οἴνω* (the dative of wine). The Revised Version has "in spirit" in the margin, which albeit is hardly the way of the English language, or is not very good English that, no doubt, is the reason why the *ἐν* is taken no notice of in our most beautiful and excellent Authorised Version.

The filling here is very similar to that beautiful word which we have (Eph. iii. 19): "That ye might be filled *into* all the fulness of God." Being filled in the Spirit is something like the physical fact that we are filled with, and are also in, the atmosphere by which we are completely surrounded. Thus we should have the privilege and the power to live in the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit (Gal. v. 25): to pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude xx.): to speak in the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 3).

J. S.

Editor's Note.—The antithesis here is between

"wine" and "the Spirit." The natural man given to excess in wine, accompanied by noisy revelry and songs, is placed over against the spiritual man, filled with the Spirit of God, and consequently giving vent to his emotions in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

That "En" usually signifies "in" is true, but it is occasionally used where the sense in English is better expressed by "with," and in this we do not see any reason to differ from the Authorised and the Revised Versions.

BLIND AND DEAF—WHO?

QUESTION 563.—Kindly explain who the blind servant or deaf messenger is in Isaiah xlii. 19. Is it Christ, the true and faithful servant, or Israel, as in Matt. xiii. 14, 15?

Answer A.—The Jews, Israel.—Isaiah had said (verse 17) God would destroy the heathen idolators, but remembers that even the Jews, from whom better things might have been expected, were tainted with this sin. The heathen's blindness was nothing compared with these Israelite idolators. They would not see or hear. Though the fire of God's wrath burned Israel, yet he knew not. Israel was called "My servant," "My messenger" (Isa. xli. 8; xlv. 4), as being chosen of God to serve Him, and to be the herald of His truth to other nations. The Revised Version rendering of the paragraph (verses 18-25) gives better sense than the Authorised Version. Compare verses 19, 20 with 24, 25, and reference to "law," verse 21, with that in verse 24. The magnifying of the law for the sake of God's righteousness was probably in punishing Israel for their disobedience to it. Matt. xiii. 14, 15 is a quotation from Isa. vi. 9.

J. H. H.

Answer B.—The messenger here spoken of is Christ—the servant of Jehovah in His entire devotion to God. He was blind and deaf to all that was not pleasing to His God and Father. His eyes were always kept for God, He had ears only to hear His voice, and it is our blessed privilege, in fellowship with Him, to close our eyes and shut our ears to all down here, and thus be like Him—blind and deaf to all save what the Lord desires us to see and hear. In Matt. xiii. 14, 15 we have Israel in a backslidden condition—no eyes for God, no ears for His truth.

J. F.

Editor's Note.—We give two replies taking different views of this Scripture. We incline to think that it is the blindness of the nation of Israel that is intended, as blindness and deafness are never elsewhere alluded to as characteristic of the Lord Jesus, but rather quickness of hearing and discernment. That He was practically blind and deaf to every consideration except the voice and will of God is perfectly true, but we doubt if that is the meaning of this passage.

HOW TO LIVE A PEACEFUL, HAPPY LIFE.

Address by the late Mr. GEORGE MULLER on
Philippians iv. 4-7.

THESE four verses are by the Holy Ghost written to the beloved brethren and sisters in Christ here present. All of us, more or less, need the counsel, advice, exhortation, here given to us. May we seek now to listen to the voice of God the Holy Spirit in them.

“*Rejoice in the Lord always*” (verse 4). This exhortation is given to believers, for none but such can rejoice in the Lord. In order to attend to it, we must first have been made to see our lost and ruined condition; we must have owned this before God, and then have put our sole trust for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. In doing so we become justified, we are regenerated, we are forgiven, we become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; we are brought into the road to Heaven, and Heaven will be our home at last.

Entering into this, joy in the Lord commences, but only *commences*, because to the highest degree it can be brought only in glory. But in a little degree the joy of Heaven then commences; and the more we lay hold on what we have obtained by faith in Christ Jesus the greater will be this peace and joy in God, the greater our real,

TRUE HAPPINESS WHILE YET IN THE BODY.

We should especially also couple with this, in order that this joy in the Lord may continue, the careful, diligent, habitual reading of the Holy Scriptures; a seeking to carry out in our life what God makes known to us in His precious Word, in order that we may attend to the second part of this exhortation—“And, again, I say, Rejoice.” This is especially to be noted: Joy *commences* by attending to what I have mentioned; but this joy will be *continued* to us, we shall be happy always if we are dwelling by faith on the work of the Lord Jesus—appropriating it to ourselves.

We know how much has been spoken of this joy in the Lord. Philippians, in particular, is full of it. We have in the beginning of chapter iii. this word—“Finally, my brethren, Rejoice in the Lord.” Then it is repeated here, but with this especially weighty addition:

“Rejoice in the Lord *always*,” and then, as if all this were not enough, it is yet once more repeated—“And, *again, I say, Rejoice.*” So much stress is laid on it, because it tends so much to the glory of God to give testimony to the world that it is not a vain thing to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to show to the world how much we obtain through this faith in Him, and also by attending to it we strengthen the hands of our fellow-believers.

“*Let your moderation be known unto all men*” (verse 5). Most of the beloved brethren and sisters here present know that the meaning of the word “moderation” is “*yieldingness*” It does not mean that we can go too far in the things of God. This never has been the case. We cannot pray too much, trust too much, love too much, too much carry out the mind of Christ. It cannot be; but, as I said, the meaning is, “*yieldingness.*” That is, though believers in Christ, we should not insist on our own rights, but be ready to yield to the world and to our brethren in Christ; and by manifesting this meek, this yielding spirit, we glorify God. Naturally we might be inclined to say, “If I do so, the people of the world will take great advantage of me.” This would be the case if we had no Father in Heaven who cared for us, if no Lord Jesus Christ were our Friend and Helper. And immediately after we read: “The Lord is at hand.” Commit your matters into the hands of God, leave yourself in His hands; *He* will look after you, care for you, and see that the people of the world shall not overpower you and take too much advantage of you. Since you have a Father in Heaven, and the Lord Jesus Christ is your intimate Friend and Helper, it cannot be so.

Then come two other most precious verses: “*Be careful for nothing*” (verse 6). That, as we all know, does not mean, “Be careless and unconcerned altogether about your family affairs and business matters, and work and labour for the Lord;” but, as we again and again have heard, it means, “Be *anxious* about nothing.” It is the great privilege of the child of God *not to be anxious.* And it is possible to attain to it even in this life; yea, in the midst of great difficulties, great trials. It can be attained to, it is attained to by not a few of

the children of God. And, by the Grace of God, I am one of those who for many a long year have not been anxious ;

FOR MORE THAN SIXTY YEARS I HAVE NOT
BEEN ANXIOUS.

I have rolled my burdens on the Lord, and He has carried them for me. The result of that has been that "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," has kept my heart and mind. If we are anxious, it brings about a gloomy look, and a gloomy look greatly dishonours God and greatly deters the unconverted from seeking after the Lord, for they say to themselves : "That man, that woman, is just as miserable as I am when I am in trouble." But when they see we are in heavy trial, in heavy affliction, and yet there is found a cheerful look about us, our very look is an encouragement to the unconverted, and also strengthens the hands of our fellow-believers in God. And, therefore, beloved, let us aim at this, that *we be not anxious*. As I stated : It is to be obtained, but we cannot obtain it by our own resolutions, by our saying to ourselves—"I will go through it bravely." We have in our weakness and helplessness to roll our burdens on God, then it is brought about that we have the peace of God.

Let me affectionately press this on the hearts of my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, for it brings about a miserable life if we carry our own trials, our own burdens. Even the lightest trials and burdens will be found too heavy for us, if carried in our own strength, and we oblige our Heavenly Father to step in and make the burden heavier. If we, in our foolishness and self-importance, try to carry the burden ourselves, then, speaking after the manner of men, the ten-pound weight will be made fifty ; and if, in our high-mindedness, we try to carry that, He makes it a hundred ; and if we foolishly think we can then carry the burden, it will be made still far more, so that God may make us see how weak we are, and that we cannot carry the burden ourselves.

The next thing which I desire affectionately to commend for your souls' profit is the counsel : "*In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God*" (verse 6). That means, not merely when the trial is exceed-

ingly great, only then to pray, but about *little* things, the ordinary affairs of life—to bring them all before God. And the result of this is—"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Though this is a vale of tears, yet we are able thus to go cheerfully through the world. It is my habitual practice about little things, to bring them before God. I never attempt to carry any burdens myself ; I roll them on God and speak to God about them. Beloved Mr. Wright and myself, the first thing when we meet every morning, have prayer about the affairs of our work, and bring everything before our God ; the most minute affairs we bring before God, roll them on Him, do not attempt to carry them ourselves.

ASKING FOR ORPHANS.

And I give here an illustration which some may not have heard out of my mouth. When, sixty-two years ago, God particularly laid on my heart to care about destitute orphans, the first thing was to seek to ascertain the mind of God whether I should be engaged in this work, and after a great deal of prayer I came to the decision that it *was* the will of God. I tried my motives, and invariably came to the decision, "It is for the glory of God I seek to be engaged in this." Then I began to pray with regard to the various matters in which I needed the help of God. I asked God for money, for a house, for helpers to take care of the children, and He gave me all these. And about all the various articles of furniture I asked God to guide and direct me, and did not think myself clever enough or wise enough to get them. Now all was ready for the orphans, and I fixed two hours when I would be in the vestry to receive applications for orphans. I sat there two hours, and not one came, so I left the vestry and walked home, and on the way I had brought to my mind this very verse, "*In everything,*" and I said to myself, "You have asked for money—you have obtained it ; you have asked for helpers—you have obtained them ; you have asked for a suitable house—you have obtained it ; and while you were furnishing it you asked God, step by step, about everything, that He would guide and direct ; but you never asked God for *orphans*." This was not wilfully and in-

tentionally left out, but it never came to my mind to ask for *orphans*. I said to myself, "There are tens of thousands of destitute orphans; there will be no difficulty in getting them," and therefore I never prayed about it. Now I saw how sinfully I had acted about this matter, and when I came home I locked the door of my room and cast myself flat on the floor, confessing my sin, how I had not regarded the Word of God in this particular; and I lay on the floor two or three hours in confession and humiliation of myself before God. At last, after I had once more examined my heart, I came to this: "It is for Thy glory, Lord, that I have begun this, and if Thou wouldst be more glorified by bringing the whole to nought, and putting me to shame before my fellow-men and fellow-believers, bring it to nought if Thou canst be more glorified; but if it would be for Thy glory, be pleased to forgive me, and send me orphans." And I rose cheerfully from the floor, on which I had been lying in prayer and supplication. Next morning at eleven the first orphan was applied for; before a month was over forty-two came, and since more than twelve thousand—a plain proof that there were plenty of orphans to be had.

I have given the details of this to show what we have to understand by "in everything," bringing our matters before God, and never attempting to carry our own burdens. And I cannot tell you what a blessing this has been to me—to roll every one of my burdens on God, and never to attempt to carry them myself. I had done this before, but this little circumstance taught me the lesson so perfectly that I have never lost sight of it since.

"*By prayer and supplication*" (verse 6). Ordinary prayer, and oft-repeated prayer, is not enough; we must ask in the way that a beggar asks for alms, and pursues us, sometimes fifty yards, and will not let us go till he gets something given him. In a way something like this we have to bring our matters before God in order to have the blessing.

And notice, further, this is to be done "with thanksgiving." So to speak, we have to lay a good foundation with praise and thanksgiving, and then build on this prayer and supplication, for, whatever our position in life, however great, and varied, and manifold our trials and afflictions may be,

THERE IS ABUNDANT REASON FOR
THANKSGIVING.

Why? Because our heavenly Father remains to us. Whatever is wanting, He is not taken from us; He remains to us, and our precious Lord Jesus, our heavenly Friend, remains to us, however our own friends might forsake us; however heavy, great, and varied our trials and difficulties, He remains to us, and the Holy Spirit is given to us and remains to us; our bodies are still a "temple of the Holy Ghost," and the Word of God remains to us. Therefore we have still abundant cause for praise and thanksgiving, and we should not lose sight of these blessings that remain. And what would be the result? We should be calmed, quieted down; we should say, "I shall yet be happy; my heavenly Father will not forsake me, but will help me and keep me while yet in the body near Himself.

And, as is stated here, the result of all this will be—

"*The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*" (verse 7).

"The peace of God!"—that calm, quiet, trustful state of heart which is called "the peace of God," and which is so blessed that the greatest orator could not describe what it is except he knew it, and the greatest poet in the world could not represent to us in poetry unless he knew it by experience, and the greatest painter could not represent on canvas what this peace of God is unless he knew it by happy experience. But it is to be known by every believer by the grace of God, and by the grace of God I have habitually enjoyed it for sixty years, and therefore because I know it is to be had while yet in the body, I affectionately beseech and entreat beloved brethren and sisters in Christ to aim at it, and it is to be obtained in the way that is stated before.

Then this is the precious winding-up of the matter, the fruit of all: "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." The word "keep" in the original is applied literally to military power, as if by military power we are kept; and then this spiritualised means that we should be kept in Christ Jesus, our minds and our hearts happy in Christ Jesus. That is just what real, true believers especially

desire, that under no circumstances they may fall or dishonour God, but that they may be kept from falling. Now, we shall not fall as long as our hearts and minds are kept *in* Christ Jesus (it is "through" in our version, but "in" in the original), and this as by military power. Just as a garrison is sent forth to keep a fortress against the power of the enemy, so in like manner, by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the instrumentality of the peace of God that we get by attending to this exhortation, shall we be kept in Christ Jesus.

Now, is not all this most precious? And shall we not endeavour to obtain it through attending to this exhortation? Oh, it is worth while to attend to it!

If you will allow me again to refer to my own experience, I could tell you what

A PEACEFUL, HAPPY MAN I HAVE BEEN
THESE SEVENTY YEARS,

and every one of my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ who have not yet habitual peace may have it too, therefore I comment so continually on this. This peace of God "which passeth all understanding" may be enjoyed not merely now and then, but month after month, year after year, and for many a long year, even as I have had it now for above seventy years. And let my beloved brethren and sisters in Christ who have not had it as an habitual gift and blessing from God, seek for it and they can have it. I have not the least doubt that there are very many in our midst this morning who like myself enjoy this peace of God, but it should not be merely a few, but everyone.

God grant that this may be the result of our meditation in this hour.

THE FORERUNNER AND THE COMING ONE.

Revised Notes of Addresses on "The Lord Jesus as seen in the Epistle to the Hebrews," by J. R. CALDWELL.

HEB. VI. 19, 20: X. 36, 37.

"THE Hope set before us" is Christ, even as we read in 1 Tim. i., "The Lord Jesus Christ who is our Hope." He is the "Hope of Israel" (Acts xxviii. 20), and "on Him shall the Gentiles hope" (Rom. xv. 12 R.V.).

Usually this verse in Heb. vi. is quoted as "the hope set before us in the Gospel," and applied to the hope of being finally saved. But it seems here rather to be a flying for refuge, as a ship in distress making for the harbour, from the wreck of all things beneath the sun, to lay hold of that which is sure and stable, and which, as the anchor holds the ship by the great chain-cable, holds the believing, trusting, hoping, waiting soul steadfast in spite of all opposing waves and tempests till the storm is past and the morning without a cloud has dawned.

It is Christ Himself that is the Hope, and He also is the Anchor. As the anchor passes out of sight, and yet though unseen its powerful hold is realised, so Christ though unseen is realised by faith as the One who holds and keeps the feeble ones who cling to Him.

As the priest of old passed out of sight as he entered within the veil, so the Lord Jesus, our High Priest, passed out of sight when ascending up to heaven—the veil of clouds was drawn beneath His pierced feet.

We have already seen that His ascension was not merely to heaven, but, as in chapter iv. 14, "through the heavens, or, as in Eph. iv. 10, "up far above all heavens."

And He has gone thither not as before His incarnation, where from eternity "He was God" and "was with God," but as the God Man. It is really a glorified Man who has ascended up from the depths of Hades to the throne of God.

The graves were opened and the veil was rent when He died on Calvary, showing that on the ground of His atoning work no barrier remained, but a way was opened up straight from the depths of the grave to the immediate presence of God.

And how deeply significant is that title here given to the ascended One, "The Forerunner!"

Already he had become "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. xv. 20), "the first born from among the dead" (Col. i. 18), "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." And as the "first fruits" corresponded to the harvest of which it was a part, so the saints in resurrection will be fashioned like unto His glorious body, corresponding in their measure to Him—Christ the pattern of resurrection to which all must be conformed.

It is interesting in this connection to observe that in Lev. xxiii. 10, when the "sheaf of first fruits" is mentioned, a different Hebrew word is used from that which in the same chapter, verse 17, is applied to the "two wave loaves baked with leaven."

The word rendered "first fruits" in the latter verse simply implies first in order. That applied to the sheaf signifies first in the sense of pre-eminence. Thus the divinely perfect wording of the Scriptures is witnessed to, the wave sheaf so evidently typifying the Lord Himself, whilst the two loaves as clearly foreshadow those who, as the fruit of His work, are accepted in Him.

But not only is He the pattern of all His redeemed and heavenly people in His resurrection, He is also their pattern in His ascension. The Forerunner necessarily implies others who are to follow. He has gone first; as He said, "I go to prepare a place for you," and those whom the Father has given Him are to follow afterwards and in like manner to the place where He is.

The Old Testament Scriptures are full of the glory and blessing in store for this earth when as Son of Man the Lord Jesus shall receive the kingdom; when Israel, the completed nation, the twelve tribes, shall be restored to their land, when Jerusalem shall be "the city of the great King," and when, flowing out from that earthly metropolis of the heavenly kingdom, streams of blessing shall extend to all nations of the earth.

All this is plainly predicted, and it is familiar to our ears. But where in the Scriptures of the Old Testament do we find the thought of an elect people, taken, irrespective of the distinction between Jew and Gentile, gathered out of every kingdom, and nation, and people, and tongue, during the period of Israel's long dispersion, and destined to be taken up to heaven, to enter as a royal priesthood into the heavenly sanctuary, to worship around the throne in the full blaze of the glory of the Majesty on high, to dwell in the Father's house as the favoured sons of God, to come with the King of kings when He comes, and to reign with Him when He reigns eternally, sharing the glory of His kingdom—where are such things found in the Old Testament?

Prefigured it might be, but types alone are

meaningless until God Himself, who devised them, presents us with the key to unlock them. However distinct the type when once its significance is opened to us, till then it is a "secret hid in God."

Such is the mystery of the Church as one with Christ, co-partner of His heavenly glory and His eternal kingdom.

And it is thus as the Forerunner that He has gone up on high. Crucified, dead, buried, quickened, risen, WITH Christ, the Church is now seated in heavenly places IN Christ Jesus. Not yet with Him, but destined to follow Him to where He has gone, and knowing now that there is our portion and our home.

But He is also seen in this wondrous epistle as "the Coming One." "For yet a very little while, and He that cometh [or the coming One] shall come, and shall not tarry" (Heb. x. 37, R.V.). As those who are to follow the Forerunner up to the heavenly sanctuary, we are not to be left to take that unknown and untrodden way alone. The Lord Himself shall come, according to His promise: "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." He shall send His angelic messengers to gather His elect for His earthly kingdom from the four winds of heaven, but not thus will He gather those who are the elect for heavenly glory. He Himself must perform this glorious transaction; no voice but His may quicken the sleeping and change the living saints, and when raised and changed He alone shall, as a mighty magnet, attract them from earth and gather them unto Himself in the heavens.

It was the Lord Himself who first used this word, "a little while." Thus He sought to cheer and comfort their hearts as He broke to His disciples the thought that He was about to leave them and return to the Father. At first they could not understand it, but tenderly He explained that He was going away only for a little while, and that certainly they should see Him again. It is this word which the Spirit takes up again in Heb. x. to cheer and comfort those who had been called to endure "a great fight of affliction." But here the little while is made shorter still—"a very little while"—for truly "the night is far spent, and the day is at hand."

Again and again the Lord confirms the

word, "Behold, I come quickly," "Surely I come quickly." Saints amid conflict and sorrow may long for that hour, but none ever longed for it with the fervent desire of the Lord Himself. For Him it is the consummation of the Bridegroom's joy when He presents her to Himself all glorious. For this He endured the Cross and despised the shame. Then shall death be swallowed up in His victory, and not a relic be left in the grave to be a trophy of its temporary triumph over the dust that was redeemed.

"A little while! Our Lord shall come,
And we shall wander here no more;
He'll take us to our Father's home,
Where He for us has gone before;
To dwell with Him, to see His face,
And sing the glories of His grace."

But He is also the Coming One in another character. He was looked forward to from Old Testament times as the Coming One, as we read, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. xiv. 5). In that day when He comes, not FOR but WITH His saints, His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, that is before Jerusalem upon the east, that very mount upon whose brow He sat and wept those bitter tears of rejected love, and the quaking earth shall own in Him its Creator and Lord. Meantime, and until that day, He is seated at the right hand of God awaiting the fulfilment of the promise that His enemies shall be made His footstool.

As we say of Queen Victoria, that she has been seated upon the throne of England for 60 years, so the Lord has been seated for these 18 centuries and more upon His Father's throne.

But the hour will come when He shall no longer be seated at the Father's right hand, but, invested with universal dominion, He shall occupy His own throne (Rev. iii. 21), and reign as the great Melchizedek, the Monarch of a kingdom that shall know no end.

In view of such prospects, "What manner of persons ought ye to be?" "In all holy conversation and godliness looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." "Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

IN CHRIST—A NEW CREATION.

An Address by Dr. NEATBY, ON 2 COR. V. 14-18.

IT is specially on the 17th verse that I would offer a few general remarks. If there is anything that is unattractive it is death. It was *moral death that Christ looked upon*. Not merely the activity of evil—that was true. It was moral death that the terrible plague of sin had wrought to its bitter end—it resulted in death. I was called to visit a patient who was ill. The case was too far gone when I arrived. There was no movement or sign of pulsation or breath. I found no sign whatever of life. I said, "You have called me too late—the patient is dead." That was the condition of man. His activities ended in death. There was moral death; and Christ looked upon it and brought life into the scene of death, "that *they which live* should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him who died for them and rose again." It was your natural condition and mine to make self the centre of our moral being—to live to ourselves. Just as everything in our solar system revolves around the sun; by nature, I make myself, you make yourself the centre of your system. The purpose of God in the death of Christ is to displace that centre. You cannot show me a man where that displacement has been fully realised. It is the will and purpose of God that this displacement should be realised, and that Christ should be in that place that I dared to take to myself. In love to us He died for us in order that He should have the pre-eminence, not in a general way, but that He should have the entire control of the whole system of our lives, our thoughts, and actions down here. In order that we should not henceforth live to ourselves but unto Him who died for us and rose again, He has become the Head of the new creation: as such He takes entire precedence in everything. The old creation is set aside by the fact of a new creation being required. That is a humbling lesson for us all. It is the closing of the history of the old man and the introduction of a man according to God's counsels: the Son of Man made strong for Himself. This is indicated when Christ tells Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." He comes to Christ to be taught. He says, "I cannot teach the old man; there must

be a new creation": you must be born over again in the very springs of your being. This is at the foundation of God's intention in salvation. That sets aside entirely the old creation. God was dealing for the formation of a new creation in Christ its Head when He raised Him from the dead. That was the first action in the new creation. It was necessary that He should die, but in resurrection you have the beginning, according to God, of the new creation. Christ was the "seed of the woman": man is set aside by that expression. If I took my mother's name it would be the setting aside of my father's name. The seed of the woman is the entire setting aside of man, and that is borne out in 1 Cor. xv. 45: "The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit." What an important lesson is involved in this. For 4000 years, millions, hundreds of millions, and thousands of millions have been born descended from the first Adam. We read concerning Adam that he begat a son "in his own likeness, after his own image." That went on for four thousand years. No new man, only the reproduction of the old—"like father like son"—a rebellious, sinful father, a rebellious, sinful son. But after the four thousand years a second Man comes on the scene, "the Lord from heaven." This is severely practical truth for us: it is the entire setting aside of the old man. What was the old man? All that I was when God met me in His grace—my moral condition before God when He began to deal with me—that is, flesh. Turn to Rom. vii. 4: "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God; for when we were in the flesh"—that implies that we are not in the flesh now: "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit" (chap. viii. 9). "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (ver. 8). It is a ruin, and past remedy. You may do what you will to the carnal mind, you cannot make it anything but enmity toward God. Do anything you will to the flesh, it is flesh to the end, and flesh never can become spirit: "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." The Spirit characterises our relation-

ship with God now. It is not what I give up for God: it is what God's mighty grace can accomplish in me by Christ.

In Rom. v. we have the two heads of the race, Adam and Christ. In this chapter it is a question of sin, the evil principle in our nature. Let me illustrate this. I have told a lie. How comes it? Because I have a deceitful heart. The deceitful heart is the sin, the lie I told is the fruit of the sin that springs from the deceitful heart. How does God deal with actual sins committed? He forgives them for His name's sake. Christ answered for them on the Cross of Calvary. What about sin? Does He forgive it? No, He never forgives sin in the flesh. What did He do with it? He crucified it with Christ: He put it to death with His own blessed Son on the Cross, "that the body of sin might be *destroyed*." This is an important word; it is used both in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 14) and here. It means that sin might be annulled. Sin is not destroyed yet, but the mighty work by which it will be destroyed was wrought on the Cross of Calvary. The devil is not yet destroyed, but he will be destroyed on the ground of the work wrought by Christ on the Cross. He crucified me with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed, that I might have another, standing before Him in Christ Jesus; that I not only might look up to Him as the Forgiver of my sins, but look up to Him, that Infinitely Holy One, as having condemned sin in the flesh, having given no quarter to sin in the flesh, having utterly dealt with it according to His holiness in the blessed Lord Jesus that I, the sinner, might go free, and that He might give me another standing before Him: that is, a new creation. It is not repairing the old one, it is a brand new creation in the risen Christ. God has not been occupied all these years in improving Adam the first, but in bringing in the second Man, the Head of a new race.

Let us look now at the two heads. Adam disobeyed God, and, in his rebellion, became the head of a race like himself. Christ obeyed, and, when His work was finished in resurrection, He became the Head of a race. When Adam's disobedience was an accomplished fact, he became the head of a race of disobedient ones like himself. Christ, having

become obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, in resurrection has become the Head of a new creation destined to be conformed to His own image. We stand before God in Christ in His entire obedience unto death. There is an excellence in the work of Christ before God which is a rest for His loving heart, and a rest to the souls of those that are brought to Him. As by one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of the One shall many be constituted righteous. I wish I could tell you of that wondrous obedience in adequate terms. The blessed Lord Jesus did all the will of God. He said, coming into this world, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." His one purpose, aim, and object was to do the will of God. O that we knew something of this in power. The one thing that absorbs all others is that I be found doing the will of God: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." With what love and delight did God look down upon His Son: in every word He spake, in every action of His life, in all the inward springs of his being God found perfect rest. There was one work needed for man's condition and for God's glory. The blessed Lord asked in the Garden that the cup might pass from Him. It was His perfection thus to shrink from the Cross. He who had ever been the delight of His Father, could *He* bear the hiding of God's face? There never was such a moment, never in all eternity, as when the Lord Jesus thus prayed. To go to the Cross was to be forsaken of God. To shrink back involved that all the will of God should remain unaccomplished! The devil took advantage of this season. The blessed Lord said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in *Me*." He came not to use the power of death: He could not, for Christ was not a sinner. He could not use the power of death, but he seeks to frighten the Lord. His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground! Do you believe it? Shall He go forward and do the will of God, or shall He go backward and leave all the counsels of God unfulfilled? The blessed Lord, whilst He thus shrank from having to endure the wrath and curse of God for sin, He, the Perfect, blessed One who was ever the delight of His Father, said, "Thy will be done." That is the only answer of the

Lord Jesus. "Father, glorify Thy name." O what did the angels think when permitted to hear that? What did God feel as He heard in the sanctuary the Son of His love, in view of that awful Cross, saying these blessed words. How wonderful! "Therefore doth my Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again." Don't we feel that there is a motive for the love of God towards His Son in that wonderful Cross? I am saved by it. Thank God a thousand times God's heart rests in His Son as it never could have rested apart from the Cross.

UNREAL CONVERSIONS.

IN carrying on Gospel work, there is such a thing as an undue anxiety to secure professions of conversion. The result of this is that souls never truly convinced of sin are persuaded to profess. No sooner do they make a profession than their names are duly tabulated and announced as fruits of the work. Yea, there may be great jubilation; yet, like the stony-ground hearers, these only endure for a little while. They seemed to receive the Word with joy; but, as there was no depth of conviction, there was no reality of conversion. Borne onward by the enthusiasm of the meetings, or the novelty of the experience, they kept the flag of profession waving for a time. No sooner, however, were they brought face to face with the great truth that the flesh must die, than they discovered that they had not "counted the cost." They did not object to receiving a certificate that they were sure of Heaven; but, when they found that the upward path meant a cross and a grave—a daily dying and a separation from the world—they said to themselves, "We never counted on this." They then threw up their profession, and took their place once more among the worldlings. What good purpose was served by the profession of conversion which they were persuaded to make? No good purpose whatever. On the contrary, there is grave reason to fear that their last state is worse than the first. Indeed, this zeal to secure converts is fraught with very serious dangers.

It leads *unrepentant* sinners into the delusion that they are *reconciled* to God. It lays the flattering unction to their soul that they

are "booked right through for glory," while in reality they are going down to hell with a lie in their right hand. Nor is the mischief entirely undone when they "go back," as it is called—that is, when they return to the beggarly elements from which they had never *been separated in heart*. When they throw up their profession they are not the same persons as they were *before* they made the profession. It is more difficult to reach them now. It is no longer "virgin soil" you have to deal with. They feel they have been deceived in some way, and they must be careful lest they make fools of themselves again. Besides, they are tempted to think, and their associates are tempted to think, that the Gospel has failed in its effect.

These unreal converts—these "strange children"—are a very serious drawback to Christian testimony. Of course we know the stock arguments that wherever there is wheat there will be chaff, and so on. In other words, wherever real work is being done for God, you may be sure that Satan will have his counterfeits. This is admitted. But can we expect "real work" to be done for God if we adopt the modern methods of rushing people into a profession whose hearts have not been furrowed by the great ploughshare of the Spirit of God?

If there is to be true conversion to God, there must be true conviction of sin. We do not need to be in any hurry, brethren. We simply need to be right with God ourselves, and to do with our might the work of the ambassador. Let us beware lest we attempt to *do the work of the Holy Spirit*. He will do His own work. Our God will not give His glory to another. Impatience will simply put the blessing further away. Impatience may give us Ishmaels—sons of the bondwoman, causing great joy, it may be, at the time; but afterwards requiring to be cast out, as having no part with the sons of the free. On the other hand, faith in God and in His Gospel shall bring us the Isaacs—the true children of promise, over whom we shall rejoice with a joy which no man taketh from us. W. S.

EVENTS are God's; let us do and not plead against God's office; let Him sit at His own helm, who moderated all events. S. R.

"THE FIRST DIVISION IN THE CHURCH."

PAPER III.—ITS OBJECT AND CHARACTERISTICS.

BY EPHRAIM VENN.

WE cannot say who now represents Diotrefes. Doubtless his name is legion, but "by their fruits ye shall know them." Wherever there is a manifest tendency to self-assertion in the Assembly, to rule the saints, to sit on the judgment-seat, there Diotrefes is to be discovered. Perhaps the meaning of the name may help somewhat—"Nourished by Jupiter." In his early days he might have been dedicated to Jupiter, and nourished in the pride which that heathen deity typifies; but although saved, and led out of his former manner of living, he must have yielded to the tendencies of his evil heart in seeking pre-eminence among the saints.

Without doubt he was a man of ability, with perhaps apparent spirituality, or he would not have secured a following in the Church; but the priestly spirit was in him, and while he might have been clear and mighty in the Scriptures, professing great loyalty to Christ, and leading up the Church to a high position, so as to make it appear absolutely necessary to separate from the brethren,

SELF WAS THE OBJECT.

He was serving, not our Lord Jesus Christ, but his own belly (see Rom. xvi. 17, 18).

Of course this was not apparent to every observer; "by good words and fair speeches he had deceived the hearts of the simple." But the flesh, though at first unnoticeable, if unjudged *practically*, will feed and thrive on spiritual gift and ability, growing in its proportions, until it claims the mastery in the name of Christ, and usurps the place and power belonging to Christ alone. Worse still, all this may be cloaked under the professed acceptance and even utterance of the truth that our old man has been put off; or even the assertion that the flesh was entirely removed at the Cross, and can never come up again.

In this way self becomes the real object of that which is done professedly for Christ and His people, and soon everything in the Assembly is ruled according to its relation to selfish interest, under colour of outward separation from evil, zeal for the truth, standing for the

honour of Christ, guarding the sanctity of His Assembly, and many other kindred objects of a highly spiritual appearance.

Happily for us the Spirit of God has anticipated this state of things, and furnished us with a Divine solution of the whole case, putting into our hands an able test wherewith to "try the spirits" by pointing out

THE REAL ROOT OF THE EVIL—

Diotrephes loveth to have the pre-eminence among them. This is where the difficulty begins in almost every case where strife and division are found among saints. "Only by pride cometh contention," for he that is of a proud heart "stirreth up strife." The trouble is produced and perpetuated by pride of heart. Whoever *loveth pre-eminence* is under the dominion of the lusts that war in the members, from whence come wars and fightings (Jas. iv. 1). Yes, this is the root of bitterness which springing up, troubles and defiles many, by which the "old paths" have been made crooked, and that which is lame has been turned out of the way. The fruit must be after its kind. Wherever there is love of pre-eminence there will be wars and fightings—it cannot be otherwise. In the last days "men shall be lovers of themselves," and the only thing that can save us from this subtle snare is the love of Christ. The heart must have some object paramount. Christ will not divide the affections: He will either gain the heart's whole interest, or the love of other things will enter in and gain the ascendancy, nay, the *supremacy*.

Oh, may the Lord save us from that pride of heart which is ever ready to find fault, or to cut off, but never willing to examine or judge self, or to rejoice in the grace of God which may be seen in others: so that our souls may prosper "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

When once this terrible object, *self*, has been enthroned, there is no lack of complaints against the brethren. The very best of them, viewed from such a standpoint, will soon have glaring deficiencies, for while love, according to God, will cover a multitude of sins, love, according to self, will *uncover* them, so that none can escape unless they bring themselves

under the ruling spirit of the fault-finder, no, not even John "the elder."

Who can tell the points of difference between the haughty Diotrephes and the meek and lowly John? When the Lord comes, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart, we shall know all, and then, notwithstanding all terrible mistakes, shall every man have his praise of God, greatly though that praise will vary.

We have seen the coming out, the *formation* of this new company. It will be well now to look at some of

THEIR LEADING CHARACTERISTICS,

as described in verses 9 and 10. Now, what is the first thing in verse 9? "*The Church.*" And what is the last thing in verse 10? "*The Church.*" From this we see that this is a company strongly entrenched on Church ground. This is their impregnable fortress, and from whichever side you approach them you see their ensign flying aloft. It is not simply an assembly, but the Assembly of Christ—the only one which He can acknowledge as "My Assembly;" the only company of saints which can claim His Presence in the midst; for they would argue, He cannot be with two companies opposed to each other. The best of all others are but a splendid counterfeit, say they, and the very imitation only proves the genuineness of their Assembly. No other company, therefore, can have the Lord's Presence or the Lord's Table; for, although they may meet as believers, they only form a believers' meeting—not *His Assembly!*

In the minds of the teachers of this select company this would be very clear, and they would seek to make it quite plain to others, who would naturally take all for granted as "sound teaching which cannot be denied."

But how is all this fair show shorn of its strength and dignity the moment that John unveils the facts of the case! They are then seen gathered together not in the *Name* of the Lord, *but unto the person of Diotrephes.*

YES, GATHERED TO A MAN

who is pre-eminent among them! The original mode of gathering was according to Matt. xviii. 20—"Where two or three are gathered

together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them." But this, though tenaciously held still in the letter, has been cleverly manipulated here, so that whenever the saints come together in assembly, Diotrephes is the real centre and head. How is the fine gold become dim!

THE TRUE TOKEN.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

JOSHUA 2.

PERHAPS there is no stronger proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures than this, that beneath the more or less interesting parts of the Word there is an undercurrent of spiritual truth, so that its narratives become wonderfully illustrative of its doctrines. The Word of God is the communication of the Divine mind and will to man, having for its centre and substance the Person of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the Inspirer and Editor.

Verse 1. "And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, 'Go view the land, even Jericho.' And they went, and came into a harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there."

Joshua sending the two spies from Shittim, where Israel then was on the other side of the Jordan, is a striking type of the Lord Jesus in resurrection, who is the Captain of our salvation and the Perfecter of Faith. So now the Lord Jesus sends forth His testimony-bearers.

One of the first things the Evangelist has to do is to examine into the spiritual condition of the land, so as to minister to its need. "A harlot's house." We see here a wondrous combination of Divine providence, grace, and sovereignty.

Who guided their steps to this dwelling? He who directs the sparrow's flight directed them.

Some say that Rahab was an innkeeper and kept an open house, where travellers might be accommodated. This might be so, but there was evidently something more.

Verse 2. "And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, 'Behold there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel to search out the country.'"

Tidings came to the king of Jericho of the arrival of the spies, so he sent at once to Rahab, but, like Lydia, her heart had been

opened by God. These spies had been suspected, and undoubtedly Rahab had been also. Those in the city took the king's part, while she, perhaps from having had more intercourse with the spies, took the part of God and Israel, having received the words spoken by them.

Terror alone had wrought on the minds of the mass of the people by the tidings of God's great doings; not so had it been with this woman—she shared in the terror, but she had faith in God. She knew Him to be the God of heaven and earth, the Triune God (ver. 11).

Mankind is divided into two great armies, the one taking part with Satan and the men of the world, and the other with God and His people. Our Lord said, "He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and He that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me" (John xiii. 20).

Verse 6. "She had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof."

Verses 8, 9. "And before they were laid down, she came unto them upon the roof; and she said unto the men, 'I know that Jehovah hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.'"

This was Rahab's confession of faith in Jehovah when she had received the spies in peace; and her faith was justified by her works in her hiding them, and sending them out another way (Heb. xi. 31; James ii. 25). Her name Rahab signifies "spacious or large"; and the largeness of her heart and the strength of her faith was shown in this, that she not only pleads for herself, but for all her relations: at the same time she gives expression of the reality of her faith in God.

THE TRUE TOKEN.

Rahab requested of the spies, "Give me a true token."

The spies then gave her as a token a scarlet line, which she was to bind in the window through which she let them down (ver. 18). They assured her of perfect security, and said their lives should go for her life if any sheltered under the scarlet line perished.

What is the spiritual significance of this? "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by

two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. vi. 17, 18).

There was another similar scene on the night of the Passover in Egypt, when the blood of the lamb was sprinkled outside, and all within the houses were secure.

Again, Noah and his family having entered the Ark were safe, having been shut in by God: even so those who have fled for refuge to the blood of the Lamb are safe. Beneath it, all is safety and peace. Rahab accepted the terms, so that when the spies had gone she bound the scarlet line in the window (ver. 21). What an example! All passers-by could see it, and so, too, all Israel could see it when they compassed the city; and Joshua then sent in the two men, who brought out Rahab and all her kindred in safety.

They became a foreshadowing type of all who are sheltered under Emmanuel's Blood.

The world lies under judgment like Jericho, and is devoted to utter destruction; it is under the curse (see Joshua vi. 26). Even so, "He that believeth not is condemned already." We have also an example in Rahab not to be ashamed of our colours, but to "nail them to the mast" — in plain language, not to be ashamed to own that we are sinners, and that we owe all our hopes and prospects for eternity to the Blood of Jesus. Rahab exhibited her faith to all around. Glory in the Cross, like Paul, who boasted, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. vi. 14).

The blood of the lamb was sprinkled on the lintel to meet the eye of God, that He could say, "When I see the blood I will pass over you" (Ex. xii. 13). In all our approaches to the Throne of Grace our only plea is the atoning Blood; it gives boldness to enter into the holiest" (Heb. x. 19, 20). But it was also sprinkled on the two side-posts guarding the way, both on the right and on the left: let us not neglect thus to shelter ourselves.

The land of Israel has been desolate for nigh two thousand years, for the Blood rests on it in judgment, as also on the world, for it has murdered God's beloved Son.

When looking heavenward, all is seen through

the Blood, so that there is not a cloud above. That precious Blood cleanseth from all sin, and it has opened the way into the very presence of God.

Rahab believed God, and acted accordingly.

Conversion is being "Born again by the Word of God": "Begotten by the Word of Truth." Living faith is the reception of God's testimony to Christ, taking Him at His word, and setting our seal that what He speaks is true.

The testimony of Paul and of James is not at variance. According to Paul, Rahab was justified by faith when she had received the spies in peace; according to James, her faith was justified by her works when she hid the spies, and sent them out another way.

It is the self-same Rahab who is afterwards spoken of in Scripture as the progenitor of Boaz, of whom David came (Matt. i. 5-16); and yet more honourable mention is made of her as one through whom our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came into the world. Oh! the Sovereignty of Divine grace that takes up a harlot to inherit the throne of glory! One woman out of a condemned city to be a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God!

THE DEATH OF POLYCARP.

HE stood before the Roman bar,
 In God's own peace serene;
 Around were marshalled men of war,
 With swords of glittering sheen.
 They glared on him like beasts of prey—
 As vultures at a dove;
 He looked on them without dismay,
 Made strong through Jesus' love.
 More than a century of snow
 Now graced his noble head,
 And it was many years ago
 Since first God's flock he fed.
 In earlier days 'twas his to walk
 With the Apostle John,
 And much together did they talk
 Of God's beloved Son.
 What he had "handled, seen, and heard,"
 How gladly John would tell,
 And as He sowed the Living Word
 In fruitful soil it fell.

For Polycarp shone as a light
 Upon a troubled sea,
 When sun and stars are hid from sight
 And winds howl mournfully.

The Church at Smyrna oft was tossed
 On persecution's waves,
 And of that faithful band the most
 Filled martyr's honoured graves.

The task was often his to cheer
 Such prisoners of the Lord—
 To gently calm the rising fear
 With tranquilizing word.

Exhorting, too, the faltering one,
 Tired of the rugged road,
 Faith's race with patience still to run
 Until at home with God.

Mingling his tears with those who wept
 Belov'd ones from them torn ;
 The midnight vigils oft he kept,
 Although with labour worn.

And now the agèd pastor stands
 To hear *his* sentence fall ;
 It will, he knows, but snap his bands—
 Be the Chief Shepherd's call.

"Take courage, Polycarp, be strong ;"
 These words came down from heaven,
 Were heard by friends amid the throng—
 Thus special grace was given.

"Wilt thou renounce that Christ of thine ?"
 The consul sternly cried—

"Deny that Jesus is divine ?"
 Quick Polycarp replied :

"Four-score and six years have I served
 That Master kind and true ;
 He never wronged me or deserved
 That I this thing should do.

'He my Redeemer is ; He came
 To bleed and die for me.
 I *will* confess His blessed Name—
 My Lord and King is He."

"Away with him !" the soldiers cried ;
 The crowd rang out, "Away !
 The gods of Rome he has defied,
 So he must die this day."

Him forth they led and rudely bound
 Fast to the martyr's stake,
 While saints who loved him gathered round
 As thus in prayer he spake :

"O Lord, my God," they heard him say,
 "Father of God the Son,
 Who is to us as light of day,
 Showing what Thou hast done,

"I bless Thee for this day and hour,
 This honour to me given,
 For needed patience, grace, and power,
 Vouchsafed to me from Heaven.

"I thank Thee, Lord, that it is mine
 This day to stand enrolled
 With faithful witnesses of Thine,
 Tried in the fire as gold.

"May I with them accepted be
 Through Christ's great sacrifice,
 Appointed and fulfilled that we
 From death to life may rise.

"Thy great and holy Name I bless
 Once more on earth again,
 For God the Son and Spirit's grace,
 Praise to the Lord. Amen."

Round him the crowd had built a pyre,
 And when he ceased from prayer
 They lighted up the blazing fire,
 Exulting in its glare.

But, strange to say, the flames that day
 Had lost their wonted power ;
Round him they only seemed to play,
 Refusing to devour.

At length a soldier pierced his side
 And set his spirit free ;
 Thus Polycarp the agèd died—
 A vet'ran witness he.

The sorrowing saints would fain have laid
 His body in the tomb,
 To rest beneath the cypress' shade
 Until the Lord should come.

With tears they made this last request,
 With scorn it was denied ;
 They'd pay his ashes no respect,
 Since he their gods defied.

They placed it on the burning wood,
 Their triumph to complete ;
 But who can doubt that smoke to God
 Rose as frankincense sweet ?

For He would smell a savour there
 Of his belovèd Son ;
 Would see a precious trophy fair
 Of what His grace had done.

Ere long He will require the blood
Of all the martyr band ;
Then judgment like a mighty flood
Will pass from land to land.

When Cesar's name and fame and shame
Are to oblivion driven,
Who suffer death for Jesus' Name
Shall reign with Him in heaven.

Workington.

A. W. P. S.

THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE ASSEMBLY.

PAPER II.

By GEORGE ADAM, Straunraer.

IN closing my last paper I dwelt chiefly on the condition of soul necessary before one can eat the Lord's Supper to His pleasing, or to their own blessing. This truth is of such importance, and is so liable to be overlooked, that I feel constrained to refer to it again: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body: for this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Cor. xi. 28-30). In 1 John v. 16, we read of the "sin unto death." Does not the passage just quoted teach that eating the Lord's Supper, without self-examination, is one of the aspects of this sin? There were those in the Church at Corinth who were eating the Lord's Supper without due exercise as to their spiritual condition, and this was so displeasing to Him that He laid His chastening hand on some of them, and others He could not trust any longer in the place of testimony, and so took them home to heaven. While contending for the right of all believers to be at the Lord's table, are we duly pondering over this solemn passage? In our zeal to remove every barrier to the Lord's table which has not been placed there by Himself, is there not on the other hand a danger of robbing His table of its *holy character*? In the Epistles to the Churches of Ephesus and Laodicea (Rev. ii. 3), there is no charge of anything wrong in either their *doctrine* or *walk*. It was the spiritual condition alone that was wrong, and yet they were the only two Churches which the Lord

threatened to blot out. Let these things be duly pondered by those who would take the lead in the Church, lest in avoiding one snare we may unwittingly be led into another equally displeasing to the Lord.

Having made these remarks on the necessity for a healthy spiritual condition, let us now glance at chapter xii., where we get a revelation of the variety of members, and of the diversity of the gifts in the Assembly.

The thought which strikes one on reading this chapter is, How *divine* everything is: "All things are of God." In verses 4, 5, 6 we see God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all engaged in the bestowal, administration, and operations of the gifts in the Church. In verse 3 we have the "Lordship of Christ" set forth, as if God designed that truth to be learned in power before we attempt to learn anything else as to Church order.

To be taught by the Holy Spirit to say that Jesus is the Lord is the first step in a healthy knowledge of what the Church of God is, and of how to behave ourselves in it. In verse 11 we see the Spirit working and dividing the gifts severally as He will; and in verse 18 we read: "But now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him." How great must be the sin of ignorance and spiritual pride in the sight of God, for man to put his hand to that which is so pre-eminently Divine in its source and symmetry, and designed to be so in all its operations; the ascended Christ, the source of all spiritual gifts (Eph. iv.); the Holy Spirit, dividing and controlling all the gifts; and God the Father working in all through these gifts. May we all have grace to bow to this wonderful revelation, and seek to know our own place, to keep it, and to fill it to the glory of the Three-in-One God.

We will now look at the "more excellent way," as revealed in chapter xiii. How all that man would naturally value and covet sinks into insignificance when compared with the cardinal grace of Christian love! All gift, all knowledge, all faith, and all liberality are alike worthless unless they are mellowed by this one grace. The Christian who can love most, and who can bear most, is greatest in the estimation of the Lord; but often the one who can talk most, and do so most fluently, is greatest

in the estimation of man. How solemn to remember that "prophecies shall fail, tongues shall cease, knowledge itself shall vanish away." When we are home in heaven it will not be what *we know* that will fix our place in the coming kingdom, but what *we are*. Our moral likeness to the Son of God in our characters whilst we are down here will fix our position in the coming glory. What a changing of places there may be in the coming kingdom, when the Lord shall arrange His servants according to His own perfect judgment of their moral worth! Some who have known little, or done little, but loved much, and patiently, and even joyfully, borne much for His Name's sake, will shine bright up yonder, albeit they may have been almost unknown down here; and some who may have shone like suns on earth may have to fill a little place in the bright hereafter. If 1 Cor. xiii. is a sample of what an assembly of God ought to be, what a beautiful thing Christianity is when it is manifested in its genuine character and native loveliness! And what a power an assembly of saints would be were all who compose it imbued with this divine love! Its fellowship would be a foretaste of heaven—no one seeking his own, but everyone another's wealth. And what fruitless efforts have been made to put things right amongst saints and churches by "square-and-rule" order, when one *bath in the laver* of 1 Cor. xiii. would have settled all the misunderstandings and murmuring in a very short time! That would not mean that sin would be winked at or covered up. That is never God's way of putting things right. God's way of "covering a multitude of sins" is "to convert the sinner from the error of his way" (James v. 19). Man's way too often is to wink at sin, especially religious sin, and leave the sinner to pursue the error of his way. With these thoughts on 1 Cor. xi., self-judgment: xii., the Lordship of Christ and the heavenly mechanism of the Church: xiii., the oil of divine love lubricating every part of that wonderful mechanism, the way is now clear for us, looking at chapter xiv., which treats more particularly with the subject on hand.

NOTHING, nothing, I say nothing but sound sanctification can abide the Lord's fan. s. r.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

LIVING BY FAITH.—From 1 Cor. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to "live by faith," and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.—Is it possible for any one to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost in this age?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

ABIB, FIRST OR SEVENTH MONTH?—It has been asserted that the month Abib, which from the institution of the Passover (Ex. xii.) was reckoned the first month of the year, is the same that previously had been the seventh month, and that, consequently, it was on the 17th day of that same month that the Ark rested on Mount Ararat, synchronising with the day that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Can any proof of this assertion be given from Scripture, or any conclusive historical evidence?

LABOURS OF WOMEN.—In what sense were the women in Romans xvi. "My helpers" (verse 3), "much labour on you" (verse 6, R.V.), "who labour in the Lord" (verse 12), or if we have any Scripture authorising women to go forth as labourers in the Gospel, and the Church's responsibility to them?

UNCONSCIOUS DEAD.

QUESTION 564.—Does the fact that death is often called "sleep" go to prove that the dead are unconscious until the resurrection?

Answer A.—To argue from figures what Scripture does not teach from them is a fruitful source of error. Scripture does not use that of "sleep" to teach that the dead are unconscious. It is a simple and natural figure of the cessation from the activities of life; and, further, it teaches the temporary character of that condition, awaiting the morning of the resurrection.

In sleep, as a matter of fact, the unconsciousness is only of the bodily senses. The mind, uncontrolled by these, is often increasingly active in another sphere. So Scripture regards it (see Job xxxiii. 15). When deep sleep falleth upon men, then God opens their ears to receive His instructions. Thus the analogy, if it proved anything, would rather show that in the sleep of death, while the body lies unconscious in the

grave, the soul enters upon a state of consciousness in another sphere. And this agrees with all the testimony of the inspired Word, such as, "To depart, and be with Christ, which is far better;" "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." These are absolutely incompatible with the thought of unconsciousness. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy." Nor does the teaching of Scripture suggest the unconsciousness of the wicked dead (see Luke xvi. 23). w. c.

Answer B.—It is the *body*, not the spirit, that falls asleep at death. Stephen said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts vii. 59); and Paul describes the passing of the spirit from the body of the believer by the words, "To depart and be *with* CHRIST, which is *far better*." That is, far better than living on in the body and receiving the fruit of his labour here. He would hardly describe an "unconscious sleep" as "far better" than this (Phil. i. 21-23). The souls of the martyrs of Jesus *remembered* their past history; they were able also to *speak*, and ask a question, and were capable of *hearing* and *understanding* the answer (Rev. vi. 11).

Luke xvi. 22-31 also confirms the latter statement concerning consciousness and ability to understand and enter into matters which affected not only himself (*i.e.*, the rich man), but also his brethren who yet lived on the earth. His own words, as also Abraham's to him—"Thou art tormented"—show he was perfectly conscious of his condition, as was also Lazarus, of whom it is said, "Now he is comforted" (verse 25). To be unconscious of comfort would be poor comfort indeed!

It would be impossible to be *with* CHRIST and not know it! To be *with* CHRIST and be unconscious of His presence! One can scarcely credit such a thought arising, still less being entertained for one moment by a believer! True, when John saw Him he "fell at His feet as one dead;" but he was immediately aroused to consciousness by the Lord's voice saying, "I am He that liveth," &c., for in His presence there could be no death, or even the resemblance of it (Rev. i. 17, 18). Knowing all this, well might Paul say, and we with him, "Therefore, we are always confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." M. M. D.

Answer C.—All the places where *hoimaomia*, translated "sleep" in our version, occur, refer to the *body*. All its pains and aches are at an end—*finally* for the saint, *for a time* with the wicked.

We annex all the passages: Matt. xxvii. 52, xxviii. 13; Luke xxiii. 45; John xi. 11, 12; Acts vii. 60, xii. 6, xiii. 36; 1 Cor. vii. 39, xi. 30, xv. 6, 18-20, 51; 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, 15; 2 Pet. iii. 4.

In Luke xvi. 19-31, we have from our Lord's

lips, not a parable, but a solemn fact. "There was a certain rich man;" who will dare to say there never was?

This rich man's body was asleep. It might cause him many wakeful nights, but when he died it slept. No pangs come from thence. But his soul is not sleeping, for "in hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." Awful words from the lips of Incarnate Truth!

Matt. xxvii. 52 is definite: "Many bodies of the saints which slept." I wonder if Lazarus was one of them? He was not asleep in hades; but if his body arose from its sleep, the complete man Lazarus would be intensely happy.

We never in all Scripture have this word *hoimaomia* (sleep) applied to the soul or spirit. We have given you all the passages.

When the witch of Endor brought up Samuel, it was clearly his spirit, which, like Lazarus, was happy in hades. God alone can raise the body; the devil may kill it, but he cannot raise it.

The Spirit of God says, "And Samuel said" (1 Sam. xxviii. 15-19). Samuel's body was asleep, but Samuel was solemnly awake to Saul. Oh, that we might realise the awful reality of the doom of the lost! while we praise God for Christ who bare our judgment, and for Whom we wait. T. C.

Editor's Note.—We devote extra space to this question because of its importance, and because so many of the children of God are being thus led so far, unwittingly, on the lines that end inevitably in the quagmire of the non-eternity of punishment doctrine. If the first death be unconsciousness, then by a natural and easy sequence the second death is made out to be the same, and the dreadful consequences of sin and unbelief as revealed in the Scriptures are deprived of their terror.

In the New Testament the term "sleep" is used of the death of "saints" (Matt. xxvii. 52); Lazarus (John xi. 11); Stephen (Acts vii. 60); Corinthian believers (1 Cor. xi. 30); disciples of the Lord (1 Cor. xv. 6); of the death of believers generally (1 Cor. xv. 18, 20, 51); also 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, 15; and of "the fathers" (2 Pet. iii. 4). In one case only *could* it be applied to an unbeliever, viz., 1 Cor. vii. 39; but it is evident from the context that believers only are in view.

It is therefore a figure beautifully adapted to express the temporary rest from labour and suffering into which the righteous enter when they (as to their spirits) depart to be with Christ.

That it refers to the bodily condition is evident from Daniel xii. 2. Souls or spirits do not "sleep in the dust of the earth"—bodies do.

In 1 Thess. v. 10 the word for sleep is different and is never applied to death—it ought to be "whether we watch or slumber."

THE GODLY BRINGING UP OF FAMILIES.

Address at Glasgow Half-yearly Meetings.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of *Earthly Relationship of the Heavenly Family*.*

THIS is a very large subject and immensely important—one that I am afraid has been very much neglected in the public ministry of the Word of God among us. It is with no small hesitation that I stand up at the outset to say a few words upon it, because, being so important, I would rather others had done this, but I doubt not there are others here who will follow to our profit.

I would ask you to look first at a word in the sixteenth chapter of Acts, verses 30, 31. I read this passage as one which, to my mind, puts us on good ground for expecting the salvation of all our families.

I was once talking with a godly farmer's wife in Ayrshire. She had ten of a family. A friend once said to her, "Weel, ye canna expect them a' to be weel da'en?" She replied, "I expect that the Grace of God, that can save one, can save ten, and I am counting on it;" and most, if not all, are now real believers. I think we are warranted in this expectation by this word of the Apostle given to the Philippian jailor, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." "They spoke the word to all that were in the house;" and as the whole house rejoiced, believing in God, it is perfectly evident that it was a case of household salvation. We have heard a great deal about household baptism, but I think the greater thing is the household salvation, and if we get the latter the former will soon follow.

The birth of a child into a family is a Scriptural occasion of rejoicing and thanksgiving, but I really do not know how a Christian could truly rejoice if he had not the confidence that that child would be saved everlastingly. I do most confidently expect that all whom the Lord has given me will be eternally saved. I know that this can never be apart from the individual, personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ of each one. They are born into this world even as others, children of wrath—flesh—they have to be *born again*. It may take place at a very early stage in life; so early,

that I have heard one testify that he did not remember a time when he did not know and love the Lord Jesus; and, indeed, it is a blessed thing to be so early brought to the Lord. But God is a Sovereign, and it does not always happen in that way, but it is our privilege to count upon God so to work in the souls of each one that, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, they shall be saved, and know Him as their Saviour and Friend—One that will surely care for them. And if father and mother be taken away, they are not left destitute, for they have a God who has promised to be a Father to the fatherless. Indeed, I think it is wonderful how God in His providence interposes on behalf of children of godly parents left orphans. God has never forgotten the parents' prayers, and their tears on behalf of their children He has put in His bottle.

That promise in the second chapter of Acts, "To you and to your children," &c., is often quoted. I do not object to any one taking it to themselves, but as it specially refers to Israel, I turn rather to that in the sixteenth chapter of Acts, which was given to a Gentile and a heathen. We are all Gentiles, and heathen enough ere we knew the Lord, so that the sixteenth of Acts comes directly to us.

Now as to the upbringing of children. Malachi ii. 15: "And did not He make one? Yet had He the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That He might seek a godly seed." Perhaps some critics may take exception to the view I take of this verse; but I think it has reference to the original statement of the Lord, that the husband and wife were one, and what God had joined man was not to put asunder. But the question is asked here, "Wherefore one?" He says, "That he might seek a godly seed." Now, I believe the oneness of the father and the mother, that is, the oneness of the husband and wife, is at the very foundation of a godly family.

I have known cases where both father and mother were Christians, but the family to a large extent had been a heartbreak; but when one became acquainted with the conditions of the upbringing, it is found that the father and the mother pulled against each other—they were not one before the children. The

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children knew, if the father said one thing, they could get round about the mother, and she would say another thing, and so family rule and discipline were completely broken up. Remember the children are quickwitted to see where they can take advantage. Therefore I press this point, that it is of the utmost importance that the parents should be as one about the details of the family life, and that no divergence of opinion or judgment should ever be suffered to come before the children.

It is just the same in family life as in Church life. If the leaders or elders suffer differences of judgment to come before the whole assembly, the young believers included, there will be no room for any further godly rule.

These are solemn things, and remember that rule is a blessing. *Any government is better than no government.* Yes, rule is an unmitigated blessing; we do not know what we owe to God for rule. O the privilege of coming together thus, none daring to make us afraid. We do not know what this liberty is until we lose it. Long may God in His mercy continue it to us. But it is the result of government.

Now, the family is a sphere of rule, and God has entrusted that to him who is the head of the house, and his rule ought to be after the pattern of God's rule—a righteous, patient, godly rule; a rule in love, a rule that considers the well-being of the household—such is the rule that God would have.

Ephesians vi. 4: "And ye, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." There is a law deep-rooted in nature: "What a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Young men, you that are still young, and yet, it may be, you are married, and have children, How did you treat your own parents? Young mother, How did you treat your own mother? I heard a story once of a man who had become impatient of having to support his father, and he carried him to the workhouse. On the way he got tired, and set his father down on a milestone, and the old man began to cry. The son asked him what he was crying for. "Oh," said he, "it is just so many years since I set my own father down on this milestone on the way to the workhouse!" The son immediately took him up, and carried him home. You

may smile at that, but there is a deep truth in it—As a man sows, he will reap. Father, if you find your sons are not subject to you, just enquire if you were subject to your father. And you, young women, that are mothers, How did you treat your mother? Were you disrespectful? Did you turn round and give them impudence? And now you find your daughters doing the same, and you are very angry at it. Look back at your own history. There is a sowing and a reaping; but do not let us faint. "Oh!" you say, "that is all true; I deserve no better." Nevertheless, we have the God of all Grace to deal with, and He can blot out our erring footsteps, and He can come in and greatly modify the crop of sorrow that we might expect to reap.

Take hold of God for wisdom and grace, that your children may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

(To be concluded in next number.)

"WHAT WENT YE OUT FOR TO SEE?"

Notes of an Address on Matthew xi., at Bray, by
GEORGE F. TRENCH.

IT was not that John was a prisoner merely—cut off from service, condemned to solitude and suffering. That was bad enough. But what troubled the heart of the great Prophet was the terrible doubt that was creeping into his brain—Was this Jesus of Nazareth the true Messiah or not? Again and again, in the hearing of the multitude, he had declared Him so to be—"Behold the Lamb of God!" "Behold the Lamb of God!" Had not this voice resounded far and wide? "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." There was no denying that he had said so; and yet—and yet—here was he, the "friend of the Bridegroom," unjustly condemned and imprisoned, and never a word of cheer from his Master, never a message of hope. Can it, after all, be He, or should we look for another? Faith and fervency come easy to those with whom all things prosper; but when the first flush dies away, and things go awry, disappointment is very apt to turn back upon the past, and cry in its bitterness, "Perhaps it was all a mistake!"

This is, I think, a sample of the state of

mind of many among ourselves. I mean those who at present see little of spiritual power in the meetings, seldom hear such ministry as deeply moves or edifies them, and observe, on the other hand, the presence of much that is of self, of sin, or of worldliness, in those who have separated themselves from the religions of Christendom to take up a Church position apart and aloof. These have begun to say—not secretly or timorously—that they fail to see the wonderful advantage of such a position, and even to wander here and there in search of some religion or ministry more to their taste. It is an experience of disappointment, followed by doubt and uncertainty as to fundamental principles.

Let us see how our Lord Jesus Christ meets and deals with this attitude of mind.

It will be remembered that at His first appearance in the Nazareth synagogue (Luke iv.) in the position of a teacher, He had claimed to be the One foretold in Isa. lxi. 1, fulfilling in seven particulars the character of the Messiah in words and works of mercy to afflicted men. To the same test He now appeals. "Go and show John those things which you do hear and see"—the miracles of mercy and the word of glad tidings. And then He asks the people the three times reiterated question at the head of this paper, with the several answers that follow.

Let me, without pausing to enlarge on their primary reference to John, bring you at once to the final word of verses 9, 10—"But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet; for this is He of whom it is written, 'Behold I send My messenger before THY face, which shall prepare THY way before THEE.'" So the Lord withdraws their minds from the messenger to his Master; or shows them rather that, in going out after John, they were really going out after Him of whom John spoke. And thus we are brought again to the question, as referring to Christ Himself—"What went ye out for to see?"

(1) "A reed shaken with the wind?" A weak and helpless sufferer, storm-tossed, and rudely shaken by winds of hostility and enmity? Was it so? Yes, truly; but yet that life of suffering which was His was not all. They need not go out to the wilderness to see

such a sight as that—it was the common lot of man.

(2) "But what then went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?" They should not have gone to the desert for such a sight. Behold, they that wear soft clothing dwell in kings' houses, and the House of the Son of David had yet to be built. The time of the Kingdom was not yet.

(3) "But what went ye out for to see?" A prophet, a great preacher, an eloquent orator, a new Elijah or Isaiah? But, indeed, they had been led to expect some one greater even than these. John was, no doubt, the greatest of them that had been born of women, but One was standing among them whom they knew not, the latchet of whose sandal John was not worthy to stoop down to unloose. Had they gone out to see *Him*? If so, they would find no cause of stumbling in the captivity of His forerunner, in the coming arrest and condemnation of Himself, for from the days of John and forward the Kingdom of Heaven was to suffer violence, and the violent would seize upon and ravage it. That was the voice of all the prophets since the world began. In a word, the Lord's answer to such doubts is this: "If you have come out to see common things—men moved by circumstances without, unmoved by the power of the Spirit within; if you have come out to see a King's Son and Royal Glory before its time; or if you have come to hear fine preaching, you will justly be disappointed. But if you have come to see Christ—the Christ of the prophets, the Opener of blind eyes, the Healer of all disease, the Giver of life, and the Messenger of pardon; destined, nevertheless, to be the victim of violence and the sport of satanic hatred—then, indeed, you will suffer no discouragement in this dark hour of John's imprisonment and My own rejection" (verses 19-25, xii. 14-24).

Turn now to present times, and see how the same argument applies:

To those who have left the sects of their forefathers, and drawn together as children of God in meetings apart, may we not repeat the question: "What came ye out for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? Something of every-day common occurrence? Some sect among the sects; some meeting among meetings; some man or men speaking under the

influence of every current or wind of doctrine that may blow?" Is it no more than this? Alas, my friends, it may be sometimes so. But far other was the hope that attracted many of us to this wilderness. It was in the faith that in the gathering of two or three in His dear Name, His Presence would be found; that there the Holy Spirit, filling the soul and heart of one and all, would abundantly bless us out of the fulness that is in Christ; that something miraculous, something supernatural, spiritual, Divine, might be expected in our midst.

And so we find in this, as in all departments of the Christian life—"According to your faith it shall be unto you." Those who go out to see wind-tossed reeds shall find none other. To those who go out to meet Christ, purposed and prepared in heart to see Christ, the vision shall be given; and so the key to all the trouble will be found by those who honestly answer the Lord's thrice-repeated question.

But, again. "What went ye out for to see?" A man clad in soft raiment? A white-robed minister, a surpliced choir of singing men? Behold they who seek such things will find them in the pillared and sculptured fanes, lofty and large, many-windowed, dim, redolent of incense, filled with the tones of the organ—a service for the senses. I need not surely stay to parley with those who have not yet learned the great elementary truth that God is a Spirit; and that they who worship Him, must worship Him in spirit; that worship is a sonfething that issues to Him from the soul, not something to be received and enjoyed by the senses.

A more subtle cause of disappointed hopes is that vain expectation that because return has taken place to primitive simplicity and early Church practice in the manner of our assemblies, we are entitled to claim the position and powers of the Church as founded by the Lord. There is no need to describe the forms in which sanguine souls have attempted reconstruction in the midst, and out of the materials of the ruin. Enough to remind you here that it has taken place, and most notably by some who were the first to show that there is always "a mess and a failure" where such mistaken efforts are made. In the Church of Rome we

see what they come to when full-blown, and in minor degrees and varying forms all the phases of the Christendom Churches reveal the same.

But the palaces of kings are not to be sought in the wilderness. Let us get back to first principles and recall what we went out for to see, when upon the charter of the words, "where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst," we went forth to meet the Lord, mourning, but with no mind to revive the ruin amid which He walked.

"But what went ye out for to see?" A prophet? That brings us to the frequent complaint, "You give us so little teaching; your ministry is feeble; you men are but half-educated. Where are your Doctors of Divinity? Where are your eloquent preachers, your wise philosophers, your higher critics?" To whom we can only reply, If these were the sights and sounds you came out for, you had better turn elsewhere. Ministry, and education to that end, are not slighted or despised, and wherever you hear of one of God's children who is ministering Christ in power, seek him out and sit at his feet if you can, but this was not what drew us out beyond the camp. We came out to see One greater than a prophet. We came out to gather round Christ Himself, to obey His invitation, to commemorate His death, to remember His love, to have fellowship at His table, as members of His body, to "show the Lord's death till He come." And feeble though the ministry may be, and simple the service, and humble the persons so assembling, there is nothing to hinder these enjoyments and privileges, ever unknown by the wise and prudent, to those, even babes in Christ, who come seeking and expecting to have them.

In conclusion, let me point you again to that scene at the Nazareth synagogue. When our Lord had read the words of Isaiah, so emphasized, no doubt, as to show the audience that He was claiming their reference to be to Himself, He sat down. Then we read, "And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon Him." So may it ever be with us! As to the disappointed, let me ask them henceforth to come to the worship meetings so purposed in heart and so resolved. Let the eyes of all, from the first moment to the last, be fastened upon Him, and then, whatever may occur or not occur, when leaving we

shall feel that what we came for we have had. So also the irrelevant hymn, or chapter, or address will be put aside. So, wholly and throughout, the presence of Christ will govern all that takes place, will kindle the affections, will fill the hungry soul, will satisfy the weary, will nerve the worker, will inspire the young, and soothe and comfort the old. Let the eyes of all them that are in our assemblies be *fastened upon Him*, and there shall be a prompt and happy answer if any say, "What went ye out for to see?"

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXVII.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

LUKE XV. 1-7.

"Then drew near unto Him all the publicans [tax-gatherers] and sinners for to hear Him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured [were murmuring,] saying, 'This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.' And He spake this parable unto them, saying, 'What man of you, having an hundred sheep, and if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home [into the house] he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.' I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

IN this chapter we have the Trinity of Grace—the Grace of the SON (verses 1-7); the Grace of the SPIRIT in the Church (verses 8-10), and the Grace of the FATHER (verses 11-32). But it is the Grace of the One True God in its threefold character of manifestation.

First, the Grace of the Son, for it was His Grace in receiving sinners, and having fellowship with them, that was found fault with.

In this parable there are five particulars: 1st, the possession; 2nd, the losing; 3rd, the seeking; 4th, the finding; 5th, the home-coming and rejoicing; for it is the joy of Grace which is the keynote of the chapter.

Each of these three parables may be looked at in a threefold point of view: 1st, as considered by the Evangelist; 2nd, by the Pastor; 3rd, by the Teacher.

First, the EVANGELIST'S view. The hundred sheep may be regarded as the elect of God,

given by the Father to the Son before the foundation of the world. And the lost sheep as a sinner yet unsaved, and still in the world. Then, as to the seeking, the Son of God came into the world to save sinners. He came forth from the Father, and came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. The lost sinner finding a Saviour is one view of the case; it is in reality the seeking Shepherd finding the lost sheep; and when once found, He will never leave him nor forsake him. And just as the good Samaritan came where the wounded man was, and first brought him to the inn, and took care of him, so the Good Shepherd brings the saved sinner into the fellowship of the saints on earth, that they may share with Him His joy in the salvation of the lost—a joy in which heaven has fellowship, and which joy will ultimately be universal and everlasting. In this solicitude of the Good Shepherd over the lost sinner—in His patient, persevering efforts for his salvation, and joy in the finding—the evangelist has full fellowship.

Secondly, the PASTOR'S apprehension of the parable. The lost sheep may be regarded as one belonging to the flock, but having "gone astray," according to the corresponding parable (Matt. xviii. 12-14), is in this sense lost, and needs to be reclaimed to the fellowship of the saints; and the pastor is in full sympathy with the Chief Shepherd for the recovery of such. And when restored to full communion there is joy on earth and joy in heaven, for the sheep that was going astray has now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Thirdly, the TEACHER'S application. The sinner may be saved, and the saved sinner may be in the full enjoyment of Church privileges, and yet the soul may come far short of the full realisation of his standing, privileges, and blessings. Like Job before the happy result of his discipline (Job iii. 26), or like the cleansed leper (Lev. xiv. 8), who, though he be clean and allowed to come into the camp, yet is required to "tarry abroad out of his tent seven days," he is not yet in possession of perfect rest. Further instruction may be needed before the believer is able to say with Paul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). It

has been aptly said that at the first there were six footprints on the sand, on the mud, or the snow—four of the sheep going astray, and two of the shepherd going after him; but when the sheep has been found, there will be but two footprints on the return journey, for the shepherd having put the sheep on both his shoulders the four feet will be firmly clasped in the hands of the shepherd. The Lord Jesus having full control of all the ways of him who truly abides in Christ, his life on earth will be the living out of that life which, as one Spirit with the Lord in glory, he draws down from above in fellowship with Him; and this will lead to the fullest and highest joy in time and for eternity.

1st. The lost sinner brought into the fellowship of God's saints rejoices in the sense of his privileges and security.

2nd. The restored backslider is brought into a fuller realisation of his indebtedness to Divine Grace and of his safety, so that none can pluck him from the hand of the Great and Good Shepherd, while the Father who gave Him to the Son is greater than all, and none can pluck him from the Father's hand.

3rd. The believer, led into a higher and fuller acquaintance with Grace Divine, realises his position as borne upon the shoulders of the Almighty Shepherd and Great High Priest, who has entire control over his walk and ways, and by whom he is being safely carried onward to his heavenly and everlasting home.

“THE FIRST DIVISION IN THE CHURCH.”

PAPER III.—ITS OBJECT AND CHARACTERISTICS.
BY EPHRAIM VENN.

WE shall presently see that this gifted brother exercises lordship over the saints in the Name of Christ; but first we must look at some other prominent features of this communion of saints. The reception question is one of burning importance among them, and, that all should speak the same thing, it is very necessary that they should be exercising a united judgment. “This honour have all His saints,” and they must feel that a very great responsibility springs out of such a dignity. Not only must they exercise judgment, but, if necessary, execute judgment also, to preserve the sanctity of the

company. And so judgment, which is God's *strange* act, is with them a familiar proceeding. All must come to a perfect agreement to exclude the brethren as unworthy of fellowship; and the most narrow-minded and bigoted, or the merest babe in the circle, can occupy the seat of judgment, and by reason of use having his senses exercised to judge both good and evil, pass judgment upon saintly John “the elder” without shame!

The excluding feature grows out of this: The Lord had said, “He that receiveth you receiveth Me;” and, therefore, may we not say that to exclude the Apostle John, the beloved Gaius, and the brethren with them, was in His sight to exclude Himself? No Christless professor should be received, nor even a believer wilfully holding error which dishonours the Person or work of Christ; but surely a child of God, though weak and uninstructed, or in a low spiritual condition, should be welcomed that he may be strengthened, taught, and lifted into a better state of soul.

How different from this is the principle which mercilessly repudiates the most gracious and saintly believer, equally with the transgressor or deceiver, while it accepts without question many who are in a carnal state of soul! How can it be otherwise when the very centre and head of this company is really, with all his high-sounding words, but a carnal self-seeker? However narrow

THIS NEW CIRCLE

is drawn, the flesh is in the centre, and however lofty its position, the flesh is at the top, so that all the evils witnessed against and professedly separated from, spring up again *within*, with the double danger of being undetected or uncondemned.

It is instructive to see the attitude John takes up in relation to this restricted circle of fellowship. He well knew he would not be received should he present himself, and yet he did not determine to keep aloof: “But if I come.” His mind was still toward them. To him it was like an affectionate father losing his much-loved children. He does not propose to discuss the new position occupied, for he well knew it was not after “the old commandment.” Nor does he threaten to excommunicate Diotrephes, or *cut off* this troublesome

Assembly. He will not use his Apostolic authority; but he says, referring to Diotrephes, "I will call to remembrance his deeds which he doeth." He will seek to convict him of his wrong, and, if possible, to convert him "from the error of his ways" (James v. 19, 20). It would be most unfair to say that here two parties cut each other off. Oh, no; John, Gaius, and the brethren with them, never adopted such a course.

Another characteristic connected with this excluding spirit is brought out in the words, "*Prating against us with malicious words.*" No flaw is pointed out in the doctrine of the Diotrephes company, no charge is made against their teaching; nor, on the other hand, is there any statement as to their soul-prosperity, but attention is called to the habit of their leader, which, doubtless, would be imitated by his followers. How can you reject saints without judging them? And how can you judge them without speaking evil of them? So John says, "*Prating against us.*" Apparently nothing good was said even of John. All that was "after a godly sort" in Gaius, the brethren, Demetrius, or John, finds no recognition from the lips of Diotrephes; his mission was of entirely another order: to discover faults, to dwell upon discrepancies, to expose weaknesses among the godly, was his special gift. "From the beginning" it was according to Paul's words in Philippians: "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be *any* virtue, and if there be *any* praise, *think on these things.*" But this

MASTER OF THE ASSEMBLY

was able to strike out on a new line, and develop a new pattern for the saints to imitate. He had found faults and failings in John and the brethren sufficient to keep up the prating. How unlike the man of Jehovah's tabernacle, "who backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, *nor taketh up a reproach* against his neighbour: in whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord" (Ps. xv. 3, 4). How very solemn is it when one high in the esteem of the Church becomes an accuser of our brethren, a name intended only for the wicked one (Rev. xii. 10).

Very suspicious must be the fellowship of any Assembly that needs to be set forth or bolstered up by such means. We would not say that such an Assembly was not upon the Rock of Matt. xvi. 18, but where the structure must be raised and supported by malicious prating against saints, the Rock is covered by a human quagmire. When any one seeks to raise himself by lowering his brother, and the way in which he speaks of his brother's faults gives the impression that he is free from fault himself, even though in a company professing to have purged out the "old leaven," and to have become a "new lump," is not the old "leaven of malice and wickedness" filling his heart?

Will a father speak against his own children? or brother rail against brother? Not until natural affection has been unnaturally perverted, or destroyed. Neither would Diotrephes and his company—either ancient or modern—"prate against us" unless the "love of the brethren" had been overgrown by the love of pre-eminence.

The next feature shows the consistency of Diotrephes in his evil course. Paul's gracious method—"Brethren, be followers together of me"—is not emphatic enough here:

THEY MUST FOLLOW.

Diotrephes "*forbiddeth* them who would" do otherwise. By a law of spiritual coercion all the Church must be ruled into conformity. None are permitted to differ—there must be one mouth if not one mind, and that not according to Christ, but according to Diotrephes.

The mind, will, and judgment of all in the circle must be cast in the same mould, in order to dwell together in uniformity.

But how refreshing is it to know that, notwithstanding this universal lording of Diotrephes, there are some here *who would receive* the excluded saints, who are so strongly denounced in the Church, if they were free to act according to their own conscience before God. No doubt that, for the sake of peace or from fear of excommunication, many of those who would receive John and the brethren had not the courage of their convictions. The *rule* of Diotrephes had brought them, almost unconsciously, into a habit of submission. Those

of enlarged heart and gentle spirit were compelled to yield to the strong excluding element, and so a union is preserved of human opinion rather than life and love, and a government is maintained of human rule instead of the authority of Christ.

Another notable feature completes this sorrowful picture. Those *who would* have received us are *cast "out of the Church."* The commendation for reception and fellowship was not that you belong to Christ, that you are a child of God. Vain would it have been to assure Diotrophes that you had Christ, and nothing but Christ, for your standing and aim. The all-important question would have been—What is your judgment with regard to certain brethren whom we do not receive?

Agree to exclude them, and you can share the wonderful dignity, and enjoy the peculiar privileges, of fellowship with us; but, if you would receive them, you must be *cast out of the Church*, for it cannot be allowed that you call on the Lord out of a pure heart unless you purge yourself from these vessels to dishonour.

The Apostle does not tell us whether the heaven spread to other assemblies. That is unnecessary, as each separated company would only be a reproduction of the same in principle—making the same claims to be THE Church of God, the only true purged-out company, under each ruling spirit in their divided state. We are thankful, therefore, to have only one example before us of so mournful a character, and this not for our imitation, but

FOR OUR WARNING,

lest we become partakers of other men's sins. May each of us take heed to the Apostle's warning: "Beloved, follow [imitate] not that which is evil, but that which is good" (verse 11).

We are thankful, too, that we never read of a John party, or a Gaius party, or a Demetrius party. So far as we know, these godly ones never drew away disciples after them. May we ever have grace to say: "PEACE be to the brethren, AND LOVE, with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. GRACE be with ALL *them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*"

"WHOSE I AM — WHOM I SERVE."

JESUS, Saviour, I am Thine!
Now no more this heart of mine
Rest shall seek from Thee apart,
Since thou hast unveiled Thy heart.

Thou hast made me for Thy praise,
Then to Thee my song I'll raise:
Worship, honour, praise, and power,
These be Thine for evermore.

Gift of the Father to the Son,
Ere Earth's Ages had begun;
Thou the gift didst not refuse,
Though I did Thy grace abuse.

Thou hast bought me by Thy blood—
Hast redeemed my soul to God:
Wondrous love on Calvary seen,
Jesus' blood now makes me clean.

Thou hast sealed me as Thine own—
Fill my heart Thyself alone!
Let me ne'er Thy Spirit grieve,
Nevermore Thy footstool leave.

Jesus, Lord, to Thee I bow,
Grace on grace to me bestow;
Now to Thee myself I give,
Help me for Thyself to live. J. N. C.

"IN CHRIST A NEW CREATION."

Address by Dr. NEATBY, London, author of "Our Lord's Coming Again," on 2 Cor. v. 14-18.

"BY one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be constituted righteous." They had their place in the first Adam: they are now in the last Adam, the second Man. They were in the disobedience and rebellion of the first man, but being saved by the obedience unto death of the Lord Jesus Christ, they have their place in Him. "No condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." Notice it is *in Christ*. We have a perfect standing in Christ in the presence of God. We are in the New Creation in Christ. The question has been settled by Christ, the Head of the New Creation. It began with entire judgment of sin, and the perfect atonement made in His blood. Therefore God has raised Christ from the dead.

I am not only pardoned, but I have a new place before God, as an actual fact for enjoyment. There is no condemnation in Christ. He took our place as condemned ones, and perfectly satisfied God in that place. And now we are put in Christ, risen, without any condemnation whatever. It is the New Creation, where all things are of God. He has raised up His Son from the dead because He was perfectly satisfied with His work on behalf of sinners, therefore there can be no condemnation to those who are in the risen Christ, a Christ beyond death, a Christ beyond condemnation. What a complete deliverance it is!

Eph. i. 6: "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has accepted us in the beloved." It is not a question of accepting us in the sense that the word is used in the epistle to the Romans (xv. 16, 31). It is the same word as was addressed to Mary by the angel in Luke i. 28: "Hail! thou that art highly favoured." He has made us "highly favoured" in the Beloved. It is not only in Christ, but in Christ the beloved of God. We are highly favoured in that very beloved One. "If any man be in Christ there is a new creation." Here I find myself in the beloved according to His place with His Father—according to the delight that God finds in Him. This is positive excellence. I cannot find any word to use higher than that, "highly favoured." Just as Christ is, so is the believer in this world. So art thou, my brother and sister, highly favoured. Gabriel might address each one of us in the same terms: "Hail! thou that art highly favoured."

John xvii.: The blessed Lord here takes in the whole of His disciples and presents them according to His place before God. He announces that which would be true when the Holy Ghost came. Before looking at this chapter turn to xiv. 20: "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." The day that is mentioned here is the day of the Holy Ghost. They ought to have known then that He was in the Father, and the Father in Him. He taught them that already. But they could not know, for it was not true of them yet, that they were in Christ, and Christ in them. But in this day we know that Christ is the blessed Son of the Father. We know that to see the Son is to see the Father. It is a most striking way of

showing that the Father and Son are One. We say that a man and wife are one. But you cannot say you have seen the man when you have seen the wife. But it is so with regard to Christ. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." We are in Christ, and Christ in us. How? By the Spirit coming down to form a new creation in the Son of God. "I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Is that a fact? Just at this moment is it so? Yes; I could not say otherwise. I am in Christ, and Christ is in me.

John xvii. 21: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me," &c. We are one with the Lord Jesus by the Spirit. It is a real oneness. It is not oneness because you and I see alike. We are one because the Holy Spirit lives in Me, and lives in you. The same blessed Spirit links us together. You may be a Jew and I a Gentile; the Spirit links both to the Lord Jesus. "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." That one Holy Spirit has united you and me to the Lord Jesus. Highly favoured in the Beloved, and loved as the Beloved One is loved. God loves the Head and all the members—one blessed person—the Christ.

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creation." It is not the setting up of the old man; it is the bringing in of a new creation. What have we to say to our God about this? We must have something to say to Him if these things are so. You cannot be what you were when you were in the flesh—that would be unreality. The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. That immediately links us with a risen Christ. We are no longer to live to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again. Our blessed Lord we owned as our Lord this morning, when we sat at His own table. His lordship is a very deep reality. There is all blessing in it for our souls for time and eternity. I am brought now into communion with my God. He says: "This is life eternal, that we might know God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent." Brought into this holy relationship that I might express it in all my relationships down here; that I may be a new creature; that I may be one of whom and in whom it may be said, "Old

things are passed away." That man who was passionate is not passionate any longer; that man whose word you could not trust hates a lie now, he is an honest man—in Christ, a new creation. God is seeking reality; and He is producing reality, "for it is God who works in us, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." You cannot enjoy these things without living them out. You cannot enjoy this place in Christ without living in it. If you are enjoying your place in Christ you will be a great comfort to your family when you go home. They won't say, "Behold, this grumbler cometh." It will be like a sunbeam when you enter your house. If you are enjoying one half of these things—if you are in the enjoyment of a quarter of them—your face will be beaming. Every word will show it—it will tell you have found the source of blessing; that you are living by the fountain of the water of life. May God work it in me and you mightily by His Spirit.

I ask you: Do we not need it in the Church? The questions that arise constantly, which cause so much strife, would be settled easily if this were made good in our souls in the living faith that the blessed Spirit produces. It is said of Stephen that he was a man "full of faith and the Holy Spirit." You cannot be full of faith without being full of the Holy Spirit; you cannot be full of the Spirit without being full of faith. May He work this in us. It is a priceless privilege. It is your privilege to represent Christ in a world that does not know Him, in your actions, words, and manner of life here below. It must be seen of God; it must be seen by principalities and powers; and it ought to be seen by our fellow-creatures every day of our life.

THE LIBERTY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE ASSEMBLY.

PAPER III.

By GEORGE ADAM, Stranraer.

UNPROFITABLE AND MISTAKEN MINISTRY.

IN dealing with this subject in previous papers I have looked specially at the spiritual condition necessary to know, and to follow the leading of the Spirit in the assembly.

No doubt this is the main qualification. Without a right condition nothing can be right. But we come now to another point, viz., *Is condition everything?* Granted that the condition is in a measure right, is a Christian man's own *inner consciousness always a safe guide in opening his mouth in an assembly?* Or does the Spirit lay down certain principles which if duly recognised would act as safeguards in keeping an honest believer right? I believe there are such principles to be found in the passage we are considering. I also believe that our overlooking these principles has led to an *openness* in thanksgiving and ministry which Scripture does not warrant.

The idea is almost universally prevalent amongst those who "gather" according to New Testament simplicity, that if a brother *believe himself* to be led to open his mouth it is an interference with scriptural liberty to call in question his right to do so. Now, it seems to me that that erroneous idea has opened a door for the "flesh" to come in and manifest itself, to the sad detriment of all concerned.

It may be needful here to give a word of explanation, because some may say that as there were gifts in the Church at Corinth which do not now exist, therefore the injunctions as to the exercise of these gifts do not now apply. Well, no doubt the instructions given as to the gifts of tongues and of prophecy had

A SPECIFIC APPLICATION

to these gifts, yet the *divine principles underlying* these instructions still apply to the gifts that remain, and will do so until the Lord come and put an end to the Church dispensation.

And now as to what these principles are: The first I notice is, "Let all things be done unto edifying" (verse 26). Those of us who take upon us to lead in an assembly do well to remember that our exercises have two sides—a *human* side as well as a *divine*. It is not enough for me to be conscious of the presence of the Lord in what I am doing. I ought to have also a care that my exercises help in the upbuilding of my fellow-saints.

The brother in the Church at Corinth who gave thanks in an unknown tongue, unless he could interpret what he said, was to keep silence. He might have given "thanks well,"

but the other was not edified ; and those whose place is to be silent in the Church could not say "amen" at his giving of thanks. Will anyone venture to say that that principle does not still apply? And yet how many are going on as if no such injunctions were given "from the Lord"? How much there has been of going on talking in the assembly as if no one had any right to complain so long as the speaker believes that he is led of the Spirit. And not only is this so, but I believe the principle of "bearing all things" has been misapplied, and a state of things has sometimes been allowed and borne with which

OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN PUT AN END TO.

If any injustice or unkindness is directed towards myself, I am to bear with it. It is also according to the Spirit of Christ for us to bear with one another's infirmities, inexperience, or ignorance; but where there is a continuance of exercises in an assembly which all feel not to be, to edification, is it according to the tenor of 1 Cor. xiv. to go on bearing with such?

Our subject at this point becomes so delicate that I can do no more than raise the question, but I have long been impressed with the thought that in our conceptions of the liberty of the Spirit in the assembly there is somewhere

A "LINK AWANTING."

No one can read 1 Cor. xiv. with a desire to learn but must have the conviction that exercises in an assembly *which do not tend to personal edification ought not to be at all.*

To "stumble in word" is one thing, but it is quite another to go on occupying time utterly indifferent as to whether my service is to edification or not.

Verse 29 of this chapter lays down another injunction which has been too much overlooked. "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." The gift of prophecy was given to the Church until the canon of Scripture was complete. A prophet in the Church could stand up and give a message direct from the Lord *without having to use the Bible*, because the "oracles of God" which were to be given to the Church were not completed.

The teacher—the third gift in the Church (1 Cor. xii. 28)—gives a message from the Lord *through the Bible*, but the principle laid down to keep the prophet right in the exercise of his gift applies equally to the teacher in the exercise of his gift. That principle is that those prophets "sitting by" and listening were better fitted to discern if the message was divine than is the speaker himself. We would not suppose that a prophet in primitive days would have *pretended* to have a message from the Lord if he knew it was not so. The thought seems rather to be that he might be honestly mistaken. And so with the teacher now; he too may be

HONESTLY MISTAKEN.

He may think he has a message from the Lord when not only his fellow-teachers but any spiritually-minded listener can discern that the message is not *by the Spirit from the Lord at all.*

This divine principle, I repeat, has been, and is, overlooked. A proper and godly recognition of this principle would be a great blessing not only in what is known as "fellowship meetings," but also in public conferences. It would have a salutary effect on those who need to remember how liable they are to go wrong *when they think they are right*, and would lead them to value and be thankful for an admonition instead of resenting it. It would also act as a stimulant on those who are listening to exercise *grace and faithfulness.*

There are two things which require much grace to do. One is to wash another's feet according to John xiii. 1-17; the other is to sit meekly down and allow another to wash my feet. Perhaps the last requires more grace than the first—at least to some temperaments it does.

There is much that could be said on the exercise of gift in our

"PUBLIC CONFERENCES"

and "believers' meetings." But if these principles which I have sought to point out were duly recognised and practically owned a great point would be gained.

These principles are :

I. That all exercises in an assembly of saints are, or ought to be, to *edification*, and what is not to edification ought not to be at all.

II. That in laying down principles of divine order in the assembly, the Holy Spirit teaches that those *listening* are better fitted to discern of the spirituality of the exercises than the speaker himself is.

The idea which so many have, that if a brother have an *inner consciousness* that he is led of the Spirit, no one has any right to call his exercises in question, is, I believe, entirely unscriptural, and the sooner many of us learn this the better for all concerned.

Of course what I have been contending for may be abused. The Lord's own message may be rejected as it was in Jeremiah's day. It is not always a proof that a message is not of God if it be unpalatable to the hearers. The opposite may be the case, but this is an aspect of truth that would need a paper for itself.

Correspondence.

RATIO OF MISSIONARIES.

(Post-card received, dated Garenganze, 1st Jan., 1898.)

WHEN are men to fill our gaps and break the silence of our far interior? The Master Himself told off seventy for that little patch of the world lying between Lebanon and Moab; and if seventy for that little portion, how many, according to the law of "the equality of ratios," should Africa have? (Deut. xxxii. 8). Africa's vast stretch of land was determined by the number of the Children of Israel (Luke x. 1). Israel gets seventy missionaries! and shall God's principle of Deut. xxxii. 8 be applied as to the number of Africa's missionaries?

KONGA VANTO.

D. CRAWEORD.

NOTES OF A BRIEF VISIT TO BIBLE LANDS.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

CAIRO, EGYPT, 9th April, 1898.

ON the evening of Monday, 21st March, I embarked at Tilbury (on the Thames) in the *Creole Prince*, with twenty-two passengers and 3000 tons of cargo for Mediterranean ports. We had stiff breezes, both in the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean. Although some of the passengers were sea-sick, I am glad to say I escaped.

On leaving the Bay of Biscay we passed Cape Finisterre, on the north-west of Spain, and got within a mile of the Tagus, on which Lisbon, the Portuguese capital, is situated. Gibraltar was reached on Sunday evening, and, though rather dark, we had a glimpse of the famous

"Rock," with its almost impregnable fortress looming up before us. The light from the lighthouse of Ceuta, on the other side of Gibraltar Straits, was clearly seen. It is fifteen miles from Europa Point to Ceuta, in Morocco. This was the first glimpse we had of the "Dark Continent." We could not help thinking of, and praying for, the band of British missionaries about to sail from the shores of England to spread the Gospel light farther south. On clearing the Straits, we entered the Mediterranean, or "Great Sea" of Scripture, coasted the shores of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunis; sailed up the Bay of Algiers, and had a good view of the city. Pantalario, an Italian convict settlement (sixty miles south of Sicily), was passed; and on Friday forenoon, after a voyage of eleven days, we steamed into the harbour of Valetta, the capital of Malta. What particularly struck me there was the massive fortifications. Two 100-ton guns defend the approach to the Grand Harbour. The large number of huge battle-ships and cruisers at anchor, belonging to the Mediterranean Fleet, showed that the days of peace and goodwill among nations have not yet arrived.

It took nearly two days to discharge our Maltese cargo, and we had ample time for visiting in the city and neighbourhood. Nearly all the Maltese are Romanists, and are reputed to be exceedingly bigoted. It is illegal to distribute Gospels or tracts publicly amongst Roman Catholics. Two years ago a Glasgow lady, when distributing Gospels in Valetta, was apprehended and narrowly escaped imprisonment. Where Rome has the power, she hinders the circulation of God's Word. We need not wonder at this, for the Scriptures, when understood and obeyed, lead Christians outside her pale. We were shown through St. John's Roman Catholic Church, one of the most richly and elaborately adorned ecclesiastical edifices in the world. St. Paul's Bay, the reputed scene of the Apostle Paul's shipwreck, was visited by some of our number (Acts xxvii. 41). There can be no doubt that Malta is the "Melita" of Scripture, where the "barbarous people" of the island showed the shipwrecked ones "no little kindness." As I was otherwise engaged, I had to content myself with viewing "the place where two seas met" from a distance.

I visited two young soldiers at the barracks at Civita Vecchia (the former Maltese capital) whom I had known in England previous to their joining the army, and had a quiet conversation with them. I need not say that they were glad to see a familiar face. Soldiers have many trials and temptations, and need the special sympathy and prayers of Christians.

We left Malta for Alexandria on Saturday

night, and after a fairly good passage anchored in the harbour on Wednesday afternoon. Ancient Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great over 4000 years ago, and was called by his name. At one time it contained a million of souls. There is now but little trace of the old city. Modern Alexandria is more of a Western than an Oriental city. Its population is a little over 200,000, and, being the principal Egyptian seaport, is a most important commercial centre. Twenty-five per cent. of its inhabitants are Europeans, Italians and Greeks predominating. It is said to have representatives of more nationalities than any other city in the world.

On Thursday morning we took the train for Cairo, 131 miles distant. The country through which we passed is exceedingly flat and fertile. For some distance the railway skirts the shores of Lake Mareotis, and afterwards keeps close to the Mahmodeah Canal. We saw the various methods employed by the fellaheen in irrigating their fields. Everything was so novel and interesting that the journey seemed short. The crops were advanced, the barley being quite ripe. Arabs, with buffaloes and oxen, donkeys and horses, were busy ploughing, and some were clearing the ground for a second crop. As we watched them tilling the soil with their primitive ploughs, we saw the meaning of the Scripture—"No man, putting his *hand* to the plough," &c. The plougher held the plough with *one* hand, whilst with the other he grasped a long goad, which he occasionally used to accelerate the speed of the animals.

At Tanta, a city of 35,000 inhabitants—half way between Alexandria and Cairo—a Mohammedan festival was being held. Crowds of men, women, and children, in all sorts of attires and colours, on donkeys, horses, camels, and mules, were hastening thither. A festival held annually in the month of August in Tanta is attended by as many as half-a-million of persons from all parts of Egypt. We passed through dirty Arab villages of flat-roofed mud-houses covered with straw. They are the most desolate human habitations I ever saw, and I have seen poor enough ones in Iceland and the Highlands of Scotland. Men and women, boys and girls, goats and fowls, donkeys and ponies, are huddled together. Whatever may be the virtues of the Egyptian fellaheen, cleanliness is not one of them.

Before we reached Cairo we crossed the Damietta branch of the River Nile. The Nile is, doubtless, one of the grandest and most wonderful rivers in the world. Without it, Egypt would be a vast, trackless desert. In some parts of the country not a drop of rain falls for a year at a time. Through the overflowing of the river a vast desert is turned into a fruitful land. In the middle or end of April

the snow on the mountains of Abyssinia melts, and the water reaches Egypt by the end of June or beginning of July. The Nile rises till September, and a fortnight after it reaches its height, it gradually subsides. The average rise is twenty-four feet. If less than eighteen feet a famine is the result; if over thirty feet, great damage ensues. The overflowing of the Nile is spoken of by Amos the Prophet as "the flood of Egypt" (Amos viii. 4-8).

Cairo, the capital of Egypt and the chief city of the Mohammedan world, has a population of 400,000. It is a thoroughly Oriental city, with its domes and minarets, mosques and palaces. Since the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, the population of the country has increased 43 per cent. Cairo has shared greatly in the general prosperity. A walk through the Cairo streets by one who recently arrived in the Orient will not easily be forgotten. A street scene is graphically described by an able writer as follows: "Arabs, in eastern costumes of every conceivable colour, barefooted, or shod with red or yellow slippers; swarthy Bedouins, in camel's-hair bernouses; Turks, Jews, Armenians, and Grecians; jet-black Nubians and Copts, variously attired according to their respective callings; fair-haired Saxons and Arab women, hideously veiled, are among the divers thousands of these busy streets. . . . Dogs everywhere; men, women, and children asking for 'back-sheesh' at every opportunity, and donkeys by the thousand."

The Egyptians are mostly Mohammedans. There are, in addition to numbers of "Christian" Churches, 300 Mohammedan mosques. We visited the Alabaster Mosque and Sultan Hassan's. The latter is a colossal edifice, and cost over £600,000. The chief features of a mosque are an open court, with a fountain in the midst, called "the fountain of ablutions," at which the Moslems' hands, and sometimes their head and feet, are washed before going through their form of prayer. Within the courtyard walls is the "sanctuary," in which there is the pulpit from which the priest reads the Koran, and the praying niche, showing the direction of Mecca. "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground"—Mohammedans look upon as still binding. They dare not enter a mosque with shod feet. The law has been somewhat relaxed in favour of "infidel dogs" (as Christians are designated). After we paid the usual charge for admission, slippers were placed over our shoes by a boy, and we were allowed to enter the sacred enclosure. At one of the mosques we witnessed a priest and about a dozen of "the faithful" going through their prayers. First of all they bowed their heads toward Mecca—their holy place—and

repeated a prayer formula. Then they knelt and prayed audibly. When they had "finished," they pressed their heads on the ground and rose to their feet. On the conclusion of the ceremony, to our surprise, they coolly lit their pipes and began to smoke in the "sanctuary"! Five times daily the *muezzin*, from the minaret of the mosque, calls Moslems to prayer—1, at day-break; 2, at noon; 3, afternoon; 4, sunset; 5, after dark. Lane, in his "Modern Egyptians," gives these calls as follows: "God is most great" (said four times); "I testify that there is no Deity but God" (twice); "God is most great" (twice); "There is no Deity but God." Whatever a "good" Moslem is doing, or wherever he may be at the time of prayer, he unhesitatingly and fearlessly falls on his knee and goes through his "devotions." Our carriage driver in Cairo prayed in the carriage, and in broken English said, "Me a good Mohammedan." We witnessed the Mohammedan festival of the "Procession of the Holy Carpet." The Khedive sends yearly a carpet with the pilgrims as they set out for the tomb of the false prophet. Crowds of people gathered at the Place Mehemet Ali, below the Citadel. Pashas, Beys, foreign Consuls, and soldiers were present. On the arrival of the Khedive a salute of twenty-one guns was fired. A short ceremony was gone through, and a richly-caparisoned camel, bearing a sort of shrine, followed by other camels with the carpet, headed the procession. In addition to the three or four hundred pilgrims, there were several thousands of dervishes, bearing flags and banners, dressed in all sort of costumes, playing reed-like instruments, beating drums and tom-toms, burning incense, singing and screaming, howling and shouting. The streets were literally packed with people, and it was with great difficulty we were enabled to reach our hotel. Some of our party were spat upon, and struck with stones by children. Children are taught to despise and curse all who take the name of "Christian." The whole system is a delusion, and it is sad to think that more than 200,000,000 of our fellow-creatures are under its withering influence. Twelve centuries have passed since Mahommed died, and his influence to-day is felt and owned by more people than when he was alive. In the old Moslem University, Cairo, there are nearly 10,000 Mohammedan students, taught by 320 unpaid professors. The Koran is the only text-book used for law and logic, theology and philosophy. The Mohammedan religion is really Eastern Unitarianism, and, like Mormonism, has a false revelation, which is accepted as binding on its followers. And yet, when the Koran is examined carefully, it is seen that nearly all that is good in it is

borrowed from the Bible! Prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and a pilgrimage to Mecca are the leading articles of the Moslem creed. At the beginning of every chapter in the Koran (excepting one) the following words are employed: "In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful." The *ground* on which a holy and righteous God can be merciful and compassionate on those who deserve sin's wages—eternal punishment—is not even alluded to in the Koran. The Moslem "Confession of Faith" has nothing to say of God's wondrous scheme of redemption. It speaks not of the sin-atonings, sin-cleansing blood, and has no Christ to satisfy the longings of a conscience-awakened, sin-burdened soul. A Moslem's idea of heaven is a purely material and sensual one. A Mohammedan, if he is able to afford it, is allowed to have four wives, but Mahommed had four times that number for himself!

We were specially interested in watching the water-sellers pursuing their calling on the streets of Cairo and Alexandria. Men, carrying bottles of skin, or of earthenware, go about selling water. They have two brass cups in their hands, which they use like cymbals in announcing their calling. "Water," in Arabic, signifies "the gift of God," and they shout, "The gift of God, the gift of God, who will *buy* the gift of God?" Sometimes a rich man purchases the whole of his supply, and tells him to *give* it to the poor. He then goes forth and calls, "The gift of God, the gift of God, who will *take* the gift of God?"

It is unnecessary to say that when this cry is heard by those who are thirsty, there is a rush for the cooling beverage. And yet, alas! multitudes in so-called "Christian" countries refuse to accept the "Water of Life," which they are invited and entreated to accept "without money and without price."

Moslems, as a class, are very difficult to reach with the Gospel. To leave Mahommed and embrace Christ, is looked upon as a sin worthy of death. Christian workers in Mohammedan lands, such as Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, and Egypt, say that tremendous difficulties are put in the way of the people accepting the salvation of God and publicly confessing Christ.

Schools are conducted in which the Scriptures are taught and the Gospel proclaimed, and some of the scholars have been hopefully converted to God. When travelling in the railway train between Cairo and Alexandria, I gave an Egyptian gentleman a copy of the Gospel of John in Arabic. He accepted it most courteously, and spoke freely of God's way of salvation. In the course of our conversation he told me that he was a Copt, and had been blessed

through attending the American school in Cairo. He occupies a responsible position in the Finance Department of the Egyptian Government. Let us pray more frequently and more earnestly for the toilers in Mohammedan lands; and let us ask the Lord of the harvest to thrust forth more labourers into the harvest-field, that every Mohammedan may at least hear the way of peace ere he passes from Time into Eternity. ALEXANDER MARSHALL.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—I COR. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.—Is it possible for any one to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost in this age?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

ABIB, FIRST OR SEVENTH MONTH?—It has been asserted that the month Abib, which from the institution of the Passover (Ex. xii.) was reckoned the first month of the year, is the same that previously had been the seventh month, and that, consequently, it was on the 17th day of that same month that the Ark rested on Mount Ararat, synchronising with the day that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Can any proof of this assertion be given from Scripture, or any conclusive historical evidence?

LABOURS OF WOMEN.—In what sense were the women in Romans xvi. "My helpers" (verse 3), "much labour on you" (verse 6, r.v.), "who labour in the Lord" (verse 12), or if we have any Scripture authorising women to go forth as labourers in the Gospel, and the Church's responsibility to them?

LIVING BY FAITH.

QUESTION 565.—From I COR. xii. 9 are we to conclude that faith is given to some to enable them to "live by faith," and others have not this gift, and make shipwreck in the attempt?

Answer A.—In answer to the above question, there is no doubt that a professional, ostentatious use of the phrase "living by faith" has done much to mar the truth, that it is the privilege of every Christian to do so. If we are not all living by faith, moment by moment, whether making shoes or teaching and preaching, we are not pleasing God, for without faith it is impos-

sible to please Him. No amount of prayer can take the place of obedience and humility. If we have thought more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and have chosen to give our whole time to the work of preaching the Gospel without the call, then we have the opportunity of setting the profitable example to others of retracing a wrong step. The Word says also, that if a man will not work neither shall he eat. Lack of food has often, when in Africa, led me to search myself as to the work I was doing. Was I indeed *servicing God*, or seeking my own things in His service? If there was any consciousness of a desire to serve the Lord and to do His work, then all anxiety about the where-withal quickly vanished.

I COR. xii. 9 surely gives no encouragement to act—if not in faith, *in unbelief*. It has been suggested that as some called to go to foreign lands had not this "gift of faith," they should look to a committee of brethren at home who would be responsible to find funds for them, and thus relieve them of all anxiety. But does this passage not suggest that such should, in the first instance, question rather their call to give up their occupations?

On the other hand, the servant of Christ need not be discouraged, and will not be discouraged, if he finds that true spiritual prosperity is often accompanied by deepening poverty. The words of Christ, "Whosoever shall say to this mountain," &c., encourage the greatest audacity of faith in the simplest and humblest believer, but His example in the garden is beautiful and perfect: "O, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Then later, "*Thinkest Thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels.*"

"Living by faith" is associated chiefly with getting what Jacob asked for at Bethel, food and clothing; but surely it ought primarily to be associated with delighting in God, whom we know and in whom we believe. "Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust in Thee." F. S. A.

Answer B.—I COR. xii. 9 speaks neither of "the faith," i.e., the truths of the Bible, nor the first act of faith which justifies in God's sight, nor that same *common* faith as an after-power transforming our life (Heb. xi.), and by which continued confidence in God only can we live preserved from shipwreck amid all the trials we are exposed to (Heb. x. 38). Here it is not faith as guarding against the evil one's darts, and upholding us in our individual life struggle, but faith in regard to our sphere of usefulness in the Church. It is "Church" truth, not "experimental." God never designed that all Christians should be alike, but differently endowed each.

Romans xii. 3-6 clearly tells us that some are specially endowed with faith, though *all* are sufficiently endowed. Many of the powers mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. are confessedly lost to the Church, but "gifts" characterised by those manifestations of the Spirit, words of wisdom and knowledge, and faith (not distinctive ministries, rather qualities accompanying) are surely necessary for any effective ministry. Many of the most useful talents have been mainly distinguished thus, and therefore able to lead.

Some, referring to xiii. 2, think it is faith that works miracles, but almost certainly that must be included in "the gifts of healing" and "the working of miracles," or what specific meaning could be attached to it? J. H. H.

Answer C.—The gift of faith spoken of in this Scripture (1 Cor. xii. 9) is, no doubt, the same as that alluded to in the next chapter, second verse: "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains." It is a faith through which great deeds are done, like those of Heb. xi. 32.

We might also instance the late Mr. Muller, of Bristol, and others, whose faith is spoken of in many lands. The bestowal of these gifts on some of His people by God is a Sovereign prerogative, and He gives them to whom He will.

Nevertheless, to live by faith is the privilege of every Christian, apart from this special Sovereign gift of which we have been speaking. Whether he gets his food and clothing, and other necessary blessings, through the labour of his hands, through the counting-house, the shop, the exchange, or otherwise, the Christian may see them all as certainly coming from the Lord his God. This he acknowledges as he gives thanks at every meal to God as the Great Provider. J. S.

Answer D.—"The just shall live by faith," is true of every believer without distinction. What is now understood by many, as evangelists, pastors, and teachers, "living by faith," was unknown even to the Apostle Paul; for he showed clearly that God ordained that such should be provided for by the Church. When the Apostle did not wish to accept support from the Church, he laboured with his own hands; he did not say, "I am living by faith," which is a convenient method by which the Church has cast her responsibility upon God. At the present time earnest prayer ascends from many assemblies that God would give them pastors and teachers; but, if given, would they be supported?

1 Corinthians xii. 9 says nothing about "living by faith." Faith mentioned there is in connection with miraculous "gifts," and is alluded to in chap. xiii. 2 as removing mountains. If "living by faith," as it is now understood, is included in this passage, then the Apostle Paul

either did not possess "the gift" or did not exercise it; for when the Church failed to support him he did so himself "by labouring with his own hands." In times of apostasy God has directly intervened to support His servant, as in the case of Elijah, using even unclean birds and a Gentile woman as His instruments, Israel being thereby temporarily deprived of a prophet.

Editor's Note.—We have many replies to this question, and out of them we have selected four, and even these we have been obliged to curtail for want of space.

In one of these reference is made to the late Mr. Muller. A similar reference was made to him in our article in April number ("The Author and Finisher of Faith"), and one of our correspondents points out that Mr. Muller in the strongest way repudiated the possession of this special "gift." Many years ago he wrote thus: "Though every believer is not called upon to establish Orphan Houses, and trust in the Lord *for means*, yet *all believers are called upon*, in the simple confidence of faith, to cast all their burdens upon Him, to trust Him for everything, and not only to make everything a subject of prayer, but to expect answers to their petitions which they have asked according to His will, and in the Name of the Lord Jesus." Again: "It is not true that my faith is that gift of faith which is spoken of in 1 Cor. xii. 9," &c.

That faith which is of God must be based upon the Word of God. This holds good as to the faith by which a sinner apprehends Christ as his Saviour, as to the faith by which a saint overcomes the world, as to the faith by which mighty works are accomplished, and thus in its essence every kind of faith is one and the same. Whether in the little things of daily life, or in the greater things of testimony and service to the Lord, divine faith rests upon the Word of God, by which His will and His character are revealed. "The just shall live by faith." This is not a gift bestowed upon some and not upon others. It is the privilege and duty of every child of God to trust his Father.

But to some is given special faith to count upon God to perform for them that which others are not called upon to do or to expect.

Inasmuch as Mr. Muller trusted God to direct and uphold him in all the details of his life, his faith was just the common heritage of all saints, only exercised in a simpler and fuller way than by most.

But inasmuch as he, and he alone, was enabled to trust God for the supply of the needs of 2000 orphans, it seems to us it was a special gift to him, and answers to 1 Cor. xii. 9. It is important to note that the gift of faith is distinct from the gift of healing or the gift of working miracles.

THE VALUE and FULNESS of THE SCRIPTURES

(Psalm cxix.)

By W. H. BENNET, Yeovil.

THE difficulty of writing anything on Psalm cxix. with desirable *brevis* will be best known by those who have attempted it, and to take up in a brief paper the many points that present themselves is impossible. The following are simply a few notes, in the writing of which some help has been gained from various quarters. The meaning of words, and any renderings that vary from the Authorised Version, are given, as far as can be judged, only on competent authority.

This psalm is not, like some, occupied with the sufferings and the glories of Christ, but it is well fitted to stir up "disciples" in the heavenly school to the diligent use of the Scriptures which set these forth, and to lead them to prove, by *treasuring up* God's testimonies and *obeying* His precepts, the blessedness declared in the opening verses. To this end it dwells much upon the value, the fulness, and the stability of God's written Word, this being mentioned in almost every verse in varied and expressive terms, which should be compared with Psalm xix. 7-11. The psalm is composed of twenty-two sections, according to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and each of the eight verses in any one section begins with the same letter, the order of the alphabet being followed. The terms used for the Scriptures, though in some measure synonymous, have distinct meanings, and seem designed to indicate the several aspects in which the Word is presented to us. They are the following:

1. *Law* (25 times)—from a verb *to point out, direct, guide*—signifies that which points out the Will of God for the guidance and direction of His people. The word is often used for the Law of Moses promulgated from Sinai, and this shows that it denotes what is given by Divine authority. But it is also, as here, used for *the whole of the Scriptures* as the guide and rule of life—a guide which can never mislead. The Lord Jesus introduces a quotation from Psalm lxxxii. with the words, "It is written in your *Law*," and adds, "The *Scripture* cannot be broken" (John x. 34, 35).

So Paul, when quoting from Isaiah, says, "In the *Law* it is written" (Isa. xxviii. 11; 1 Cor. xiv. 21). Thus the statement, "Thy *Law* is truth" (verse 142), answers to the Lord's declaration, "Thy *Word* is truth" (John xvii. 17). When it is said in Psalm i. of the godly man that "his delight is in the Law of Jehovah," the word *law* takes in the whole revelation of God, but it presents it in a special aspect. It reminds us that it is the Word of a King, a Voice from the Throne of the Most High; that it comes with absolute authority, and calls for equally absolute submission.

2. *Testimonies* (23 times, but in verse 88 singular, referring to a *complete whole*, like "My Word" [not words] in John xiv. 23), from the verb *to bear witness, to testify*. The word *testimony* also is constantly used for God's Law written upon the two tables of stone, and deposited in the Ark, from which that holy vessel was called "*The Ark of the Testimony*," and the Tabernacle was called "*The Tabernacle of the Testimony*." The Scriptures, therefore, are called God's *testimonies*, as containing His testimony concerning Himself and His Will. This must ever be a testimony against man's sinfulness (2 Kings xvii. 15); while all the symbolism connected with that Tabernacle of Testimony points forward to the provision of God's *grace* that is mighty to save him from it. These testimonies are "*very sure*" (Ps. xciii. 5); there is nothing variable in them; they are like their Author, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

3. *Precepts* (21 times)—from a verb *to appoint or charge*—indicate special injunctions in which our obligations to God are set forth. God as a Master gives directions to His servants, which we are responsible to carry out. This word occurs in three other psalms, and nowhere else. In Psalm xix. 8 it is rendered *statutes*, and in ciii. 18 and cxi. 7, *commandments*. All God's precepts are *right* and *sure*; there need be no doubt about them, therefore they rejoice the heart, for the one who fears Him does find joy in proving "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

4. *Statutes* (20 times, though verse 16 is *slightly different* from the rest).—Statute, from a verb *to engrave on stone*, denotes a solemn or authoritative edict or decree, which is immutable. It is used of the *law* Joseph made

(Gen. xlvii. 26), of the *ordinance* of the Passover (Ex. xii. 24), of God's *decree* for the rain, the sea, and the waters (Job xxviii. 6, xxxviii. 10; Ps. cxlviii. 6; Prov. viii. 29), and "*the decree*" concerning the Messiah (Ps. ii. 7). The word, therefore, brings the Scriptures before us in an aspect we do well to consider in the present day. The unbridled tongues (James i. 26) of those whose pride of intellect shows itself in their assumption of ability to correct the judgment of the Lord Jesus touching the integrity of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, may sometimes overawe those of unstable mind; but the simple believer knows that these *decrees* of "the King Eternal" are as immutable as His Throne, and, therefore, *delights* in them (verse 16).

5. *Commandments* (21 times plural, and in verse 96 singular, as of a *complete whole*—compare John xii. 49, 50). This word is used for God's commands generally, as to Adam, to Noah, to Moses (Ex. xxxix., xl.).

6. *Judgments* (23 times, but in verse 9 it is rendered, *according to Thine ordinances*, and in verse 132, *as Thou usest to do*. In verse 66 a different word is used; on which see below).—Being from the verb *to govern, judge, determine*, this word denotes the utterances of Jehovah as Judge and Lawgiver, and brings before us the *judicial or discriminating* power of His Word, as that which "is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; . . . a *discerner* of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12). *Judgments* here also seem to mean God's providential dealings with men, and His righteous acts towards them as unfolded in His Word (see Ps. xxxvi. 6).

7. *Word*.—Two distinct terms are thus rendered. One is the more general term for the Word of God as denoting the substance of His revelation, that which he has been pleased to communicate to us. This occurs 23 times, being found twice in verse 42, which is rendered literally, "And then I will answer my revilers a word, for I trust in Thy word." Taken with verse 41, it seems to mean, Let Thy word be fulfilled to Me, and I shall have a word to say in answer to Mine enemies. The second (*imrah*), answering more to our *saying*, denotes the *verbal utterance*, or the word of the speaker, upon which faith rests as knowing *who has spoken*. It often has the sense of *promise*,

though it could not always be thus rendered. It occurs 19 times in this psalm, 7 in other psalms, and only 10 in the rest of the Bible. This is the term used in Psalm cxxxviii. 2, reference to which will help to illustrate its meaning: "Thou hast magnified Thy *word* above all Thy name." God's name denotes the revelation of Himself and His ways, and David, referring to God's definite *word of promise* to him in 2 Sam. vii., says it goes beyond any previous revelation. The verses in Psalm cxix. where *imrah* occurs are the following: 11, 38, 41, 50, 58, 67, 76, 82, 103, 116, 123, 133, 140, 148, 154, 158, 162, 170, 172. The other places in the Psalms where it is found are: xii. 6 (twice), xvii. 6 (*speech*), xviii. 30, cv. 19 (second part), cxxxviii. 2, cxlvii. 15 (*commandment*).

8. *Way*.—It might be thought that verses 3 and 37 contain no reference to the Scriptures, but do not the expressions "*His ways*" and "*Thy way*" mean the way of His commandments and His statutes (32, 33)—*the way* marked out in *the Word*? Compare the use of the word "*way*" in Jer. vi. 16, Mal. ii. 8, and Acts ix. 2 and xix. 9, 23. In the last three places the Greek is simply "*the way*," as it is "*the name*" in Acts v. 41, like Lev. xxiv. 11. Another word rendered "*way*" in this psalm should be *path* or *paths*: it occurs in verses 9, 15, 101, 104, 128. The former is said to include the inward principle of action, while the latter is more definite outward conduct. Verses 90 and 122 seem to be the only verses that do not contain any one of the above eight words.

The question naturally arises, Does this psalm give us the experience of Christ? The statement that we have here "a photograph of the holy Child, perhaps in a period of life of which not a glimpse is given in the Gospels," is very beautiful and suggestive; but the one who made it carried it too far, while another, who spoke of the whole psalm as "the special utterance of Christ," tried to *modify* some of its statements in order to maintain his interpretation.

That Jehovah's perfect Servant found in most of the sentences of this psalm a suitable expression of His own experience is beyond doubt, and of not a few it may be said that they declare what He alone fully displayed—

that *perfect obedience* which all who are led by the Spirit aim at, and confess they fall short of; but there are some statements that could not have been His.

Many of God's holiest servants have had to say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word," and "I thought upon my ways, and *turned my feet* unto Thy testimonies"; but such words could not express the experience of Him whose heart never wandered from His God, and whose feet never took a step outside the path of His testimonies. Efforts to give a different meaning to some verses have not commended themselves. Let the treatment of verse 67 by the two well-known teachers just referred to suffice for an example. One suggests that it be rendered, "I have not yet been afflicted, as one going astray, and still I have kept Thy word," explaining it thus: "I did not need the sorrow and shame of experienced error to drive me into Thy ways." But, in addition to the fact that no other Hebrew scholar seems to countenance such a rendering, the statement, "*I have not yet been afflicted*," would be out of harmony with verses 50, 71, 75, &c. The other, who takes the psalm as "a photograph of the holy Child," says that the expression "went astray" means, *was ignorant, mistook*. Now that the holy Child grew in wisdom is expressly recorded, and the record shows how really He became a child, and developed *mentally* as well as *physically*; but to say that "He must have misunderstood at one time what He more fully understood afterwards," is to add to Scripture, and, however unwittingly, to dishonour the Lord. To *misunderstand* is an evidence of imperfection, but the Holy One of God was perfect in every stage of His earthly course.

One feature of Psalm cxix. is that, though written before Christ came, it so fully traces the proper pathway of a "man of God," that all who aim at being "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3. 17), must find much help from it. For though it is only since His manifestation that it can be said, "The darkness is past and the true light now shineth," it is our privilege to read these Scriptures in the fuller light thus given to us. If we do this we find the breathings of this psalm in full harmony with the exhortations of the New Testament, and with the desires wrought in us by

the same Spirit who was the Author of all the holy experiences it records. The questions of forgiveness of sins and acceptance are not before us here, but rather the course of the forgiven and accepted one.

Perfection is often spoken of in our day. Now, the "blessednesses" of perfection are expressed in the opening verses of this psalm, while the many that follow clearly show how they may be attained. This *way of the perfect* is very high, but it is very definite; it is not something cloudy which cannot be grasped, like some modern teaching, calculated to beget the fancy that *assent is attainment*, and to lead to a repetition of the folly of those who gloried in the law, while through their transgressions of that very law they dishonoured the God who gave it (Rom. ii. 23).

The characteristics of "the perfect in the way" are that *God Himself* is the object of the *undivided heart*; His *testimonies* are guarded as a precious heritage, nothing being allowed that would impair them; His *law*—His *entire Word* bowed to as the authoritative rule of all conduct—is a hedge on each side of the pathway, so that they "WALK IN" it (verses 1, 2). "They"—of whom this is true—"also *do no iniquity*"; not that they are sinless, but, instead of getting *outside* His law, and thus becoming *lawless*, "*they walk in His ways*"—the ways so clearly marked out in His Word. Of such obedience Zacharias and his wife were bright examples in a day of much formalism and disobedience: "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Lu. i. 6).

This *perfection*, or *wholeheartedness*, in seeking God and His favour (verses 10, 58), and in obedience (verses 34, 69), is expressed in many ways. There is *love to* (verses 97, 163) and *delight in* (verses 70, 72, 92, 174) God's law, love to His commandments (verse 127) and His testimonies (167), constant meditation therein (verses 48, 97, 148), a testing of the ways by them, a turning of the feet unto them (verse 59), and a refraining of the feet from "every evil path" (verse 101) to keep them. This steadfastness (verses 106, 112) in obedience, in spite of snares (verse 110) and persecution (verses 86, 87), leads to constant praise (verses 62, 164, 171), but not to self-esteem or self-confidence.

The Psalmist knew something of his own heart and how easily it might wander from God's commandments (verse 10), or be drawn away to covetousness or vanity (verses 36, 37), or even fall under the dominion of iniquity (verse 133). He knew, too, how absolutely dependent he was upon God, who alone could teach him (verses 33, 124, 171), give him understanding (verses 27, 34, &c.), incline his heart (verse 36), lead him (verse 35), and uphold him (verse 116). Yet with earnestness in prayer there was holy determination. He chose "the way of truth" (verse 30), and of God's "precepts" (verse 173); he "*stuck unto His testimonies*" (verse 31), and took possession of them as his heritage (verse 111), while he "*made haste*" and delayed not to keep His commandments (verse 60). He combined the *diligence* commended in Prov. ii. 2-4 with that *dependence* upon God which finds its expression in prayer, as enjoined in verse 3, and thus obtained the reward promised in verse 5. Or, to put it in another way, He understood the principle of Philip. ii. 12, 13—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." So, while he prays, "*Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies,*" he also says, "*I have inclined my heart to perform Thy statutes*" (verses 36, 112).

(To be concluded in next number.)

"TILL HE COME."

A Sunday Morning Address on Isaiah liiii.
By Dr. NEATBY, of London.

THESE words are the utterances of the remnant of Israel in the last days as they look with repentant eyes upon their crucified Messiah whom they rejected. They had been unable to discern the beauty of the One who was fairer than the sons of men.

"Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." These words are taken up in Matt. viii. 17: "Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses." The blessed Lord was indeed the Man of Sorrows. The God-man, blessed Man! He chased sorrow from many a sorrowful heart by taking them upon Himself. He took, in deep sorrow, on his sinless heart the sorrows that He chased from us.

"He was smitten of God and afflicted. Man did not understand such a heart as His. They

thought that God was chastening Him for His sin. "Yet we did esteem Him smitten of God and afflicted." What is the answer of God to all this? "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities." Now let us give the very best of our affections to Him. He is worthy of them all. All the reproaches of man were lost upon Him. He set His face steadfastly as a flint to go to Jerusalem to die for us.

We rejoice in the substitution of Christ under the judgment of God. Praise to God, we are brought back to Him healed by His stripes. We are seated in His presence in perfect liberty. It was His precious sin-atonement death that did this. There is no flaw in the work of redemption. All my sins He became answerable for as our surety. He bore them in His own body on the tree. God was glorified where I dishonoured Him. God takes account of redemption. He is the gainer, and we are infinitely gainers through His precious death. God is glorified and we are satisfied. May worship flow from hearts at liberty from sin to delight in the One who has ransomed us. Could the Lord have told me in words more explicit than these that He really suffered for me what I ought to have suffered?

"His grave was appointed with the wicked." The sentence of crucifixion carried with it burial at the foot of the cross of the One who was crucified. How wondrous are the ways of our God! Christ was bound to be buried at the foot of the cross. His grave was ordered with the wicked. But *no, no*, the Work is "finished," and God, looking down upon this world which crucified His Son, will have no further indignity put upon that blessed Body. His grave was really with the rich in His death.

"It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him." Let us have something to say to our God about this. Let us with adoring hearts bow down and worship before Him. What a heart of infinite love Jehovah has who brought us at such infinite cost to Himself. God shall yet show His satisfaction in the work of His Son by raising up the dead and changing the living at His coming. Let us look forward to that blessed day and remember Him thus in the breaking of bread till He come. Then we shall see Him and be like Him. May God hasten that day!

THE GODLY BRINGING UP OF FAMILIES.

PART II.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of *Christ as seen in the Levitical Offerings.**

YOU will notice in Eph. vi. 4, and also in Col. iii. 21, that the very little that is said is addressed to *the father*. It is not addressed to the parents nor to the mother, but to the father. That is to say, God recognises the father as the head of the house, and commits His instructions to him; but every one who has any experience or observation, knows perfectly well that the mother has ten times more than the father to do with the moulding of the young life of the child.

It is the mother that has the destinies of the children (as I might almost say) in her control. There, feeding on the breast of the mother, the earliest lessons are learned. For years, it may be, the father, being the breadwinner, is out early in the morning, comes home late and tired at night, and, let him be ever so godly, he sees but little of the children. But early in years, when the plant is young, it is then they are continually with the mother. O then, mother, remember this: They learn far more from example than from precept.

It is to live in the Presence of God. It is to deal with the children in the fear of God. It is to let it be manifest to them that there is One whom you own as your Lord; whose words you cherish and obey; to whom you go with your sorrows and troubles, your perplexities and burdens; and seeing the reality of the life in you, it becomes a reality to them. How many there are who can look back to their mother!

A brother the other day said to me: "I know not how much we ten children owe to our mother." The godly impressions, the moulding of the life, is in the hands of the mother. O mothers, you do not need to seek a sphere of service that God has not assigned to you; you have already got one, more important than any I know—the bringing up of your children. One of the services that a woman is to be commended for is "if she have brought up children." Don't despise it—it is a work for God. It was the faith that was in the

mother and in the grandmother that was reflected in the life of devotion of Timothy.

Therefore I make it very pointedly a word to the mothers. Mothers, first see that you reverence your husband, and that no discrepancy between you and your husband, whatever it may be, comes before the children. Go into the presence of God and get the matter settled there first, and then be one before the children.

You notice the warning in these passages is, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger."

I was once talking to a friend of mine who had a great deal of experience in the things of this world; we were talking about a man driving a horse, and he said a great many drivers consider their own tempers and not the horses. They get angry, and then the horse suffers for it. Something like that oftentimes happens in the bringing up of children. The parents lose their temper, and the punishment is according to the measure of the *parent's temper*, and not according to the measure of the *child's guilt*. Perhaps the parent was the one that was really to blame.

Remember this, also, that parents often err (I am not excluding myself) in considering *their enjoyment* of their children rather than the *blessing of the children*. That has been said to be the difference between divine love and human love. Human love considers the enjoyment of its object; divine love considers first and last the blessing of its object. O see to it that, whether it be joy or pleasure, the giving of instruction or chastisement, the one consideration be the blessing of the children. There is such a thing as being unreasonable, and the child feeling that you are unreasonable, and you are provoking the child, the child loses confidence in you and will hide things from you, and you have yourself to blame.

We have to cultivate, by love, wisdom, and patience, the confidence of our children, so that they will come and open out to us and keep nothing back. There is a great deal gained if we have their confidence. There are some fathers who are pretty well known as *the men who use the rod*.

There are some in meetings, and their tongues are like rods, and when there is anything wrong

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they are ready with the rod ; they are not much known as those that feed, comfort, and nourish. Now, the parents are the ones that care for, nourish, protect, feed, clothe, bless, bring joy into the life and lot of their children, and if the instructions that God has given as to family life are carried out, I do not see anything to hinder a Christian family being just a little heaven on earth, a blessed spot.

The world has its songs, and that is a good one which speaks of home thus : " Be it ever so humble, there is no place like home." A Christian's home ought to be a place that the child will ever look back to with thankfulness and reverence. Sin is the root of death and corruption. You and I cannot be disobeying God ourselves and at the same time be bringing joy into the household.

Our brother Dr. Neatby yesterday afternoon, at the close of his address, said : " O if but one quarter of all these blessed things were realised in our souls, instead of people looking when you come into the house and saying, ' There comes that grumbler,' they would say, ' There comes that sunbeam.' "

Now, there are great natural differences amongst children. Some in the same family are pliable and easily moulded ; others have wills that are as stiff as iron, and it requires special wisdom and grace, only to be got at the throne of grace and by the Spirit of God teaching us in His Word, to deal with every individual case according to its own peculiar temperament.

These natural differences will be, and the parent should make each child a study, and seek the wisdom and the grace that God will deny to none who seek it, that they may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

What is the difference between the nurture and admonition? *Nurture* means nourishment ; it means all that God has provided for us, the full tale of God's goodness : let the children know all that God has done for them and provided for them in Christ. *Admonition* refers to God's claims upon them. If you press the *claims* without the nurture you will bring them up either legally or probably fearing and possibly hating God. If you press only the *grace*, and not the claims, then it may be they will think anything will do for God. Keep the two together, bring them up " in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Look at 1 Kings i. 5, 6 : " Then Adonijah, the son of Haggith, exalted himself, saying, I will be king ; and he prepared him chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run before him. And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so ? " O what a crop of trouble David reaped from his foolish indulgence of this son of his ! His father had never checked him, never said, Why hast thou done this ? His father had let him do as he pleased. Was it kindness, was it love ? O, would it be love in my Father in heaven to let me do as I pleased ? Verily, no. There is the chastening of the Lord : " Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth "—sometimes very lightly, sometimes very heavily. " Faint not, neither despise the chastening of the Lord." You may despise the lighter chastening, but it leads to heavier. But God deals in wisdom and in grace.

Some parents (I have no hesitation in saying it) seem to know no other way of correcting a child but with a rod or by a box on the ear. It is more like a dog kennel than a family circle. Children are intelligent beings, and at a very early age they are quite open to be reasoned with, and instructed, and taught, and if they are taught that every chastening is given as in the presence of God, the effect will be such that the chastenings will be rare, and it may be never very heavy.

May God teach us His own ways and His own thoughts ; may He give us the needed grace and the needed wisdom that we may bring up the children as a godly family, that He may be glorified in them, and that every one of them may meet with the parents in the Father's house above.

DISCIPLINE.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

THE discipline of the Father, from which none are exempted (except bastards), is, it appears to me, of a twofold nature. He may touch His child with His chastening hand, or He may touch his circumstances. The child of God derives various and important lessons from these distinct dealings of the Father with him.

If I become the subject of divine discipline it may come to me in the form of my being led deeper into the recesses of my natural heart to learn its vileness as never before. This is

exceedingly painful. Perhaps I have neglected to watch and pray, to depend on the power of God for every fresh step: service, though still in honesty of desire, *for* Christ, has not been *from* Him as being in communion *with* Him. A fresh sight of myself, feeling, if there be now no death on me, there is death working in me, will make me cry "out of the depths" again, as the fugitive prophet out of the billows of the great sea. Or it may be by a painful illness that my impotence is brought home to me. God blows upon our pride. What is man? Mere animated dust and ashes, possessing not a single guarantee for another breath. How quickly the beauty of man consumes as a moth under the crushings of God!

But the way of God is "in the sea," as the psalmist confesses, always taking on a different complexion. He may, in inscrutable wisdom, break up something that He Himself has permitted me to find comfort in. How else could I be led into the deeper comfort that is in Himself? This is the weaning process. I may learn to do without that which the One who is the source of my life has Himself encouraged me to regard as the necessity of that life. How reason staggers as a blind man here!

Psalms cxxx. and cxxxi. illustrate these two different forms of discipline. The second presents a profound study indeed. And here again Jonah helps us to seize the point. We can understand that he could easily interpret the meaning of the dispensation which made him cry out of the depths. But see his bewilderment when he found himself sitting beside the withered gourd, blasted by the same hand that caused it to grow for his comfort!

But the peaceable fruit of righteousness is of immense value. It is good to have God's help in our difficulties, yet the heart craves HIMSELF, to find both our present support and our future eternal home in Him. The weaned child nestles down on the breast that is refused him. It has ceased to hanker after that which it had been taught to look upon as essential to its very existence.

Thus there is not only the unchangeable standing in "grace" and the uninterrupted state of "peace," there is the "mercy" which ministers daily supplies for daily emergencies, and turns the exercises of the pathway into richest profit to the chastened child of God.

HOW TO WALK IN PATHS OF PEACE.

Address by the late GEORGE MÜLLER, of Bristol.

READ PROVERBS III. 5-17.

"*TRUST in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding.*"—This counsel which our Heavenly Father by the Holy Spirit gives us through this word is most precious. The natural tendency in us all, more or less, is to have a good opinion about ourselves, and this in a variety of ways. The one thing here particularly referred to is a good opinion of ourselves with regard to our judgment—that we know how to manage matters, how to do things, how to carry on things, to trust in the good opinion which we have in ourselves. This is our natural tendency, against which we have to guard; e.g., in the bringing up of our children, in our family relationships, in the carrying on of our business or profession, we need to be aware that we have no judgment in a single matter in ourselves, and that we need to seek guidance, direction, help, counsel, and advice from our Heavenly Father. Thus also with regard to the service of the Lord, we need to be aware that in ourselves we are foolish, and we need continual direction and guidance from the Lord to know how to do the work of the Lord in a right and proper way—not merely as to the right *spirit* in which we do it, but also as the right *way* of acting. Therefore we will seek by the grace of God to *act* on this advice, not merely to *say* we are doing it, or fancy that we are doing it, but really and truly to depend on God, and really and truly to lean not unto our own understanding.

"*In all thy ways acknowledge Him.*"—Not to undertake anything without first seeking guidance, direction, and counsel from the Lord, and also seeking the needed spiritual strength we require to carry on the work of the Lord; and, whatever we do, in all our paths to acknowledge Him, to have a kind of spiritual habit or spiritual instinct, so that, without needing to be reminded to do it, we do it—that is the right state of heart. Owing our own weakness, helplessness, ignorance; being so fully convinced of our own nothingness and entire weakness, and helplessness and ignorance, if left to ourselves, that

invariably we betake ourselves to the Lord. Whenever we take any step, to go to the Lord to be guided, counselled, directed by Him.

"*And He shall direct thy paths*"—that is, He shall make plain thy paths; He will so guide, lead, direct thee, that thou shalt see in the end that this is the right thing that thou oughtest to have done.

"*Be not wise in thine own eyes,*" which we are naturally prone to be, and, therefore, it becomes us continually to betake ourselves to prayer, and to ask God that He would not allow us to be wise in our own eyes, but to own continually our ignorance and nothingness, and our entire dependence on Him.

"*Fear the Lord, and depart from evil*"—that is what we have to do, and one of the special evils is to have a good opinion about ourselves, to be wise in our own eyes, and not to be willing to own our entire ignorance and dependence on God. And if we really and truly act according to the advice and counsel given us here, we shall find it even beneficial to our health; we are told it will be "marrow to our bones."

"*Honour the Lord with thy substance.*"—This, in its highest and fullest degree, especially had to do with the Jewish dispensation, yet it has its application, and its profitable application, for our days. Notice the expression; naturally we are inclined to use our temporal things for ourselves, for our own comfort, for our own enjoyment, for our own pleasure. But this natural tendency is not to be gratified; we have not to seek to please ourselves with regard to making use of the things of this life, but therewith to *honour Jehovah*. For that is the very purpose for which we are entrusted with them—our health, our powers of mind, our earthly possessions; all these things are put into our hands to be used for the Lord, therewith to glorify God, as it is expressed here, "to honour the Lord."

"*And with the first fruits of all thine increase.*"—When the Lord allows further blessing of a temporal character to us, to use this to the praise, and honour, and glory of His Name. And the result will be, God will see to it that He is not our debtor, but that we shall be His debtors, and therefore it is added,

"*So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*"—

In my long Christian experience, now for more than seventy years, I have become acquainted with a great number of children of God who acted according to the spirit of these words, and the Lord continually saw to it that He would not be their debtor, but that they should be His debtors, and I have seen how abundantly He has repaid very many business men I have known who acted according to the spirit of these words.

"*My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction.*"—This, too, is an important word. We may be in affliction, and for a long time in affliction; we may not fall so deeply as to *despise* the chastening of the Lord, though, if left to ourselves and if we are not watchful, it might come even to that; but suppose it does not come to this, yet there is great danger of our being *weary* of His correction.

I remember in my own case, in 1836, because I had been going on carelessly with regard to my own health—working, and working, and working all day long, and never giving myself any rest—I broke down completely. Now, when I was thus completely broken down, oh! the trial that it was to me I cannot describe, because having been active year after year to labour so abundantly, now to be entirely unfit to do anything, the trial was immense. By the grace of God I did not *despise* this—according to this exhortation, "Despise not the chastening of the Lord"—but after it had been going on month after month, and when it came to four, five, six months at last, the exceeding great danger was to be *weary* of it, and I had to cry mightily to God that I might not be *weary* of it. I mention this particularly, because sometimes it is absolutely needful for our spiritual benefit that there should be a long, long time of chastisement and of correction, and under such circumstances the exceeding great danger is at last to fret, to complain, to be dissatisfied because we are *weary* of this long trial. May any of the beloved brethren or sisters who are in such a position be warned by this word. We are reminded here to "neither be *weary* of His correction," for God means to bring about real, true, lasting blessing by means of it. I have learned a great deal from this long trial, and it has been also God's instrument to warn scores

of young disciples of the Lord to take care of their health, and that they do not thus injure it in supposing they are doing God's work.

"*Whom the Lord LOVETH He correcteth.*"—Notice this particularly. It is not "whom the Lord hateth," or "whom the Lord does not care anything about," but "whom the Lord loveth." Never, never, never should we lose sight of this word "LOVETH."

"*Happy is the man that findeth wisdom*"—that is, in other words, "Happy is the man who findeth Christ," who is Wisdom personified. This is real happiness, true happiness, eternal happiness to find Christ.

"*And the man that getteth understanding*"—that means that getteth *spiritual* understanding, not who becomes master of a number of sciences or a number of languages—not this, not this; it means that getteth spiritual understanding, understanding of *heavenly* things.

Nothing, nothing, nothing to be compared with the blessedness of knowing the Lord Jesus, of having found Him. And oh, let us seek increasingly, beloved in Christ, to enter into this: all earthly things are as nothing in comparison to knowing Jesus and having Him on our side, having Him for us as our Helper, as our Friend, as our Guide, as our Saviour, as our *all*.

"*All the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.*"—If in our inmost soul we cannot say this yet, let us cry mightily to God that habitually we may be brought to such a state of heart that in our inmost soul we set our "Amen" to this.

Now the last two verses: "*Length of days is in her right hand.*"—Spiritual life, eternal life is the portion of all those who have found Jesus, and true riches and true honour besides.

"*Her ways are ways of pleasantness.*"—Do our hearts agree with this? Is this our own language? This necessarily is the case if we make much of the blood of Christ. If we habitually come to the blood of Christ confessing our sinfulness, that we deserve nothing but punishment if we had what we deserve; but relying on the blood of Christ more and more we shall find this our experience: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness." But if there is not much made of the blood of Christ, if we do not continually own our deserving nothing but punishment, and do not trust simply, solely,

entirely in the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, this will not be our experience.

"*And all her paths are peace.*"—Not simply now and then is it thus, but habitually so, going on in the ways of the Lord—peace, peace, peace, and nothing but peace.

In connection with making much of the blood of Christ one other thing is necessary—uprightness, honesty of heart in the things of God. If we do not in any way allow things which we know are contrary to the mind of God, if we are honestly carrying on warfare against the powers of darkness and not allowing ourselves in any way—in the most secret way—to do things or to allow things which we know are contrary to the mind of God—as assuredly as these two things are found in us, making much of the blood of Christ and maintaining uprightness, honesty, sincerity of heart, so assuredly "HER WAYS ARE WAYS OF PLEASANTNESS, AND ALL HER PATHS ARE PEACE."

"HE WAS A GOOD MAN."

By WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole.

IN connection with the joy of Barnabas over the Lord's doings at Antioch, it is instructive to note the Spirit's testimony—"For he was a good man," &c. (Acts xi. 24). We know that Barnabas was one of the Lord's preachers, that he laboured with Paul, and was one of the "mighty men" in the early days of the Church's history. Yet, in speaking of the joy of Barnabas in the Antioch revival, and his exhortation of the saints, the Spirit does not say, "For he was an able preacher." His ability as a speaker, whatever it may have been, is left out entirely. Our God goes right to the root of the matter. He deals not with "accomplishments," but with *character*. He lets us know *what kind of man* Barnabas was. We are expressly told that he was a *good man*. Wonderful testimony, and well worthy of being pondered by all who seek to win souls for Christ.

But what is meant by "a good man?" It means much more than merely a *righteous* man—one who is straight in his dealings—who duly pays twenty shillings in the pound, and who can boast that he is free from the grosser vices which afflict humanity. The "righteous"

man is largely a negative character. He can point to a good many objectionable things which he is not guilty of. But he goes very little further. He is a stranger to the beauties and adornments of the Christian character. He has put off much: he has put on little. He is like a house that is swept and cleaned, but left unfurnished. It cannot be said that he does much harm; and it would be as difficult to assert that he does much good. He is not one who could say, like Job, "When the eye saw me it blessed me." For such a man—a merely righteous man—scarcely will one die. Such is the testimony of Scripture (Rom. v. 7). Yet Scripture also declares that for a *good* man some would even dare to die. Barnabas, then, was just such a man as some would be prepared to die for. He was an attractive personality. His Christianity no doubt consisted in *putting off*, but it consisted as largely in *putting on*. He had put on Christ. He had drunk of the Spirit of Christ; he had become assimilated to the mind of Christ; he was adorned with the beauties of Christ. Like Paul, he was one who could say, "Not I, but Christ." He was not a hard man who repelled you by his austerity. He did not need to assume an earnestness that was not his own, nor to affect a zeal to which he was a stranger, nor to profess a joy which he did not feel. His was the earnestness of an honest heart, the zeal of an unselfish love, and joy springing from that goodness to which God Himself has borne testimony.

Let the Spirit's declaration as to Barnabas sink down into the hearts of all who seek to serve the Lord Christ—"he was a good man." We are living in a day of superficiality, a day in which the platform is a coveted spot by many. No doubt public ministry is a wonderful means in God's hand for moulding the destinies of His people. But one thing is being forgotten in connection with this great work, and that is the absolute necessity for *character* in those who would stand in the place of public testimony for God. Preaching, by itself, is only so much sound—so many words. It is *character* that gives weight to the preacher's message. A preacher weak in character may have a great command of words, and many in this superficial age will be ready to applaud him to the echo. But such

preaching is only an artistic performance. It may tickle the ear of sense—it may dazzle the eye of intellect; but it fails to reach the heart, and we know that out of the heart are the issues of life. We must beware of the delusion that *command of language* makes a man a minister of Christ. A brother of great experience said not long ago that facility of expression may be one of the greatest snares to which a Christian—especially a young Christian—could be exposed. There are preachers of whom we make bold to say that if it had not been for their ability to speak fluently for forty minutes, they would never have been heard of in the Church. This simply means an idolizing of what is called "gift," apart from what the man really is. To get at what a preacher is, you must *abstract* his preaching, if we may so speak. Take away the external covering of his ability to speak, and see what is left. If there are left the elements of a godly and humble brother, whose ways and actions have a savour of Christ, and who can be pointed to as an example to follow, then his word shall have all the weight that such a character gives to it. He is a God-sent gift to the Church, and would be such although he never opened his mouth on a public platform. But if, on the other hand, you search the preacher in vain for these "beauties of character" after you take away his preaching, we fail to see how such ministry can be recognised as a gift of the ascended Lord. The preacher must be assimilated to his message. Character and testimony must be fused into one. Then, and only then, is there a voice heard from the excellent Glory.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TIME.

No time away the Christian idly throws;
It is a sacred trust, and well he knows
The service of his gracious Lord demands
A willing, grateful heart, and active hands.
Do worldlings ask, What motives can thus move?
We answer, it is LOVE—constraining love
Of Him who for our souls a ransom gave,
Bled, groaned, and died, and triumphed o'er
the grave.

COME to the *blood* of Jesus to have sin pardoned,
and then come to the *arm* of Jesus to have
it subdued.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

I.—A SOLDIER.

By DR. J. N. CASE, China.

THE conception of the Church as an army is a very ancient and very common one, and it is withal very true both to Scripture and experience. Every true Christian is also a soldier of Christ Jesus. "Take thy part in suffering with me," writes Paul to his son Timothy, "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. ii. 3). When these words were written the Apostle, as a prisoner at Rome, was night and day guarded by soldiers. Little wonder, therefore, that he saw in their occupation an illustration of the Christian's calling.

At that time, to make a soldier two chief things were necessary: (1) a captain seeking men to lead to fight; (2) a man willing and able to follow him. Thus the man became a soldier by his definite choice of a leader, and by the leader's definite choice of him. Christ is our great Captain; He is Jehovah of hosts. He is daily enrolling recruits to fight under Him against the world, the flesh, and the devil, so that all who come to Christ for salvation come also to Him for service on the field of battle.

Ofentimes a big bounty was offered to men to induce them to enlist. This may remind us of the overflowing measure of joy and exultation which were ours when, for the first time, we had a meeting with the Son of God. But that is not all: from the hour of enlistment the recruit is provided for. The provision for his future needs devolves on his captain: for him there is henceforth one business—to obey him who has called him to be a soldier. So is it with the soldier of the Cross. The full forgiveness of all past sins is only the first step: Christ further makes ample provision for the continuous supply of all the needs of His followers.

That, if we may so say, is His business; ours is simply at all times and in all things to please Him. Unhesitating obedience, absorption in duty, is the *sine qua non* of a soldier, whether it be in an earthly or in the heavenly army. It would be quite out of character, say, for a soldier to open a shop and give his attention to getting on in the world. The regulations would not for a moment allow it. It would

distract him from the one great business of doing the will of his leader. "No soldier on service," writes the Apostle, "entangleth himself in the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." It will be well for us to understand this verse. It cannot mean that Christians should withdraw from the business and duties of life to attend solely to so-called spiritual things, for this would go against both the teaching and example of the Apostle. When occasion required, and that would appear to have been not unfrequently, he himself wrought as a tent-maker. The point of the verse is in the word "*entangleth*" not himself in the affairs of this life." But even thus it is a very searching statement for many of Christ's people in the present day, for it is to be feared that thousands of Christians, from the beginning to the end of the year, are just absorbed in money-making—in getting on in the world. Verily such are entangled in the affairs of this life, and will, sooner or later, suffer for it. It is a simple truism to remark that every Christian ought to avoid any business, calling, or relationship which would tend to hinder him in pleasing the One who has enrolled him as a soldier.

The true soldier is one who is prepared at any time to go forth to face the foe. Fighting is his business. To handle the sword is as much his everyday work as to handle the hammer and saw is the work of the carpenter. Therefore for war he should be always ready, and always preparing himself: in like manner with the Christian. Throughout his life he must reckon himself *a soldier on active service*. It is a war in which no quarter must be given, no armistice expected, and from which there is no discharge.

And let us never underrate our foes: they are many and strong. We often speak of the threefold enemy leagued against us. Perhaps the greatest and most-to-be-feared of these is the Flesh. Satan or his messengers may at times leave us, and the world, too, for a season may be shut out, but the flesh is always with us. But concerning this, though cast down we are not in despair. We remember the Word, which says: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." All is of God. It is by faith that it may be of grace. The world also we overcome through faith in God

and in His word: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4). Again, we are called upon to "fight the good fight of faith." It was faith in God and His promise which enabled Moses to cast from him the transitory pleasures of sin, and associate himself with a despised and downtrodden people; and as we appropriate our present position in Christ and believe in the future glory promised us, we, too, shall overcome that ancient foe of God and His people—the world.

Then we refer to Satan and all his angels. For that warfare a special panoply is provided for each soldier of Christ. (Read Ephesians vi. 10-18.) The armour is both defensive and offensive. Space forbids our dwelling on it in detail. But notice that we are exhorted to put on the *whole* armour of God: no piece is superfluous. The vital parts are specially protected. The breastplate defends the heart: the helmet the head; and, skilfully used, the shield of faith protects all other parts of the body. It will preserve us even from the fiery darts hurled at us by the enemy. May not these fiery darts represent evil thoughts—mistrust of the Lord, doubt of His word and promise, &c., which Satan shoots into the mind; but in a moment faith quenches the fire and renders them harmless. Prayer must be our resource: "With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication," &c.

But our warfare is not all defensive. We take the field and attack the enemy. The only weapon of our warfare is the Spirit-produced sword, the Word of God, the Scriptures of Truth. By its use the faithful in all ages have attacked and routed the enemy. To handle it skilfully we cannot do better than follow our great Captain into the wilderness and watch the conflict between Him and Satan. Every soldier of Christ may well ponder that scene. He overcame him by the Word of God, and by that means alone can His followers hope to conquer.

• The fighting depicted in Ephesians vi. is for those who *in experience*, as well as in God's purpose, have crossed the Jordan and are already in the land. They are risen and seated with Christ in heavenly places: their conflict

is "against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places." Why do so few of us know the meaning of wrestling with Satan and the powers of darkness? Surely it is because of the low average of spiritual life among professing Christians: few get beyond the wilderness and its conflict. Saints generally are so easily overcome by the flesh or the world that Satan himself seldom finds it necessary to enter the lists against them. But at times he does so. Then we must resist him in the name of the Lord, fight him with the sword of the Spirit, and indubitably he will flee from us.

The normal Christian life is one of conflict, but not of defeat. Through Christ we may be more than conquerors over all our foes. To each one of His own our Leader again and again whispers: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And what Christ in humiliation did in His own person, now that He is glorified He is both able and willing to do in us, so that it is no longer we who fight, but Christ who fighteth in and through us. His final victory is assured, and it is near. Well may we take courage in view of that Word which comes with power to the hearts of God's fainting yet fighting warriors: "AND THE GOD OF PEACE SHALL BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET SHORTLY" (Rom. xvi. 20).

"Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumults of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore;
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious,
Shall be the church at rest."

MUST COME DOWN.

LET this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. ii. 5). This goes deeper than mere imitation. It involves a drinking in of the Master's spirit—an assimilation to the character of Christ. Mary sat at His feet, heard His word, learned of Him. She rested in the great sunshine of His presence. Hers was no painful effort, no cumbered service. She gazed upon Him who was fairer than the children of men. O, what an inspiration was there!

Perhaps you are in doubt as to how you should act in certain circumstances. You are

not sure what attitude you should take up, seeing you cannot find a "Thus saith the Lord" bearing directly on the point. What is to be done? "Let this mind be in you." Stand still, and take time to hear the Master's voice. Or, to change the figure: Retire from the multitude, that you may in spirit sit at His feet, and behold the glory of His Person and see light in His light clearly.

To let "this mind" be in you involves a *coming down*. They seek in vain for the Master's mind who labour to find it at some giddy height, after painful toiling upward. Christ came down. "Now that He *ascended*, what is it but that He also *descended*?" Who is there that ever humbled himself like Jesus? No one ever descended to such a depth; and now He is ascended to the highest Heaven! The measure of His *ascent* is the measure of His *descent*. Thus shall it be with us. If ours is to be that "promotion" which comes from God, we must be prepared to come down—down to that spot in the valley of humiliation where the Master's mind shall be found, and prized, and treasured. This descent may cost us something; yet we may be assured it will cost us nothing but what we can well do without. It will bear hard on the flesh, and be withering to the pride of man; but the fruit shall be holiness. In some measure the mind of Christ—the lowly mind—shall be found in us. We shall be able, in a certain sense, to say with those of old: "And we beheld His glory." W. S.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXVIII.

THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

LUKE XV. 8-10.

Verses 8-10. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle [lamp], and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?"

"And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, 'Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.' Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

THIS parable illustrates the operation of the SPIRIT of God in and through the CHURCH. The application of the parable may be threefold.

First, the lost piece of silver may represent

one who, though belonging to the Church in the sovereign counsels of God, may as yet be UNCONVERTED.

The LIGHTING OF THE LAMP represents the use of those means whereby the testimony of the Gospel by the EVANGELIST is caused to be proclaimed openly, in order to the salvation of sinners; and the Church is responsible for this.

THE SWEEPING OF THE HOUSE signifies the removal, putting away, and purging out all those inconsistencies and scandals of profession in the Church which are obstacles to the conversion of souls.

And the DILIGENT SEEKING, that patient, persevering, and personal effort which ceases not till the object is accomplished.

An unconverted soul is in darkness, but when the light of the glorious Gospel shines upon it, that light is the light of life, and that soul is turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). The preaching of the Gospel of Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost is the means by which the counsels of God in eternity are accomplished in time, and those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are in due time made manifest and become the children of God.

Secondly, the lost piece of silver may be regarded as representing one who, though belonging to the Church, and having once been received into its fellowship, has GONE ASTRAY, and practically is lost to it. The recovery of such is especially the work of the PASTOR who through the manifestation of the gift of the Spirit, and by the presentation of the truth, and the removal of difficulties and obstacles, by diligent perseverance brings back the wanderer from the error of his ways, to become a treasure and a joy to the Church of God.

Thirdly, the operation of the Spirit of God, by the instrumentality of the TEACHER, may accomplish another and higher result, whereby the value and efficiency of the individual believer to the Church may be greatly enhanced; namely, by such a presentation of the truth of God as may enable the believer, divested of all hindrances, fully to apprehend his standing in Christ, security, and future prospects. So that walking in the sunshine of the Divine favour, abiding in Christ, and living and walking in the Spirit, he may bring

forth fruit to God, and glorify Him in his spirit, soul, and body, which are God's.

When these results are accomplished, either in the salvation of the sinner, the restoration of the backslider, or in the fulness of blessing as realised by the believer, provision is made for the purest, richest, and deepest joy in the assemblies of God's saints on earth; and in the heaven above there is not only joy to the eternal Three, and to the angels which surround His throne, but also joy in their "presence" to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to those loved ones who have gone before, to whom by angelic ministry the glad tidings may be communicated.

Correspondence.

A BRIEF VISIT TO BIBLE LANDS—II.
TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

Jerusalem, April, 1898.

FEW visitors to Cairo leave the city without seeing the Pyramids. The three Pyramids at Gizeh, nine miles from Cairo, are visited by multitudes of travellers. The Great Pyramid ("Cheops") is one of the oldest buildings in the world, and is certainly the most stupendous. It is 760 feet square at the base, covers an area of nearly 13 acres, and is 451 feet high. Although there has been much speculation and conjecture as to the purpose for which the Pyramids were erected, it is generally believed that they were the tombs of the early Egyptian kings. I climbed to the top of the Great Pyramid, and afterwards penetrated its interior as far as the King's chamber. About 20 miles south of Gizeh are the Pyramids of Sakkarah, near to which is the site of Memphis, the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, and seat of government of the Pharaohs and of Joseph.

The ruins of the Temple of Apis are seen, and close to them are the tombs of the sacred bulls. Within five minutes' walk of the Great Pyramid is the famous Sphinx, which is cut out of solid rock. The body is about 140 feet long, the head 30 feet from brow to chin, and 14 feet across. At the Gizeh museum we saw a splendid collection of curiosities, including sarcophagi and mummies of Egyptian kings and queens, and among them the mummy of Rameses II., the Pharaoh of the oppression. This powerful and famous monarch ascended the throne at the age of 30, and reigned 67 years. The Pharaoh of the exodus was his son Manepthah. Egypt was once one of the foremost nations of the world.

It became what God declared it would be, "the basest of kingdoms" (Ezek. xxix. 15). God will, however, take up Egypt, and the Scripture will be fulfilled, "Blessed be Egypt, my people" (Isa. xix. 25).

We had our first glimpse of Immanuel's Land" (Isa. viii. 8) on "Easter Monday." At about six o'clock in the morning the *Croale Prince* anchored in the roadstead of Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem, and principal seaport of Palestine. As Jaffa cannot boast of a harbour or pier, we were taken ashore in large row-boats ably manned by stout, swarthy, barelegged Arabs. My mind was filled with conflicting emotions as for the first time I set my feet on the shores of the "Holy Land" (Zech. ii. 12). The moment we landed we could see that the country was in the power of the "unspeakable Turk." There is a proverb in the East that wherever the Turk settles the grass forgets to grow. Jaffa is a flourishing city of from 25,000 to 30,000 inhabitants, and is picturesquely situated on a hill overlooking the Mediterranean. Fully half of the people are Moslems, the remainder being mostly composed of members of the Greek and Latin (Roman Catholic) communions.

The streets of Jaffa (Joppa), like those of most Syrian towns, are narrow and dirty. We greatly enjoyed a drive around the beautiful gardens and groves for which Jaffa is famous, in which are peach, apricot, citron, plum, almond, orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees. There are 400 orange groves in and around the city, varying from three to twelve acres in extent, fenced with the giant cactus or prickly pear. The fragrance of the orange blossom is perceptible two or three miles off. In the season—from December to April—visitors to the orange groves, by paying two or three piastres each (a piastre equals 2½d), are allowed to eat as many oranges as they choose! If Jaffa were within 20 or 30 miles of a Scotch or English city, what a popular resort it would be for Sunday-school picnics! In the season of 1893 there were exported from the port of Jaffa 278,000 boxes of oranges.

We visited the reputed house of Simon the tanner by the sea-side. If not the exact place, it must be within a short distance from the spot where Peter had his remarkable vision. "God hath showed me," said he to the servants of Cornelius, "that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts x. 28).

It was to Jaffa that Hiram, king of Tyre, sent his floats with Lebanon cedars for the building of Solomon's temple (2 Chron. ii. 16). When Jonah was told to go to Nineveh and "cry against" its guilty inhabitants, he was unwilling to obey the command of the Lord. Instead of doing what he was told, he went to Joppa, booked for Tarsish, and "paid the fare thereof." This was

indeed to him an eventful and expensive voyage. Tabitha, the mother of "Dorcas Societies," lived, died, and was miraculously restored to life in Joppa (Acts ix. 36-43). A Greek church now stands on the traditional site of her house, and close by is shown her tomb. We called on Miss Arnot, an Edinburgh lady, who with her helpers has done and is doing a good work among young girls. She has been labouring in Palestine for 37 years, and has several schools, where sound Bible instruction is given. A short time previous to our visit all the Jewish girls were withdrawn from her care. This has caused her much sorrow, as she has long taken a deep interest in the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Jews. Within the last year or two Jewish leaders have become more and more opposed to the Gospel. We were told that the hospital in Jerusalem, built by a London society for the spread of the Gospel among Jews, is empty, and that the Rabbi has refused Jewish burial to all who enter it.

"ALL ABOARD."

At 2 p.m. we took railway tickets for Jerusalem. The distance from Jaffa to the metropolis by road is 37 miles, and by rail 54. The railway journey usually occupies about 3½ hours. At present there is but one train daily each way. Doubtless, as the traffic increases, other trains will be added.

Two or three minutes after the advertised time the cry, "All aboard" was heard, and a few moments later we were *en route* to the "City of the Great King" (Ps. xlviii. 2). The line crosses the Plain of Sharon, which extends from Mount Carmel on the north to Jaffa on the south; from the Mediterranean on the west to the mountains of Judea on the east. The Plain of Sharon is exceedingly fertile. This was evidenced by the number of oliveyards, vineyards, groves, and gardens on both sides of the railway track. The ground was carpeted with beautiful wild flowers, such as marigolds, cyclamens, anemones, poppies, geraniums, and lupins. Strings of camels, herds of cattle, flocks of sheep and goats, and numbers of horses, ponies, and donkeys were passed. Ploughing operations were being vigorously prosecuted with camels, oxen, horses, and donkeys.

On several occasions we witnessed the breach of an Old Testament command, "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together" (Deut. xxii. 10). We watched with much interest a shepherd in front of his sheep—*leading*, not *driving*, them—and remembered the words of the Good Shepherd, "When He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice" (John x. 3, 4). On another occasion we saw a shepherd in the midst of his sheep playing a

Syrian reed flute. On the journey we were shown several Bible sites. Amongst such were Ludd, the ancient Lydda, where Æneas was cured of palsy by the Apostle Peter (Acts ix. 33, 34); Zorah, Samson's birthplace (Jud. xiii. 2), with a mosque close by; the valley of Sorek, the home of Delilah (Jud. xvi. 4); the rock Etam, on the brow of a precipice, where Samson allowed the men of Judah to bind him (Jud. xv. 11-15); Bethshemesh, where 50,000 were slain through looking into the Ark (1 Sam. vi. 9-12); Philip's Fountain, where Philip is said to have baptized the Eunuch (Acts viii. 26). On passing Deir Adan station the railway line follows the windings of a deep ravine. The scenery is bold and striking, reminding one of the Scottish Highlands. Though the hills are bleak and bare, the terraced slopes are visible, showing that the vine once flourished on these lonely heights. As we reached the terminus we were reminded of the Psalmist's words, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people, from henceforth, even for ever" (Ps. cxxv. 2).

A little before six o'clock the train, which had been creeping along and around the Judean mountains, slowed up, and a few seconds later we stopped at—JERUSALEM!

ALEXANDER MARSHALL.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

LABOURS OF WOMEN.—In what sense were the women in Romans xvi. "My helpers" (verse 3), "much labour on you" (verse 6, R.V.), "who labour in the Lord" (verse 12), or if we have any Scripture authorising women to go forth as labourers in the Gospel, and the Church's responsibility to them?

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

QUESTION 566.—Is it possible for any one to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost in this age?

Answer.—It seems needful first to be clear as to what was the sin referred to. The following is offered in explanation:

The Lord habitually rested His claims not on any human authority or origin, but on the testimony of Scripture that what He did was by the

Spirit of God (Luke iv. 18; John v. 36-39, &c.) His reasoning in Matthew xii. 25-29 was to show that not by Satan's power, as they affirmed, but by the Spirit of God, He was casting out devils in fulfilment of the prophecy quoted in verse 18, "I will put My Spirit upon Him."

Men might dispute His personal claims, saying, "Is not this Joseph's son?" "They were offended in Him." It was to their loss, yet not irremediably. But these, while demanding signs of their own prescribing, were rejecting the signs God had given in His word whereby to know the Christ when He should come, and deliberately attributed to Satan what Scripture testified to be of the holy Spirit of God. Beyond this testimony there was no further appeal to their consciences. In rejecting it they put themselves outside the pale of conviction and repentance, and therefore of forgiveness.

What was true of those who in the time of the Lord on earth thus blasphemed the Spirit by which He wrought, may have its counterpart now. But God in His grace has not so defined it as to cut off from hope even the most hardened sinner who will come to Him for mercy through His Son, much less make sad the heart of a trembling believer.

W. C.

ABIB, FIRST OR SEVENTH MONTH?

QUESTION 567.—It has been asserted that the month Abib, which from the institution of the Passover (Exodus xii.) was reckoned the first month of the year, is the same that previously had been the seventh month, and that, consequently, it was on the 17th day of that same month that the Ark rested on Mount Ararat, synchronising with the day that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. Can any proof of this assertion be given from Scripture, or any conclusive historical evidence?

Answer A.—It may be pointed out from Exod. xxiii. 16 and xxiv. 22 that the feast of ingathering is respectively stated to be at the "end of the year" and at the "revolution of the year" (M.R.), whilst the feast of tabernacles is always stated to be on the 7th month, though both feasts are at one and the same time. May we not conclude that, in relation to the harvest guided by the sun, the 7th month is called the revolution of the year, hence Abib must be the seventh. But in relation to the feasts Abib is the 1st month. The 7th month was also the beginning of the year in relation to the Sabbatical and jubilee year (Lev. xxv.). The month of Ethanim (strength), possibly so called because of the harvest, and also the re-supply of water, is remarkably paraphrased in the Targum Jonathan: "The ancient month that was called the 1st month, but since the feasts the 7th month (1 Kings viii. 2). Again, the feast of trumpets is to the present day called

by the Jews Rosh Hashonah, the beginning of the year from which their new date, reckoning from the creation, commences. Rabbi Eliezer proves that the world was created on Tisri, the 7th month, from Gen. i. 11, 12, these verses describing the harvest season. All these favour the view that Abib, in relation to some things, and especially to temporal things, was the 7th month. Yet who can say with certainty, and what need is there for it?—that the ark rested on the 17th of Abib upon the mountains of Ararat. May it not be sounder to say that the whole time of the flood's existence was to Noah a resurrection time (1 Peter iii. 20, 21). On the other hand, if the time given in Genesis viii. 4 be the harvest season, the miracle becomes a greater one, the floods drying up at a season of much water and less sun.

H. B.

Answer B.—The language of Exodus xii. 2 clearly indicates that the month Abib (Exodus xiii. 4), corresponding to our March—which was henceforth to be "the beginning of months"—had hitherto occupied another position in the year, and Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us what that was. We may learn from his antiquities that the Jewish year had previously begun with the month Tisri or Ethanim, corresponding to September, and that Abib had been till then the 7th month. He also says that the month Tisri continued to be the 1st month as far as civil contracts were concerned, but that Abib became from the Exodus the 1st month of the sacred year. This arrangement holds good to the present day, and the Jews still recognise these two months as the beginning of the civil and ecclesiastical years respectively. Authorities are divided as to whether the months in Genesis vii. 11-13 date from Abib or Tisri. The latter is perhaps most likely, both because the Adamic creation was supposed to date from this month, and it would thus be considered the natural beginning of the year, and also because, as we have seen, it was not till Israel came out of Egypt that the new order of the months was adopted. If, then, we take the year in Gen. vii. as beginning with Tisri, the flood began on the 17th of Bul or Marchesvan, and the ark rested on Ararat on the 17th of Abib.

If our Lord, as is most probable, ate the passover on the usual day, then the date of His resurrection would in fact correspond with that on which the ark came to its rest. Perhaps, however, as authorities differ as to the month referred to in Genesis vii. 13, it is safer in the absence apparently of any certain scriptural proof to be cautious in drawing lessons from any intended connection between the two events.

[In our next we hope to give a table showing the Jewish civil and ecclesiastical years, and the corresponding months in our reckoning.]

THE COMMAND AND THE PROMISE TO PRAYER.

By Mr. JAMES WRIGHT, Ashley Down, Bristol.

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."—Jer. xxxiii. 3.

THIS verse contains one of the clearest commands and one of the most blessed Scriptures of promise to prayer. Its parallel in the New Testament is in Matthew vii. 7: "Ask, and it shall be given you." That command and promise were some of "the gracious words (Luke iv. 22) that proceeded out of" the lips of the Personal Word, the Christ of God. He said, "Ask"—the command; and "it shall be given you"—the promise. And remember, beloved fellow-believers, that it is the promise of the promise-keeping God, the promise of the One who has never failed in one single promise He has made.

This command and promise were uttered and written by a man of like passions with ourselves, but it was not *his* command and promise. "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). Jeremiah was the instrument; in that sense the words were his, but they did not proceed from him. He did not speak them on his own authority; it is a command, a promise of the Holy Spirit. Now, that Spirit which spoke by Jeremiah is called in Peter "The Spirit of Christ" (1 Peter i. 11). Then it is no wonder, is it, that there should be such harmony between the two passages; the one is the command and promise of Christ Himself, the other the command and promise of the Spirit of Christ. He Himself spake by the Spirit. Yes, the Second Person in the blessed Trinity, the eternal, uncreated Son of God, made flesh, spake not by His own authority. He was actuated by the Holy Spirit; He went about and spake in the power of the Holy Spirit. And not only before the Cross was this the case, but after the Cross, and after His resurrection, when He says (Matt. xxviii. 18), "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth," still we read, "After that He *through the Holy Ghost* had given commandments unto the Apostles" (Acts i. 2). The dependent Servant of Jehovah, that blessed One, continued to be all through His earthly ministry in the economy of redemption, the dependent Servant of Je-

hovah, and, to His praise and glory be it spoken, He so remains now. He is doing the Father's will at the right hand of God, the Mediator between God and men.

Your hope, beloved friends and fellow-sinners who are yet in your sins, your one hope by the ordinance of God, so that

CHRIST IS NOW THE MEDIATOR

between God and men. Mark, it does not say, "Between men and God." This mediatorship was not man's seeking or desire, but God deigning in grace to meet His poor, fallen creatures.

But not only does He, the blessed Christ of God, sustain this relationship to man as man, but to all who have by the grace of God obtained the forgiveness of sins—to all who have come to God by Him, using Him as the Mediator—to them He sustains the added and most precious relationship of Intercessor, His priestly work. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. vii. 25).

Thus all who have made use of Him as Mediator, and come to Him in their sins, and trusted in Him for forgiveness, for all such from that moment

HE IS INTERCESSOR AND ADVOCATE,

ever before the Father on their behalf.

Of this we have a beautiful picture in the dress of the High Priest of old. He wore a breastplate with twelve stones, on each of which was the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel, so that the whole nation was presented before the blessed God. It was an imperfect picture, for on the breast of *our* High Priest is not merely the tribal name representing several thousands, but the name of every believer. He has infinite capacity and room for you and me, fellow-believer; little ones though we be, we are not left out! The small ones are put first. The promises in Scripture are always to "*small* and great"; you will find that precious echo all through. He puts the small first because His affection and tender pity go out to them. And the small place is the low place, and that is the meeting place with God. The reason we do not enjoy God more is that we are too great; the reason we have so little communion with Him is that we are not small enough; the reason we are not more filled with His fulness is that we are not

empty enough. "I was brought *low*, and He helped me" (Ps. cxvi. 6).

I want to look for a few moments at the precious promise here itself, and then at some of the circumstances under which the promise was given.

1. "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee." Now, on the very surface of this there meets us this glorious truth, that

PRAYER IS A REALITY.

Some are in the habit of regarding prayer as an exercise, useful in forming spiritual habits—as a kind of gymnastics—good because it disciplines and trains the spirit. That is very, very far short of the true purpose of prayer. I do not deny that it has great influence in this way, but the great and primary object of prayer is to obtain blessing from God. "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee." "Ask and it shall be given you." And when we come to God in prayer we should be like that poor, impotent man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (Acts iii.) who sat to ask alms, when Peter said, "Look on us." "He gave heed unto them, *expecting to receive something of them.*" That is what I hope you and I do. Prayer is a mere sham unless *we expect to receive something.* When God tells us to look to Him we should ever expect to receive something from Him. True prayer is a *reality.*

If prayer means expectation I must know what I expect, so prayer should be definite, and whether the subject of our prayer be spiritual or temporal, we should be *expecting something* when we ask.

Whether about matters connected with the present or with the coming life, matters connected with our outward relations in the flesh, with our family or with fellow-believers, or relating to my own soul, between God and myself, about matters bearing the stamp of the temporal or the stamp of the eternal,

WE SHOULD BE EXPECTING SOMETHING

when we ask. And, beloved fellow-believers, it is our previous privilege to bring *everything* to God in prayer. The word is very explicit in Phil. iv. : "In *everything* . . . let your requests be made known unto God." When the Spirit of God uses that word He does not mean a good many things, but everything.

And there is nothing that presses on the heart and exercises the mind that you may not bring to God in prayer, and it pleases Him when you do so, for He is your Father. Oh, He has such a Fatherly heart; the tenderest and most loving earthly father is but a faint shadow of the heart of our God, and He pities, oh, so tenderly, those who love Him. He hears their sighs, and forms them into words, and is very gracious unto them at the voice of their cry (Isaiah xxx. 19). Oh, what a gracious, blessed, loving, tender Father we have!

Well, now, just in proportion to the love he bears his children, an earthly father likes them to come to him, to confide in him about everything: about their lessons, their troubles, their accidents, their joys and pleasures—everything. And that is what our Heavenly Father likes His children to do; but we are to ask *definitely*, we are to know what we want, and we are to tell God what we want. All other kinds of prayer are mechanical.

Then, because prayer is to be definite,

OUR WORDS OUGHT TO BE SIMPLE.

We are sometimes tempted to couch our petitions in such fine phrases that their real meaning is half hidden and lost in the flow of our many words. That is not God-glorifying. Look at the Scripture prayers—they are not like that. Look at Nehemiah's prayer: "The king said unto me, For what dost thou make request?" and he lifted up his heart to God between the question and the reply. How simple and short, like a telegraphic message into the ear of God, and down came the answer, and he was able to give a most wise reply to the question. Prayer is the simplest expression of the real wants of the heart.

Then another thing is to be noticed in this beautiful verse—it implies that God gives much more than we think when we ask. "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee." A little? It does not say that. Grudgingly? It does not say that—no. "And show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not"—hidden mysteries. This implies that God is sure to exceed in His giving our asking. That is a great principle to hold fast. God has His own way of interpreting the petitions of His children. Our hearts are so narrow that when we think we make large petitions it is so little

to God He loves to give more than we ask. Do let us lay to heart that word of the Apostle, He is "able." There is first the *ability* of God "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. iii. 20). Of course He is—He is Creator. What is there God cannot do? That is the force of the Psalmist's words when he says, "Who prepareth rain for the earth" (Ps. cxlvii. 8), and Job says, "I know that Thou canst do everything" (Job xlii. 2). He who has condescended to call us His children, and put His Spirit into our hearts that we may call Him "Father," when we ask Him for something very great, we should remember He is able to do more, "because He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Another thing we should remember in connection with this doctrine of prayer. This promise we are considering is one of the great and precious promises of which the Apostle speaks in 2 Cor. i., "For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the yea" (verse 20, R.V.)—the verily, the guarantee—that is the meaning of it; for every promise of God to His people

CHRIST IS THE PLEDGE OF FULFILMENT.

This Book is a "milky way" of promises. You look up into the sky, and the milky way only seems like small dust, yet we are told that each one is a separate star. You cannot pick out one of these, or fathom the extent and scope of the whole, but God knows every one—"He calleth them all by their names" (Psa. cxlvii. 4). And so He knows every promise in this Book, and Christ is the guarantee, the pledge of it. So if you by faith select any one of these promises, Christ is the guarantee that it shall be fulfilled. We do not deserve that any promise shall be fulfilled to us, but *Christ* glorified the Father, magnified the law in His obedience unto death, and *He* deserves it. We deserve nothing in ourselves, but in Him and through Him the promises are fulfilled to us. Now, do not listen when Satan comes and whispers, "You do not deserve a single one," but say, "I look at the One who is at the right hand of God for me, and shall not I get the promises?" Satan skulks away then—he cannot answer. "All the promises of God (do let us remember that) are in Him yea," and

"Through Him is the Amen unto the glory of God through us" (R.V.). We say "Amen," and that goes up to God through us to His glory. You observe I have quoted from the Revised Version; it brings out the force more strikingly—the "Amen" that we utter in our hearts to the glory of God.

(To be completed in Next Number).

"PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

By WM. COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

PART I.

OF the several aspects in which the Kingdom of God is presented in Scripture, it is important that we should see clearly which of these is especially meant when it is said to be preached by the Lord and His apostles.

I. In one aspect, the kingdom of God, the sphere of His rule, is universal: "The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all" (Ps. ciii. 19). In a certain sense, too, "God is the King of all the earth; God reigneth over the heathen" (Ps. xlvii. 7, 8; Jer. x. 7). Thus none are outside the sphere of His rule.

II. Yet there is a limited sense more commonly found in Scripture, in which His rule applies to a people whom He has chosen to call His own, and take them for His subjects. Such was Israel of old: "The Lord your God was your King" (1 Sam. xii. 12). In 1 Sam. viii. 7 "they had rejected Him that He should not reign over them" as hitherto, when He brought them out of Egypt by the hand of Moses, and during the age of the Judges. Later we read, as 1 Chron. xvii. 14; xxviii. 5; xxix. 23: "Solomon sat on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord." In Isaiah xliii. 15; xlv. 6, &c., He is Jehovah the King of Israel; and thus His believing people own Him, as in Psalm xlv. 4, "Thou art my King, O God"; lxxiv. 12, "God is my King of old"; lxxxiv. 3, "My King and my God"; cxlv. 1, "I will extol Thee, my God, O King"; lxxxix. 18, "The Holy One of Israel is our King."

Israel, then, was the special sphere of God's rule, while He suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways (Acts xiv. 16). But inasmuch as Israel chose their own ways and would none of Him, so that when He came in grace as

their King they would have no king but Cæsar, the kingdom of God has been taken from them (Matt. xxi. 43). And thus the promises of an everlasting kingdom, made sure to the fathers by covenant and by oath, yet await their fulfilment "when the Lord shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancient people, gloriously" (Isa. xxiv. 23), and when it shall be said of them more fully than ever before, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King" (Ps. cxlix. 2).

III. This glorious future reserved for Christ is often affirmed in the New Testament: as when at His last feast He told His apostles that "He appointed unto them a kingdom, as His Father had appointed unto Him, that they should eat and drink at His table in His kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke xxii. 29, 30), and that He would no more eat of the feast till this should be fulfilled, "till the kingdom of God should come." Of that kingdom see also Luke xiii. 28; xxi. 31; xxiii. 42; Matt. xxv. 34, or where Paul writes that He "will judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom" (2 Tim. iv. 1, 18), &c.

IV. Christ, the Rejected of the earth, is now sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. i. 3). He is "set down with His Father in His throne" (Rev. iii. 21), or in the words of 1 Peter iii. 22, "is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to Him." There He now reigns; and there "He must reign," for so it is written in Psalm cx. i., "till His enemies shall be made His footstool." For this event He now waits. See Hebrews x. 13, and more fully 1 Cor. xv. 24-26, which connects this with the Resurrection, when He, the Father, shall have "put all enemies under His feet, shall have put down all rule and all authority and power": when Israel and the nations, now His enemies, shall be subdued unto Him, *and death, too*, the last enemy, so that it shall no longer prevail to hold His people in its power, but shall be swallowed up in victory—that is, when the trumpet sounds. For the Apostle thus explains in the same chapter, verses 52-55, what is meant by death as an enemy being abolished. Then shall come to pass as it is written in Revelation xi. 15, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our

Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." Blessed hope, which has quickened many in the race of faith and patience!

Yet the discovery of a new or neglected truth has its dangers. We need to watch against the tendency to let it occupy our whole vision, and exclude other truths equally or more important. And on the subject of "the kingdom" the danger is the greater, because in this case the two aspects of it, instead of being apparently opposed, are closely allied, one running into the other, and the two differing rather as being distinct stages of the same thing. There is a present aspect of "the kingdom" occupying a very large place, perhaps the more important place, in the Divine teachings. If we relegate to the future what is given for the present, we rob God of His glory and ourselves of our blessing.

V. Because Christ was rejected by Israel; because the kingdoms of this world are not, as they are to be, the kingdom of our God and of His Christ; because He has not yet taken to Himself His great power and reigned, we must not forget that He is now indeed a King. "Thou sayest that I am a King," was the good confession He witnessed before Pontius Pilate: not a king after the power or the fashion of this world; but having for His subjects "every one that is of the Truth." So it is written (Col. i. 13) that the "Father hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."

Of such a present kingdom the Lord spoke plainly in Luke xvii. 21, meeting the question of the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God should come by telling them of what more especially concerned themselves: "The kingdom of God is within you, or in the midst of you." And He appeals to His words and works of grace, the spoiling of Satan in the casting out of devils, as the proof that the kingdom of God was come unto (or upon) them—"the kingdom of God," or "of heaven," as it is more commonly called in Matthew, who himself uses the two forms interchangeably in chap. xix. 23, 24, the difference being simply that one has relation to "the Throne of God," and the other to "Him that sitteth thereon,"—of which difference see Matthew xxiii. 22. Matthew's peculiar title, "kingdom of heaven,"

is constantly applied to the very same,* which in its various phases, present or future, is elsewhere called the kingdom of God. The terms are practically synonymous. "Its various phases"—for the two forms are alike used to describe the kingdom in connection with all that concerns the work and claims of Christ, its laws and principles of rule, its progress and vicissitudes in the conflict with the powers of darkness, the place of the individual in relation to it, as well as the final manifestation of it at the Lord's appearing.

This brings us back to our opening question, What are we specially to understand by this expression when applied to the preaching of the Lord and His apostles?

(To be continued.)

* *Note.*—An apparent distinction may be detected in describing the kingdom of God in Matthew xii. 28, and Luke xi. 20, as being *come unto them* (ἐφθασε), while the kingdom "of heaven," and "of God," elsewhere, is said to be *come nigh* (ἤγγικε). But that the two words are not thus opposed, observe that ἤγγικε in Matthew xxvi. 45 is equivalent to ἤλθευ, *is come*, in Mark xiv. 41.

THE BLESSED HOPE.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the Righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

IT seems to me that there is a deep connection between the revival of Gospel truth and the revival of the hope of the Lord's coming. As long as a Gospel without assurance is preached—as long as it is mixed up with legality and does not usher souls into the joy of God's salvation—so long the hope of the Lord's coming must necessarily be kept in the background. It is not possible for any one to rejoice in the coming again of the Lord as a hope who has not the assurance of His salvation. If I am not quite sure whether His appearing is to be my everlasting glory or to be the shutting against me of the door of Mercy for ever, so long it is quite impossible for me to entertain it as a hope. It is, therefore, only where the Gospel of God's grace is known in

the power of the Holy Spirit that there is any use speaking of the hope at all, so that this subject is closely connected with a free Gospel. The glad tidings of salvation are bound up together with the Grace that receives us as guilty sinners, the Grace that keeps us as those who have trusted Christ, and the Grace that will be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ—it is all bound up together. One other preliminary thought will be found in the Gospel by Matthew, chap. ii. 3: "When Herod the king heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet. And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule My people Israel." You notice there that the priests and the scribes were all at one about the expecting of the Christ. When asked where the Christ should be born, they were able to refer to chapter and verse and give it to Herod. They knew all about it, but they had no desire for it. In like manner it is possible for us to hold the doctrine of the Lord's coming, quite possible for us to have correct prophetic views, and yet not to have a heart for His appearing. Therefore the subject appeals rather to the affections, it appeals to the heart, and if it merely enlightens our understanding without affecting our heart it will fail in its mission. At the same time it is through the enlightening of the understanding that the Holy Spirit of God reaches the heart. You know that in a railway train there is a grease-box above the axle. The grease is put into the box, and as the train moves and the axle gets heated, the grease is drawn down out of the box to lubricate the axle. Sometimes a little particle of sand or something of that sort gets in and stops the passage of the grease to the axle; it gets overheated, and the train has to be brought to a standstill until the axle gets cooled. Now that just illustrates the truth of God's precious Word—it is not intended merely to illumine the understanding but to go down into the heart, into the affections, into the soul, and so to act as a motive power purifying the whole life.

The truth of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us a sanctifying hope. Some have the idea that it is not practical. But look at 1 John iii. 2: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; and every man that hath this hope in Him [this hope in Christ] purifieth himself even as Christ is pure." Now notice, it does not say that every man that hath this hope *ought* to purify himself, but it says that every man that hath this hope in Him *purifieth* himself. It is a sanctifying hope. I may hold the doctrine and not be at all the purer for it. But I cannot have that hope in Him as a living power and expectation in my heart without it resulting in my purifying myself. That one word is quite sufficient answer to any who would say it is not a practical subject.

Unless this meeting results in greater personal, practical holiness, then the Word of God concerning the blessed hope cannot have been ministered or received in the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore let us expect that there will be, resulting from this meeting, a purifying of each individual person—a greater separation from the world and worldly ways and habits—that there will be a closer following of the blessed Son of God, more continuous looking unto Him, that the light of the glory of God may shine freely into our souls.

Let me now take you to a few Scriptures concerning this blessed hope. 1 Tim. i. 1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our Hope." I want you to notice that in this verse our hope is a Person. Everything in the New Testament is intensely personal, and the hope that God sets before us is a Person: not glory, not heaven, not a state, not circumstances, but A PERSON. If one is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing can satisfy that heart that knows Him but Himself.

John xiv. 1: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive

you unto *Myself*, that where I am there ye may be also." He puts Himself before them as their hope.

John xvii. 24: And I would have you notice that this 24th verse is the last petition of the prayer. The Lord Jesus has kept it in reserve as the most precious thing of all, and He makes the request in a different tone from that in which He makes the other requests. He asks it almost in the language of authority: "Father, *I will* that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." "To be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory."

Three brethren were once speaking upon this subject, and the thoughts before them in this conversation were (1) that at His coming they would behold Him as He is; (2) that they would be with Him for ever; and (3) that they would be like Him—changed into His image. They afterwards began to ask each other as to which thought was the most blessed. One said: "Well, I think the most blessed thing is that I will behold His glory." The second said: "I think it must be to be with Himself for ever." The third said: "I think the most blessed thing is that I shall be perfectly like Him." Well, it is pretty hard to choose between the three. But we don't require to choose. The grace that provides the one provides the whole, and all are ours the moment He comes.

In connection with this I would recall that word, "whom He *justified* them He also *glorified*." God links the justification and the glory together: "All that believe are justified from all things." Perhaps you only believed last night. God says, "justified from all things." "It is God who justifieth: who shall lay anything to your charge?" "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." God charges Himself with the responsibility of glorifying everyone that is justified. So you see what a precious, comforting hope it is.

And then the very thing the Lord Jesus Christ came to do was to fulfil the Father's will. He says: "This is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all whom He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Now, Satan is opposed to every truth that glorifies Christ. Never let us forget this. If any truth is specially designed of the Spirit to bring glory to Christ, depend upon it that is the truth Satan will oppose, the truth that Satan will endeavour to hide—to obscure. And I believe that Satan has many ways of explaining away or obscuring this most blessed prospect.

(To be concluded in next number).

BACA'S WELL AND ZION'S RIVER.

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the ways of them who, passing through the valley of Baca (trouble), make it a well. The rain, also, filleth the pools."—Psalm lxxxiv. 5, 6.

"Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures."—Psalm xxxvi. 8.

"Pleasures for evermore."—Psalm xvi. 11.

THROUGH the vale of "Baca" passing,

Make it, O our God, a "well,"

Where our thirsty souls "draw water"

From the Source invisible.

Let life's hard and stony trials

Build a "well" wherein may flow

Soul-refreshing, living water,

Quenching all our thirst below.

In our hearts are "empty places"

Waiting to be filled by Thee;

Let Thy rain and dew, distilling,

Fill these "pools" continually.

Thus, through all our pilgrim pathway,

Lead us, Lord, from strength to strength,

Till the "well" we leave behind us,

Reaching Zion's height at length;

There to drink from Life's pure "river"

Pleasures that shall never cease;

Water in our "well" was measured—

Measureless the "stream" of peace

Which shall flow beside our pathway

When we tread the street of gold,

Making glad with streams refreshing

Of the joy till then untold.

No hard "drawing" then; the "river"

In the city of our God

Will attend our ev'ry footstep

As we walk the shining road.

Whence its source? My soul, behold it

Springing out of Calvary's blood:

On the throne whence it proceedeth

Sits the once slain LAMB of God.

THE VALUE AND FULNESS OF THE SCRIPTURES.—II.

(Psalm cxix.)

By W. H. BENNET, Yeovil.

THE Psalmist loved to speak of himself as Jehovah's *servant*, and as His servant He pleads: "Give me understanding that I may know Thy testimonies" (verse 125). The liberty of *sonship* was not then made known; but if the servant who knew not God as *Father* found such delight in learning and keeping His Word, how should it be with us to whom the Spirit beareth witness that we are children of God? Readiness to obey is required for the fulfilment of the above petition, for "if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John vii. 17), and such obedience ensures the *friendship* of Christ, with all that that involves; according to His Word: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John xv. 14).

Another plea of the Psalmist is: "I am a *stranger* [or *sojourner*] in the earth; hide not Thy commandments from me" (verse 19), and the fulfilment of this petition leads to the joyful experience: "Thy statutes have been my songs *in the house of my pilgrimage*" (verse 54). All who saw God's promises—if only afar off—and in the spirit of faith greeted or saluted them, "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," and were seeking after their true home (Heb. xi. 13-16). Even in Israel those who were born and taught of God were in the minority, and, being surrounded by "the proud," "the lawless," and "transgressors," they found comfort in the hope of God's salvation and His promised kingdom (verses 81, 123, 166, 174). But such would *draw together*, having a secret bond which others knew not, like those who "feared the Lord" in Malachi's day, or those who "looked for redemption" in the days of Simeon and Anna. So the Psalmist said: "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts" (verse 63). He knew also that such would be glad to see him, and he desired to cultivate the fellowship of any yet unknown to him who revered God and His testimonies (verses 74, 79). This fear of the Lord, showing itself in obedience, is still the path in which alone true fellowship is found; and the solemn word, "Depart from me, ye evildoers, for I will keep the com-

mandments of my God" (verse 115), shows that the principle of 2 Corinthians vi. 14-18, which we are called to carry out, was not even then unknown.

The possession of, meditation in, and obedience to God's "law" leads to the highest wisdom and understanding (verses 97-100), and this understanding begets hatred of "every false way" (verses 104, 128). The one who can say, "*Thy law do I love,*" will always add, "*I hate and abhor falsehood*" (verse 163). This is the double aspect of the *perfection* which this psalm keeps before us, and it is the pathway of true *liberty*: "I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy precepts" (verse 45); as the Lord said: "If ye *continue in My word,* then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and *the truth shall make you free.*"

They who love God's law have "*great peace,*" and "for them there is *no stumbling-block*" (verse 165). They are not affected by the conclusions of "Higher Critics," nor by the inability of these professors of superior wisdom to reach any conclusion. While "the wise and prudent" of the religious world are in their unbelief discussing the origin of the books of Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, etc., God's "babes," receiving them as from Himself, eat the bread and drink the "wine and milk" their sacred pages yield to faith. Though they "hate reasonings" or "speculations" (verse 113),* they know that, however subtle such may be, they cannot affect that Word which is *settled in heaven and founded for ever* (verses 89, 152); and they rejoice in the statement, "*The sum of Thy Word is truth; and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever*" (verse 160).

It is an instructive fact that words which express the attributes of God are often used of the Scriptures. We have one instance of this in Psalm cxix., where the statement, "*Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,*" is followed by "*The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting*" (verses 142, 144). It is also worthy of note that the word in verse 129—"Thy testimonies are *wonderful*"—is the

very word used in Isaiah ix., where it is said of Immanuel: "His Name shall be called *Wonderful.*" That these testimonies contain a "hidden wisdom" is clearly intimated in verse 130: "The *opening* of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (compare Acts xvii. 2, 3, and specially 1 Cor. ii. 6-12). But, however fully anything may be unfolded, there is need of clearness of vision to discern it, hence the prayer: "*Uncover Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law*" (verse 18). The wonders are there, but any veil upon the eyes of our hearts (Eph. i. 18) will prevent our discovering them. That many things may combine to weave such a veil James (i. 21) and Peter (1 Peter ii. 2) plainly intimate. But all who follow Christ in faith and obedience exchange the veil of darkness for the "light of life" (John viii. 12), and then, "with *unveiled face,*" both behold and reflect "the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

The need of heavenly wisdom to rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. ii. 15) is deeply felt by every God-given teacher in His Church, but it is also incumbent upon *all saints* to have their senses exercised in this matter. In the prayer, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge" (verse 66), the word rendered *judgment* signifies (bodily) "*taste,*" and hence that faculty of the mind which discerns, distinguishes, and forms a right judgment. So Paul prays that love may abound "in knowledge and in all *discernment*" or *perception*, for the trying of things that differ (Phil. i. 9, 10). Thus only can the heart be "sound" or "perfect" in God's statutes (verse 80), and fortified against the subtleties of the "unlearned and unstable" who wrest the Scriptures. This spiritual faculty by which "the ear trieth words as the mouth tasteth meat" (Job xxxiv. 3), will enable us to distinguish in matters of doctrine between "the way of truth" and "the way of falsehood" (verses 29, 30), and, in putting doctrine into practice, to discern the difference between "the false path" (verse 128) and the path of God's commandments (verse 35). For example (as to *practice*), we shall readily distinguish *true reverence* from *superstition*, and also discern the difference between the *liberty of access* to God's holy presence and *irreverence*.

* The translators by supplying the word "*vain*" here expressed the true meaning. Though italics in our Bibles may sometimes be omitted with advantage, the attempt to omit them invariably would in some cases mar the sense, and in others make nonsense.

[Page 102, par. 6.—For "verse 9," read "verse 91."]

The beneficial results of *discipline* (verses 67, 71), the sustaining power of God's Word in *affliction* (verses 50, 92, 143), *zeal for God* which causes His servant to feel deeply any dishonour done to His Word (verses 136, 139, 158), his sole hope in God's *mercy* and *loving-kindness* (verses 41, 58, 76, 77, 132)—these and many other things might be dwelt upon did time and space allow. But if what has been written leads any to a more diligent use of this psalm, and consequently a greater delight in all Scripture, it will bear the desired fruit.

Does not much in the psalm, including the last verse,* remind us of Romans vii., where Paul expresses his delight in the law of God afterward the *inward man*, but sees a *different* law in his members warring against the law of his mind? The natural man can only take notice of *outward acts* of sin, but the child of God, taught by the Spirit, regards the wandering of the *mind* from Christ, or the least inclination of the *heart* to what is contrary to Him, as a real *going astray*. The recognition of this distinction would soon settle many questions about Romans vii. While, therefore, we honour Christ and magnify His work by rejoicing in that liberty wherewith He hath made us free, and give thanks for a deliverance, an acceptance, a nearness to God as worshippers, a confidence as His children which even the writer of this wonderful psalm knew not, we may find in our experience that which answers to his closing confession. As they who knew most of the blessedness of the opening verses of the psalm would be most conscious of the weakness expressed at its close, and be the more cast upon the tender compassion of the "Shepherd of Israel," so now those who are most advanced in the path of faith and obedience will most deeply feel every wandering of heart and mind, and instead of thinking of their own attainments will rejoice in the *continuous* ministry of "the Great Shepherd of the sheep," so fully unfolded in the Epistle to the Hebrews, by which—and by which alone—salvation to the end is secured (Heb. vii. 25).

* As a reason for hesitation in adopting any other meaning of verse 176, it may be noticed that the word for "have gone astray" is similarly rendered in Psalm lviii. 3; Isaiah liii. 6; Proverbs vii. 25; Ezekiel xiv. 11, xlv. 10, xlvi. 11, and has the same meaning in other places, though at times it is used in the sense of *wandering*, as in Genesis xxi. 14, xxxvii. 15.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

II.—AN ATHLETE.

By DR. J. N. CASE, China.

PUBLIC games were unknown among the Jews until they came under the corrupting and enervating influence of Greek and Roman. Life to a Jew was too real and serious a business to permit of such pastimes. Even their children engaged in staid games, such as play-weddings and funerals (see Matthew xi. 16, 17).

But with the Greeks and Romans matters were very different. Among them public contests were a perfect passion. What cricket, football, horse-racing, &c., are to the modern Englishman, even more were these games to them. So one is not surprised that the eager, active mind of the Apostle Paul, guided by the Spirit of God, seized on these contests as an apt illustration of the spiritual life. In his epistles four kinds of games are alluded to and applied spiritually, viz., the foot-race, wrestling, boxing, and the sword contest. Possibly all are referred to in 1 Cor. ix. 22-27. In a former paper we dwelt briefly on Eph. vi. 10-17, as setting before us the armour provided for the soldier; yet, probably, it is a picture drawn from the arena rather than from ordinary warfare. A hand-to-hand and death struggle is depicted; for in many of these conflicts the combatant literally struggled for his life. Ofttimes the bloodthirsty onlookers—women equally with men—demanded that the man defeated should be put to death.

These contests required courage, earnestness, watchfulness, patience, and skill in those who engaged in them; all of which traits are also necessary in the Christian athlete, and they should be diligently cultivated by all who name the Name of the Lord. But as our space is limited we will direct our attention to *the race*. This is the contest most frequently referred to in the Pauline epistles, and the one, perhaps, which best sets forth the believer's life.

To take part in these games was no haphazard matter. Certain conditions must be fulfilled by all the candidates. In 1 Cor. ix. 24-27 the Apostle is clearly thinking of the Isthmian games. These were held in the neighbourhood of the very city to which this letter is addressed. Every man who wished

to enter the lists for these games must take an oath that he had been ten months in training. So one could not take it up to-day and drop it to-morrow. It called for a set purpose and determination. And is not this even more necessary for the Christian race? To become a true Christian is to make a choice for eternity. It is not a mere incident in his life; it is the pivotal act on which his eternal happiness depends. Truly it is a great transaction, and one that should be attended to this very hour by any unsaved reader of this paper.

Much depends on a right start, and the first and all-important step, if one wishes to start in this heavenly race, is to come as an empty-handed, guilty sinner and believe on Christ for salvation.

After making up his mind to enter for a certain race, the next thing for the man was to prepare for it. This daily called for stern, strict self-denial and discipline; it usually involved real suffering, as well as weariness. So with the Christian. Daily must he discipline himself and exercise himself unto godliness. Temperance is one of the first and most important graces for the Christian athlete to cultivate (2 Pet. i. 6). It may be well to remind young believers that in the New Testament this word has a much wider meaning than it has generally at the present time. Now it usually means total abstinence from intoxicants. However, in the broader and truer sense the word means to have *complete mastery of one's self in all things*, albeit in the original the word has a special reference to bodily and fleshly desires. For all saints surely this is a consummation devoutly to be wished and aimed at. So the Apostle lays down the great principle: "Every man that striveth in the games is temperate in all things." Let us ever remember that the body is a good servant but a bad master. Accordingly, we must aim to keep the body in its right place. "I buffet my body," says the Apostle, "and bring it into bondage" (R.V.). The figure is that of a pugilistic encounter. On one side there is the lower, animal nature; on the other the higher and spiritual part of the man. Our progress in the Divine life and usefulness to the Lord will depend much upon our making the body our servant, and never allowing it to seize the reins.

In the race all superfluous clothing was taken off. In allusion to this it is written: "Let us lay aside every weight," &c. (Heb. xii. 1, 2). Each one has his own peculiar weight to be laid aside. There is some weak point to watch, some special temptation to be overcome. Would we run this race so as to win the crown? Then there are things not bad in themselves, but bad for us because of their association, or because they keep us from better things, which we must forego. Find out what it is, my reader, in your case, and then lay it aside and run with patience the race set before you.

Again, those who contested in the games must abide by the rules of the game. Even though a man won the contest, yet if in doing it he infringed one of the rules, he did not receive the prize. "If also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned *except he have contended lawfully*" (2 Tim. ii. 5). A solemn and searching truth for us all. We have our guide and regulation book. In it all that concerns this heavenly race is clearly dealt with; and no injunction, precept, or principle in that Word may be lightly esteemed, lest when too late we discover that we have run and striven in vain.

In running, the eye should be fixed on the goal, not back on ground we have covered or around at applauding or jeering spectators, but onward to the finish. Thus was it with the Apostle himself (see Phil. iii. 13-16).

Patience and endurance are the virtues that tell in a race. Other things might be carried by a sudden dash and onslaught, but not the race. There, other things being equal, it was the man with most staying power that won. Patience, perhaps, as a grace is under a cloud; it is not esteemed as once it was by the pilgrims heavenward. Yet is it very essential to us. Have we in any measure faith, courage, knowledge, and temperance? Let us go forward and add to these—*patience*. Thus we may run and gain the crown.

It is most important to understand what is run for. It is *not* for salvation. That is the free gift of God. But we do run for *a crown*. There will be differences between Christians in that day. Some will be saved as out of a fire—escaping with their lives, but losing everything else. Solemn is that word of the glorified Lord: "Hold fast that which thou

hast, that no one take thy crown." It is *thy* crown, designed for thee; see that thou dost not lose it!

In the Isthmian or Olympian games the reward was simply a quickly-fading crown of leaves (1 Cor. ix. 25); but our crown, like our inheritance, is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away.

In these contests but one received the prize, the others were all disappointed. With us, through grace, each one of us may gain a rich reward.

Paul was not afraid that he might, after all, be lost. To the end of the chapter he follows out the figure of the games. With all his might he wrestled and ran, lest, after calling others to take part in the race and win a prize, he himself might be disapproved by the Umpire, either because he failed of the goal or transgressed some of the rules of the game. If but for this one thing, the Revisers deserve the hearty thanks of all lovers of the Scriptures, in that they have removed that word "a castaway" from this passage, for it has proved a stone of stumbling to many a simple-hearted believer. The point of the passage is neither how salvation can be obtained nor whether it can be lost. It has to do with the crown to be won by all who run for it with purpose, patience, and propriety.

But Paul will yet be crowned—he will not be disapproved. Yes; methinks that soon, amid the shouts of myriads of angels and saved sinners, the grand old veteran will receive from the once pierced hand of his and our Lord, acting then as Umpire, a "crown of righteousness that fadeth not away" (see 2 Tim. iv. 6-8). In that day may reader and writer be near him, and also receive from the same blessed hand a gracious recompense. Amen.

UNITY.

A GARENGANZE BIBLE READING.

WE saw that unity all lay in my hands—the unit. And am I really a *oneity*?

Firstly, then, by way of introspection, and with unity of our band as the goal, have I been to God with the cry, "Unite my HEART"? (Psalm lxxxvi. 11). Verily, as I think in my heart so am I. This indeed is the citadel of the man. Out of it, and *with* it, are the issues of this brief life of mine. And, Lord, it is a

much endowed heart—of many and various faculties: all prone to be both laggard and straggling. This naturally leading in one direction; and that just as naturally tugging me yonder in an opposite direction. Therefore, Lord God, weld me into a unity, with every throb centralised upon Thee. Systole and diastole going out and up, giving the one eye of Matt. vi. 22, and doing the one thing of Phil. iii. 13.

And this man of the welded heart is the happy man. His "*one thing*" will be his all. Get him to do two things and then "*many things*," and he is a torn, aching multiplicity; the hero of the modern missionary romances perhaps; but, alas! a sad, drooping man now.

So engrossed were we in this first subject of the united heart that we scarcely glanced at the two other points: Unity of the Faith, and Unity of the Spirit.

Yet we noted that this man (the individual) on whom the fate of all collective unity depended was a man of one Book—and the creation of One Spirit; and thus unity of Faith and Spirit came about. And being thus a man with all the lines converging on one theme—all his faculties sanctified unto the work—he is soon necessarily a strong, yea—when occasion requires it—a dogmatic man. Thus is he the unit led up unto the unity of the Spirit.

A thousand such men coming together, it would be all the same; for did not HE pray "that they ALL may be one": *i.e.*, ten thousand times ten thousand if they really desire it!

D. CRAWFORD.

NEW BIBLE READINGS.

STORM AND CALM.

Psalm cvii. 25, 28, 29.

1. He raiseth the stormy wind.
2. *Then* they cry.
3. He maketh storm a calm. H. C. H.

THREE CIRCLES IN THE PSALMS.

1. A circle of Favour, - - v. 12.
2. A circle of Mercy, - - xxxii. 10.
3. A circle of Song, - - xxxii. 7.

PRAYER.

T. B.

- The Time for Prayer, "Always," Luke xviii. 1.
 The Place for Prayer, "Everywhere," 1 Tim. ii. 8.
 The Subject for Prayer, "All men," 1 Tim. ii. 1.

T. B.

Correspondence.

NOTES OF A BRIEF VISIT TO BIBLE LANDS.—III.

JERUSALEM, April, 1898.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion city of our God."

NEXT morning we were early astir eager to enter within the walls of the most remarkable city in the world. What hallowed associations and sacred memories cluster around the "city of the great King," to which "the tribes went up!" On Mount Moriah, at the command of God, Abraham essayed to offer up Isaac, and centuries afterwards the temple of Jehovah was erected. Jerusalem was the scene of the Lord's ministry, and the place of His rejection and crucifixion. It was also the birthplace of Christianity. The modern city is comparatively small, and is surrounded by a turreted stone wall forty feet high. It is 2600 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and has a population of from 50,000 to 60,000, three-fourths of whom are Jews. Nearly half of its inhabitants dwell without the city walls. Owing to the numbers of European Jews who have settled in it within the last six years, the population has greatly increased. Jerusalem has been taken and destroyed twenty times, the present houses being built on heaps of ruins fifty to eighty feet above the level of the ancient city. "Beautiful for situation" (Psalm xlviii. 2) it undoubtedly is, but it is not beautiful in itself. The streets are exceedingly narrow, crooked, and dirty, and many of the houses are sadly in need of repair. Amongst the first places visited by us was the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre*. This famous "church" is really a group of buildings containing chapels belonging to various religious communities, the key being kept by the Turks. Turkish soldiers are in charge of the edifice to prevent the so-called "Christians" from killing each other! It is well known that the Crimean war was occasioned—if not caused—through a dispute between Russia and France regarding the repairing of the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The place was thronged with Russian pilgrims at the time of our visit. We were shown the spot where the cross was erected on which Christ was crucified, a portion of the pillar to which He was bound when scourged, the stone on which He sat whilst the Roman soldiers cast lots, the rock rent by the earthquake, the place where His body was anointed for burial, His sepulchre, the tombs of Adam and Nicodemus, the two holes in the rock out of which the "sacred fire" issues, the "centre of the world," &c., &c. I confess I listened to the guide's statement of what was said to have taken place within such a short radius

with a considerable amount of Scotch unbelief! Near to St. Stephen's Gate, but without the city walls, there is another "Calvary." It is situated on a rising knoll, and is called by the Jews "The Hill of Execution." *Jeremiah's Grotto*, in which it is alleged the "weeping prophet" wrote his "Lamentations," is beneath it, and a "garden tomb" is close by. The late General Gordon and the majority of the Palestine explorers favour this site rather than the other. It is a matter of little importance whether the mighty work of atonement was accomplished within the precincts of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or at a spot a short distance off. It is a living Christ we worship, and not a dead Christ. As the time of our visit was the Mohammedan holy week, we were unable to obtain admission into the famous *Mosque of Omar*, or "Dome of the Rock." It is generally believed that this "holy place" of the Moslems covers the site of Solomon's Temple on Mount Moriah, and the spot where Abraham was about to offer up Isaac. We walked along the *Via Dolorosa* (street of pain), the road Christ is supposed to have travelled to Calvary. We were greatly interested in what we witnessed at the *Jews' Place of Wailing*. The "wall of wailing" is situated in a narrow street in one of the poorest parts of the Jewish quarter of the city. The wall is believed to be part of the foundation of Solomon's Temple. For centuries past Jews from many countries and climes, rich and poor, young and old, attired in silks and rags, congregate to lament the destruction of their holy city and the desolation of their beloved land. Standing in that lane, and gazing on these grief-stricken people, one can understand in some measure the meaning of the words: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" (Psalm cxxxvii. 5). To me it was indeed a sadly-suggestive sight. I watched them as they swayed backwards and forwards, pressing their lips on the stones of the Temple wall and reading aloud the Hebrew Scriptures, confessing their sins, and calling on God to fulfil His promises toward them as a people. Several Jewesses completely broke down and sobbed aloud.

I visited the Garden of Gethsemane twice. After passing the Damascus Gate and St. Stephen's Gate, we crossed the Kidron at the foot of the Mount of Olives and entered a rectangular enclosure in which is a neatly-kept garden containing eight old gnarled and twisted olive trees. The garden is fenced in with an iron railing, and is under the care of Franciscan monks. As I gazed on the scene I thought of the memorable night of Christ's betrayal, of His soul agony, and prayer that if it were His Father's will the cup might pass from Him (Matt. xxvi. 33-50). Oftentimes I had sung the familiar lines:

“Gethsemane, can I forget,
Or there Thy conflict see
Thine agony and blood-like sweat
And not remember Thee?”

We ascended the Mount of Olives, which is 2682 feet above the level of the sea, and had a magnificent view of Jerusalem and the surrounding country. The clearness of the atmosphere enables one to see distant objects very distinctly. No similar view, with such sacred historic associations, can be had in any other part of the world. Jerusalem lay before us, with its buildings, and battlements, its walls and turrets glistening in the sun. The Valley of Jehosaphat, Mount Moriah, Mount Zion, and the Tower of David, are especial objects of interest to travellers. The Dead Sea, or “Sea of Lot,” lying 4000 feet below; the Jordan, emptying itself into the Dead Sea; the wilderness and mountains of Judea; the mountains of Moab; Mizpeh, where Samuel gathered Israel together, were pointed out to us by the guide.

Innumerable controversies have been waged regarding the sites of Calvary and the Sepulchre, but there have been none regarding the Mount of Olives. The Lord Jesus frequently retreated thither from the turmoil and bustle of the city. The Evangelist tells us that “Every man went to his own house; Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives” (John vii. 53, viii. 1). On the night of His betrayal “He came and went, as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives” (Luke xxii. 39). From the Mount of Olives, not far from Bethany, He ascended to Heaven (Luke xxiv. 50, 51); and when He returns to earth with His saints in a future day, “His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives” (Zech. xiv. 4).

Close to the Garden of Gethsemane we were beset with a band of lepers, in various stages of leprosy, clamouring for “backsheesh.” Although there is a leper hospital in Jerusalem, they prefer eking out a precarious existence by the alms of travellers.

Descending the eastern slope of the mountain, in a quarter of an hour's ride we reached Bethany—“the town of Mary and her sister Martha” (John xi. 1). Although the village is a poor tumble-down place of about thirty Arab huts or houses, it is beautifully situated amid corn-fields and olive-trees. In this quiet, sequestered spot the Lord used to find a home. We were shown the site of Martha and Mary's house, and the tombs of Lazarus and Simon the Leper. We thought of the persons depicted in Luke x. and John xi. and xii.; Martha, ever bustling and busy, eagerly anxious to serve the Master; Mary, at His feet, hearkening, weeping, and pouring upon His sacred Person the precious ointment; Lazarus, dead, risen, and seated at the table, a humble, happy worshipper.

After taking a survey of the village and its surroundings, we returned by the road that was strewn with palm branches by the people when Christ rode into Jerusalem on the colt of an ass. At a certain turn of the road the city, which has hitherto been hidden from our gaze, bursts into view. At this point Christ is said to have “beheld the city and wept” (Luke xix. 41, 42). Crossing the Valley of Jehosaphat, we are shown some very ancient tombs. One is called the Pillar of Absalom, a second the Cave of St. James, and a third the Tomb of Zacharias. Farther south are the *Pool of Siloam*, where the man born blind obtained his sight (John ix. 7); *Job's Well*, sometimes called “En Rogel,” the water of which is excellent (2 Sam. xvii. 17). North-east of En Rogel is the *Mount of Scandal*, or *Mount of Offence*, the reputed spot where Solomon built “high places” for Chemosh, Moloch, and Ashtaroth (2 Kings xxiii. 13). We passed the *Hill of Evil Counsel* and the “field of blood” (or *Aceldama*), purchased with the traitor's thirty pieces of silver. Between Mount Zion and the Hill of Evil Counsel is the *Valley of Hinnom*—Gehenna or Tophet. In this valley the children of Judah offered human sacrifices to Moloch and Baalim (2 Chron. xxviii. 1-5). Because of this sin Jeremiah called it “The Valley of Slaughter” (Jer. vii. 31, 32).

After skirting the south side of Mount Zion, we turned northward on the western side, passing the lower Pool of Gihon, and entering the city by the Bethlehem and Jaffa Gate.

Six miles south-west of Jerusalem is *Bethlehem* (“House of Bread”), where the Lord of Life and Glory was born. We visited this ancient city.

Leaving Jerusalem by the Jaffa Gate, we crossed the top of the Valley of Hinnom and entered the Valley of Rephaim, where the Philistines encamped while David and his army were in the cave of Adullam (1 Chron. xi. 15). We pass a village on the right-hand side of the road which is the reputed Zelzah, where Samuel told Saul that two men would meet him (1 Sam. x. 2). A short distance from Zelzah, close by the roadside, is Rachel's tomb, surmounted by a dome (Gen. xxxv. 19, 20). Bethlehem is beautifully situated on the side of a hill, with a population of 5000, most of whom are nominal “Christians” of the Greek and Latin communions. The “Church of the Nativity” is common property, and the Latin, Greek, and Armenian churches have separate chapels. The building was erected by the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, and is supposed to be the oldest “Christian” edifice in the world. By a subterranean passage we were conducted to the traditional site of the stable and manger where Christ was born. The grotto is gaudily decorated with silver and gold embroidery, and

sixteen silver lamps are constantly kept burning. A slab of marble rests on what is said to be the manger. A silver star marks the place, with the inscription in Latin: "Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." The "field of the shepherds," where the heavenly host broke forth in praise to God (Luke ii. 8-14), is in the immediate vicinity. Bethlehem in Jacob's day was called Ephrath (Gen. xxxv. 19). Close to it, Ruth, the Moabitess, gleaned corn in the fields of Boaz (Ruth ii. 17). Bethlehem was the birthplace and home of King David, as well as that of David's Lord. It is also associated with the slaughter of the infant children by the order of Herod (Matt. ii. 16). We had a draught of cool, refreshing water from "David's well." "O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate" (1 Chron. xi. 17), said the sweet singer of Israel. His three "mighty men," at the risk of their lives, granted him the desire of his heart (verse 18). But the draught was too costly a one for him, and he "poured it out to the Lord."

Other places in Jerusalem and neighbourhood were visited, such as the Tomb of the Virgin Mary, the Tombs of the Kings, Solomon's Quarries, &c., &c. Space, however, forbids me saying more. In my next and last letter I expect, if God permit, to write a little about Haifa, Nazareth, Tiberias, and Cyprus.

ALEXANDER MARSHALL.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 COR. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE ARMY.—Is there any warrant in the New Testament for God's redeemed children volunteering to fight the nation's battles? If not, how do you account for so many godly men being in the army—men clearly born again, such as Havelock, Vicars, Gordon, and many others?

FEET WASHING: LITERAL OR SPIRITUAL?—Is there any good reason why the Lord's command to wash one another's feet (John xiii. 14) should be spiritualised, whilst that of "baptism" and "the breaking of bread" are observed literally?

"FAITH" IN THE FUTURE.—Is there any reason whatever from Scripture to believe that there will be "faith" in Heaven?

JESUS CHRIST PREACHED—WHEN?—What is the meaning of Acts iii. 20?

SUBSTITUTION IN RELATION TO THE UNCONVERTED.—Is it not true that anxious souls almost always are brought into life and liberty—saved by apprehending that Christ has died for, *i.e.*, instead of them? Can we, therefore, when preaching the Gospel to the unsaved, scripturally *apply* Isaiah liii. 5, 6 to *them*, they, as yet, it may be, being indifferent or hardened?

RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST—WHEN?—Please explain what the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," spoken of in Titus iii. 5, is, and does it *once and for all take place* immediately the sinner exercises saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread *for every member* of that One Body?

LABOURS OF WOMEN.

QUESTION 568.—In what sense were the women in Romans xvi. "My helpers" (verse 3), "much labour on you" (verse 6, *r.v.*), "who labour in the Lord" (verse 12), or if we have any Scripture authorising women to go forth as labourers in the Gospel, and the Church's responsibility to them?

Answer A.—It is not specifically stated in what way the women alluded to in Romans xvi. 3, 6, 12 became Paul's helpers, or toiled, but much which bears on the subject in general may be learned from other portions of Scripture. Briefly stated, woman's service is, *generally*, one of works (Acts ix. 36; 1 Tim. v. 10). The latter passage read together with Titus ii. 3, 4 gives to elder ones a conjoint ministry of works and words, but in a prescribed area.

Paul's first European audience was composed of women, and of these one was his first convert. It is plain from Phil. iv. that the women became co-operators with him; but how, we are not told.

The peculiar customs prevalent in countries where Mohammedanism exists quite preclude the

possibility of any men penetrating the harems and zenanas in which millions of women are shut up for life. But seeing that such are usually accessible to Christian women, and in view of our Lord's command to "preach the Gospel to every creature," are we not right in manifesting fellowship with those who for love to His Name and in whole-hearted obedience to His Word, are willing to go forth and bring the Gospel within the reach of these unhappy women, who otherwise would never hear it? But even in so-called heathen countries where the seclusion of women is unknown, for instance in Africa, godly women can be of invaluable service in furthering the Gospel. A brother who spent some years in Gospel work in a remote part of that country has stated that though he again and again preached the Gospel to mixed companies of men and women, he did not consider it judicious to speak to women personally about their souls' interests. In certain parts of Africa females are in numerical preponderance, and can best be reached by Christian women. "Shall we leave them *lost and lonely*?"

Ans. B.—These women referred to were Paul's helpers in many and varied ways. The first-named, Phœbe, was a "succourer of many," including the Apostle Paul. This seems to imply that she attended to the bodily needs of these believers, and so became a "helper" in the truth, for by this means Paul and others were left free to spend more time in ministering to the spiritual needs of believers and proclaiming the Gospel to unsaved ones. Lydia, likewise, was Paul's "helper" in this way (Acts xvi.), as was also Priscilla, who with her husband received Paul into their house (verses 3, 4), and also Acts xviii. 2, 3), during which time he wrought with Aquila in tentmaking. Meanwhile, Priscilla would doubtless look well to Paul's bodily need in providing him with food, and I don't think she would forget that his apparel needed some attention. Verse 6, concerning the sister who "bestowed much labour on us," suggests that she also was not unmindful of the apostle's need in this latter matter. Clothes in those days had not only to be "made up," but also "manufactured"; and the raiment of the apostle and his companions in travel, in those days when their clothes were often torn off their backs, would need not only repairing but replenishing. Here, then, was scope for sisters to "help" these evangelists. We know some such helpers in these days, but there is room for more to join.

Verse 12 would suggest spiritual labour by the two sisters named. We get instances of such labour in our own assemblies to-day. How many dear sisters labour untiringly in Sunday-

School work, in Bible Classes, visiting the sick in body and those who will not enter a public Gospel meeting; also in cottage meetings for women and girls, and in tract distribution, &c., many sisters are diligently labouring in the Lord.

As regards the latter part of the question, perhaps the chapter under discussion gives as good an answer as any (and one that will satisfy most, if not all, sisters who thus go forth) in Paul's words concerning the manner in which he exhorts the brethren to treat Phœbe (Rom. xvi. 1, 2). They were not only to "receive her," but to "assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you." Phœbe was evidently travelling, for her home was in Cenchrea, near Corinth, and she was "a servant of the Church" there. Thus having served faithfully at home, she was fitted to be sent farther a-field to Rome, whither she carried Paul's important epistle to the Romans, a service which, in these days of easy postal communication, we can scarcely appreciate sufficiently.

As to the responsibility of the Church with regard to sisters who go forth to labour in the Gospel among heathen women and children, it is written, "The labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke x. 7; also see 1 Cor. ix. 7-11). It may be said that the labourer here referred to is of the masculine gender. So also is the person spoken of in Galat. vi. 7, but who would deny that the principle applies as truly to one of the opposite sex? When brethren have so filled each corner of earth's vast vineyard that they are able to show that there is positively "no room" for sisters' work, then, and not till then, need the question of the rightness of our sisters' going forth be raised. Meanwhile, many a sister is earning the Lord's approval, "She hath done what she could."

Sisters are "weak," it is true—the "weaker vessels," Peter calls them, as if to remind the brethren that they are weak — but *God* has "chosen the weak things" to work His will, and their brethren cannot say, "We have no need of you." "Nay, much more (adds the apostle by the Spirit of God), those members which seem to be more feeble are *necessary*" (1 Cor. xii. 21, 22).

M. M. D.

Answer C.—Let us take a few scriptural instances of the part women have taken in the Lord's work.

We find them spinning (Exodus xxxv. 25, 26); judging (Judges iv. 4, 5); gleaning (Ruth ii. 17); praying (1 Sam. i. 12); advising (1 Sam. xxv. 33, 33); entertaining (2 Kings iv. 10); testifying (2 Kings v. 2-4); self-denying, caring for others, working, trading, &c. (Prov. xxxi. 10-31); leading (Micah vi. 4); thanking (Luke ii. 38); witnessing (John iv. 29); serving (John xii. 2); worship-

ping (verse 3); clothing (Acts ix. 39); expounding (xviii. 26); serving, succouring, helping, labouring (Rom. xvi. 1-6, also Phil. iv. 3); training (2 Tim. i. 5 and iii. 15); adorning (1 Peter iii. 4); obedient (verse 6); fruitful (2 John verse 1). Surely we would do well to fulfil our stewardship to women doing such noble services.

The expression "go forth" seems to imply that *locality* makes a difference to service, whereas Scripture shows that the field is the world (Matt. xiii. 38; Mark xvi. 15); it is, therefore, not a question of "going" but of "doing." The foregoing references show that women "doing" the right thing, *i.e.*, serving God, are duly entitled to our hearty support, which is enjoined by St. Paul in Rom. xvi. 2 and Phil. iv. 3. "May many women be led to *go and do*, and we led to *assist and help*."

A. E. F.

Answer D.—This question is in three parts, and embraces a large field. First, what the labours of these women were?

Regarding Priscilla and Aquila, we read in Acts xviii. that when Paul came to Corinth, "he abode with them and wrought" (verses 2, 3). When he sailed into Syria, they went with him (verse 18). When in Ephesus, they took Apollos and "taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly" (verse 26). The probability is that, wherever they went, they kept an open house for the Lord's servants, and may be others as well, and also helped them into clearer light as they had opportunity. In temporal things the wife would take the precedence, and her husband would help her, whilst in spiritual things he would take the precedence and she might help him.

Regarding Mary (verse 6), as authorities differ as to whether it should read "on us" or "on you," it is difficult to know the exact character of her labours. She probably ministered to the Lord in the persons of His people, as in Mark xv. 41 and Luke viii. 3. And there is no doubt but that a woman who could devote her energies and, may be, her means in such a way, would be ready to speak of the Lord Jesus as she had opportunity.

The labours of the other two mentioned in verse 12 would have been the same as the labours of those mentioned in Phil. iv. 2, 3—"They laboured with me in the Gospel." To the open mind there can be no difficulty about that; and, to my mind, the special and commendatory notice which the Holy Spirit takes of these women and of their labours, is a sufficient answer to the other two parts of this question, *i.e.*, the *authority* for women devoting their time and energies to the work of the Gospel, and the "Church's *responsibility* towards such."

The real difficulty on this question is not so

much as to the *character* or woman's work as to the *sphere* in which she is to serve. There is very much work, both in the Gospel and in the Church, which a godly woman can do better than any man. In fact, there is much work which it would be imprudent, as well as useless, for a man to attempt, especially in some heathen lands, just as there is much work for men to do which women were neither designed to do nor fitted for.

Those who contend for woman's *public* ministry make a great deal of the fact that it was women who saw the Lord first after He arose from the dead, and who got the first tidings to carry of His resurrection. But that was a *private* message to His own disciples. When the Holy Spirit is attesting the truth of the resurrection in 1 Cor. xv. 3-8, there is not a woman's name mentioned nor even referred to. That does not mean that God looks on a woman's evidence as of no value, but the testimony there was designed to be *world-wide*, and hence woman is not brought into it at all. The historical narrative recorded in Judges iv. is most instructive on this subject. The character of warfare in this age is different from what it then was (see Eph. vi. 12), but God's principles are the same. It was never Jehovah's *way* to use a woman to judge His people Israel, nor to use a woman's hand in slaying the enemies of His people, but in a time of sin against the Lord, and consequent weakness, He did both; and in carrying out His present "eternal purpose," He may do so again. Hence, "*men, brethren*," need to be careful how we speak of woman's ministry, lest our want of heart in Gospel work should make it necessary for God to take up a woman to do the work which ought to have been done by us. But it is well to notice here that whilst Deborah judged Israel in a time of extreme weakness she *dwelt* between Ramah and Bethel, and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment. And whilst she went with Barak to the field of battle because he lacked faith and courage to go alone, she did not lead the army. "Barak went up with ten thousand at his feet." Also, whilst the Lord used Jael to destroy the captain of the enemy's host she did it in *private*, not in *public*. And whilst both these godly women were used of God in doing work which ought to have been done by men, they still kept the woman's place. And whilst women were used by the Lord, when He was on earth, to carry a message, when He sent out the "twelve" (Luke ix. 1) and the "seventy" (Luke x. 1) there was not a woman among them. There was then, as now, a large field for woman's ministry without taking the place of the man. G. A.

[For Editor's view of this subject see "Ministry of Women."]

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXIX.

*THE PRODIGAL SON.*By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible.*

LUKE XV. 11-32.

Verses 11-24. "And He said: A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father: 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.' And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into the fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself he said: 'How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me one of thy hired servants.' And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' But the father said to his servants: 'Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to be merry."

IF any proof were required that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" I believe this chapter affords abundant evidence. It stands unique, towering in magnificence and beauty, pre-eminent above all human composition, ancient or modern. We have in these parables Divine grace in trinity of action and fulness of joy—a threefold provision for sinner, backslider, and child of God.

In the opening parable the grace of the Son of God, the Good Shepherd seeking the lost sheep appears. In the next the grace of the Divine, eternal Spirit, in and through the Church, is shown in recovering the lost, and the joy of that recovery. In the third the grace of the eternal Father is seen in a picture drawn with a master-hand, as He alone could who was the well-beloved Son, and painted by the eternal Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.

We may look at this parable from a threefold point of view. 1st. As it would appear to an EVANGELIST, who is sent out "into all the

world" to preach the Gospel "to every creature." Here the universal Fatherhood of God, as Creator, is recognised, for He is the Father of spirits, and "we are His offspring" (Acts xvii. 28). Dispensationally, the elder son is the Jew, or he may be looked at as the type of the moral and religious man, the one who kept the clean side of the broad road—the Pharisee. The younger son may be regarded as the Gentile, or the sinner gone, more or less, into deeper degradation, and to remoter lengths of sin and profanity, at length come to himself, awakening to a sense of his position. This is the work of the Holy Spirit bringing him to see his real condition in the sight of God, convicting of sin, righteousness, and of a judgment to come. Now the remembrance of what he had lost, and his ruin, is pressed home to his heart; he had been like Jonah—down, down; but he takes the first upward step, he takes with him words, and the Spirit teaches him to pray: "I have sinned," but I will call him "Father." There are many ways on the downward road that leadeth to destruction—many by-paths—but there is only one way back to God, to be entered by "the wicket gate." Jesus has said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

HOW WAS HE RECEIVED?

The woman in the second parable puts the recovered piece of silver, some would tell us, among the coins as a diadem of grace around her BROW. The shepherd puts the lost sheep, when found, upon his SHOULDERS—the place of power. But the father folds him to his BOSOM—the climax of grace, the climax of love.

In this picture the canvas glows with warmest tints; the Spirit lays them on lavishly. There are the robe, the ring, and the shoes on the feet; the fatted calf, the feast, and the beginning of joy—which joy rises higher and higher till it reaches the throne of God, continuing throughout eternity.

2nd. The PASTOR'S view. Here the prodigal is looked at as one in the family, but wandering from the father's house—the backslider, the one who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, but gone after the husks; left the father's house and family, the society of saints, to dabble in the world's dirty waters, to better himself in the far-off land, to try what the

citizen of that country can do for him. But the gentle, dove-like Spirit whispers: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" You, a child of God, how camest thou here? Oh, the deep conviction; the penitential tears that flow! He sighs:

"What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still;
But they have left an aching void
Not all the world can fill.

"Return, O holy Dove! return,
Sweet Messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
And drove Thee from my breast."

To such the language of Scripture is especially encouraging: "Take with you words and turn to Jehovah; say unto Him: 'Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.'" To which the Father replies: "I will heal their backsliding; I will love them freely" (Hosea xiv. 2, 4). There is a warm welcome from the family awaiting the return of such, and a deeper realisation than ever before of the privileges, comforts, and joys of home.

3rd. The aspect in which the TEACHER may regard this parable. To him the prodigal son may be considered as one who, though instructed in the way of truth, and whose outward character and conduct is irreproachable, has never learnt, by experience, under Divine teaching the hidden evils of his heart, and the tendency of his nature to go astray from God. He needs, it may be, some painful experience, some protracted trial, some walking in darkness without any light, in order to bring him to a due sense of what he really is in the sight of God. It is Job's experience over again. As in the case of Job, Satan may be challenged: "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" He himself may be unconscious of iniquity, but the Spirit of God comes and does a deeper work, reminding us of John Newton's hymn:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and hope, and every grace,"

expecting to be led on in peace;

"Instead of this He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart," &c.

But, brought like Job at length to the dust, he no longer holds fast to his integrity. The Holy Spirit turns the concave mirror of the sacred Word in full light on his soul, and that God who shines out of darkness sends a ray of

light into it. What does he discover? Oh, the hardness of heart! The revelation of the Spirit showing the matchless Son of God, convinces him how far he has fallen short of conformity to Him. He now says: "I have heard of Thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Though I might have been kept from outward transgression, I am nothing but sin in myself; this will of mine is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be.

When the eternal Spirit is thus dealing with the soul, showing him his sins in the light of the Divine countenance, he will not say with the elder son: "I have been perfect all these years," but rather he will say: "Father, I have sinned. Oh, reveal Thy Son in me, and by Thy Spirit's mighty power, on the ruins of self, establish Thy kingdom of joy and love Divine." To him the Lord Jesus will not only be the way back to the Father from the far-off land, or the door into the sheep-fold, but the way into the sanctuary, where, in the light of the lamp-stand, he may feed on the showbread and worship at the golden altar. But more, He will be to him the new and living way into the holiest of all, where, under the shadow of the Almighty and in the secret place of the Most High, he may feed on the hidden manna and drink at the fountain-head of the river of His pleasures—a foretaste of everlasting joy.

In verses 22, 23 we have a word to the SERVANTS. "The father said to his servants, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.'" There are servants in the household still who need to hear the word from the Master of the household and Father of the family, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him." Show the believer his privileges as child of God and heir of eternal glory. "Put it on him." He may not have faith to appropriate these blessings unto himself. Make him know clearly and distinctly they belong to him, and that he is at full liberty to take home to his heart all the consolation and the joy. Put on his finger the signet-ring, and see to it that his feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace to spread the glad tidings far and wide. "Bring

hither the fatted calf"—into the presence of the Father, and into the midst of His family, as the sacrifices under the law were brought before Jehovah, and to the door of the tent of the congregation, where the people were assembled. Present Jesus to the eye as the fatted calf in all His life-long service, and in all His suitability for sacrifice. "Kill it." Present Him in His sufferings in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross of Calvary. "Let us eat and be merry." Marvellous words! At the Passover the father of the family sat at the table, and partook of the feast with them. In the peace-offering God the Father had His portion; the fat of the inwards was the food of the offering made by fire unto Jehovah—the sweet savour or savour of rest unto God. Aaron and the priestly family had their portion—the heave shoulder and wave breast—while the offerer who presented it fed upon the rest, thus setting forth fellowship together in joy and peace on the ground of the atonement and reconciliation. The Father invites His family to have fellowship with Himself in the joy of grace, and in the foretaste of eternal joys to come.

Verses 25-32. "Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and drew nigh to the house he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him: 'Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf because he hath received him safe and sound.' And he was angry and would not go in, therefore came his father out and entreated him. And he answering, said to his father: 'Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.' And he said unto him: 'Son [child], thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine; it was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.'"

In like manner this portion of the parable may be regarded in three aspects. First, That of the EVANGELIST, who would naturally speak of the elder son as an unconverted man, or a self-righteous, religious Pharisee, occupied, it may be, with externals, but having little fellowship with what is going on within the household.

In the second place the PASTOR might regard the elder son as a consistent professor of

religion; irreproachable in walk and conversation, active and diligent in outward services, and though undoubtedly a child of God, yet lacking in sympathy with earnest efforts for the conversion of sinners, and the reclaiming of the wanderers.

In the third place, to the TEACHER there is something inexpressibly tender in the earnest entreaties of the Father who has gone out to bring His child into closer communion with Himself and into fuller fellowship with His gracious and loving heart. The Father acknowledges his relationship as His Son or child, and also the closeness of His walk with God, "Child, thou art ever with me." Also the riches of his inheritance, "And all that I have is thine."

It is true that the Father gives no encouragement for party and sectarian enjoyment out of the presence of God, and apart from the whole household of faith. For those that would thus make merry with their own friends not even is a kid provided. But where, under the leading of the Spirit of God, there is a desire "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of love Divine, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," for such the feast of love Divine is provided, that, filled with all the fulness of God, there might be a commencement in time of the realisation of those eternal joys which are at God's right hand for evermore. If so, we may add to this last portion of the parable the words, "And they began to be merry."

GOD'S PRESENCE.—God says, "My presence shall go with thee," and I will give thee rest (Ex. xxxiii. 14). And it would be very strange indeed if that presence, which we expect shall be able by itself to fill up eternity for us with rapture, should not be able to make more than tolerable the little fragment of life here which now remains for us. For myself, I desire heartily to pass through my small remainder of pilgrimage "leaning" as I have never leant "on the Beloved," and if, in order to bring this about, it be indispensable that earth be turned into a tenfold wilderness to me than it has ever been, then "Amen"—let Christ be everything to me.—JOHN DICKIE.

THE BLESSED HOPE.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

PART II.

WE all know and are familiar with the common teaching that death answers in each individual case to the coming of the Lord. I want to say a few words upon that. In no passage of the New Testament is death ever so spoken of. Death—that is, the death of the believer, called in the New Testament generally “sleep”—is the departure to be with Christ. In 2 Cor. v. 6 we read: “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith and not by sight.” So long as we are at home in the body we walk by faith. Not having seen Him we love Him. Nevertheless, we are willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. This clearly implies that the moment a believer is absent from the body it is no longer faith but sight. I believe that the instant a believer departs out of the body he has a vision of the Person of Christ far excelling anything known to faith. As the apostle says elsewhere, “To depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” The Spirit of God gives us very little information as to the condition of the spirits of departed believers, yet He gives us the fullest satisfaction, for they are “with Christ,” beholding Christ, which is perfect satisfaction and joy. Death is not a coming of the Lord, for death is not the triumph of Christ, it is the last that sin and Satan can do, and that thought has come to me with great comfort when I watched a dear one let down into the grave, and saw the cold clods fall upon the coffin lid. I comforted myself with this thought as I turned away from the grave: it was the last that sin and Satan could do. The next will be the shout that will usher them into the glory and presence of Christ. Death although robbed of its sting, is like a snake with its fangs extracted—it is harmless, but it is repulsive. I am perfectly sure the believer who has departed is forever with the Lord; yet it is not the coming of the Lord, for it is not the triumph of Christ. The coming of the Lord is His triumph, for then death shall be swallowed up in victory. Not a single rag shall be left in the hand of the enemy as a trophy of his former triumph. Christ will come

in the glory of His power and take every sleeping saint out from the grave, and change every living one on the earth, and take them up to be forever with Himself. This is His triumph. Therefore, I say, we must never confound the departure of the believer, which is Satan’s last triumph, with the coming of Christ, which is His victory over sin and Satan. Christ is patiently waiting. Waiting for what? Not waiting till one by one every believer departs to be with Him, but waiting the moment appointed of the Father when He shall descend from heaven with that mighty shout, and rob the grave of its victory as before He had robbed death of its sting. We ought to be waiting for that same moment that Christ is waiting for, and be sharers of His patience. Already he has triumphed over principalities and powers. They tried, but they could not hold him in the grave.

“Up from the grave He arose
With a mighty triumph o’er His foes.”

He is victor now; but so long as the body of one saint lies in the grave His victory is not complete. But it will be complete; and don’t let us speak about *delay*. The Lord is not delaying His coming. He is waiting the moment appointed of the Father—patiently waiting that time. When He comes there will be no delay. Sometimes in coming home from London the engine keeps proper time till it reaches a junction. There it stops, and the guard is seen walking up and down on the platform as if he had nothing to do. The passengers get restless and irritable about the delay. “What are you waiting for?” “Can’t you get on?” they would cry, and you don’t generally get a satisfactory answer. By-and-by you hear a whistle. A train comes in rapidly on the other platform. There is a hurry and a bustle, a banging of doors, a getting of the luggage and passengers changed out of the one train into the other. A second whistle, and off we go. There was definite cause for the detention. The moment that impediment was removed, there was no delay. I believe now that God is waiting. He has His own appointed time. He has not told it to men nor to angels. No. The hour is not known, but is kept in the heart of the Father. The Lord Jesus in patience is waiting for it, and when it comes, will there be delay? He

will descend from the throne of the Father with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And how long will He take to do His work—how long will He take? A moment's too long. "In the twinkling of an eye." There's no delay there. I asked an electrician how long it takes for a message to come by cable from Australia to London. Now, it takes a swift steamer six weeks to come; but that message borne by the electric current comes in three-sixteenths of a second. That's very quick work. You can hardly take it in, and yet that happens every day. Dear friends, the Lord Jesus Christ will come in more than electric rapidity. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he will raise every sleeping saint out of the grave, and the living ones will be changed, and fitted to appear in the glory of His presence in the place prepared for them in His Father's house. That is what we are waiting for. I don't know how it comes up into the hearts of people to think that saints are not to know one another. I think the fourth chapter of first Thessalonians has settled the question, because it is written thus concerning those who have departed to be with Christ. The apostle says: "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words; they shall be caught up together to meet Him in the air." Comfort one another with these words. Memory can never be extinguished. It is comforting to know that those who have been separated by death shall be together when He comes—never to part again. That is all part of this blessed hope. It is all bound up together. You remember that when the Lord Jesus was upon earth He put forth His mighty resurrection power on three occasions. He raised the daughter of Jairus, and when He raised the little child He gave her into the charge of the parents, and told them to give her something to eat, and withdrew, and left them to enjoy what grace had done for them. And when He raised the widow's son that was being carried on a bier, He touched the bier, and the young man rose up. What did He do? Delivered him to his mother—restored the broken link. When He raised Lazarus from the grave, where do we see Lazarus next? In the home of his loving sisters. There He is at the table with them again; the link that death had broken is restored. Which is the

greater joy—the joy of the Lord Jesus Christ in restoring these broken links—joy He had in giving them back to the affection of their friends—or their joy who received the blessing? And don't you think that will be part of His joy when He comes for us. It is all brought together in this blessed hope. It is like the boy with the burning glass. He puts it in the rays of the sun, and it so gathers them together into one focus, in the centre of the lens, that the heat will set fire to a piece of paper. When I was a boy at school I used to do it. It seems to me as though God had brought together into one focus every blessed thought, every glorious prospect, that the heart could desire. In Israel of old land was valued and payment reckoned from the day of the jubilee, which came every fiftieth year. Supposing any one wanted to sell out his land nine years after the jubilee, he would get a good price for it, because the man who bought it would have 40 years of crops from it. But supposing the jubilee was only next year, the man selling would not get much for it, as the purchaser would only have one year of it. God would have us to entertain such a faith and expectation concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we would be looking upon it as going to happen immediately. He would have us understand that we might not have another day of the world, let alone another year of it. The Lord may come before to-morrow morning, and what then becomes of the world? God would have us live in prospect of that, and to live for Christ, and for heaven, and for eternity.

THE LIGHT AND TRUTH OF GOD.

Notes of Address by Mr. A. STEWART, 1st Jan., 1870.

PSALM XLIII.

THE Lord has been leading our hearts out this morning in praise for the blessings of the past year, and indeed, as has been remarked in prayer, we have always more to praise Him for than to ask for.

In this Psalm we have three distinct steps prior to taking the harp. First—Light from the Lord. This is indispensable: the light that shines from the face of Jesus. There is no other light for our souls but God's light—all else is darkness.

But whither do the light and truth of God lead us? Second step—To God's holy hill and dwelling-place. It is because light has been dissociated from holiness that it has been abused; men have sought for light and it has been given, but its leading to the *hill of God's holiness* has been rejected, and even light has been condemnation.

There may be the outward form of praise apart from the apprehension of God's holiness, but no true praise; the harp cannot be attuned to His praise apart from His presence. Arrived at the holy hill, the third step is the altar. There were two altars—the first on entrance was the altar of burnt-offering; next the golden altar, with the golden crown. No man ever, in spirit, reached the hill of God's holiness and His holy dwelling-place without finding his need of the blood.

It may be said, "I have *got beyond the Cross*; it is the person of the risen Christ, it is the coming of the Lord that occupies me." Alas! for the man that has such an experience. It only tells its own secret—that he *knows not God's presence*, or he would feel that *there* the blood, and the blood alone, could empower him to take the harp.

But if the burnt-offering altar told of the suffering Christ, the golden altar and its golden crown told of the same Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and still ministering to God on our account. There is the place for praise—it is as we see Jesus risen, and know that through His blood we are righteous, and that in all the fragrance of the incense our praises ascend with acceptance, that we can take the harp and praise Him *our God*.

No doubt some of you this morning have been groaning over the coldness of your hearts, the feebleness of your prayers and praise—but stop! Even that poor hymn that has ascended from this room to-day, with feeble and discordant voices, has reached the highest heaven, the very ear of God, and gone up as incense to Him through *Jesus Christ*. Thus faith can look beyond the disquiet of this present time, and can joy in God as it anticipates the glory, and hope counts through His faithfulness upon the dawning of the morning, when every shadow shall flee away, when we shall be with the Lord for ever and see Him as He is, and in His holy presence praise Him without end!

THE COMMAND AND THE PROMISE TO PRAYER.

By Mr. JAMES WRIGHT, Ashley Down, Bristol.

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."—Jer. xxxiii. 3.

PART II.

NOW let us look at the *circumstances under which this very precious promise was given*.

It was given to a servant of God in prison, therefore it was given to a very tried one. Jeremiah was a man of tears, and was in measure a beautiful picture of the Greater than Jeremiah—of the Man of Sorrows. "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people" (Jer. ix. 1). That was Jeremiah's heart—he was the weeping Prophet. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. xv. 16). So had the Greater than Jeremiah His joys; unbroken fellowship with Jehovah always filled His heart with joy, so that He could say with the Psalmist: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places" (Ps. xvi. 6). The only explanation of that is that unbroken fellowship with the Father was infinite compensation for all the trials of the way. So it will be with us, in measure, if we have the mind of Christ.

There is great connection between the two things—

DEEP SORROW AND ABOUNDING SPIRITUAL JOY.

God holds the balances, and if He puts sorrow into one, He puts consolation into the other. "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (2 Cor. i. 5); and "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" (1 Cor. x. 13). He pours in the consolation, and always keeps the balance even. Do not let us be afraid of trial, for it brings us into fellowship with Christ, and gives us the consolation of Christ. It is a very different thing to talk about this consolation, or read about it in the Scriptures, and to know it in our hearts. If we do not know trial we do not know the consolation; and if we will shun the cross and have a flowery path all through life, we must go without the consolation. Let us understand

the purpose of our Father when He brings us into very sore trial ; it is that we may have fellowship with Him, and know more of His consolation, and grow more like Him.

Now, this was a message to a servant of God in prison. Prisons have been blessed places to God's servants.

THEY ARE LIKE GREENHOUSES,

where the plants of God's own planting are sheltered from the withering blasts of worldly applause, and from worldly prosperity—another terrible blast.

Look at Bunyan in Bedford prison. It was there that God gave him that wonderful vision of the course of the child of God from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. Ah, Bunyan would never have written "The Pilgrim's Progress" if he had been brought up at Court ; he must go into prison for it. Look at Paul in the inner prison at Philippi (Acts xvi). What was that ? A concert-room where, with smarting backs, Paul and Silas discoursed sweet music to a notable audience, not the *élite* of the town, such as are seen at a musical festival, but—prisoners ! I dare say that singing lightened some burdens and produced an effect far superior to the masterpieces of man's music in God's sight. Ah, but was not God the Father also listening and all the holy angels ? When Paul was in prison in Jerusalem (Acts xxiii. 11), alone in the darkness, the Lord stood by him and said : "Be of good cheer, Paul." Now, beloved friends, you would enjoy one of the worst dungeons in Russia if you could hear such a voice. I do not wish to boast, but I think I should if I could hear that voice saying, "Be of good cheer." It was in that prison in Rome that he said : "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in Him," &c. Paul must go into prison to be brought so into fellowship with God and His Son Jesus Christ as to pour forth such a prayer. O blessed places such prisons were !

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an heritage.

If I have freedom in my Lord,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty."

It is no prison to one free in Christ Jesus. But suppose we are never put in prison, we may notwithstanding that be shut up. David says in Psalm lxxxviii. 8, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth." He was not in prison, but simply limited and enclosed by circumstances ; he was in great difficulty and perplexity, and could not see which way to turn. You and I may often be in such a prison, and speaking freely to our heavenly Father say, "I am shut up." Remember that is the time for prayer. Jeremiah was in prison praying, and then God says, "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee." If he had lacked a little in the spirit of prayer this must have been a blessed tonic to his soul. So if we are in prison it is God's mind that we should pray, and He can bring us out ; it is the very work of Christ to give deliverance to the captives. Now, remember that, and when in prison plead the worthiness of Christ, and most assuredly you will get deliverance, for He "will show thee great and mighty things that thou knowest not." Peter was in prison, and Herod had fixed the day of his execution. The night before he was sleeping guarded by sixteen soldiers—a pretty strong guard for one man ; but what about these sixteen soldiers ? They all went to sleep. What of the chains ? When the angel of the Lord touched him they fell off. What of Peter ? He went out of the prison ; the iron gate opened before him, and he went into the city, to the house of Mary, the mother of John, "where many were gathered together *praying*" (Acts xii.). O what a mighty thing is prayer—

A MIGHTY THING !

Never despair, whatever prison you get into !

But it was not only to a servant of God in prison this promise was made, it was made to an *obedient* servant. If you carefully read the preceding chapter you will find that Jeremiah had just been subjected to a most severe test ; he had been told by the Lord to buy a field in Anathoth. "The day shall come when land will be again sold here, and I want you to do this in faith of my promise." Therefore he did what the man of the world would have considered making a very bad bargain.

But we glorify God more by faith than by business talent. That is the practical point. It was after this splendid act of obedience and faith God brought an exceeding rich reward to His obedient child. If we want the reward we must be obedient children. What a poor thing to get to heaven simply because we do not want to go to hell—what a poor thing for a Christian to lose his *life*, even though he does not lose his *soul*; but there is such a thing as getting to heaven and having all our works burnt up, only our soul saved (1 Cor. iii. 15). That was not Jeremiah's case—he was an obedient servant. Fellow-believers, it should be our ambition as saved souls to be well-pleasing to God. We can find out easily if we are testing our ways, thoughts, feelings, desires by this Word; we can anticipate the judgment-seat of Christ, and find out what is pleasing to Him, and then everything pleasing to God that we have done will be remembered in that day. We shall be heaping up treasure in heaven, and this is very different from getting to heaven by the skin of our teeth. Jeremiah was an obedient servant, and therefore God gave him such refreshment.

One other thought with regard to this promise. We must read it

IN CONNECTION WITH ALL THE GLORIOUS
PROMISES

to restored, forgiven, blessed Israel in the latter days. These are some of the mighty and hidden things that God spoke of here—that is, hidden in God's purpose and counsel, not revealed or manifested. And such are all the purposes of blessing to His people Israel. Never let us forget it, for it concerns the glory of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus. These promises of God to the literal Israel regarding the possession of the land, and the thousand years of blessing to that land, must come to pass because Christ died on the Cross. On the ground of the value of that death of the Lord Jesus these temporal blessings come to Israel, and we should never forget that. Our statesmen do not regard the fact that Jerusalem is to be the centre of earthly polity—not London, not Berlin, but Jerusalem—and there the Son of Man will reign. And then there will be that connection between earth and heaven of which our Lord spoke to

Nathaniel: "Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John i. 51)—a beautiful picture of communication between earth and heaven, when Satan is cast into the pit and bound for a thousand years. That is the true solution of the Eastern Question! Never let us forget that—thankful as we are for every moment of peace we enjoy, and every bit of blessing that God causes to rest upon the enactments of our statesmen, and that they are bent on peace, and we should praise and bless God for it—yet we as believers must look onward to the future of God's Word.

We speak of "the world to come," the coming age—an age different from this age. *Now*, the devil is rampant, setting one nation against another; *then*, he will be bound and off the scene, and Christ will reign. Truth will be paramount, and the devil in chains. I do not say there will not be sin, because at the end of the thousand years there will be an outbreak of rebellion against God, but it will be a thousand years of great blessing, because Satan will be bound, for he is a large factor in the world's history, and then will be fulfilled Psalm viii.: "O Lord our God, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!"

Beloved friends, there was power in the believing prayer of one man to help on the blessing of the nation of Israel. Now this applies in measure to us: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee" (Psalm cxxii. 6).

"BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY."

"I will seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." "And there shall be one flock and one Shepherd" (Ezek. xxxiv. 12; Jno. x. 16).

LORD, Thy sheep are sadly scattered,
And the world is strange and cold:

Many lambs, with piteous bleating,

Cry for some protecting fold.

Jesus, gentle Shepherd, come!

Gather all the wand'ers home.

Some are straying on bleak mountains,

Where the grass is dry and dead;

Wolves have entered, and have spared not—

What sad havoc they have made!

Jesus, gracious Shepherd, come!

Call Thy wayward wand'ers home.

Over all, where'er they're straying,
 Ever watchful Thou dost keep;
 Thou dost mark the faintest bleatings,
 And the wand'rings of Thy sheep.
 Follow them, where'er they roam,
 And Thou'lt surely bring them home.

Some are feeding in the valleys,
 Where the grass is tender, sweet;
 Tracing out the unseen footprints,
 Sitting at the Master's feet,
 Looking, Lord, for Thee to come.
 Come, and take Thy loved ones home.

Keep their hearts, the while they're waiting,
 Ever faithful, Lord, to Thee.
 Filling up the fleeting moments,
 Ere Thy glorious face we see,
 Shepherd of Thy scattered sheep,
 May we patient vigil keep.

H. M'D.

“PREACHING THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

By WM. COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

PART II.

BEING pressed by the people to stay with them in Luke iv. 43, He said, “I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities *also*, for therefore am I sent.” Already in that chapter we are told *what* He had been preaching. Taking as His text Isa. lxi. 1, He proclaimed Himself “anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor.” He was “sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” This was now fulfilled in their ears. So far from any reference to what lay beyond, He “closed the book” at that point. Nor, in fact, do we find it recorded that He taught anything about the future Kingdom, except as to the judgments and rewards then to take place.

Of the Parables of the Kingdom, while some carry forward to the final judgments, all, more or less, have for their burden the Kingdom in its present aspects. The sowing of the tares; the net—gathering of every kind; the king's debtor, the labourers in the vineyard, the husbandman, the king's marriage feast, the wise and foolish virgins, the talents, the sheep and goats—all of the deepest importance to ourselves in our walk of faith and obedience. And

some, like the Sower (with which, be it observed, the Lord connects “the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven”), the leaven, the hidden treasure, and the pearl, speak of *present* aspects *only*.

“The Word of the Kingdom,” which was to be sown in the heart (Matt. xiii. 19), was it the teaching on the Second Advent? What was the Kingdom of Heaven which the violent were taking by force? Compare *βιάζεται*, in Matt. xi. 12, with Luke xvi. 16. Or the Kingdom of Heaven, which the Pharisees had shut up against men—neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that were entering to go in; taking away the key of knowledge (Matt. xxiii. 13; Luke xi. 52)?

“The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt. xvi. 19)—Were these the keys of the Millennial Kingdom? Or was it to be Peter's office to open to Jew and Gentile the great fact of Christ's Personal reign? If so, how is it that neither at Pentecost, nor at Cesarea, nor in his epistles, is there any mention of the subject beyond such allusions as in Acts ii. 30-35, iii. 20, and in his second epistle the confirmation of “the promise of His coming?”

What was the “Gospel of the Kingdom,” which should be preached in “all the world before the end come” (Matt. xxiv. 14)? Was it Second Advent truth? Or was it what He charged them with in Luke xxiv. 47—“That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations?”

“The Kingdom of God,” which should be taken from Israel and given to others—Was it the Millennial Kingdom? Read Micah iv. 8.

During the forty days (Acts i. 3) He was “speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” But when they questioned Him about restoring the Kingdom to Israel, He denied them an answer, and, as in the case of the Pharisees in Luke xvii. 20, turned their attention to what then concerned themselves.

Philip preached the Kingdom of God at Samaria. Was it prophetic teaching? Paul describes by the term “the Kingdom of God” that which he went about preaching. He has just before described it as “the Gospel of the Grace of God” (Acts xx. 24, 25; and compare xix. 8, xxviii. 23-31). Where in Acts do we find him speaking of the Millennial reign? Or how much do we find about it in his

epistles? He tells us of judgments then to come, as 1 Cor. iii. 13, iv. 5, vi. 9, 10, ix. 27, or 2 Tim. iv. 1, 18; that Israel will be restored, Rom. xi.; the "till He come" of 1 Cor. xi. 26. It is in chap. xv. we find his most explicit teaching on this point. Christ leaves the *Father's throne to take the subject Kingdom*, when His saints are raised to reign with Him.

In Galatians his only mention of the future is in vi. 8, 9. In Eph., if i. 10 is of the future, it is the solitary instance there. Phil. ii. 10, 11, speaks of Christ's coming glory, and iii. of the blessed hope of resurrection, referred to again in Col. i. 5, iii. 4, and 1 Thess. i. 10, ii. 19, iii. 13; while iv. 13 shows the power of that hope for comfort to the bereaved, and v. 1-11 its bearing on watchfulness—all, of course, in connection with the Lord's Personal return. 2 Thess. gives further instructions as to accompaniments of that event, and Titus ii. teaches us how to behave while "awaiting that blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Precious as are these allusions found scattered among his writings, and abundant as is their testimony to the Lord's Personal return, can it be said that they warrant us in understanding that when he spoke of the "Kingdom of God" as the theme of his preaching, he meant the coming Millennial reign?

In Rom. xiv. 17 he describes the "Kingdom of God" as being "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Here we can hardly fail to recognise what very largely occupied all his teaching, as the superstructure he sought to build on the one foundation—Jesus the Christ. It was the same that under the kindred words of "Justice, mercy, and faith," the Lord Himself taught—the laws of His Kingdom (comp. Micah vi. 8). These are what He amplifies in the "Sermon on the Mount," declaring that His Kingdom is for those who hear these sayings of His and do them.

The truth of a manifested Kingdom, when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, is abundantly shown in other Scriptures. It needs not that we should enlist on its behalf the above and similar passages which speak of a present Kingdom. A weak argument in favour sometimes damages the cause of truth more than open opposition. Perhaps nothing has more tended to hinder the reception of the

truth of a Personal reign than the habitual application to it by its advocates of what can be evidently seen to refer to the present aspect of the Kingdom.

And more than this. We rob ourselves thereby of the most important to us of all the *teachings of the Divine Word*. Next to the truth of sin forgiven through faith in the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ, what most concerns us now is our walk as His servants—the *subjects* of His Kingdom, as bearing on our place as *sharers* of His Kingdom hereafter. Hear His words in Matt. vii. 21, and compare Luke xiii. 24-30—"Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven." "Except your righteousness (expressly of keeping His commandments) shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (ch. v. 20). Take these which way we will, they tell that "the Kingdom" is something more than deliverance from the wrath to come. The Kingdom *there* is only for those who enter the Kingdom—as He describes it—*here*. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Greatest and least in the Kingdom is according as we thus obey. To those who faithfully followed Him here, He appointed the Kingdom and the thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke xxii. 29). It is "to him that overcometh" He will give to sit with Him in His Throne (Rev. iii. 21). Only as we give diligence to make our calling and election sure, adding to our faith according to 2 Peter i. 5-7, an entrance will be ministered abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Solemn, indeed, are these words. How fearful would they be if they implied a question of *life* rather than of *reward*? But see 1 Cor. iii. 15, where the opposite is made clear: "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." Here it is plainly declared that the loss of reward does not mean loss of salvation. And it throws light on the above Scriptures, *and many others which are commonly taken as speaking of false professors*, therefore as having no application to children of God; and thus

the Word of God is made of none effect to those it especially concerns.

Neither, on the other hand, is the contrite believer, who trembles at God's Word and mourns his shortcoming, to regard these searching words as dooming him to the judgment of false professors, and excluding his name from the Book of Life; for thus many hearts are made sad whom God would not make sad. Yet, with these Scriptures before us, we may see the danger of supposing that all the glories of Heaven and the crowns of the Kingdom belong, of course, to those who have been redeemed from eternal death. Blessed be God for His Grace that saves us sinners from the hell we deserved! But, beyond this, He sets before the obedient child and the faithful servant a prize to be won, which we shall miss (1 Cor. ix. 27; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Rev. iii. 11), if we rest satisfied to be saved from the wrath to come, and forget that we are bought with a price to serve Him who so redeemed us.

In vain we would picture in our imagination what the reality of all this will be, what the Kingdom will be like, or the rewards in their actual fulfilment. When we have done our best in conjecturing, in interpreting prophecies and symbols, we are probably as wide of the mark as were those before the Lord's first coming in their thoughts of that event. Had this been what the Lord intended us to know all about, He would have written it plainly in the Word, instead of veiling it in so much obscurity. If He has not seen fit to do so, it is because it belongs to Himself to fulfil His promises and to administer His judgments. He teaches in Matt. xx. and xxv. that these will come out very unlike what we may anticipate. Our part is to see that we walk in loving obedience to His commands, for all these are made abundantly plain. The rewards are not promised to those who have diligently searched out His secrets and mapped out His plans, but to those who have diligently kept His commandments and done His will.



TWO THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING. — 1. "IN ME, that is in my flesh, dwelleth *no* good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). 2. "IN HIM, dwelleth *all* the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9). T. B.

THE CENTRE AND THE CIRCLE.

John xii., xiii.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

CHAPTER xii. closes up a distinct section in the Gospel of John. It presents the death of Christ in a fourfold aspect, and it involves Messiah's break (for the time being at least) with the Jew. Verse 24 shows the necessity of the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying in order to have associates with itself. This is the cross in the light of our condition. There could have been no link with Christ on the ground of His incarnation merely. He had to descend into "the dust of death."

Verses 27 and 28 contemplate the Cross in the light of the Father's glory: "Now is My soul troubled; what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." Beyond the glory that the life of the Lord Jesus secured to the Father, His death was the complete vindication of God's character and the settling of all outstanding claims of righteousness upon man, so that the very heart and nature of God could repose in profound satisfaction in the love and obedience of the Son.

But verse 31 intimates that the Cross is an impeachment of the world, it demonstrates its guilt, and its shadow falls upon it like a funeral pall: "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out." It is a solemn thing to accept as your home a world which has Satan for its prince now. The Cross is its moral exposure, as it is the bruising of its rebel leader. It is not the world as the handiwork of God, but that awful system introduced in the Fall, "overcome" by Christ in His life, and judged in His death.

Now comes a further important communication: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me"; this, He said, signifying what death He should die. A rejected Christ becomes God's new Centre of gathering — "all" shall yet be drawn to Him and own Him Lord. There will be a "vast universe of bliss," and He who was lifted up from the earth, refused by it, and morally separated

from it, as well as actually lifted up above it, will be the Centre and Sun of that blessed scene—evil will have been forever banished into the lake of fire, regarded as beyond its bounds, as in “the *outer darkness*” where the daybeams never reach.

In the meantime He draws a comparatively limited company indeed to Himself—the Christian company, called the “*ecclesia*,” conventionally, the “Church,” and the Church is the present comfort the Father ministers to Christ because of the loss of Israel, as Isaac was comforted in Rebekkah after his mother’s death.

Chapters xiii. to xvii. tell us about this little circle drawn around God’s new Centre—the new and resurrection family, fruit of the travail of His soul—“*many brethren*,” according to the magnificent scope of God’s election, though the “*little flock*,” compared with “the *great congregation* in the midst of which Messiah will yet sing praises to God, that glorious millennial gathering in the dispensation to follow this.

And thus we find if “*His own*,” in chapter i. 11, meant the nation, here “His own” meant quite a different circle, a very much smaller company, only a feeble, insignificant remnant separated from the nation attached to His person. He has them apart in that upper room. He has done with the nation as such, He is leaving the world *to go to the Father*, the beautiful form of expression the Gospel of John employs to describe His death.

Now there are two things that characterised His activities to everyone the Father had drawn into this new circle: “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end,” and “He began to wash His disciples’ feet”: *love and holiness*. The love was unconquerable, but the holiness unflinching: “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me,” for love seeks the company of its object, and how could we be at home in His company if His eye detected a spot. “Fellowship” can only be in “the light” whatever *love* might wish, else it degenerates into mere sociability, the honey of nature.

Not that their feet were defiled for *Jewish* communion, for they had partaken of the Pass-over together; but now the Lord would unfold the nature of *Christian* fellowship, and the grace that brings us into Christian blessings is

not less but more stringent in its holiness than the Law. *Their feet were not clean enough for that*; the Lord would have them more than *merely converted Jews*, and stopping there.

And now in His absence they should act towards each other according to the example He had shown. Thus, if His love continued in its strength right on till the end, His word to them is: “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; *as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*” (verse 34). Outside was the world, inside the new circle was to be the atmosphere of love that never cools. But He had washed them as well as loved, and so His word: “If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to *wash one another’s feet*” (verse 14).* Keep each other clean, keep the fellowship pure, preserve untainted the atmosphere of holiness, keep defilement out.

People don’t object to the love—they can’t get too much of that—they complain of its lack, but call the washing interference; but we dare not set the one against the other—they flow from the nature of God, who is “Light” and who is “Love” in the very essence of His Being.

This, then, is what is to be found in the Christian circle, or more correctly, *to be shown*—holiness and love, purity and affection, truth and grace. The nearer we get to the Centre the more intelligent will our souls become in both these blessed activities of Him whom, drawn by Himself, we own as Lord, before the vast creation joins as one to give Him His dearly-bought rights.

PERFECT LOVE GIVES ALL.

THE Lord Jesus in His love keeps back nothing from thee: He could not do it; He is constantly giving; He gives thee His all; He has given thee His very self. It is more delightful for Him to give to thee than for thee to get. At this moment the Lord Jesus in heaven has no more than thou hast upon earth, for in purest love He shares His all with thee: His Sonship (John i. 12), His glory (John xvii. 22), and at length His very throne (Rev. iii. 21). For perfect love does not, and cannot, keep anything back from its beloved, and thou art the object of His perfect love. Heaven would

* It must not be forgotten that the washing of the feet was the *lowliest* service that one could perform for another.

be greatly wanting to Him without His people beside Him; therefore He is coming to receive them to Himself. What a shocking thing that any of us should seek or find our rest on this sin-cursed earth without Him!—JOHN DICKIE.

Correspondence.

A BRIEF VISIT TO BIBLE LANDS—IV.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

ON Thursday morning, 14th April, we took the train from Jerusalem to Jaffa, and in the evening sailed for Cyprus. As we steamed northwards close to land we were pointed out a number of Bible localities. *Mount Ebal* and *Mount Gerizim*, the mountains of blessing and cursing, were conspicuous objects of interest rising up from the plains of Samaria. It was probably *Mount Gerizim* that the Samaritan woman referred to when she said to the Lord, "Our fathers worshipped in *this mountain*" (John iv. 20). The ruins of the once flourishing city of *Cæsarea* were seen. It was at *Cæsarea* that *Cornelius*, the first Gentile convert, was baptised (Acts x. 48). It was at *Cæsarea* that Paul was sent by *Claudius Lysias* under the protection of the Roman soldiers (Acts xxiii. 21-23). It was at *Cæsarea* that he so "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment" that *Felix* trembled and said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (ch. xxiv. 25). Between *Haifa* and *Beyrout* there are the ruins of the two ancient cities *Tyre* and *Sidon*. *Tyre* at one time was a populous city of Phœnicia. In *Joshua's* day it was spoken of as "the strong city" (*Joshua* xix. 29), and in *Isaiah's* time "the crowning city whose merchants are princes" (*Isaiah* xxiii. 8). *Hiram*, one of its kings, supplied *Solomon* with cedars of Lebanon for the building of the Temple (1 Kings ix. 11). *Sodom's* especial sins were "pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness" (*Ezekiel* xvi. 49). *Pride* was the sin of *Tyre*. The Divine prediction, "Thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon" (*Ezek.* xxvi. 5) has been literally fulfilled. *Sidon*, an important city in the days of the *Judges* (*Judges* xviii. 28), mentioned by *Jeremiah* (*Jer.* xxv. 22) and by the Lord (*Matt.* xi. 21) was sighted. The modern town is surrounded by extensive orange groves, and has a population of 15,000. *Beyrout*, the *Berothah* of Scripture, was reached. It is the largest and most important commercial city of Syria, and has upwards of 100,000 inhabitants. The streets of the city and some of the buildings are large and imposing. The *Protestant Syrian College*, composed of three handsome buildings overlooking the bay, has a good teaching staff

and 100 students. Eleven of our passengers disembarked at *Beyrout* to visit *Baalbec* and *Damascus*. We remained in the *Creole Prince*, and soon after sailed for *Cyprus*, reaching *Larnica* on the following day. *Cyprus* is the ancient *Chittim* of Scripture (*Numb.* xxiv. 24), is 125 miles long by 25 wide, and has a population of 200,000. Two-thirds of its inhabitants belong to the Greek and Latin communions, the remainder, with the exception of a few Episcopalians, being Moslems. Since the British occupation great progress has been made. We spent a day at *Larnica*, another at *Limasoll*, and a third at *Paphos*. Whilst at *Paphos* we thought of Paul's visit to the town, of the conversion of *Sergius Paulus*, and of *Elymas* the sorcerer being stricken with blindness (*Acts* xiii. 4-13).

Barnabas, who was a native of *Cyprus*, sold his property and gave the proceeds to the Lord (*Acts* iv. 36, 37). *Cyprus* was the home of *Mnason*, the "old disciple" with whom Paul lodged at *Jerusalem* (*Acts* xxi. 16). After *Stephen's* martyrdom some of those who were "scattered abroad" went to *Cyprus* and preached the Word (*Acts* xi. 19). On returning to *Beyrout* we picked up the *Damascus* passengers, and set sail for *Haifa*. *Haifa* is picturesquely situated at the foot of *Mount Carmel*. We spent a night there. I was thankful to be able to visit Mr. and Mrs. *Joseph*, who are toiling on with much discouragement. I was privileged to address a class of 21 Arab youths in Mr. *Joseph's* house. Was pleased to meet Mr. and Mrs. *Wasserszug*, who are now labouring in *Haifa*. I visited the new iron room which has been erected through our brother *Joseph*. These dear brethren and sisters have many hindrances and drawbacks in their work, and would value the fellowship and prayers of God's people. At 6.30 the following morning we started in vehicles for *Tiberias*, a journey of about 45 miles. Leaving *Haifa* we skirted the base of *Carmel*, a range of mountains or hills 14 miles in length, and from 600 to 1800 feet in height. Two or three miles from *Haifa* we crossed "that ancient river, the river *Kishon*" (*Judges* v. 21). It is now a shallow stream, and flows into the *Mediterranean*. One of the peaks of *Carmel* is called "The Sacrifice," being the traditional site of the spot where "the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the sacrifice" (1 Kings xviii. 38) offered by *Elijah*. By the prophet's command the false prophets of *Baal* were slain at the *Kishon* (verse 40). The road, which was exceedingly rough in some parts, was being repaired by the Turkish authorities in view of the contemplated visit of the German Emperor in the autumn. After several hours' travelling we entered the *Plain of Esdraelon* or *Valley of Megiddo* (2 Chron. xxxv. 22), the great battlefield of Pales-

tine. It was on this plain close to the river Kishon that Sisera's army was defeated (Judges iv. 13-16). It was there that Gideon with his 300 men defeated the Midianitish host (Judges vii. 19-22). *Jezebel*, the favourite abode of King Ahab, and the city where his wicked queen, Jezebel, was devoured by dogs (2 Kings ix. 36), was seen. *Nain*, the city where the young man, the "only son of his mother," was raised from the dead (Luke vii. 15), and *Shunem*, the place where the woman resided whose son was restored to life through Elijah (2 Kings iv. 35), were pointed out. *Mount Hermon*, with its 10,000-foot snow-crowned cap; *Mount Gilboa*, where Saul and Jonathan perished in battle (1 Sam. xxxi. 1); *Mount Tabor*, mentioned by the Psalmist: "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name" (Ps. lxxxix. 12), were clearly seen. At mid-day we arrived at *Nazareth*, where we dined. As we were anxious to reach Tiberias before dark, we hurried onward. We halted for an hour or so at *Cana*, where the Lord turned water into wine (John ii.), and saw one of the waterpots that was said to be used on that festive occasion! Shortly after sunset we reached Tiberias. At 6.30 the following day we were on board a large fishing-boat on the Sea of Galilee, manned by five barefooted and barelegged Arabs. *The Lake of Gennesaret*, or *Sea of Galilee*, is 12½ miles long, and from 4 to 6½ wide, and is 681 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. As we sped through the calm water I thought of M'Cheyne's familiar lines:

"How pleasant to me thy deep, blue wave,
O Sea of Galilee!
For the Glorious One Who came to save
Hath often stood by thee.
Fair are the lakes in the land I love,
Where pine and heather grow;
But thou hast loveliness far above
What Nature can bestow.
It is not that the wild gazelle
Comes down to drink thy tide,
But He that was pierced to save from hell
Oft wandered by thy side."

What hallowed memories are associated with this beautiful lake! It was here that the Lord Jesus from the deck of a fishing-boat uttered most of His parables (Matt. xiii.). Here He called John and James, Peter and Andrew, to be "fishers of men" (Matt. iv. 18-22). On this very lake He rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a "great calm" (Matt. viii. 26). Here He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection (John xxi. 6-8). Once there was a number of flourishing cities on its shores, such as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, but at the present day the only place of any importance is Tiberias, which is one of the Jewish holy cities. Once the lake was covered with fishing-

boats; now there are only about half-a-dozen. Yet the water teems with fish, and those we had for our breakfast were exceedingly good.

The distance from Tiberias to *Tell Hum*, the traditional site of *Capernaum*, is about seven miles. By using the sails and oars we reached it in two hours. We were shown the site of *Dalmanutha* (Mark viii. 10) and *Magdala*, the home of Mary Magdalene (Luke viii. 2), and afterwards landed at Capernaum. All that remains of that once populous place, which the evangelist calls "his own city" (Matt. ix. 1), are a few ancient ruins, amongst them some resembling those of a synagogue. The supposed sites of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* are a couple of miles farther east. The shores of the lake are fringed with shrubs, flowering oleanders being very plentiful. Some of us had the luxury of a bathe and a swim in the historic waters.

How highly favoured were the inhabitants of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida! If *Tyre* and *Sidon* had had the privileges that they enjoyed, "they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes" (Matt. xi. 21). The principle, "To whom much is given, of the same much will be required," is a Divine one. One of our Arab boatmen accepted a copy of John's Gospel in Arabic, and read portions of it aloud to the others. Oh, that the glorious Gospel of God's matchless grace were received by them! After dinner we left Tiberias for Nazareth. On the road we passed the *Horns of Hattin*, a hill the shape of a saddle. This is believed by many to be the *Mount of Beatitudes*, where the Lord Jesus preached what is popularly called *The Sermon on the Mount*. It is also said that there or close by He fed the 5000 with five loaves and two fishes. At this very hill the battle of Hattin was fought in 1187, which sealed the fate of the Crusaders. Saladdin, the Turkish general, defeated the "Christians," and took as prisoners the King of Jerusalem and the Grand Master of the Templars. *Nazareth* was reached in the evening.

"And Nazareth, that love reveals
Nestling amidst its lonely hills."

It is said that fifteen green hills rise round Nazareth like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion. It was in this obscure and secluded place that the Lord Jesus spent most of His life on earth. From childhood to youth and from youth to manhood He grew up amidst these lonely Galilean hills. In Luke ii. 39, 40, we are told that Joseph and Mary "returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the Child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him." Nazareth is spoken of as the city where Christ was "brought up" (Luke iv. 16). We

visited the reputed house and home of Joseph and Mary. The monks, however, say that the real house was carried by angels to Loretto in Italy! The workshop of Joseph and Jesus, and the synagogue where Christ read the "gracious words," were shown. Several elevated places are spoken of as the "Hill of Precipitation," over which the Jews sought to cast Christ (Luke iv. 29).

After His rejection by the Nazarenes, the Lord removed to Capernaum. Once afterwards He returned in grace to Nazareth, and the evangelist records that "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt. xiii. 58). In the centre of the town is the *Virgin's Fountain*, the principal, if not the only well, of the place. All day long it was thronged with women coming and going with their waterpots.

Some of us visited and spent a pleasant evening with Dr. and Mrs. Vardun. Dr. Vardun is an aged medical missionary, who has borne the burden and heat of the day for thirty-five years in Palestine. He told us that he only knew of *one* Mohammedan who had publicly confessed Christ, and in order to do so he had to remove to a distant town. The Moslems look upon apostasy from their faith as a crime worthy of death.

Next afternoon we returned to Haifa and sailed for Alexandria. During our stay of six days at the latter place we had opportunities of meeting a number of Christians and seeing something of the Lord's doings. Some years ago an English lady, sojourning in Alexandria, besought the Lord to raise up seven young men to preach Christ to the Mohammedans. After waiting on God, six educated Irishmen and a Scotchman gave themselves to the work. We were privileged to have a Bible-reading with four of these brethren in their house in a suburb of Alexandria. They are studying Arabic, and hope soon to be able to enter the Egyptian villages and preach Christ to the bigoted Moslems. They are untrammelled by the ties of any sect, seeking to be guided by the Lord alone. I would ask special prayer on their behalf, that they may be blessed and made a blessing to many. I also had the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to a number of English-speaking people in the "Soldiers' and Sailors' Institute," and attended a Bible-reading in a Christian's house. From Alexandria we steamed to Malta, and thence to Gibraltar; but as I have already trespassed on your valuable space, I shall refrain from saying anything about these places. Under the good hand of God we arrived in London on Thursday forenoon, 19th May, and reached Glasgow the same night, refreshed in spirit and improved in health.

ALEXANDER MARSHALL.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—I Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE ARMY.—Is there any warrant in the New Testament for God's redeemed children volunteering to fight the nation's battles? If not, how do you account for so many godly men being in the army—men clearly born again, such as Havelock, Vicars, Gordon, and many others?

"FAITH" IN THE FUTURE.—Is there any reason whatever from Scripture to believe that there will be "faith" in Heaven?

JESUS CHRIST PREACHED.—WHEN?—What is the meaning of Acts iii. 20?

SUBSTITUTION IN RELATION TO THE UNCONVERTED.—Is it not true that anxious souls almost always are brought into life and liberty—saved by apprehending that Christ has died for, *i.e.*, instead of them? Can we, therefore, when preaching the Gospel to the unsaved, scripturally *apply* Isaiah liii. 5, 6 to *them*, they, as yet, it may be, being indifferent or hardened?

RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST.—WHEN?—Please explain what the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," spoken of in Titus iii. 5, is, and does it *once and for all take place* immediately the sinner exercises saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread *for every member* of that One Body?

HEBREW MONTHS,
WITH THEIR MODERN EQUIVALENTS.

A QUESTION in the June number of *The Witness* as to the month *Abib* has suggested the thought that a table of the Jewish

months, with their modern equivalents, might be helpful to some readers. It is always good to be able to enter intelligently into what we read, and we sometimes miss valuable instruction by ignoring even the names of the months. Who, for example, would suppose that Nehemiah had to wait four months for an answer to his prayer, if the names of the months in Nehemiah i. 1 and ii. 1 did not show us that such was the case?

The following table contains the Jewish months in the order of the Sacred Year on the left, and on the right numbers indicating the order of the Civil Year. *Abib* (March—April) means that *Abib* falls partly in March and partly in April, and so on with the other months.

SACRED YEAR.	FEASTS, &C.	CORRESPONDING MODERN MONTHS.	CIVIL YEAR
1. <i>Abib</i> , or <i>Nisan</i> (Ex. 12. 1), = 13. 4).	14, Passover. 15-21, First-fruits: Barley green ears (Ex. 23. 11). 15-21, Days of Unleavened Bread.	Mar.—Apr.	7
2. <i>Zif</i> , or <i>Ifar</i> , = splen- dour (1 Ki. 6. 1).	14, Little Passover (Num. 9. 10, 11).	Apr.—May	8
3. <i>Sivan</i> .	Feast of Weeks, or First-fruits of Wheat (Lev. 23. 17) —Pentecost.	May—June	9
4. <i>Tammuz</i> .	Fast on account of Taking of Jerusalem (2 Ki. 25. 3; Zech. 8. 19).	June—July	10
5. <i>Ab</i> .	—	July—Aug.	11
6. <i>Elul</i> (Neh. 6. 15).	—	Aug.—Sept.	12
7. <i>Tisri</i> , or <i>Ethanim</i> (1 Ki. 8. 2).	1, Feast of Trumpets. 10, Day of Atonement—the Fast (Ac. 27. 9). 15-21, Feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles.	Sept.—Oct.	1
8. <i>Bul</i> , or <i>Marchesran</i> , = rain (1 Ki. 6. 38).	—	Oct.—Nov.	2
9. <i>Chisleu</i> (Neh. 1. 1).	—	Nov.—Dec.	3
10. <i>Tebeth</i> .	—	Dec.—Jan.	4
11. <i>Sebat</i> (Zech. 1. 7).	—	Jan.—Feb.	5
12. <i>Adar</i> (Es. 3. 7; 9. 17).	14-15, Feast of Purim.	Feb.—Mar.	6

W. H.

FEET-WASHING: LITERAL or SPIRITUAL?

QUESTION 569.—Is there any good reason why the Lord's command to wash one another's feet (John xiii. 14) should be spiritualised, whilst that of "baptism" and "the breaking of bread" are observed literally?

Answer A.—Feet-washing was an office of humanity shown to all strangers and travellers in eastern countries, who, either walking bare-foot or with sandals only, needed washing when they came to their journey's end. Ablutions of the body are particularly necessary to ward off disease in warm climes, but feet-washing is quite contrary to the necessities of countries like our own. Our Lord's act was symbolical and expressly intended for his apostles, in view of His being taken from them (verse 1), and of their attachment to worldly honours and dignities, which had just been manifested anew even then (Luke xxii. 24-27), and would have had dreadful consequences if not removed. He was Lord

and Master, but yet, meek and lowly in heart. He took the office of the meanest slave (1 Sam. xxv. 41), therefore Peter's query (verse 6). Them (verse 14), quite naturally speaking, in accordance with His symbolic act, he asked, in effect, if He had stooped ought they not to stoop. This is not spiritualising, but translating the parabolic expression into its literal meaning.

Taken apart from its context, this verse might seem to imply an institution to be literally observed, but surely the apostles would not easily perceive a natural obligation to feet-washing ("ye also ought") from Christ's act, while they would to humility. They were to do in all things (verse 17; Rom. xii. 10; Gal. vi. 1, 2; 1 Pet. v. 3) as he had exemplified. They were not to make themselves greater than their Lord—the greatest was to be servant of all, and if they knew and acted thus they would be blessed (verses 16, 17). There can be no doubt, however, that this act of condescension became very dear to Christians after our Lord's act, thus 1 Tim. v. 10, though even there it is merely connected with hospitality and the like. But the real signification was soon forgotten, or overlooked by superstitious feelings, as in the remnants of the practice found in the Romish Church yet.

J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—"The custom of literally and ceremonially washing the feet is not found before the fourth century" (*Alford*). There is certainly no hint in the Scriptures at such an ordinance having been observed in the early Church. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence that the two ordinances of baptism and the breaking of bread were observed literally from the earliest days of the dispensation. The lesson obviously intended was that the disciples should cultivate that humbleness of mind which would cheerfully and lovingly perform the meanest service to another. It was just about this time that they were disputing who should be greatest (Luke xxii. 24). The lesson, therefore, was a needed one. What most nearly answers nowadays to washing the feet would be *brushing the shoes*. It is a readiness to serve one another in love, even though the service at the time required be one that is usually performed by a servant.

That there was a spiritual sense as well is evident from the Lord's own reference to another washing, without which none could have any part with Him. Galatians vi. 1 may indicate the way in which it may be carried out spiritually by disciples now.

It has been noticed that the Lord does not say (verse 15), "Do what I have done to you," but "Do as I have done to you." That is, act in the same spirit and after the same example of lowliness.

ALLEGED ERRORS.*

By the late Dr. JAS. H. BROOKES.

HIGHER Criticism claims to be hand-maid of the Bible. But small value can be attached to the services of a hand-maid whose principal business is to find fault with the mistress, and to pick her character to pieces until the lowest scullion retails the gossip. Ingersoll's latest assault upon the Bible, apart from its vile and vulgar blasphemy, and its trifling manner of dealing with so grave a subject, is made with weapons borrowed wholly from the Higher Critics. It may be well, therefore, to examine the mistakes and contradictions which these learned gentlemen fancy they have discovered in the sacred Scriptures. The very strongest of their objections will be considered.

1. Prof. Briggs starts out by saying: "In Matt. xxvii. 9, the following citation is made: 'Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was priced, whom certain of the children of Israel did price.' But this passage is not found in Jeremiah. It is really from Zechariah xi. 12, 13." But it is really not there: "I said unto them. If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord SAID unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them, And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zech. xi. 12, 13). But there is more than this.

Observe (1) that Matthew does not say, that which was *written*, but "that which was *spoken* by Jeremiah the prophet." Can Prof. Briggs prove that Jeremiah did not speak these words? (2) Zechariah says, "Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets" (Zech. vii. 7)? Can Prof. Briggs prove that the words which Matthew quotes were not among the words Jeremiah cried? (3) The purpose of Matthew is evidently not to make the thirty pieces of silver, for which Judas betrayed the Lord, the principal thing, but to state the confession, "I have

sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood," and the use to which the thirty pieces of silver were put; "And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me" (Mat. xxvii. 3, 10). It turns out that Jeremiah was the prophet who spoke about the potter's house and the marred vessel, and "the blood of innocents" (Jer. xviii. 1-4; xix. 1-4). So then it is not Matthew who is in error, but Prof. Briggs, for Jeremiah certainly spoke the original and fundamental passage.

2. The Professor says: "In Mark i. 2, we find these words, 'Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.' The evangelist seems to have overlooked the fact that one of these passages is from Malachi iii. 1. Here are two slips of memory on the part of the evangelists, such as any writer is liable to make." If so, they were not fit to be evangelists nor historians, for a school-boy would know the names of the authors quoted.

But Prof. Briggs is well aware that the Authorised Version gives, "It is written in the prophets," and that the Revised Version, which says, "It is written in Isaiah the prophet," adds in the margin, "Some ancient authorities read *in the prophets*." Why could not the Professor assume that the Authorised Version and the marginal reading are correct in this instance, or that the later prophet repeated an earlier prophet, as is often the case? There was an old Roman writer who said, "I will find a discrepancy, or make one." The Professor is obviously acting on this principle in dealing with the Word of God.

3. The next alleged error he borrows from Prof. L. J. Evans, of Lane Theological Seminary: he supposes that one of Stephen's hearers replied to him, "You have said that Abraham left Haran after the death of his father Terah; whereas if you study the figures in Genesis you will find that Terah must have lived fifty years or more in Haran after Abraham left" (Acts vii. 4). Even if Stephen was mistaken, no one pretends that he was inspired, and inspiration

* From "God Spake all these Words." Now Ready, 2/6 post free

does not express God's approval of everything written in the Bible, although it gives us an unerring record of what was done and said. But Stephen was not mistaken. There is no proof whatever that Abraham was Terah's eldest son, though mentioned first on account of his prominence, as Moses is mentioned before Aaron, who was the elder, and as is common in all languages and nations. Abraham may have been the youngest son, which Jewish writers concede, so far as we know, born when Terah was 130 years old. It would follow, then, that Abraham left Haran at the age of 75, his father having previously died at the age of 205 years (Gen. xi. 27, 32).

4. He borrows still from Prof. Evans: "You were mistaken, also, in saying that Abraham bought the sepulchre of the sons of Hamor in Shechem. If you look into the matter a little more closely you will find that that was Jacob, and that Abraham bought his purchase at Hebron of Ephron the Hittite" (Acts vii. 16). Shechem, or Sychem in the Septuagint form of the word, was the first place Abraham reached in Canaan, and "there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him" (Gen. xii. 6, 7). When he returned from Egypt he went "unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at first" (Gen. xiii. 4). He clearly had a proprietary right in it; and the man who would not receive at the hands of the king of Sodom "from a thread even to a shoe-latchet" (Gen. xiv. 23), the man who was so scrupulous in buying ground that was offered to him for nothing (Gen. xxiii. 5-13), would certainly purchase the land at Shechem:

In the course of one hundred and eighty-five years that elapsed, it may have fallen again into the possession of the Shechemites, for Jacob bought a parcel of a field at Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19), besides the portion which, he tells us, "I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow" (Gen. xlviii. 22). The Vulgate and other versions supply *son* instead of *father*, and make it read, "of the sons of Emmor the son of Sychem," the words "father of," in the Authorised Version being in italics, and therefore not belonging to the

text. This would carry us back to a Shechem and Emmor or Hamor antecedent to Abraham, and quite different from those of whose sons Jacob made the purchase. There is no evidence whatever that Abraham did not buy the land at Shechem, or that he did not buy it for a sepulchre, and as he was a stranger and pilgrim, wandering about, and had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house (Gen. xiv. 14), it is altogether probable that he had more than one burial-place, so that the objection to Stephen's accuracy amounts to nothing.

5. Another objection the Professor borrows from Prof. Preserved Smith of Lane Seminary: "The high places were not taken away: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect with Jahveh all his days" (1 Kings xv. 14). "And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of Jahveh his God: for he took away the strange altars, and the high places, and brake down the pillars and hewed down the Asherim" (2 Chron. xiv. 1, 2). Here the Professors are sure that we have a flat contradiction; but if they were as familiar with the Bible as they are with Higher Criticism, they would know that there were "high places" devoted to the worship of Jehovah, as well as "high places" given up to the worship of idols (1 Kings iii. 2-4; xxii. 43; 2 Kings xii. 2, 3; xiv. 3, 4; xv. 3, 4; 1 Chron. xvi. 39, 40, &c.). There is a marked distinction between the two kinds of "high places;" and Asa did not remove the high places where Jehovah was recognised, and he did remove the high places where idolatry was established. It is unaccountable that Professors who have the least regard for their own reputation can imagine a contradiction in such passages.

6. Prof. Preserved Smith brings forward a Biblical mistake as his own discovery, although it is old, and brings it forward confidently and frequently. David is represented as giving Araunah, or Ornan, the Jebusite, a certain amount of money for a purchase. "So David bought the threshing floor and oxen for fifty shekels of silver" (2 Sam. xxiv. 24). In another place it is written, "David said to Ornan, Grant me THE PLACE of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord. . . . So

David gave to Ornan for THE PLACE six hundred shekels of gold by weight" (1 Chron. xxi. 22-25). The Professor imagines that fifty shekels of silver seemed too mean a sum in the eyes of "the chronicler" for a prince like David to give, and hence he kindly lied, increasing the amount to six hundred shekels of gold.

Perhaps the Professor does not know that this was the spot where the temple was built. "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite" (2 Chron. iii. 1). At all events, he fails to distinguish between the threshing floor and THE PLACE of which David said, "I will verily buy it for the full price" (1 Chron. xxi. 24). A man is riding through the country and sees a threshing machine in a field, which he fancies, and buys for fifty dollars in silver. He also wishes to purchase the entire field for some purpose, and pays for it six hundred dollars in gold. A child can see there is no contradiction.

(To be concluded in next number).

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

READ with me Romans v. 6, also John xv. 5 and Isaiah xlv. 24.

Every child of God has been brought under the conviction of the Holy Spirit to see that he had no righteousness—that even his righteous-
nesses were as filthy rags. Some of us, perhaps tried a long time doing the best we could, but we found it came to nothing, and we were shut up to Christ. We rejoiced, and blessed God that "Jesus Christ was made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." To find that Christ was our righteousness was a great deliverance and rest to our souls. For a time I got some little comfort from that verse, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." But my thought was that God would fill me by making me satisfied with my own righteousness—that is, by making me so holy that I would be quite certain that I was a child of God, and on my way to heaven.

But so long as I was on that tack I got no peace, no rest. I did not get better—I only got worse. The great deliverance was in seeing that the righteousness in which I could stand before God was not anything of my own, nor even that which was to be wrought in me by the Spirit of God, but God's righteousness manifested in Christ. Christ on the Cross for my sins, Christ on the throne of God as the witness that my sins were put away: that is my righteousness. Now, I say every child of God has been at some time brought to this, but I think a great many of God's children have to learn, and sometimes by very bitter experience, that they are as much without strength as without righteousness. I think very few really learn this at the first.

Now, in that verse we began with (Romans v. 6), it is plainly declared, "When we were yet without strength . . . Christ died for the ungodly." Coming to an end of myself, feeling my utter inability to please God, to keep the law, to get the victory over the devil, or anything else—finding myself "without strength," I was cast upon the one that "died for the ungodly" for my salvation. This is the sense of the verse in Isaiah. "Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength." Not only righteousness as a guilty one, not only life as a dead one, but strength as a helpless one. Now, it may be that up to a certain period, and in a certain measure, we have learned this; yet there is a continual tendency in every one of us to be going back again to our own strength. We are far more apt to go back in self-confidence to trust in our own strength than to go back for righteousness to our own efforts to please God. The fact that we know Christ as our righteousness delivers us from that.

I think there is no sin God's children are more liable to than self-confidence—confidence in our own strength or wisdom, if not confidence in our own righteousness. Now, it is a blessed thing for every one of us to get shaken out of self-confidence, but God has sometimes to take very painful ways to teach His children the meaning of that word in the 15th of John: "Without Me ye can do nothing." You know pride is natural to man—it is in our nature; it is not regarded by man as a sin. Pride is rather gloried in. Pride,

and self-confidence, and self-sufficiency—these are the things the flesh glories in. But God would take all this out of us, and sometimes He has to take very severe means to make us know our utter want of strength. You remember how the Lord had to deal with Peter. Peter was perfectly confident in his own love to Christ. Peter was perfectly sincere when he protested, "Although all shall deny Thee, yet will not I." The Lord was dealing with self-confidence in Peter, and so He tells him, "Before the cock crow thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me." "Not so," says Peter; "I am ready to die with Thee." What was the Lord's object? He was just dealing with Peter to get him shaken out of his self-confidence. In fact, Peter thought he was better than all the rest. He as much as said, "John, Bartholomew, Matthew may forsake you, but I, Simon Peter, am not going to forsake you." That was his boast, and the Lord had to take that self-confidence out of him by a terrible fall, and to show him that he was "without strength," and so at his beautiful restoration, when the Lord deals with him on the sea-shore, after they had dined, He says to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" "You boasted before that though all the rest would forsake or deny Me, you would not. Do you now say that you love Me more than these?" Oh, no, he does not say now, "More than these," but, "Thou knowest that I love Thee." He is done with comparisons. Thus God has ways of humbling us to bring us down that we may learn that we have no more strength apart from Christ than we have righteousness apart from Christ.

Now, a word or two more on the matter of self-confidence. Turn with me to the book of Joshua, vii. 12. It is a remarkable thing in God's way that He permits the sin of one or two persons perhaps to affect a whole nation. It is not that God counts the nation guilty of that sin, but it is that God has a controversy with the nation about something else; that is what we have in this chapter. You find the same thing when David sinned in numbering the people. God did not simply judge David for his sin, but He permitted David to be moved by Satan in order that His controversy with the whole nation might be entered into. So with Achan; it was not only what

Achan did: God had a further controversy with Israel. I am not going into the particulars of these chapters, but I want you to see this—when the children of Israel were brought face to face with Jericho, called before those mighty walls, their forces were disposed according to God's commandment, and every step was taken and every act according to the mouth of the Lord. They compassed the city seven times in silence, and then at last they blew with the ram's horns, and the mighty walls fell down flat before them. They got such an easy victory that they became self-confident. They began at once to forget that it was Jehovah that had given them the victory. Now they come to another place not like Jericho—it is only a little place. They argue, "We do not need to take the armies of Israel up there; two or three thousand will be enough"—and Joshua, not waiting for divine counsel, went in with this suggestion. All this came out of self-confidence. What was the result? The three thousand men were smitten before the men of Ai! What was God teaching them? He was taking their self-confidence out of them. He was showing them that whether it be a great city or a little one, they have no might but the might of Jehovah, and if they have not Jehovah with them they are utterly powerless. That was the lesson.

Dear friends, have you found the devil was too strong for you? Have you found that the world had such a grip of you that you could not disentangle yourself? Have you found the flesh rising up and threatening to carry all before it? Many a child of God who once shone brightly has been brought by bitter experience to know that he had no strength but the strength of the Lord. The Lord, in order to take his self-confidence out of him, had to suffer him to have a terrible fall. Donald Ross once said, "Humility does not come to you like a packet through the parcel post. The Lord has to work it in the soul; he has to work it by letting some men get drunk like Noah, or to deny Him like Peter." God has sometimes to adopt terrible means in order to take the self-confidence out of us, that so we may trust Christ for all.

Take another instance; a little further on in this book, chapter ix., the story about the Gibeonites. One of the nations that

was to be destroyed sent ambassadors to Joshua pretending they had come a long journey. They showed the effects of it in their worn-out garments and mouldy bread. Joshua was taken in. "What a long journey they must have come," and so they received the men "by reason of their victuals," as we have it in the margin, "and asked not counsel of Jehovah." Of course they were taken in, but God had to shake them out of their self-confidence. They had confidence in their own wisdom. They did not think it was necessary to ask counsel at the mouth of the Lord in making a league with these men; they judged at once that they could not be the people of the land; they never dreamed they were the people of a great city which they were called to go against in a short time. They had confidence in themselves and in their wisdom to act without God. O, dear young believer (and old believer for that part too), have not you and I had confidence to act without God? "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thine own understanding." God has to shake us out of all confidence in our own strength or wisdom in order that we may trust Him and prove His sufficiency.

Take another instance—turn to Exodus xvii. 8, 9. Now mark here Moses understood the situation. Moses was in this secret of divine knowledge. Moses knew that Israel were helpless to contend with Amalek unless he was on the top of the mount with the rod of God in his hand, that the strength for victory must come from on high, and therefore He went up as the mediator to the top of the mount. But Israel did not know it, therefore they must learn it; they must get the lesson too. So we read in verses 10 to 13. Whenever Moses' hands were down, who is the strongest? Amalek! Match Amalek against Israel, and Israel is "without strength." But match Amalek with Israel's God, and Israel is omnipotent. Now, dear friends, there is the lesson we have to learn. If I seek to contend with the devil in my own strength, I prove that I am "without strength;" if I seek by my own efforts to overcome the flesh, again I will find that I am "without strength." I will find my resolutions and pledges will be broken a hundred times! Until I learn the lesson that I am "without strength," and simply

put myself into the hands of Him that is "able to keep me from falling"—then I have the strength of omnipotence to uphold me. And that is the meaning of that other word in the fifth of Romans: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." It is not a dead Saviour on the cross, but the living Saviour on the right hand of God that is to save me. It is "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" that makes me "free from the law of sin and death." It is my hiding in Christ; it is being "safe in the arms of Jesus;" it is "as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye except ye abide in Me." It is conscious reliance upon the power of the living Son of God; when conscious of my weakness and shaken out of my self-confidence I am leaning on the arm of God's omnipotence, then am I strong. O that God may teach us it.

WHY THE SINGING CEASED.

By WM. SHAW, Maybole.

I WAS passing down a village street when three little girls came along arm-in-arm and singing one of childhood's songs. They were keeping step to the simple tune, and presented such a picture of the innocence and joy of life's early day that I could not help standing still to gaze on the beautiful sight. These young hearts were as yet "unstained by sin," speaking after the manner of men. Not a care had they. Happy as the day is long, they could sing as if a world of sorrow and trouble were far away.

Acting on a sudden impulse I put my hand into my pocket and drew out a small silver coin, which I presented to the three dainty little folk. I made the humble offering as a kind of acknowledgment that I had been refreshed in beholding such a picture of the guilelessness and freedom from care that mark the early days of human life. My intention was good, yet I unconsciously *spoiled the picture*. No sooner had they received the silver than the *singing ceased*. I had not counted on this. I had expected that the singing would go on, and I was purposely hanging about to "take in" the interesting details of the situation.

But I was disappointed. The singing was at an end. *The silver ended the music.* The three little maidens looked at each other in a puzzled kind of way. They had a certain weight upon their shoulders now. How would they dispose of the money? I have no doubt that was a very serious question for *them*. They had no more thought for singing. They pursued their journey as before, but a troubled silence had taken the place of the joyous song.

Ah! I said to myself, is not this a picture, drawn to the life, of many who began their Christian testimony with songs of joy, rising from hearts all guileless and free from care? Cleansed from the guilt of sin, and delivered from its power with a great deliverance, they went on their way rejoicing.

"They knew not a care
In that noontide so fair."

Their all was on the altar for God; His joy was their strength; a heavenly music, if we may so speak, pervaded their life; Jesus and His glory was to them the centre of the universe; their feet were swift and beautiful for *Him*. Their heart rejoiced in the glorified One of Calvary. And they were more than conquerors through Him that loved them; yea, they were compassed about with songs of deliverance. But a change has taken place—a change for the worse. A down-grade has been entered upon. It is the same story that has been told ten thousand times in the history of the people of God. After passing safely and victoriously through the fires of persecution, and even having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, they fell before the powerful seduction of *earthly prosperity*. They were getting on well in the world, and had begun to taste the sweets of that self-sufficiency which, but for the aids of heavenly power, will ever follow the possession of money. But they failed to give due heed to that word which says, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps. lxxii. 10). They were not careful to remember that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. vi. 10, R.V.). Forgetting the solemn possibilities involved in worldly success, they permitted themselves, slowly but surely, to be

sucked into that awful vortex which has proved the grave of so many Christian testimonies. In their case, as in the case of those village children, the silver has ended the music! The song of joy has ceased; the brightness of testimony has faded away; the filling of the cup of earthly prosperity—the "silver test" as we may call it—is one of the severest that can be applied to the faith of the believer. How few abide that test! How few there are of whom it can be said, "Although they have prospered in the world, yet their spiritual tone abides; the dew of youth is theirs." Therefore, let us see that we "dwell" where the heart shall be abundantly satisfied with the joy of the presence of God. Mammon has little attraction for "the satisfied heart." Yea, the prince of this world cometh and findeth but little there.

THE TRIAL AND REWARD OF HUMILITY AND FAITH.

An Address by J. G. M'VICHER in City Hall, Glasgow.
Matthew xv. 21-28.

TYRE and Sidon were outside the Lord's usual circuit. He intended to work a great deliverance for a woman in that country, and so He put Himself within her reach. Just so the Lord Jesus Christ has come down to this earth, and is among us at this moment putting Himself within our reach that we may turn to Him in all our difficulties, and get help from Him instead of putting our head and hand to the work that only His head and His hand can effectually settle.

"And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away." Their thought was, "Give her what she is asking for, and

SAVE US FROM THE TROUBLE
of her importunity."

"For she crieth after us." She had no right to the Lord Jesus as the Son of David. You remember in the 20th chapter Bartimæus called Him "Son of David." He was a Jew, he had a claim on the Messiah, and the Lord stopped and helped him; but when this

Canaanitish woman, who had no claim, asked for relief for her daughter, He answered her not a word. When the disciples spoke He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." She had no claim ;

SHE CAME IN A FALSE CHARACTER—

she came as a Jewess, and Christ would not recognise her claims. And I think, brethren, we often compel Christ to reject our plea because we do not come exactly as we are. I have known people come to Christ as believers, and there was not a particle of faith about them. Let us come as we are ; let us see where we have brought ourselves to ; let us own our unbelief, our self-seeking, our want of love to our fellow-saints that lies at the bottom of so much evil speaking and division.

It is useless preaching and teaching if we pretend to love our brethren but break their hearts in place of healing them. Let us be true. There was a time when self-examination used to be preached. It is not an unwholesome exercise. It is a good thing to go down into the motives of our conduct and see if we are really founded on the Lord, and then come to Him in our true character.

This woman came in a wrong character. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

SHE THEN MENDED HER PLEA.

The Lord help us to do the same ! I wonder she did not go away. But her need was too real, too great, and she could not bear the thought of going home to her daughter without the blessing. "I went and asked, and get no deliverance !" Ah, she could not make up her mind to that. She believed, silent as He was, that in His heart He was on her side, and He was going to help her in the end.

"Then came she"—she came in sincerity—"and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me." A mother who had been praying for her children said : "I never thought it would be so long a time before my children would be converted." But getting closer to Him she could say : "I know He is for me, and He never can mean to say, 'I won't.' I have come the wrong way somehow. I have addressed Him in a wrong character." There was a dear Scotchwoman in Ireland whose

little girl asked her for some bread and butter. The mother paid no attention, and by-and-by the child ran away to play. She was asked why she did not attend to the child's request. "Ah," said she, "when she really wants it she pulls me by the gown, and won't give up till she gets it !"

Those obtain who know their need, and are in downright earnest. The low place is the rich place, but it is not an easy piece of work getting down into it. John Bunyan tells of Christian slipping as he was going down into the Valley of Humiliation. Yet after all we are His workmanship, and He is going to get credit out of us in the end.

She came and worshipped Him, and said only one thing, "Lord, help me." O what a beautiful prayer ! Put all you know of Him into that little word "Lord." After 36 years of it I ought to know something of His patience. Think of His unchangeableness and His perfect love until you feel you are resting upon Him, on One that cannot deny Himself ; He must act. Get above yourself, and the difficulties, dangers, and perplexities, and think of Him as LORD. Is not He greater than the whole of them ? and has not He undertaken for us ? and is not He faithful and true ? She took her daughter there, and I must just take the same place.

"Lord, help me"—help me, the poor, Gentile sinner—me that has preached myself, instead of preaching Christ—the crooked one, the perverse one, the unreliable one ! "Lord, help me." It is not angels, nor archangels, that He is going to glorify for ever. It is us whom he picked up off the dunghill, us "dust and ashes" ; we are the ones who shall be to the praise and glory of His grace in the coming ages.

God is going to have

A GREAT MUSEUM

by-and-by, and we are to be the specimens. He is going to gather the whole creation to see His skill, His love, His grace displayed in us. Do not be discouraged from what you find in yourself, but rather be encouraged, and put it into that word "help." Translate it into, "Lord, help me."

Now, having taken her true place and come in her true character, the Lord will surely give

her what she wants. No, not yet. "Shall I take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs?" It is here the *little dogs*—the house dogs as distinguished from the wild dogs that people would drive off with a stick—"Shall I take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs?" Which of you would have stood that test? Which of you would have borne it? I wonder she did not go home, but she did not. I do not know whether it is the fashion in Scotland now-a-days to read John Bunyan. A man (I forget his name) in the Holy War began to pick at the answer of Immanuel, and picked at it, and picked at it until he picked comfort from it. So this woman picked at the answer, "I am not one of the children, although I pretended to be. *Dogs*—that is the truth about me. He did not call me the wild dog, nor a wolf; he called me one of the house dogs, and have they not a right to get the crumbs that fall from the table? They have got a master, not a Father, and what I want from the table from Christ is only a crumb from one so rich and generous! I see now; I have got hold of Him. He meant me to take my place under the table to get a crumb," and so she said, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

"Then Jesus answered, and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

HIS WHOLE FULLNESS

is opened to the humility and faith of this Gentile woman. Let me clinch what I have been saying. In our difficulties we try to mend them ourselves. Let us learn to bring our sins, our defeats, to Him and pray about them. The reason you are defeated is, you do not pray enough. I do not believe there is enough prayer in the Church of God. A brother said lately in Belfast: "I do not believe that anybody can keep his soul right with five minutes' prayer in the morning." Go deliberately, persistently, expectantly, and wait upon God. Believe that He is listening to you, and let your heart rely upon Him to hear your cry. Whether in soul difficulties, business difficulties, or Church difficulties, this is the great secret—and what we have sadly failed in—the great secret of success.

PUT THE LORD IN HIS TRUE PLACE.

We do not choose pastors and teachers. Why? Because the Lord does that. We do not choose a president in our gathering for worship. Why? Because we believe in the presence of the Lord Jesus Himself. We may go through the form, but if we are not praying men the power will be wanting.

We are His workmanship—His perfect work. He is on our side, but we often spoil it by taking it into our own hands. Let us get down lower and exalt Him higher, and take a firmer grip of Him, and He will say, "O man, O woman, great is thy faith"—mind that word, "great is thy faith"—confidence in Him: "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

CHRIST OUR OBJECT.

Notes of Address by Mr. A. STEWART.

PHILIPPIANS III.—Read verse 7.

THE word "gain" occurs twice in this epistle. There is Paul's gain *before* his conversion—it was *his religion*; then his gain after his conversion (chap. i. 21)—*to die*. A word to the unconverted. You say you don't believe there is such a place as hell, but can you say, "To die is GAIN"? By grace alone we *can* say this—If to live be *Christ*, to die will be *more of Christ*. Would you not desire to look death in the face and know that it could only *bring you gain*. If all the thieves in Glasgow were to say there was no such place as the North Prison would that prevent them from being put into it?

Some say that the soul sleeps between death and resurrection. Now, you rarely find evil doctrine met in the Word by a distinct negative, but you always find passages that, even on their surface, give it the lie, and this is one of them. How could *to die* be *gain* if you pass into a state of unconsciousness? At most to you to die would be *nothing at all*—it could not be gain. But to me to live *is Christ*. This may mean two things—I don't dogmatise. Either Christ is my life as Adam is my natural life—my spiritual life is derived from Him, hid with Him, and in His power I live—or it may mean Christ is the object, centre,

and end of my life. Take away Christ and you take the sun from my firmament—I have no hope or object to live for. Some men might say truly, to me to live is *drink*; others, to me to live is *business*; others, to me to live is *my wife and family*, but the Christian has one supreme object before him to live for, and that is *Christ*.

Verse 10. "That I may know Him." We have heard how we are to know Him; it is a reflective process—as we trust Him we know Him, and as we know Him we trust Him. "And the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings." Mark, these two things are always connected. In John xi. we have a man (Lazarus) learning the power of His resurrection. In John xii. you have the world consulting to put *him* to death also because he was the witness of resurrection life. Such is man—a *fool*. As if resurrection power, had it been possible to kill him, would not have raised him ten times.

Verse 11. A hint as to the character of the Epistle to the Philippians. It is not the believer in the heavenly places, as in Ephesians; not the Canaan experience, but the believer with Egypt and the Red Sea behind him, and all the wilderness before him—his way to fight—his salvation to work out—Christ and resurrection to be won.

Verse 18. The enemies of the *Cross* of Christ—not of the Man Jesus, so pure and gentle, the teacher and example of humanity, as He walked the land of Palestine; oh, no, not His enemy! but the enemies of His *Cross*—they know not their need, as guilty sinners, and care not for the peace that was made by the blood of His Cross. Are there any of the religionists here who say, "I don't believe in your religion of blood, and revivals, and Gospel preaching; I believe in going out to *Nature* and looking through Nature up to Nature's God." Well, friend, what do you learn of God there? Turn to Romans i.—His eternal power and Godhead, and you, hell-deserving rebel, what comfort do *you* get from His eternal power and Godhead? Grace has been revealed *from heaven* through Christ, but if you despise His Cross and His Word the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven too, and in the person of Christ. His eternal power and Godhead, are *against* you, O sinner!

But God is revealed in another way in John i. "The only-begotten Son has declared Him." This is the *full* revelation of God. But the Word made flesh has been put to death; He is gone to the throne of God; the world does not see Him. How, then, is God revealed? Yet a third way—in the *written Word*. Beloved, these are no times for speaking smooth things. Every word of God is pure—seven times purified. When heaven and earth shall pass away, and nature's work is burned, the *Word* shall remain, and not one jot or tittle fail. It is God's revelation of Himself, and he who would cut and carve it slanders the God who made it.

But what do you go to the Word for? Is it for knowledge? If merely for this you are in a mistake. You are like a man in the gold-fields, digging deep and shovelling out sand mingled with rich nuggets of the precious ore, and throwing it all aside as worthless. "Man, what are you digging for?" "Oh, I am a geologist; I want knowledge." So, he who searches the Word for knowledge may dig up precious, golden truths for others to be enriched, but he throws them away himself, and his soul is in poverty and starvation.

Verse 21. In chapter ii. we have God working in us. Here we have Christ doing his final work of power upon us.

And now comes the aim of the whole glorious subject—often forgotten because cut off and added to the next chapter—and with this I close: "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

GOD'S GRACE.

WHAT a blessed assurance was that given to Paul in 2 Corinthians xii. 9; and given equally to you and to me. Our burden may be heavy, and our need may be urgent, but His grace shall be always sufficient; and He shall not suffer the trial at any time to go beyond the strength supplied (1 Cor. x. 13). But it is His grace, not ours; we always feel the weakness, while He supplies the strength that meets the need. Let us, then, walk in joyous trust and humble dependence, comforted by knowing that though we be poor and needy, the Lord is planning for us (Psalm xl. 17.—JOHN DICKIE.

HOW LONG HALT YE ?

1 Kings xviii. 19-44 ; Romans viii. 32 ; xii. 1, 2.

FOR a "man of God"—Elijah like,
To call to Carmel's top God's own to-day!
To bid Baal's priesthood prove Baal's power,
or else

Cease to pervert the people of the LORD ?
Then bid all Israel—those on whom the Name
Of GOD is called—to definitely choose
JEHOVAH, the Almighty, for their God :
Or Baal, whose power is proved of no avail.
Bid them no longer "halt between two
thoughts ;"—

"No man can serve two masters ;" therefore
choose

Between Baal and his mammon, earthly gold,
And GOD, whose golden glory lasts for aye !
See *Calvary's altar* reared. Let that decide
Whose is the right to your heart's worship claim.
"He spared not *His Son* !" Shall we withhold
Aught from such love ? Nay ! therefore, let
us bring

"Spirit, soul, body," and present to Him
A "*living sacrifice*"—*wholly* for God !
Then shall our barren land with rain be blessed,
Reapers o'ertake the sowers, gathering in
Grain, golden, for the garner of the *Lord* !

M. M. D.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.

I.—GENERAL CHARACTER.

By GEORGE ADAM, *Stranraer*.

GOD'S holy principles in dealing with the
guilty race of mankind are the same in
all ages. If He deals with man in righteousness
that righteousness is inflexible. If He
deals with man in grace, it is "grace reigning
through righteousness" (Rom. v. 21). But,
whilst God's eternal principles are the same,
and always in perfect harmony with the holiness
of His character, these principles are not
always dispensed in the same way. In different
ages, or dispensations, of this world's history
God has had different modes of administering
the principles of His own perfect government.
To be able to distinguish the special character-
istic of one age from another is of great
importance in understanding the Scriptures.
One of the early fathers wrote, "Distinguish

the time, and the Scriptures agree." We might
add, "Confound one dispensation with another,
and the Scriptures appear to be confused and
contradictory."

The special design of this is to help inquiring
minds into a clearer understanding of

WHAT GOD IS NOW DOING

amongst the children of men during the
present period of time—the age in which we
live.

It is quite evident to those who are careful
students of the Scriptures, and who are in some
measure enlightened as to their primary appli-
cation, that those inspired men, who foretold
future events before the Holy Spirit was sent
down from heaven, did not get a revelation of
what God is now doing in "calling out" a
people to be taken up to heaven when His
present purpose is completed. "They testified
beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the
glory that should follow" (1 Peter i. 11), but
the unique purpose which God is now work-
ing out they seem never to have seen. It
would seem as if the Holy Spirit had given
these prophets a sight of future events as we
would gaze on a group of stars, and be occupied
with their beauty and brightness without
being able to distinguish their relative distances
from where we stand. But in thus beholding
future events as we would look at a group of
stars, and describing them as the Spirit taught
them, there was one bright star which God kept
"hid," as it were, under a cloud, until His
own perfect time came for its unfolding.

THAT STAR WAS THE CHURCH.

There were shadows of the Church in bygone
ages, but there was no clear revelation of it
until the Apostle Paul was raised up to be the
special minister of the Church (Col. i. 24, 25).
Hence Paul, in writing of the "mystery" which
was made known to him, says, "which in
other ages was not made known unto the sons
of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy
apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. iii.
5). The "glories" of which the prophets in
bygone ages testified were specially *earthly*
glories in connection with the Messianic reign
of the Lord Jesus, when He shall "sit on the
throne of His father David," and "shall have
dominion from sea to sea, and from the river
unto the ends of the earth" (Luke i. 32 ; Ps.

xxiii. 8). But whilst the mystery of the Church was not revealed then as it is now, yet, as we have said, there were

VARIOUS FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHURCH. How far these shadows were understood, in their prophetic import, by the saints in these days we have little means of knowing, nor is it necessary that we should. Let us rather seek to glean what instruction we can from some of these shadows, so as to help us into the thoughts and purposes of God concerning ourselves.

Let us take the case of Enoch, the heavenly man, who never died, "but was translated that he should not see death" (Heb. xi. 5). It will help us to see the beauty and meaning of Enoch's life and "translation" if we contrast him with other two men, evidently typical men as well as he, but not types of the same people nor period of time. These two men I refer to are Adam and Noah. One lived before Enoch, and the other after him. They were both men of the earth in their calling. I do not speak of their *characters*. Both Adam and Noah had the government of the earth put into their hands, as see Genesis i. 26-28 and ix. 1-6. Adam, as we know, failed as Israel, God's earthly people, failed in the past. Noah, in being brought through the waters of judgment, was a type of Israel in the future, when a remnant shall be brought through the terrible judgment that shall yet be poured out on this guilty world when God's present purposes of grace are finished. Enoch, the *heavenly* man,

COMES IN BETWEEN THE TWO,

as the Church, the *heavenly* people, comes in between Israel and the past and Israel in the future. Enoch had nothing to do with the government of the earth. He was called out from the surrounding pollution to "walk with God." Such is the calling, and such ought to be the character of the saints in the present age. "If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John xv. 19). Again, "I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 6, 14, 16). Again, in writing to the Hebrew saints, the

Holy Spirit says, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession (confession), Christ Jesus" (Heb. iii. 1). Before their conversion the hopes of these Hebrews were *earthly*, in connection with "the land of promise." Israel, by their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah, forfeited their right to the fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant regarding the "land." And whilst that covenant is not broken, and never can be, its fulfilment is

MEANWHILE POSTPONED;

and during the period of time in which that covenant is held in abeyance, God is carrying out a purpose which was never fully revealed until Israel, as a nation, had sealed their own doom by the rejection of the Holy Spirit's testimony, through the stoning of Stephen, as well as their crucifixion of Christ. Then the Lord called out Saul of Tarsus, and through him unfolded that secret purpose which had been "hid in God," and kept secret since the world began" (Rom. xvi. 35; Eph. iii. 9). That purpose is the calling of a people out of the world, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, uniting them to the glorified Man now at God's right hand in heaven. When this purpose of God is completed this called out people will be taken home to heaven, where the Lord Jesus now is. It is this purpose of God which is denominated the "heavenly calling" in Heb. iii. 1. All the saved during the present age belong to or share in the blessings of this heavenly calling. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us" (John xvii. 20, 21). But whilst this heavenly people were given by the Father to the Son "out of the world," and chosen by the Lord Jesus "out of the world," there is a sense in which we are still in it. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

1. We are sanctified or set apart, in the purpose of God, *to be saved* (2 Thes. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2).
2. We were set apart by the blood of Christ when we were saved (Heb. xiii. 12).
3. It is God's design that we should be

practically set apart through the truth from the day of our regeneration (John xvii. 17).

We are first taken out of the world and separated from it, and then sent back into it. To witness unto our absent and now rejected Lord is our *business* during our sojourn on earth, and if we have never learned that, we are missing

THE END AND DESIGN OF OUR CONVERSION,

and misunderstanding our calling. If our hearts are ensnared by the world, or by anything in it, so as to lead us to neglect our business and calling, not only is the world losing, but our God and Father is losing the joy of the companionship of His children.

No doubt Enoch was a witness for God in the midst of the surrounding apostacy, but he was more—he was also a *joy to God*, in the midst of the increasing moral darkness. We may be well sure Enoch's "walking with God" never made him a "recluse." Walking with the God of the Bible will never make any one a "hermit." Communion with God will never lead to *isolation* from suffering humanity, but it will separate the heart from earth and earthly things, and will lead us to see things around us in some measure as God sees them. As we cultivate this intercourse with our God He will lead us more and more into His own thoughts of Christ, and into His own perfect delight in His well-beloved Son. And this implies a clearer apprehension of the "eternal purpose" He is now carrying on to consummation in gathering out a people from both Jew and Gentile, and uniting them to His Son in heaven, and of His coming soon to transform every sinner who has exercised faith in His own precious blood into His own likeness, and to translate them all into His own presence. Seeing we look for such things, well may we say, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Peter iii. 11).

This paper deals specially with the *general character* of God's present purpose. I hope in future papers to take up some of its special *characteristics*, or some of those things which distinguish the present age from what God was doing in this world before the Church was called out, and from what He will do again after the Church is complete and caught up to heaven.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

III.—A SLAVE.

By DR. J N CASE, China.

IN ancient times hired labour would seem to have been little used; slavery was the prevailing form of service. From time immemorial the unnatural system has existed among men. It was one of those practices which, like lax divorce, on account of the hardness of man's heart, God suffered to continue, but which He assuredly did not appoint or approve.

Among the Hebrews a man might, through crime or debt, involve himself and his family in slavery; though usually he regained his liberty at the end of six years, and if not then, certainly in the Jubilee year. But most of their slaves consisted of captives taken in war, or those bought of foreign dealers. Yet among the Israelites slavery was not the horrible system which prevailed among heathen nations, or even what it became later in so-called Christian countries. The Mosaic law guarded the bondman's life and limb, albeit it looked upon him as the "money" or "property" of his master.

Terrible as was the condition of the slave, it is but a faint picture of the spiritual bondage in which men are held; for one who knows the Word of God and his own heart cannot blink the fact that in his present abnormal state man is a slave born. Sin—inherited and personal—is the great tyrant that holds men in subjection. But the bondage is not hopeless. There is a remedy; for it is the great glory of the Gospel that it brings us to One both able and willing to deliver. And since it is the Son of God who through the Truth makes us free, we become free indeed. All others are slaves still. As a poet says—

"He is the freeman whom the Truth makes free,
And all beside are slaves."

We cannot too often repeat that Christ saves from sin's dominion as well as from its condemnation. We give utterance to good, sound, practical theology when we sing—

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free."

But if the iron chains of sin are broken, it is in order that we may be bound to God by the golden chains of love; for the Holy Spirit

takes the degraded word "slave" and gives to it a high and noble application. The Lord frequently uses it of His disciples, and the apostles love to speak of themselves as the bond-servants of Jesus Christ. It is, perhaps, the word which tells of the deepest devotion to the Lord's Person and work.

To some the words of the Lord in John xv. 14, 15, may present a difficulty: "Henceforth," He said to His disciples, "I call you not bond-servants, . . . but I have called you friends." It is asked, "If He does not call us slaves, should we call ourselves such?" This, at least, is certain: Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude found no difficulty in so doing. It is the name they seem to love and to most naturally use. The point of the passage is just this: We are not *merely* slaves, and that we are not slaves in the sense there indicated. A bond-servant is not usually taken into his master's confidence, but we know the mind of our Master. "For," our Lord explains, "all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you."

That this is the meaning of the passage I think will be made clear when we observe that a little lower down (verse 20) the word is again used by Christ of His followers.

Not to refer to Old Testament passages, there is, at least, one place in the New Testament where the word is employed in reference to the Lord Jesus Himself (Phil. ii. 7). A slave is one *who belongs to and is wholly subject to the will of another*. In every relationship the Son of God could be nothing less than perfect, and He fully acted up to this position. From the manger to the cross, "Father, glorify Thy Name!" was the constant spoken or unspoken prayer of His heart. Though He had a human will, yet it was as if He had not; it was moment by moment subject to and lost in the will of His Father. And this was the case in the small details as well as in the great crises of His life. And not alone on earth; for He is the true fulfilment of the Hebrew servant who in resurrection takes the place of perpetual service. Him we hear say: "I love my master, my wife, my children; I will not go out free!" (Exod. xxi. 5). Luke xii. 37 gives us a hint of our Lord's future service as a bond-servant. But inviting as is this theme, we may not here further enlarge on it.

As is well known, slaves frequently came into their master's hands *by purchase*. So with us. Concerning our God and Saviour Jesus Christ the Apostle writes: "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14; see also 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Peter i. 19, &c.). I need scarcely remind the intelligent reader that the word to "redeem" means a deliverance wrought on the ground of a ransom paid; the object being to make us *peculiarly His own*—a holy people.

Fellow-bond-servant of Jesus Christ! by the pouring out of His life's blood our Lord has purchased us to be His own forever. Do we acknowledge His claims? Are we daily living as those who belong to Christ the Lord? Our daily, oft-repeated inquiry should be: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" For all that we are and have are His.

Among men a slave owner often took care of his "property." It paid him to see that they were well fed and clothed, and not injured or overworked. And our Master, from love, not self-interest, takes good care of His bond-servants. If we make it our one aim to do His will, He will provide for us, both temporally and spiritually. Yes, the Word still holds good: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Though, as to our devotedness we are, or should be, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, it is not in this temper of mind that we pass the time of sojourning here. Fear and eye-service characterise the one, love and heart-devotedness the other; for we are friends and fellow-heirs, as well as servants. Hence, in reference to our conversion, the Apostle writes: "For ye received not a slavish spirit again to fear," &c. (Rom. viii. 15). So in the low, earthly aspect of the word it can never be true of Christ's followers; yet the figure sets forth a very real fact, and one that we should ever seek to remember and to act on.

The redeemed present the unusual spectacle of slaves who love their bonds and glory in their condition. To have it changed would be our greatest sorrow and calamity. We rejoice to call to mind that in our souls, if not in our bodies, we bear branded the marks of

the Lord Jesus, for we are His now and for ever. We, too, in spirit, have come to the door-post and had our ear bored through with the awl, in token of everlasting servitude; and we, through grace, also say: "I love my Master; . . . I will not go out free."

The One who redeemed us to Himself, and who ever lives to care for us, is soon coming to the air to receive His servants unto Himself. Happy, thrice happy, those who shall then hear from His lips the words: "Well done, good and faithful bond-servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Our service will not end here. We dip into the future, and by the eye of faith we see the time when "His bond-servants shall do Him priestly service; and they shall see His face, and His Name shall be on their foreheads" (Rev. xxii. 3, 4).

JONATHAN'S SERVICE AND SAUL'S DECREE.

"And Saul answered, ' . . . thou shalt surely die, Jonathan'" (1 Sam. xiv. 44).

JONATHAN had vanquished the enemy in the service of God, and had tasted of honey *with the blessing of God*; but Saul's decree was disregarded, and he is condemned. It is a solemn example for all time of the disastrous effect of human will thrusting itself in as religious authority between the true servant and God.

The Spirit of God has made it a very plain one for our warning and instruction.

Jonathan is led by the Spirit of God, but Saul's decree condemns him. But there is more than this—the people rescue Jonathan, manifestly by the good hand of God. "And the people said unto Saul, 'Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid! As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day.' So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not."

The people had been distressed in seeking to obey the foolish decree—toiling in battle, but unfed. But God allows matters to come to a head, and the unrighteousness and folly of the decree are openly manifest when Jonathan must die. True instinct rouses them to indignation, and the misused authority is spurned

by the people, as before it had had no control over Jonathan. We must obey God rather than men. It was open resistance to authority, but a resistance approved of God. Submission would have been folly worse than Saul's.

HIS LOVE.

"He knoweth the way that I take."

I CANNOT tell what may befall,
I know not, but God knoweth all;
His love will give me what is best,
He lives, He loves—ah! that is rest.

S. TREVOR FRANCIS.

Correspondence.

PALESTINE FOR THE JEWS.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

SIR,—Last year a Congress of influential Jews was held at Basle for considering the possibility of securing Palestine for the Jews. I was unable to attend, but read all details of what was said and proposed. A few months ago I heard that a second Congress was to be held, and I decided, if the Lord should permit me, to go and see and hear for myself what was going on, and to witness for Christ to individual Jews, as He should enable me. The day before the Congress opened I arrived in Basle, and was struck with the numerous signs of something unusual going on. Many Zionist flags, blue and white, with the shield of David, were to be seen at the station and elsewhere, as well as numerous placards announcing the Congress. Carriages met the trains to take the delegates and visitors to their destinations, the drivers of which wore badges bearing the shield of David. Blue rosettes with the same shield were worn by members of the Congress, who were to be seen everywhere, and badges were worn by all who attended the meetings. I soon found three other Hebrew Christians and a Gentile who were also attending the Congress, and we united in prayer that God would bless our individual testimony to those to whom we might be able to speak of Christ. We then introduced ourselves to some of the leaders and chief workers in the movement, and met with a cordial reception beyond our expectations. The delegates were Jews from all lands, of all shades of thought—Talmudical as well as Reformed Jews, Russian rabbis with their long gabardines and locks, doctors, philosophers, journalists, bankers, engineers, artisans, merchants, all united in the one desire to obtain Palestine.

In the opening address, Dr. Theodore Herzl, the President, said: "This new Jewish movement appeared at first to the world as strange, and inconceivable to many. Some regarded it as a spectre of past times. The Jewish nation was dead, and had disappeared. We had a dark experience before we were conscious that it was not true, for death is the end of all suffering. How is it, then, that we suffer? The maxim of the philosopher is thus reversed, 'I suffer, so I exist'; and again, we are ready to bring about the reconstruction of Judaism; we have everything in abundance—man, material, and plans. What we require is the soil. Certainly the soil we need is of a peculiar kind. No spot is so coveted as this; it has been so eagerly sought after by the various peoples, that between them all it has withered. We believe, however, that these desolated corners of the Orient have not only a past but a future, like ourselves. From this soil, on which so little grows at the present day, ideas for all mankind have been produced. No one will deny that there is an unbreakable connection between our people and this land. If there be such a thing as a claim to a part of the earth, all peoples who believe in the Bible must recognise the right of the Jews to Palestine, and they can do so without envy and without fear, for the Jews are not a political power, and never will be one."

Dr. Max Nordau, of Paris, next gave a most able retrospect of the condition of the Jews since last year's Congress, and many other gifted speakers discussed the question of colonising Jews in the Holy Land, establishing a Jewish bank, also the revival of the Hebrew language, and I was struck with the fluency with which some of the delegates spoke the holy tongue. Conversing with them, I enquired, "What will you do about the ritual?" Some replied that it would not be re-established; others said, "Let us first get the land, then will come the re-establishment of the sacrifices and the settling of the ritual according to the wishes of the majority of the nation who are orthodox."

I remarked that the first two days of the Congress there had been no mention of God as helping them to return to their land; but later on, when a desire was expressed for some agitation literature, Dr. Gaster said it was not needed; they had something better—the Bible—which was applauded. I enquired of many Russian Jews what the condition of the people is in their land, and they all told me that the chief topic of conversation in the synagogue and home, in the streets and market-places, is this movement, and they are ready to do what they can to further it.

I had the privilege to speak of Christ to many, and I believe my attendance at the Congress, and meeting so many rabbis and others from

such numbers of towns in the various countries of Europe as well as America, will give me an opening amongst the Jews wherever I am able to go to preach the Gospel.

I. I. ASCHKENASI.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE ARMY.—Is there any warrant in the New Testament for God's redeemed children volunteering to fight the nation's battles? If not, how do you account for so many godly men being in the army—men clearly born again, such as Havelock, Vicars, Gordon, and many others?

JESUS CHRIST PREACHED—WHEN?—What is the meaning of Acts iii. 20?

SUBSTITUTION IN RELATION TO THE UNCONVERTED.—Is it not true that anxious souls almost always are brought into life and liberty—saved by apprehending that Christ has died for, *i.e.*, instead of them? Can we, therefore, when preaching the Gospel to the unsaved, scripturally *apply* Isaiah liii. 5, 6 to *them*, they, as yet, it may be, being indifferent or hardened?

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST—WHEN?

QUESTION 570.—Please explain what the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," spoken of in Titus iii. 5, is, and does it *once and for all take place* immediately the sinner exercises saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Answer A.—I understand the washing, or laver,

of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit to be two different things. The first of these "takes place once for all," when the sinner believes the Gospel. This was typified in the consecration of the priests (see Ex. xxiv. 4 and Lev. viii. 6). This bathing was never repeated. The washing of the hands and feet (Ex. xxx. 19-21) was a continuous thing. The same truth is taught in John xiii. 10, "He that is washed (bathed) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The renewing of the Holy Spirit, whilst it began when spiritual life was first imparted, ought to be going on "day by day," as in 2 Corinthians iv. 16. The injunction, "Be ye transformed by the *renewing* of your minds" (Rom. xii. 2), "and be *renewed* in the spirit of your mind" (Eph. iv. 23), was written to those who had been *regenerated* long before. Spiritual life needs to be renewed by taking in fresh supplies, the same as physical life, and I fear this is a line of truth very much neglected by us all, and hence the spiritual poverty and weakness. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Isa. xl. 31). In busy days there is little time and little inclination to "WAIT ON THE LORD." G. A.

Answer B.—While careful to show that we are justified, not by works (as a ground) of righteousness, but by His grace, the Scripture here is teaching us how we have been saved from the condition in which others are, and in which we once were. We are washed from it by "regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Through the blood of Christ we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins (Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14). Through the one offering we are sanctified, *i.e.*, made fit to come to God as worshippers and as children. This is set before us as a fact, accomplished *for us*, once for all. In it our works of righteousness have no place. But, further, "He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity." To this end He shed on us His Holy Spirit to work in us to *will and to do* of His good pleasure. In a sense this takes place once for all. We are regenerated, born again to this new life. But so far from this work being once for all accomplished in us, it is everywhere set before us as a matter of precept and exhortation. Only in measure as we walk in the Spirit will such result take place. Since God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter i. 3), we have to give diligence, as directed in verses 5-11. Carefulness to maintain good works (Titus iii. 8); taking heed to cleanse our way, according to 2 Timothy iii. 10, 11; feeding on the Word that we may grow thereby (1 Pet. ii. 2); looking to Jesus, learning His mind, and following in His steps (Phil. ii.). w. c.

Editor's Note.—Regeneration takes place once. It cannot be repeated. But "the inward man"—that which is born of God—requires to be "renewed day by day." This is effected by the power of the Holy Spirit. But His power operates through the Word. It is "the sincere milk," and must be desired and fed upon. It is the manna, and must be gathered and eaten. Therein is Christ revealed, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to impart the fulness of Christ to the believing, waiting heart. The place of renewing is at the Master's feet. But the rush and bustle of nineteenth century life is all antagonistic to this gracious and needful operation of the Spirit. It is in the sanctuary that His voice is heard.

WILL THERE BE "FAITH" IN HEAVEN?

QUESTION 571.—Is there any reason whatever from Scripture to believe that there will be "faith" in Heaven?

Answer A.—"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. v. 7). "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). "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" (1 Peter i. 8). Now is the time for the exercise and the trial of *faith*; in heaven it will be *sight* in contrast to faith now. At the same time there may be, even in heaven, part of the ways of the infinite God which we shall not be able to comprehend, but there will be perfect confidence in Him regarding what we may not be able to understand. But is it not better to leave such *reasonings* till we get there? "Now the just shall live by faith" (Heb. x. 38). "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi. 1). In heaven those things we now hope for will be ours in possession. G. A.

Editor's Note.—The elect have, in all ages, been called to believe and obey the bare Word of God. "Faith is the substance (or substantiating) of things hoped for, the firm conviction of things not seen." By this faith all those things which are revealed and promised in the Scriptures are now apprehended. There will no longer be occasion for such exercise of faith when we enter on the possession and enjoyment of what we hoped for and when the great unseen realities so long known to faith burst upon our raptured vision. But faith itself, the great principle of confidence in the truth, and love, and power of God can never cease to be, and will doubtless be maintained in lively exercise as God proceeds to unfold His infinite and eternal counsels.

THE SONG OF SONGS.

By WM. COLLINGWOOD, Bristol.

"THE Song of Songs, which is Solomon's."

His songs were a thousand and five. To one of these, or a group of them, the Holy Spirit has given a place "in the Volume of the Book." It is "touching the King." We have no need to speculate on the circumstances or the persons to whom it may otherwise have referred. Where the Spirit has not told us, it is better for us not to know.

In this parable a royal personage has wedded one who was naturally unattractive, the outcast and drudge of her kindred (chap. i. 6), but in whom He finds what He most values—a response to His affection—while others see no beauty that they should desire Him (chap. v. 9).

Wedded union, as here pictured, affords one of the holiest and most perfect illustrations of Divine love and its proper response. It rises above the platform of service to a master, however reasonable; above the love of paternal relationship, blessed as that is. Here we see, not a servant bought, nor a child begotten; it is "bone out of His bones," the fruit of the death-sleep of Calvary, the object to gain which He gave His precious life. The result of this the Song sets forth in terms of unparalleled beauty and purity.

It may be said that this points forward to the day when "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His Bride hath made herself ready." Doubtless, like so many other scriptures, it will find its consummation in the Church collective and completed. But it is not to be relegated altogether to that glorious day, for then chapter v. will not apply, nor chapter iii. 1-7. These indicate its reference to our personal experience. The latter so closely resembles Mary Magdalene, in John xx. 1-17, as to suggest an intentional connection. Still more closely chapter i. 12, of Mary of Bethany in John xii. 3. Thus it comes home to us individually, and only needs that we should make it ours in reality, and gather what blessing we may from the various emblems, drinking from these "vessels of gold, diverse one from another, the royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the King" (Est. i. 7).

"The kisses of the mouth," felt on human lips, are the

PLEDGE AND UTTERANCE OF ENDEARMENT.

From His mouth they are the assurances of His love which abound in His Word. Such as wine is in men's feasts to "make glad the heart," so, and much more, to the believer, is the sense of that love. What spices are to fill the house with sweet odour, such to the soul are the ways of God as seen in Christ. The gladdening consciousness of His favour is likened to the fragrance of a bunch of myrrh set in a woman's bosom (note the corrected translation in R.V.). And as a banqueting house is the ideal of earthly enjoyment, so in heavenly things it is to be able to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

Natural affection finds its happiness in the companionship of its object; so heavenly love is not satisfied without the realised presence of the Lord. And so, wondrous grace! He seeks the fellowship of His saved ones. As a loving pair will sport together, calling each other by the names of pet creatures (chap. ii. 9-14), so the mutual affection is here represented as seeking language to express the mutual delight. Compare Isaiah lxii. 4 and Psalm xxxvii. 4. Only we

MUST NOT MISTAKE THE FIGURE FOR THE REALITY,

or forget the reverence ever due to our Heavenly Lord.

Human love is proverbially blind to defects. God, who knows them all, looks at them in the light of His own infinite grace. His is the "charity that bears (*lit.*—loves, R.V., *margin*) all where the heart is true to Him. The Bridegroom seeks, in whatever is most beautiful to sight, something to compare her with. To Him she is all fair—the eyes, which look out affection; the lips, which speak love; every feature affords Him delight. In her company He finds His chief pleasure, whether it be on the mountains, in the gardens, or the vineyards. And she, thus drawn by His love, finds all her felicity in His beauty and in His presence.

Yet with the Bride there is not always the full return of His affection. Sleep and love of ease can keep Him waiting out in the cold as He knocks for entrance. So she has to lose

the sense of His presence until she has learned what that loss means, and then again the joy of it is restored to her, and her rapturous estimate of His beauty and grace leads others to seek Him too (compare Ps. li. 12-14).

How blessed the picture if we take it as teaching us

GOD'S LOVE TO OURSELVES,

and render back to Him the devotion of our hearts. The Song is not alone in this. Scripture abounds with the same, though not in the same poetic imagery. We have only to read as far as Genesis iii. to find it. The thought that glows in the poetry of the Song is wrapped up in the sad words with which the Lord God first sought His fallen creature, "Adam, where art *thou*?"

Observe what had taken place. Having created man in His own image, God saw that it was not good for him to be alone. That would have left him to come short of the image of his Maker. He needed one to share with him the dominion and the enjoyment of all that had been bestowed on him to make the likeness complete, for the Lord God had created man to participate and enjoy in fellowship with Himself the good things He had made. How sad the day when, coming in the cool of the evening to take His accustomed walk in the loving company of His favoured creature, to enjoy the garden He had planted for him, He finds Himself "alone." "Adam, where art *thou*? — thou, without whom all these no longer afford Me the happiness I seek in them!"

Here, and also in many other scriptures, the manifestation of God's love does but bear witness to the failure of man to render a return. Yet the love of God is the deep theme that underlies Ezekiel xvi., or Hosea ii., or Joel ii., and many other such. Elsewhere the substance of the Song is seen in its happier light, as Isaiah liv., Jeremiah xxxi. 3, Zephaniah iii. 17, &c. And for the same language without the poetry, yet no less fervent, see Psalm lxiii., "My God"; Psalm lxxvii., "God, even *our own* God"; or "Thou art *Mine*," Isaiah xliii. 1, and numberless others. Nor do the declarations of God's love in the New Testament fall short of these, though there we meet with little poetic imagery till we come to the Apocalypse.

The Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures, has much to teach us about sin and its consequences, about the plan of redemption and the work of the Redeemer, the laws and ways of His kingdom. But this one highest aspect, this which will abide when former things have passed away, is what it all leads to, the end and purpose of all. "To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," summed up Paul's prayer for the believers at Ephesus, and for us.

It was a saying of George Müller, whose remains we but lately followed to the grave, that he was

ONE OF GOD'S DARLINGS.

Not meaning that he was more so than any other of His children, for in the same breath he always was, to himself, a hell-deserving sinner, but that God "dearly loved" all His children, and he knew it, and took it to himself. This was the secret of his life of faith and power. He knew that God loved him, and loved to do him good, and to answer his prayers. And as one of God's *dearlings* (so read literally Eph. v. 1) he sought to be an *imitator* of Him.

May we not each say, on the strength of that word, "I am one of God's darlings"? Not because I deserve it—I deserve only hell; none deserves His love less than I; yet He dearly loves me for Christ's sake, and would have me know it, and act on it, walking before Him, trusting Him, imitating Him as one of His "darling" children.

Oh, how unlike the poor, narrow thoughts with which some (perhaps we ourselves) are too easily contented. Given *reality* in such a knowledge of the love of Christ, how it would constrain us to live no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again, to be new creatures, with whom old things are passed away, and all things are become new.

OBJECTS OF LOVE.

Five different in 1st and 2nd Timothy.

- I. Love of Money (1 Tim. vi. 10).
- II. Love of Self (2 Tim. iii. 2).
- III. Love of Pleasure (2 Tim. iii. 4).
- IV. Love of the World (2 Tim. iv. 10).
- V. Love of Christ's Appearing (2 Tim. iv. 8).

This last-mentioned love is *the* cure for the other four.

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

PART II.

BUT God had to teach the lesson of human weakness to more than these.

Turn with me for a moment to Genesis xxxii. 24. Jacob had sent across the brook all that he had, and he remained behind alone. I have thought that Jacob probably remained behind in order to pray. He had made all his arrangements. He had sent forward a present for Esau; he had done everything that he could devise to ensure the safety of all that he had. He put those he loved least at the front and those he loved best behind, and he remained to ask God to bless the means.

A very common way; we do all we possibly can without consulting God, and then we ask God to bless all our devices and schemes. But God does not want our plannings and schemings. He can do without that altogether; He does not want us to help Him; He wants to get all the glory. Now, here is Jacob left behind, and "there wrestled a man with him." I doubt not that Jacob thought this was a robber, perhaps some emissary from Esau, and so he wrestled as for his very life—he wrestled the whole night through! What a struggle that night was—a struggle against the power of God! But Jacob did not know who he was wrestling with; the Lord was acting in the character of a robber—as an opposer.

At last the morning came, and still the divine angel prevailed not against Jacob, teaching us the awful truth that the flesh has power to wrestle with God until God puts forth His omnipotence. O the power of our stubborn will to resist and run counter to God! Thus Jacob wrestled with God until at last He touched the hollow of his thigh. Well, you know how little hope there is for a wrestler with his thigh out of joint: I should say that is an end of his wrestling. And remember, when God comes to deal with us by the finger of His omnipotence, there is no use struggling with Him any more. He will very soon take the self-confidence out of us. It is better to learn the lesson by His Spirit, through the Word, but often He requires to teach it by His providence!

By one touch He put Jacob's thigh out of

joint, and said, "Let Me go, for the day breaketh." But Jacob answered, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." Here is a change in Jacob's attitude. Suddenly he discovered by that omnipotent touch that it was God he was wrestling with! and the moment he finds out who it is—that it is the covenant God, the God that met him when he ran away, the God that had been with him in his journeying and in the far-off land, that showed him His wonderful hosts at Mahanaim—then he takes hold of Him and cries, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." That was the moment of Jacob's power—when he was weak, then he was strong; he wept, he prayed, he made supplication unto the angel. It was in his clinging weakness, and not his wrestling power, that he became a prince with God.

No longer is he to be called Jacob; he is now to be called Israel, because he has prevailed with God. Don't you see in it the lesson: our weakness never hinders God—our strength does. Are you weak?—are you conscious of it?—then you have the Almighty Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, to depend upon.

Now look for a moment to Isaiah xl. 28-30. In weakness, faintness, utter inability, casting ourselves upon Almighty God, we lose our strength and we get God's strength, and therefore, as it is written in Isaiah xxxiii. 23, "The lame take the prey." The very ones we think unfitted get the victory—the strong ones are nowhere; but those who in feebleness are waiting upon God, they change their strength—they lose their own, and they get God's.

I want you next to look at a passage in 2 Chron. xx. 12. Here is Jehosaphat face to face with the mighty army—the Moabites and the Ammonites leagued together. Well, what is Jehosaphat's position? If you look to the 17th chapter, verses 14-19, you will find that Jehosaphat's army of "mighty men," "valiant men," amounted to 1,160,000. You would say that is a pretty large army: it would figure very respectably among the great armies of the present day. Jehosaphat had all this force at his back. But what does he say to the Lord? He goes into the house of God as if he were foolish and helpless as a little child and says:

"O, Lord, we have no might, neither know we what to do!" Only fancy a man with 1,160,000 mighty men at his back saying, "We have no might!" But Jehosaphat knew a little about this lesson we are trying to learn. He knew that without God it mattered not whether he had one million or twenty. Man was *powerless to meet the enemy*.

And you and I are in an enemy's world. We have a threefold adversary. We have the world, the flesh, and the devil in league against us, and we have "no might;" we are "without strength," and apart from Christ we can do nothing. The one business for you and me is to "keep in with Christ," to live in dependence upon Him; to see that we are in no position and occupied in no way that we cannot count upon Him to be with us. If we go without Him, we go into certain defeat—not *possible*, but CERTAIN defeat. We are as certain to be defeated without Him as we are to have the victory with Him.

Now turn to 2 Cor. xii. 7. There is such a thing as being exalted by worldly prosperity. We read of Uzziah that he was "marvellously helped until he was strong, but when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction." He was prospered in worldly circumstances, and it was that which lifted up his heart. But there is also such a thing as being puffed up by spiritual privileges. Some are puffed up by knowledge. "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." Do you think you know a great deal? It just shows how little you know. One of the greatest philosophers the world ever knew said, at the end of his career, that he had been like a little child picking up shells on the seashore, whilst the vast ocean lay before him unexplored. How much more may the child of God say so concerning the knowledge of what God has revealed.

Here is Paul, and God has given to him such revelations as He never gave to any man. Whether, at the time, he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell. He was caught up into Paradise, and he recognises the possibility of his being out of the body at this time, and yet the conscious receiver of revelations from God. At another time he was taken up "to the third heaven." Such revelations God had never given to any son of man.

But God, knowing that the flesh is just the same up till the very end, anticipated in His love the danger Paul was exposed to, "lest I should be exalted above measure." Lest he should think "how superior I am to these poor saints; Peter is nowhere compared to me;" in case he should thus get "exalted above measure, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh," and that word "thorn" is a strong word, and really means a stake. The thought is not such as a prick in the finger, but of being impaled. "The messenger of Satan to buffet me."

When Satan was let loose to buffet Job he hit him sore: and when the Lord gives Satan leave to buffet Paul you may depend upon it he did not spare him. But God makes the devil's enmity a blessing to His people. God makes the wrath of the devil to praise Him. Just as the shepherd uses the dog; its natural disposition would be to worry the sheep, but the shepherd makes the dog a blessing to the sheep, and restrains it so that it does them no harm. Thus the Lord permitted the devil to vex Paul, but also restrained him. "And for this thing I besought the Lord thrice," probably taking the example of the blessed Lord, who prayed in the garden three times that that cup might depart from Him. He did not go on in self-will or unbelief, harping at it like a fretful child. On the third time of asking, the Lord gives him His answer: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." There is the lesson. This thorn, then, is just an occasion to prove the power of Christ.

Do you want to be in better circumstances to serve the Lord? Do you think, "If I had this or that, more strength, more money, more education, a wider circle of acquaintance, I could do more." Depend upon it, the circumstances you are in are the best for you, even if there be a thorn in them; whatever it be, it is there by God's permission, and it is there in order to cause you to fly to the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may prove His power to succour.

"My strength is made perfect in weakness," "most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in"—what? In my infirmity? Yes, he gloried in his infirmity. There are some people who talk about a bad temper as "an infirmity." Not

it; that is not an infirmity. But it may be that one has a very weak and sensitive, nervous constitution. That is an infirmity, and makes things a trial to them which would not be a trial to another. That irritable constitution is an "infirmity," and he cannot get the victory but by the power of Christ; but if he goes in faith to Christ he will get the victory. "My grace is sufficient for thee."

A drunkard for years has formed the habit, and the craving for drink he cannot overcome. That is his weakness; but here is the promise, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." It is not *his resolution* but the power of Christ that is to enable him to overcome. His very weakness keeps him in the lowly place of dependence. Proud flesh does not like to be dependent, for dependence involves subjection; but God means that we shall be dependent upon Himself, and upon Himself alone.

It is so in Nature. "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created those things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power, not one of them faileth" (Is. xl. 26). The law of nature, called the law of gravity, by which an apple falls from the tree, or the rain-drops fall to the earth, which enables us firmly to tread earth's surface though it is whirling through space with enormous velocity, is the same law which holds the planets in their orbits round the sun, and causes the sun with all its system of planets to circle round some unknown centre.

Might I venture to call it another name, I would call it *the law of dependence*, for it is because of the greatness of His power that not one of them faileth.

We read of One who, "upholding all things by the word of His power," yet stooped down to purge our sins. Scientists cannot explain that universal law of gravity; they know not what it is, but we know it is the power of God. And that is just our illustration of what faith is. It is the law of dependence upon God. And, therefore, those conditions are the *best* and not the *worst* which most shut us up to the power of Christ. As dear old Mr. Chapman has said, "those circumstances are the very best for me which most try my faith, humble my pride, and curb my self-will."

We have a beautiful illustration of how to obtain the power of Christ to meet our need in Luke viii. 43. This poor woman had come to the end of her resources; she had spent all she had upon physicians. How alarmed we become lest we get to the end of our resources! Yet this is God's way of shutting us up to Himself. The same sea that overwhelmed Pharaoh's hosts cut Israel off from Egypt's resources and shut them up to God alone. They were brought into a barren wilderness to learn how God could feed them, and lead them, and supply their every need.

Now, this poor woman having come to an end of her own resources was shut up to Christ. "She came behind Him, pressed through the crowd, and touched the hem of His garment, for she had said within herself, 'If I may but touch His garment I shall be whole.'" Jesus enquires, "Who touched Me?" He knew in Himself that there had been a going forth of His Divine power into someone.

A multitude thronged Him—jostled Him; they were not afraid to go near Him, but not a particle of Divine power went out to any of them. Yet He says, "Somebody hath touched Me," and when the woman saw that she was not hid she came and witnessed a good confession. And what, then, did the Lord say to her? "Thy *touch* hath made thee whole." Is that it? Oh, no; He does not say, "Thy touch hath made thee whole"—you and I cannot touch Him: *she* found it hard enough, but you and I would find it much harder. What He does say is: "Thy *faith* hath made thee whole; go in peace." It is the touch of faith; and it is the faith He wants.

It is not thy prayer. Every believing soul will pray—must pray—but you and I may pray without faith.

It is not the reading of the Word. Every believing soul will read the Word—must read the Word—but you may read and become acquainted with it, and not read it believingly for yourself. "The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with *faith* in them that heard it." So is it still. The essential thing is FAITH.

Let us bring our weakness to Christ's power and we will find there is still the virtue to go forth from Him which can give us the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. "This

is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." May God bring this lesson before each one of us in power, so that we may not need to learn it by bitter experience, but taught by His Spirit through the Word, may wholly distrust self and rely on the all-sufficient grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ALLEGED ERRORS. *

By the late Dr. JAS. H. BROOKES.

PART II.

7. The Higher Critics invent a contradiction in the number of David's soldiers given in the same two chapters. "There were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men" (2 Sam. xxiv. 9); "All they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred three score and ten thousand men that drew sword" (1 Chron. xxi. 5). In Samuel there were 800,000 VALIANT men that drew the sword, veterans as we say, proved soldiers, but in Chronicles nothing is said about "valiant men." In Samuel the men of Judah were in all 500,000; in Chronicles there were 470,000 "THAT DREW SWORD." Instead of a contradiction there is the most perfect accuracy.

8. An attempt has been made to find a contradiction between Stephen's account of the number that accompanied Jacob when he left Canaan for Egypt, and the statement in Genesis. "Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls" (Acts vii. 14); "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were three score and six. And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were three score and ten" (Gen. xlvi. 26, 27). The number that *came out of Jacob's loins*, besides, excepting his sons' wives, we find to be 66, as in verse 26. If to these we add Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons, we have 70, as in verse 27. If to the 66 we add the nine wives of Jacob's sons, Judah and Simeon having lost their wives,

as elsewhere recorded, we have 75 mentioned by Stephen.

9. The Higher Critics ridicule the story as unbelievable, which tells us that David was Saul's harpist, and that afterwards the king inquired after his name (1 Sam. xvi., xvii.). But the king did no such thing. When David killed Goliath, Saul said to Abner, "Whose son is this? . . . Inquire thou whose son the stripling is . . . And Saul said to him, Whose son art thou, young man?" (1 Sam. xvii. 55-58). He did not ask about David, but David's father. He had promised to enrich the man who slew the giant, to give him his daughter in marriage, and to "make his father's house free in Israel." It does not appear that Saul had ever seen David's father; and when we remember that the harpist had quit the service of the king, and gone back to his sheep in the wilderness, that an evil spirit from the Lord troubled the unhappy monarch, it is likely enough in his periodical fits of madness that he had forgotten the name of David's father, if he had ever given it the slightest attention.

10. The Apostle Paul, referring to a plague that smote ancient Israel, says: "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand" (1 Cor. x. 8). Moses, recording the event, says: "Those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand" (Num. xxv. 9). The Higher Critics inform us that this shows "a slip of memory" on the part of the apostle, although a mere boy could have remembered such simple figures as twenty-four thousand. They do not see that Paul says, there fell in *one day* three and twenty thousand, and Moses tells us that those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. Suppose that two armies are about to engage in battle. They have a skirmish in which 1,000 are killed, and in the more serious encounter 23,000 fell in one day. Where is the contradiction?

11. The same learned gentlemen, alluding to numerous laws in the Pentateuch concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, add: "Yet Jehovah Himself, speaking through His prophet Jeremiah, declares most emphatically that He *never gave any directions whatever* about burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Jer. vii. 22).

* From "God Spake all these Words." Now Ready, 2/6 post fr

He never made any such declaration. "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them *in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt*, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices" (Jer. vii. 22). Look at the italicised words, and ask if such criticism is honest or respectable? God said nothing about burnt offerings and sacrifices *in the day He brought them out of the land of Egypt*; but does it follow that He said nothing about them afterwards? This is the way real infidels, in the guise of professing Christians, gull so many shallow minds.

12. They also assure us that the regulation with regard to peace offerings required that "it shall be eaten on the same day ye offer it, *and on the morrow*" (Lev. xix. 5, 6). And in another passage in the same book (Lev. xxii. 30) we find this clear injunction regarding the very same peace offerings: "On the same day it shall be eaten up; *ye shall leave none of it until the morrow*: I am the Lord." What must be thought of the integrity of a man who will make a statement like this? When we examine the last passage quoted, it does not even refer to peace offerings. "When ye will offer a *sacrifice of thanksgiving* unto the Lord, offer it at your own will. On the same day it shall be eaten up; ye shall leave none of it until the morrow: I am the Lord" (Lev. xxii. 29, 30). Peace offerings were one thing, a sacrifice of thanksgiving was quite another; but what shall we think of those who rely upon the ignorance of their readers, or upon the indolence of so many to investigate for themselves, in order to poison their minds against the truth of the Bible? May God forgive them, since He has mercy in store for the meanest of sinners.

Want of space forbids any further examination of the alleged errors of the Bible. Nor is it necessary to continue the review, for the twelve already considered are a fair sample of the others, and are indeed most frequently urged as the best, or the worst, that can be advanced. It is amazing that men who ought to possess the intelligence of the Higher Critics should urge objections to the credibility of the Scriptures that are so trifling, and should allow themselves to heap together such worthless trash. Many of them are like ghouls that rob the dead, and the infidel dead as Voltaire and Tom

Paine, to find tools with which to undermine the foundation of our faith and hope. They spend their time in trying to show that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that Job was written in the Captivity, that David did not write the Psalms attributed to him, that Solomon did not write Proverbs, nor Ecclesiastes, nor the Song of Songs, that Isaiah did not write Isaiah, that Daniel did not write Daniel, that Zechariah did not write Zechariah; but, so far as known, they never speak of man's sin and need of redemption through the blood of Christ, nor of any comfort for the sad and fainting heart.

Prof. Briggs says: "But what do these errors amount to after all? They are only in minor matters, in things which lie entirely beyond the range of faith and practice" (*The Bible, the Church, and the Reason*, p. 115). But why does he, and why do all other Higher Critics seem so anxious to show these errors in "minor matters"? If there are errors at all, how does he know that they are only in "minor matters"? If God by His Spirit kept the sacred writers from errors in *major* matters, could He not have preserved them from errors in *minor* matters? How can the Professor say that these alleged errors are "in things which lie entirely beyond the range of faith and practice"? Surely the distinction between the truth and only a slight falsehood is a thing of faith and practice even in minor matters.

There is a Bible still in existence once belonging to Washington's mother which records that he was born "ye 11th day of February, 1732." He was really born the 22nd day of February, 1732 (new style); but this would constitute, in the judgment of Higher Criticism, an unreconcilable discrepancy, if it did not prove that Washington was never born at all. Dr. Moses Stuart confessed that when he was a young man he was sorely perplexed by the difficulties that confronted him in the Bible, but that time, patience, and the study of forty years had scattered them to the winds. It is certain that he who most thoroughly knows the Bible most thoroughly believes it, and that after carefully reading it scores of times, he will rise from the perusal with the conviction firmly established that "God spake all these words."

"IN DEED AND IN TRUTH"

1 John iii. 18.

Words without deeds, however fair,
Are merely wavelets of the air,
Like tinkling sound of hollow bells,
Empty as ocean's cast-off shells.

Words without deeds are paper cash,
Which *minus* gold are worthless trash;
Mere promissory notes at best,
They will not stand the fiery test.

Words without deeds fall to the ground—
No potency in them is found;
Each word I say will measured be
By how it lives and acts through me.

Words without deeds? It was not so
God His great heart of love did show;
Before He said He loved the world
Love's living banner He unfurled.

Words without deeds? Ah, no; He gave
His only Son the world to save;
Then sent the message through that Son
Of what for us His love had done.

Words without deeds? No; let us each,
Like Jesus Christ, "both do and teach;"
For deed with word must wedded be
If fruit abounding we would see.

Workington.

A. W. P. S.

TO FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY.

IN running a race it is the closing rounds of the course that tell most on the competitor. The start is comparatively easy. The testing time comes as the finish approaches. This applies with peculiar force to the Christian race. How many there are who have set out with a light heart on "the race that is set before us," and have been completely discouraged by the first serious difficulty. Others have run well for years, and seemed to be "set" for a triumphant finish, when lo! their sun went down while it was yet day. Of course no record is kept of the hosts that profess conversion, and of the various "fortunes" that attend their way through life. But it is greatly to be feared that these "hosts" undergo a terrible thinning as the race goes on. Between storm and trial, a tempting devil and an alluring world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, one after another drops out of the race. And even the survivors, "faint yet pursuing," have no room for boast-

ing. It is by grace they stand. It becomes them to be not high-minded, but fear, and to "rejoice with trembling." They cannot presume on years of consistent testimony. They dare not relax their vigilance. Fires of desire, seemingly long extinguished, may kindle again, and be fanned into a blaze by some "wind of circumstances," through secret departure from God. They have not yet reached the goal, and although it may be not far off, they feel the increasing need to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. We doubt not that this is the experience of all who have proved the loving-kindness of the Lord in the years that are past. They have seen His "wonders in the deep"; and though often their souls have been melted because of trouble, they have as often had occasion to praise Him who is the Deliverer of His people in the dark and cloudy day.

But such deliverances have not engendered a spirit of self-confidence. Nay, rather they have wrought a carefulness—a godly fear—a distrust of the flesh. And in each heart thus exercised before the Lord there has arisen the desire, born from above, "that I might finish my course with joy."

As we near the final stages of the "race," we need not be surprised if "Satan all his arts employ." He may even specially aim at our discomfiture, knowing that his time is short, so far at least as we are concerned. But greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Yea, our God is able to make all grace abound, that ye, always having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work. Therefore, no matter how many years of Christian testimony may lie behind us, let us remember that we are debtors to grace for that grace which keeps us to-day. We are as dependent on the keeping power of the risen One as we were in that hour when we first believed on His name. It is still true—yea, it should be increasingly true of us—that the life we live in the flesh we live *by the faith of the Son of God*. Thus drawing from the riches of His grace, and going onward with the feeble hand of our faith in the Great Hand of Omnipotence, we may count upon our God for that grace for which an aged saint once longed when he prayed, "Now, Lord, for grace to end well!"

w. s.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

IV.—A HUSBANDMAN.

By DR. J. N. CASE, China.

THE Jewish Patriarchs led a nomadic life, consequently at the first they were chiefly a pastoral people; but after settling in the land they became mainly husbandmen. So prophet, apostle, and the great Teacher Himself frequently drew spiritual lessons from this calling.

Looked at from one standpoint the Church as a whole may be described as *God's husbandry* (John xv. 1; 1 Cor. iii. 9). Now and here it is not on that we dwell; but as "God's fellow-labourers", as spiritual husbandmen, let us briefly meditate on a few lessons that may be gathered from this figure.

1. The land required to be cleared of stones and thorns, and to be thoroughly broken up by the ploughshare (Isa. v. 2; Jer. iv. 3; Hosea x. 12). The soil represents the human heart (Luke viii. 12-15). As the land needed tilling ere it was suitable to be sown, so a preparation is required for the reception of the Gospel. But this is not something which, through a round of observances or series of good deeds, one can accomplish for himself or for his fellows. Truly, in this case also, "the preparation of the heart is from the Lord". As a good old Gospel hymn runs:

"All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him:
This He gives you,—
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam."

In the Gospel, God is the great Seeker. It is He who brings man to know his own condition and need. In dealing with God or himself no man naturally has "an honest heart". This choice blessing is a gift from above. Happy the one who through grace has received it!

And the man who stands in Jehovah's counsel will, through his teaching and preaching, aim to produce this sense of guilt in the minds of his hearers; for this, as a rule, will end in repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Many thoughtful observers grieve over the strong tendency in present-day evangelism to hurry men into a profession of conversion ere ever there has been any true measure of conviction of sin or contrition for the same. Few now, in looking back on their experience, seem to naturally take up the

language of the psalmist where he says, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow".

It is to be feared that many are not ploughing up the fallow ground, but are sowing among thorns. The picture drawn by our Lord is still true to life; not a few, when they hear the word, immediately with joy receive it. Yet, not having root, they only stand for a short time. When persecution, affliction, or temptation because of the Word arises, they are stumbled (Matt. xiii. 20, 21). Perhaps to-day this class is more common than ever it has been before in the history of evangelisation. Fellow-workers in the Lord's harvest-field, let it be our aim not to add to the number of such sham converts by shallow, unspiritual work!

2. In Palestine the seed was thrown broadcast, and fell on all kinds of soil (Matt. xiii. 1-8). Thus should it be with us. For Christ died and rose again, ascended up on high and sent forth the Holy Spirit, to the end "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations" (Luke xxiv. 47). And to every one who is fitted and called of the Lord to do the work of an evangelist the exhortation still comes, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season," &c. (2 Tim. iv. 2). The reason for this broadcast sowing is evident; we should often make serious mistakes if we began to sample heart-soil. Many a one that we would think was a good-ground hearer would turn out only to be a stony or thorny-ground one, and *vice versa*. So it is for us to preach the Word to all classes and conditions of men, and God will assuredly make it to prosper in the thing whereto He sent it.

But in spiritual agriculture there is *planting as well as sowing*. So the true evangelist follows in the footsteps of the great Apostle and teacher, from house to house as well as publicly (Acts xx. 20). He not only preaches to the crowd in public, he also deals with the individual in private. Both kinds of service are important, and we should seek to fulfil our ministry in both respects, for only thus shall we be "pure from the blood of all men".

3. "The seed is the Word of God." This it is most important to remember. Nothing will take the place of the proclamation of the

pure, full truth of God. The Lord's servant must preach the whole counsel of God, keeping back nothing which would be profitable to his hearers, for in so doing he shall "both save himself and those who hear him"—save himself from loss and shame at the judgment-seat of Christ, and his hearers from false doctrine and resultant sorrow now and loss of reward hereafter. God of old, through His servant Moses, strictly forbade the Israelites ever to sow their fields with different kinds of seed (Deut. xxii. 9). We may ask, Did Jehovah thus mind whether oats and peas were sown together in one field? Was it not rather that He designed thereby to teach all generations of His people a great spiritual lesson? In the present day there is much sowing with mixed seed, so that oftentimes the Word of God is made of none effect through the philosophies, theologies, opinions, or traditions of men. Let us see to it that by His grace we preach and teach the Word of God, the whole Word of God, and nothing but the Word of God.

4. Certain kinds of farming called for watering after the planting or sowing. This the apostle Paul alludes to, and applies spiritually (1 Cor. iii. 6-8). Perhaps this aspect of the work is too often forgotten. We seldom "go forth *weeping*, bearing the measure of seed." Before sowing the incorruptible seed of the Gospel it is fitting that we steep it in the clear water of earnest, believing prayer, and after sowing we should take care to water it by the same mean.

If we knew more of the sorrow of travailing in birth for souls we should oftener experience the joy of seeing our own children in the faith walking in the truth. Then, sowing with diligence and watering with care, we shall, even now, be among God's reapers who receive wages, and gather fruit unto life eternal. And, other things being equal, the harvest will be commensurate to the labour expended and the amount of seed sown. For in this, as in other matters, the rule holds, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. ix. 6).

5. *The harvest.* To gather in a good harvest is the great object the farmer has in view. Clearing the land, ploughing, sowing, watering, weeding, manuring, all have that end in view.

And so in the spiritual realm. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; seer, prophet and priest; apostle, evangelist, and pastor, from the dawn of time until now, have all laboured in view of the glorious harvest to be gathered from the field of this world. Yes, the joy of the harvest-home shall soon be ours. Then sower, waterer, and reaper shall rejoice together. But the chief, full cup of joy shall be His, who toiled and groaned amid the burden and heat of the day, and in the end became the grain of wheat which, falling into the ground, died, and from Whom has sprung up this exceeding abundant harvest. Often He sends us to reap that on which it may be said we have bestowed no labour. Our Lord, in His own person and in the person of His servants, has sown in tears, and soon He "will come again with rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him" (Ps. cxxvi. 6; 1 Thes. 4. 14). And then the Lord of the harvest and all who have laboured with and under Him shall for ever and aye rejoice together. "Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

"Go then ever weeping, sowing for the Master,
Tho' the loss sustained our spirit often grieves;
When our weeping's over, He will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves."

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.—II.

SEPARATION AND UNITY.

By GEORGE ADAM, Straustraer.

UNTIL the call of Abram (Gen. xii.) there was no such thing as separation in the governmental ways of God with the human family. No doubt the grace of God, where it was in operation, would divide between the living and the dead. By a law of their very being, that which was of God would withdraw from that which was of the devil; but until Abram's call there was no revealed command for God's elect to separate from the corrupt mass of humanity. God's command to Abram was, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee" (Gen. xii. 1), and we read that Abraham "obeyed; and he went

out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). But

THE CHARACTER OF THE SEPARATION which was enjoined on Abraham was very different from the separation which is enjoined on the Christian. He was commanded to leave his earthly kindred, and to remove from one part of the habitable earth to reside in another. No separation of this nature is enjoined on believers in this present age; and when the Lord took up the descendants of Abraham, through the line of Isaac and Jacob, to give them possession of the land of promise, their separation from the surrounding nations was both national and local, as well as ecclesiastical. Their unity also was national. They were constituted members of the commonwealth of Israel by natural birth.

Some of them were subjects of divine grace, but many of them were not; and those who were, were not separated from those who were not. All who were Israelites after the flesh formed part of the same ecclesiastical and civil polity. But when Israel after the flesh so abused their privileges that God had to set them aside from being His witnesses upon the earth; He began a new thing which had no existence before. That new thing is called in Scripture

"THE CHURCH OF GOD".

This was no "after thought" on the part of God. It is called His "eternal purpose" (Eph. iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9), and so far as Scripture sheds light on this subject, it is His *highest* purpose, as well as his *first* purpose. And it is clear from Eph. iii. 1-11, Col. ii. 1-3, as well as from other Scriptures, that the Holy Spirit has an intense desire that all who belong to Christ should understand that wonderful "mystery", which was kept "hid from ages and generations" in the past, but has now been revealed unto the sons of men, and is now being wrought out by the Holy Spirit during the session of the Lord Jesus at the right hand of God, and His present ministry in heaven. As I noticed in my last paper, scriptural

SEPARATION IS NOT ISOLATION

from suffering humanity, nor from fellow-saints who do not see as we see. It is anything but that. Believers of the present age were given by the Father to the Son "out of the world".

They have been redeemed by the Son unto Himself, quickened and sealed by the Holy Spirit, and sent by the Son of God into the world to be His witnesses, and a peculiar people unto himself (Titus ii. 14). This peculiarity does not consist in anything that can be seen by the natural eye. Nor does it even consist in holding and contending for certain religious tenets, albeit they may be scriptural. It consists in moral likeness to the character of the Son of God, when he was as a Man moving about in this guilty and suffering world; and in heart-obedience to all His revealed will as far as it is apprehended. Under the Law the separation of Israel as a nation from other nations might be said to have been within the limits of the old creation, but separation now is

BETWEEN ONE CREATION AND ANOTHER.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (*lit.* a new creation); "old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). A believer has still the old Adam nature in him, but he himself forms part of that new creation of which Christ is the Head. He has got a new judicial standing before God—a perfect standing in Christ. Once he stood in condemnation, now no charge can be brought against him (Rom. viii. 33, 34). He possesses a new life he never had before, new aspirations, new hopes, new joys. In short, he is a "new man", and yet in one sense he is the same man still, but he belongs to a new race, and is left down in the scene of the old creation for a longer or shorter period, to live out the principles of the new life he has received, and of the new creation to which he belongs. Just in as far as he lives out these heavenly principles, he will be a *separated man*, and no further. It is not locality now, nor even Church position, which is the essence of separation in the present age; no doubt that is included in it, but all that may exist without the thing itself.

A Christian may be a zealous and even an orthodox Churchman, and yet he may know almost nothing of what Paul means when he says, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world was crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14). Separation according to Scripture has doubtless a Church

aspect. That might be said to be one of its *details*; but it is not the essence of the thing, though by some it has been made so, whilst separation from the world by the Cross of Christ has been little known and little taught. We have been in danger of losing sight of the fundamental truth that the believer's relation to the world as a child of Adam

CAME TO AN END

in the death of Christ, and that every believer is born into a new creation by virtue of His resurrection through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. "Begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter i. 3). "Quickened together with Christ; raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 5, 6). According to these great truths the believer is not only separated from the old ruined creation, with all that pertains to it, but he is brought into a new oneness which had not, and could not have any existence until the Lord Jesus died and rose again. Believers before the Cross were all justified by faith on the ground of that one sacrifice which was to be offered on Calvary, but they were not joined to Christ, nor joined to one another as believers in the present age are. This unity, or

ONENESS OF ALL THE SAVED,

is characteristic of the present age; it embraces those who were gathered out unto the Lord Jesus whilst He was upon earth, with all those who shall believe the Holy Spirit's testimony unto Him whilst He is away in heaven (John xvii. 20-24). It neither includes those who were saved before the incarnation of the Son of God, nor those who will be saved after the "gospel of the grace of God" has done its work. The saved of the present dispensation form a unique company, having no parallel before the present age began, nor will it have any after the age is finished. The last age was finished up by the murder of the Son of God, and whilst the Jews as a nation were specially guilty, and will yet be specially punished, yet all the human family were well represented on that tragic occasion. "Both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together" (Acts iv. 27).

Not only Israel as a nation, but the world as the world, is guilty of shedding the blood of

God's well-beloved Son; and before the "Day of the LORD come", when He will lift His hand in judgment to avenge the crucifixion of His Son, God in His infinite mercy is gathering a people out of the guiltiest age of all the ages of this world's history, and bringing that guilty people into a nearer and sweeter relationship to the very Christ they rejected and murdered, than any other company of saved sinners either before or after. This is

NO SUBJECT FOR SPECULATION.

It is a matter of divine revelation, and designed by God to separate His children practically from a world which is "lying in the Evil One" (1 John v. 19); and until separation from a guilty world by the death and resurrection of Christ, and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is learned, and learned in power, we never can have God's thoughts of what separation really is; nor can we ever learn what scriptural unity is until we have apprehended the unity God has formed between Christ and all believers, and by which all believers are constituted "members one of another."

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXX.

THE UNJUST STEWARD.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible.*

LUKE XVI. 1-4.

Verses 1-4. "And He said also unto His disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted [was wasting] his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it [what is it] that I hear this of thee? Give [give in] an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest [canst] be no longer steward. Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship; I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses."

THE possession of wealth, and the privileges and opportunities which wealth brings, is a stewardship for which an account must be rendered to God hereafter.

Riches and influence may be so employed that, should a reverse of fortune come, those who have been helped and benefited in the time of the steward's prosperity may be disposed to act as friends in the days of his adversity. But the claims of God, and the account to be rendered to Him, must not be overlooked; for He requires truth and uprightness

in all the dealings of His servants and stewards.

Verses 5-8. "So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures [baths] of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures [cors] of wheat. And he said, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely [prudently]; for the children [sons] of this world [age] are in their generation wiser [more prudent] than the children [sons] of light."

This transaction shows the character of the steward, and his utter want of integrity and fidelity in his office.

Two examples are given as a specimen of his conduct, in seeking to ingratiate himself with his fellows by lowering their estimate of the claims of his master upon them. And this may be done by lowering the claims of God in regard to holiness and truth, by giving a false estimate of what God requires.

In all this he has no regard to the interests of his lord, and his just claims on them.

We here notice that it was not the Lord Jesus who commended his conduct, but the person spoken of in the parable.

There is much that is highly esteemed in the world, "for men will praise thee when thou doest well to thyself," which, from its want of principle, may be an abomination in the sight of God.

Verse 9. "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon [by means of the riches] of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations [tabernacles]."

The advice of the Lord Jesus to His disciples is, that they should learn a lesson from the prudence and foresight often exercised by men of the world, but at the same time carefully avoid acting upon their principles of conduct. The possession of wealth, influence, position, leisure, or opportunity, may be so employed during the short span of human life as never to be forgotten in the eternal state. The pecuniary assistance rendered to the poor and destitute in the court, garret, cottage, or the poorhouse, may fade from the memory of the donor in a very short time; but when the heirs of glory meet in the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, no gift will be forgotten, no cup of cold water administered will lose its reward.

Then the children of God in the everlasting habitations of the blessed will welcome with gratitude and love those from whom, while on earth, they have received the manifestation of Christian love, even though it might then have assumed the form of some temporal gift.

What a thought! Friends for eternity may be secured by the employment of temporal means in the spirit of Christian love. Meanwhile we must never forget that we are responsible to a Divine and Heavenly Master for whatever gifts, whether temporal or spiritual, He has committed to our stewardship.

Verses 10-12. "He that is faithful in that which is least [a very little] is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least [a very little] is unjust also in much. If, therefore, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [riches], who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

The children of God are to act at all times as under a responsibility to a Divine Master in the smallest matters as well as in the greater, and not only with regard to spiritual gifts, but also in the management of their temporal affairs.

It has often been found that a course of patient perseverance and conscientious exactness in the discharge of duties connected with some secular situation has been over-ruled by God as an *effectual means of training* for the discharge of spiritual service of the most important, extensive, and enduring character; whereas persons of dilatory and uncertain habits are little fitted for spiritual and important work.

So, also, the gifts of the Spirit, such as those of the evangelist, the pastor, and the teacher, bear fruits lasting as eternity. The spiritual children of the evangelist will in the ages to come rise up and call him blessed. Those who have benefited by the labours of the pastor and teacher will be their joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

In the Church of God there is not only gift, but grace, and the grace of God may be so exercised and manifested in time as to leave its fruit, or memorial, on the ages to come.

“THE DAY OF THE LORD.”

By the late F. C. BLAND, of Dublin.

(2 Peter iii. 3-13.)

THERE is an *apparent* confusion in the events stated as occurring in the latter days, but this will be explained by the eighth verse, which evidently means the millennial day of a thousand years. *All* the events occur in that time, but some occur just at the beginning (such as the destruction of the scoffers mentioned in verse 3), and others at the end of it, viz., the dissolution of the present heavens and earth (verse 12). The “Day of the Lord” is referred to in Scripture sometimes as a momentary event, and sometimes as the period of the Lord’s reign on earth, just as in the ordinary day Parliament may be dissolved in the *morning* and there may be a great earthquake in the *evening*. Both would occur in the same day, one event at the beginning and the other at its close. So the “Sun of Righteousness” arises with healing on His wings, chasing the moral and spiritual darkness out of the world, and ruling the day for the thousand years, which verse 8 tells us is with the Lord as one day. There can be no other object for the interpolation of such a statement except to identify the thousand years with “The day of the Lord.”

You will note that the creation of the new heavens and new earth *is not included* in the events of that day, the “nevertheless” of verse 13 starting a new subject. Where Scripture speaks of dispensations generally, it passes over periods which in other places it treats of specifically. Peter apparently passes over the millennium, but his object is not to treat of it, but of all *that is to pass away*. Our Lord, while absent, is looked for in various aspects, such as :

- I. The Hope of the Church ;
- II. The Messiah of Israel ;
- III. The Desired of all nations ; and
- IV. The Emancipator of the groaning creation.

And in like manner the “Day of the Lord” is used in prophetic language with a latitude of meaning which admits of its application to a *particular crisis* in the history of man, or *to the entire reign of Christ*, as for instance in 1 Cor. xv. 25. So also is His coming spoken of generally, as in this passage referred to, and at other times, with a pointed reference to some special event.

A CALL TO ACTION.

From One already in the Thick of the Fight.

IN less than two years’ time, if the will of God be so, we shall be dating all our correspondence 1900, and yet, is it not unspeakably sad to record that, though so many years have passed since Christ rose from the grave, and gave commission to His apostles to make disciples of all nations, yet to-day by far the greater number of the inhabitants of this world are sitting in a darkness that positively can be *felt*—not felt by those who sit in it, but felt, oh, *so* deeply, by those called of God to labour in foreign lands. Besides the darkness in which they dwell, it is computed that nearly 96,000 of those poor souls are daily being carried to dark, hopeless, Christless graves.

What is to be done? I propose that every reader of this article should carry the above computation into the sanctuary of God, and there pray over it, and ask God to *burn* into our hearts the meaning of 96,000 lost souls.

How can we account for this backward state in the evangelisation of the world, except it be found in the fact that during the middle ages the Church went to sleep on Satan’s knees, the preaching of the Gospel was neglected, and even those countries already evangelised soon lapsed back into their former state of superstitious idolatry. This generation in which we live is pre-eminently an evangelistic generation, for there is a depth of missionary fervour visible to-day such as has not been seen since the days that followed Pentecost. Shall we not take advantage of the Christian warmth and make one stupendous effort for the evangelisation of the world in our generation? Not that we are looking for all the world to be saved, but let us at least put it beyond their power to say that they never heard the Gospel. One of our own poets has said : “There is a tide in the affairs of men which, if taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;” and to-day there is a tide in the affairs of God that bids fair to become a flood. Let us, therefore, cast ourselves upon the crest of this wave of grace, and send the Gospel to earth’s remotest bound.

Beloved brethren, I do not plead for *miracles*, I only ask that we do our *duty* ; but of this I am fully persuaded, that if we did our duty, a miracle would be wrought, and such a miracle as would astonish the most advanced Pessimist.

Just before the British fleet entered upon the battle of Trafalgar this message was signalled to every ship: "England expects that every man this day will do his duty." Every man did his duty that day, and the expectations of England were gloriously realised. God expects His Church this day to do its duty. Is His expectation to be realised? or will His eyes still weep in secret over our death-like indifference to plain duty? "*After they had done all,*" the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to say, "We are unprofitable servants; for we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke xvii. 10). How much more unprofitable shall we be reckoned who have done *little* or *nothing* of the duty assigned to us? May the Lord of the harvest arrest and arouse us, that we may go forth preaching repentance and remission of sins to all nations. The promise of the Father has been fulfilled to the Son, and holds good to the consummation of the age.

T. B.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—I COR. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE ARMY.—Is there any warrant in the New Testament for God's redeemed children volunteering to fight the nation's battles? If not, how do you account for so many godly men being in the army—men clearly born again, such as Havelock, Vicars, Gordon, and many others?

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in I Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

JESUS CHRIST PREACHED—WHEN?

QUESTION 572.—What is the meaning of Acts iii. 20?

Answer.—The changes adopted in the Revised Version, supported for the most part it would seem by the weight of authority, appear to throw light on the whole passage: "But the things which God foreshewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He thus fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began. Moses indeed said, A Prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to Him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever He shall speak unto you." The subject might be said to be, "The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow;" and the apostle shows how both were bound up in the person and work of the Lord Jesus. Had God foreshown by the mouth of His prophets that His Christ should suffer, then this prediction had been fulfilled by the death of the Lord Jesus (verse 18). Had God appointed (R.V.) or preached (*lit.*, heralded) beforehand by the Old Testament prophets the coming of Christ to restore all things, then this, too, would be accomplished in the return of the same Jesus (verse 20). If Israel as a nation had even then repented and turned again to God, not only would their sins have been blotted out, but seasons of refreshing would have come from the presence of the Lord, and the times of restoration of all things would have been ushered in by the personal advent of the long-heralded Messiah in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

W. H.

SUBSTITUTION IN RELATION TO THE UNCONVERTED.

QUESTION 573.—Is it not true that anxious souls almost always are brought into life and liberty—saved by apprehending that Christ has died for, *i.e.*, instead of them? Can we, therefore, when preaching the Gospel to the unsaved, scripturally apply Isaiah liii. 5, 6 to *them*, they, as yet, it may be, being indifferent or hardened?

Answer.—There are, according to Lev. xvi. 8, two aspects of our Lord's death, represented by the two goats, the Lord's and the scapegoat, which best answer this important question.

In one sense the blessed Lord fulfilled the

type of the scapegoat, of which it is said that "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness." This is the aspect of His substitution referred to in Isaiah liii. 5, 6, and applies only to the believer who owns to and confesses his sins, and seeks forgiveness on the ground of atonement for them.

In another sense Christ fulfilled the type of the goat on which the Lord's lot fell, of which it is said that "he shall kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat . . . and he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

In this sense, although necessarily the type was given in connection with Israel only, its application extends universally, even to the whole human race.

For this simple reason the blood is used to make atonement *for the holy place*, viz., for that effect of sin which dishonours God and assails His throne, and would, but for atonement, prevent all communication of peace between the Creator and His creature man. In this sense, therefore, we may rightly preach Christ's death as a ransom for all, available for all, that is—not only for all without distinction of nation, but for all without exception. For by it a righteous way has been found and provided by which sinful man may draw near to holy God.

And as to Isaiah liii. 5, 6, although it would be wrong to say to any careless sinner, "He was wounded for *your* transgressions, He was bruised for *your* iniquities, for he might reply, "Why, then, should I fear or repent—am I not saved?"

yet addressing congregations it is right to use the passage to explain to seeking souls the righteous ground of their salvation, and the Spirit of God frequently uses this Scripture for the conversion of those whom otherwise their sense of just condemnation would send desponding away.

G. F. T.

Editor's Note.—Isaiah liii. 5, 6 is the language of faith. Faith alone can make use of it. As the reply given above clearly shows, atonement in its Godward aspect has been made of such a character and value that a world-wide proclamation of the glad tidings is sent forth. It is to "every creature," "a ransom for all," "tasted death for every man," "not for our sins only, but also for the whole world."

Let us suppose that an Israelite having sinned; a kid is provided, it is unblemished, it is presented at the door of the tabernacle, it stands there as provided for him, it is open to him to come forward and lay his hand on its head confessing his guilt, and thus to become identified with it. Having done so, he can say, "It died for my sin." But though the whole appointed service were gone through, if the sinning one refused to lay his hand on its head, and with his own hand to kill it, then it could not be said to have died *for him* in the sense of being his substitute, that is, in his room and stead. It was then "for him" in the sense of being provided for him, but not "for him" in the sense of his being identified with it. Now, that which answers to the laying of the hand on the head of the offering is *faith*.

"By faith I lay my hand
On that dear head of Thine."

Therefore faith alone can say, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed."

THE TWENTY-NINTH YEAR OF *THE WITNESS*.

IN continuing the issue of *The Witness* for 1899 we began twenty-eight years ago, viz., to present the moderation, keeping back nothing that we deem to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as to give no unnecessary offence to anyone. We would again record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed in the past, and for blessing given through the truth ministered in the pages of *The Witness*, of which many of the Lord's people in various lands have communicated their testimony and thanks, to our joy and encouragement. During next year, amongst many others, we hope to have the following papers:

ISRAEL IN THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE: A series of Addresses, as well as Original Papers, by the Editor.

THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD: Original Notes, completing the series, by our venerable brother, Thos. Newberry, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

THE CHRISTIAN IN VARIOUS ASPECTS, following up those already issued. By Dr. Case, of China.

SHORTHAND NOTES of Addresses by Dr. Neatby, Alex. Stewart, Henry Heath, James Wright, Robert

We desire the continued assistance of those competent to write on Scripture subjects, or those who send in Answers to Questions, and shall be thankful for the prayers of all who love the Lord Jesus, for wisdom and grace to continue this service, and for increased blessing thereon.

purpose (d.v.) adhering to the object for which it was Truth, in its variety and breadth, with definiteness and to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as again record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed ministered in the pages of *The Witness*, of which many of their testimony and thanks, to our joy and encouragement.

C. Chapman, George Muller, J. R. Caldwell, M. I. Reich, and others.

Articles on VARIOUS SUBJECTS OF INTEREST by Messrs. W. H. Bennet, Wm. Collingwood, T. Newberry, George Adam, Wm. Shaw, Max Isaac Reich, and many others.

As well as REVIEWS of profitable books; ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS on a variety of Subjects; INTELLIGENCE from all lands; Missionary Reports, Correspondence, Bible Notes, &c.

J. R. CALDWELL.

BAPTISED FOR THE DEAD.

By GEORGE F. TRENCH, Ardferf, Ireland.

THE attempt to elucidate the meaning of difficult passages in Holy Writ has engaged the labour and study of God's servants in all ages, and is fruitful of many good results. For it is an eloquent if undesigned testimony to the value attached by them to the letter of the Word; it is an answer when successful to the cavils and assaults of the infidel, and more often than otherwise it brings to view the most precious treasures of the Revelation frequently veiled under the inevitable difficulty of conveying heavenly truth in the imperfect vehicle of earthly language.

The verse (1 Cor. xv. 29) which we are about to consider has been a veritable crux to commentators, and remains to this day a frequent cause of stumbling to the ordinary reader. "Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are they then baptised for them?" These are the words, forming a part of Paul's argument for the truth of the Resurrection, which have evoked so much earnest research, and generally baffled the best efforts of the learned and devout.

Briefly to enumerate a few of the more plausible of the many conflicting explanations given: (1) Some believe that the reference is to a practice, not otherwise known to us, of survivors allowing themselves to be baptised on behalf of friends who have died without baptism, as their representatives and sponsors, and in order to secure the benefit of the rite for the dead. (2) Others hold that it refers to some supposed custom of baptising the living over (*huper*) the dead, that is over their sepulchres, as a profession of faith in resurrection. (3) Others, again, that "for the dead" means to fill the place of the dead—recruits, as it were, to fill the ranks broken and gapped by death. There are other suggestions, too many for statement, all of which, it may be said, agree with the first and second of the above in supposing an allusion made to some limited or special superstitious practice of which no other evidence but this passage exists. The answer to all such is that given by Pridham: "It is

hardly credible that, when conducting an argument of this kind, the apostle would appeal to any use or habit not of general recognition and observance in the Church. Such an appeal would be of no moral force at all, since the objector might justly reply that such customs proved nothing but that certain Christians did a questionable thing. Still less would he allow himself to refer approvingly (as some strangely suppose) to a custom of a superstitious kind. By doing so he would have brought his own name under the stigma which he elsewhere applies to the 'many who corrupt the Word of God'."

With the above I am in hearty agreement. Hard driven indeed the apostle would have been had he been obliged to appeal to practices nowhere taught in the Word of God, and in use by the superstitious only. And this appeal is the more incredible when he possessed ready to his hand, in the ordinance of baptism as instituted by the Holy Spirit and universally practised, a powerful argument for the truth of resurrection.

It remains to allude to the third of the above suggestions, which, strange to say, has the endorsement of no less an authority than J. N. Darby, viz., that to be baptised for the dead means to become a Christian, with the view fixed on those who have fallen asleep in Christ, and particularly as being slain for Him. There are two principal faults in this theory.

First, that it makes nothing of baptism, on which manifestly the whole argument rests. To become a Christian and to be baptised were not synonymous expressions, and the force of the verse lies not in conversion but in baptism.

Secondly, there is no sense in such an explanation as a proof of resurrection. For the fact that some people came to Christ because others of His people had died, tends rather *against* their faith in resurrection than otherwise. That a soldier enlists to fill the blank left by a fallen predecessor may prove his patriotism, his loyalty, his bravery, but it proves nothing as to any belief that his predecessor will rise again.

Passing away, then, from all such vain

imaginings, and turning to Scripture itself for a clue, let us see whether the passage may be interpreted in accordance with other parts of the divine revelation. In Colossians ii. 12 we read: "Having been buried with Christ in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." And in Romans vi. 4, "We were buried, therefore, with Him, through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Again, in verse 8, "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." (See also 1 Peter iii. 20, 21.) These passages are, I believe, the true key to the verse in question. For in them we have learned that baptism is not only an outward and visible sign of that present burial of the old man, and of our resurrection to newness of life, but is a witness of our faith in the death and resurrection of the body itself, therein actually, though figuratively, buried and raised again.

Let us now recall that the 15th chapter of first Corinthians is a long and elaborate argument for the resurrection of the body as an article of faith. The reasoning is divided into two principal sections. First, that Christianity as believed and practised rests upon faith in the resurrection. Second, that Nature is full of analogies that confirm the belief that the dead shall be raised.

Upon the latter it is not necessary to touch; but as to the first, which is the subject of the whole passage beginning with verse 12 and ending with verse 34, I must briefly point out how clearly it interprets the verse in question. For, as will be now seen, our verse forms one of several appeals to existing Christian faith and practice, and is part of the apostle's *argumentum ad hominem* addressed to Christians, and proving that they are bound to accept the resurrection if they would be consistent with themselves. The following are the seven points of the argument:

(1) Christ has risen; how, then, can resurrection be denied? (verses 12-14).

(2) The apostles who witness this are accepted by you as true, and yet if Christ be not risen they are false (verse 15):

(3) Your own faith rests on His resurrection; in denying it you deny your own faith, and are yet in your sins (verse 17).

(4) The saints that sleep are perished if there be no resurrection (verse 18).

(5) The misery of our present life is only compensated by the hope of resurrection (verse 19).

(6) Your baptism, or water-burial and resurrection, testifies that you believe in that of the body. Else why be baptised? (v. 29).

(7) If there be no resurrection, what sense is there in us thus imperilling our lives daily for Christ's cause? (verses 30-32).

Now, if No. 6 of the above refer to some superstition, see how it invalidates the whole argument, or weakens it, to say the least. For if in one case he appeals to superstition, may not he have done so in others also? But if it refer to universal Christian practice, founded on Divine injunction, it is worthy to rank with the rest.

There are, therefore, strong *primâ facie* reasons for believing, if the language of the text will bear the interpretation, that none other than this is the apostle's meaning.

Now it seems necessary to adduce evidence that baptism had the character of a burial and resurrection of the dead, not only in the Scriptures (to which we have already referred), but also in the practice of the Church. For remember it is not to the institution that St. Paul here appeals, but to the *practice* of baptism by believers. "Else what shall they do?" &c. That is, how shall they account for their conduct in being baptised, &c.

Dean Stanley says: "Baptism was more than a bath. It was an entire submersion in deep water, where for the moment the waves close 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." "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 meaning of the very word 'baptise,' that those who were baptised were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water." "Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient Church, except in the case of deathbeds or extreme necessity, as no baptism at

all." This is the testimony of the eminent Church historian, whose doctrine, in many respects, is unfortunately so far inferior to his facts. Thus the quotations from Romans and Colossians prove that our verse is capable of being justly explained by the doctrine of Paul, and it is paralleled, according to Dean Stanley, by the practice of the times in which they were written. And if the great doctors of theology have failed to interpret it so, may not one cause of their infirmity be that for so many centuries the national Churches of the world have been turned away from the ancient practice, so that baptism, as performed in the large majority of cases, contains no suggestion whatever of death and resurrection. Such is the danger of departure from the prescribed line of Christian observance. Presently the truth itself is lost.

But it may be asked, How do you account for the term "baptised *for the dead*?" Is not this a new way of putting the truth of Rom. vi. and Col. ii.? To this it may be sufficient answer to say that there are numerous instances in Scripture of departure from the usual phraseology in order to convey truth which is unearthly, supernatural, and mysterious. This verse is eminently a case in point, the intention of the ordinance, as conveyed in the passages already quoted, being of so strange and spiritual a character. Briefly stated, it amounts to this, that in the Lord's death believers are held to have been associated with Him. They died with Him, not for sin, but unto sin, were even *crucified* with Him. Baptism illustrates and confirms this truth, under the figure of the burial of the dead. "Baptised into His death," "they are *buried* with Him in baptism into death." Treating the living people as if they were dead ones, the baptist *buries* them for a moment, and then raises them again. In other words, they, the living, are baptised for the dead, that is in the character of the dead, being the dead figuratively, though actually the living. We have in English a somewhat similar expression, "We took them *for* Europeans," that is, to our eyes they bore the character of Europeans, or again, "He was left *for* dead." That is, though alive his body was left as if it had

been dead, *treated* as dead. This seems to be the force of the Greek preposition (*huper*) in the present passage.* In confirmation of this translation of the preposition I am glad to find that Pridham says: "They had been *baptised*. But if so, with what meaning and intent? What ideas did they attach to a rite of such general observance in the Church of God? Now, if they rightly understood the substance of that outward and symbolic act, they were stultified entirely by their reasonings against the resurrection of the dead, for, as the apostle elsewhere teaches, and as was doubtless everywhere acknowledged in the Church, the two things indicated in that ordinance are death and resurrection. They, then, who are baptised are baptised for the dead, *i.e.*, that which they undergo in their mortal bodies they undergo on behalf of their own dead selves." "Being dead with Christ, by faith in Him crucified, they are risen also with Him through faith in His resurrection. Their act of baptism was done, then, 'for the dead,' but, says the apostle, if the dead rise not, this ordinance of Christ becomes mere folly, even as the faith to which it witnesses is also vain." . . . "The phrase (*hoi baptisomenoi huper ton nekron*) is quite comprehensive enough to embrace all baptised Christians, and no partial or special construction of a divinely appointed ordinance can be reasonably supposed to have been in the contemplation of an inspired teacher when thus solemnly arguing a fundamental point of truth."

Thus it comes to pass that under the guidance of both the translation of the Greek and the meaning of the full context we reach the same result, and that this verse may be freely paraphrased thus: "Else what is the sense or significance of baptism? If the dead are not to be raised at all, why are we immersed in water as though dead, and raised up again as though resurrected?"

* The preposition *huper*, upon which all the strange interpretations alluded to above depend, is never used in the New Testament in a local sense, so that baptism over these ulchres may be dismissed. It is always figurative (Winer). It is most frequently used for - In his name, in his behalf, on his part, in his stead. Numerous examples occur. 2 Cor. v. 15, 20, twice; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Phile. 13; Mark ix. 40. The present interpretation is in line with these. And the only question that remains is, What dead are referred to? The usual view is that others are meant, which is superstitious and inadmissible. This paper suggests that our dead selves are intended.

There is little need to go further. Greek students know in what a variety of senses the word "*huper*" (here, and frequently translated "for") is used in Scripture, and will have no difficulty in accepting the above view, that it refers to the burial of the living body, on behalf of or as the representative of the dead flesh.

And when we remember that the great Pauline doctrine of holiness, that is of present deliverance from our legal bondage to the reign of sin in the soul, is based upon our death with Christ to sin, it will be admitted that to seek to rescue this passage from a superstitious interpretation destructive of the true meaning of baptism is not a work of minor importance.

In conclusion, I have only to commend to my brethren a view of a difficult passage which greatly adds to the significance of this beautiful ordinance by distinctly explaining the vaguer hints of Romans and Colossians that in it is found, besides other and primary teachings, the Church's way of publicly witnessing by its members individually that "if a man die he certainly shall live again" (Job xiv. 14).

THE FOOD OF THE PRIESTLY FAMILY.

By J. R. CALDWELL, Editor of "Christ in the Levitical Offerings."

"They shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them."—Ex. xxix. 33.

WE find here that the practical sanctifying and consecrating of the priestly family was connected with their priestly food. They were to eat those things wherewith atonement was made. The portion that the Lord set apart for the priest was the breast and the shoulder of the ram of consecration. It was in the eating of these that they became practically a sanctified people. The thought in sanctification is always separation unto God. The thought in consecration is the filling of the hands. That is, occupation with that which God has given to be their food. They were to have those things they were to feed upon laid upon their hands, and they were to wave them before the Lord. When their hands

were thus occupied they were said to be "consecrated." Their hands being thus filled with what God had put upon them, they could not be occupied with anything else. The same truth is taught in John vi. 53, 54, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life." We are sanctified and consecrated practically by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man. Again, the Lord said, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me." How did the Lord Jesus live by the Father? "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge," etc. (John v. 30). He met Satan's temptation in the wilderness with these words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Matt. iv. 4). The Lord lived on the words that proceeded out of the mouth of God. That was His daily bread. He fed on the Word of God, and walked in the path of implicit obedience to the will of His Father. Faith and obedience constituted His life. He never was a moment consciously separate from His Father. He was one with Him. Only while He was on the cross bearing our sins under the judgment of God was He in spirit separate from His Father. As the Lord Jesus lived by the Father, so we live by Him. We are to feed upon His Word. "Let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you" (Col. iii. 16). That is the food God has given us to feed upon. As we read the Word there we find Christ. In John v. 39 He says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." There is no eternal life apart from Christ. "You think you can get eternal life by reading the Scripture and keeping the law; you will never get it in that way: the Scriptures testify of Me: I am the eternal life." As we read the Scripture the Spirit reveals Christ to us in all His fulness and preciousness, comforting and satisfying us. Thus His life becomes a reality to us and in us.

As the priests fed on the breast and shoulder of the ram of consecration, so we are called to feed on Christ; on His

breast that tells of His love—the breast upon which John leaned: on His shoulder of almighty strength. He has pledged Himself to bring the lost one home on His mighty shoulder. We are taken up with the natural flesh. “The flesh profiteth nothing.” It is the Spirit that is the great thing. We inquire for one another’s health. John says, “I wish *above all things* that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John, verse 2). May God grant us to know our priestly privilege, and feed upon those things wherewith atonement was made, that we may be practically a sanctified, satisfied, and consecrated people.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD—XXXI.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman’s Bible*.

Luke xvi. 19-31.

Verse 19. “Now there was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously [*literally*, making merry, splendidly] every day.”

THIS rich man, instead of making friends by means of the mammon which he possessed, in the prospect of eternity, which our Lord recommends His disciples to do, spent his wealth on himself, and in self-indulgence, in luxury, and splendour, living only for time, and neglecting the eternity beyond. We do not find any vices or crimes laid to his charge; no doubt he had his friends and companions who shared in his entertainments. He was not wicked in the ordinary sense of the word, but he was worldly. Not cruel, it may be, but living in the neglect of the poor and the suffering. Living and walking in the flesh, and not in the Spirit.

This appears to have been his daily and habitual course: the choice of this present world for his portion, the enjoyment of the gifts of Providence, but living in forgetfulness of God, the good and bounteous Giver.

Verses 20, 21. “And there was a certain beggar [poor man] named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.”

The same Providence which gave the rich man his riches, with an opportunity for employing them for the glory of God, and to his own eternal gain, placed the poor man at his gate, in affliction and suffering, with an opportunity for patient endurance and acquiescence in the will of God, by fixing the eye on the things unseen and eternal, and by enduring as seeing Him who is invisible.

The Greek word does not convey the idea of begging, but of poverty.

His trust was in God. This his name implies. “Lazarus” is the Greek form of the Hebrew name “Eliezer,” the meaning of which is, “God, my helper”: his hope and trust were in his God. Probably his friends laid him daily at the rich man’s gate, thus bringing him under his notice, and the notice of his friends and companions. In his poverty he had learned contentment. He was not desirous of the rich man’s dainties, but simply that his bread might be given him and his water might be sure; and this the promise secured him, for he was a pensioner upon Divine bounty. He was a son of Abraham living by faith, walking in the Spirit, the heir with Abraham of the same inheritance, looking for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Of such the world is not worthy, and the world overlooks them, or passes them unheeded by; even to such the animal creation may prove more friendly than their fellow-men.

Verse 22. “And it came to pass that the beggar [poor man] died, and he was carried [and he was carried away] by the angels into Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died, and was buried.”

The patience of the poor man having had its perfect work, the trial of his faith came to an end, but that ending was the beginning of a brighter day. Those ministering spirits which had been sent forth to minister unto him as an heir of salvation, unseen by him during his lifetime, now fulfilled their mission by bearing him away from the scene of his suffering and sorrow to join the spirits of the just made perfect in the heavenly Jerusalem, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God.

In the present dispensation the believer departs to be with Christ, which is far better.

The soul, also, of the rich man was required of him; his worldly enjoyment, also, had an end. The attendance on his splendid funeral might have been numerous, his body might have been conveyed to the tomb with due honours, but his soul on departing from the earth was solitary; no angel convoy awaited him to convey him to the regions of the blest. The fool may prefer to be without God in this world, but to be without God in eternity is terrible indeed.

The remembrance of pleasures enjoyed without God in this life will afford little satisfaction in the world to come.

Verses 23, 24. "And in hell [hades] he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; and he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.'

Hades is the place, or state, of separate spirits. It expresses the condition of the soul as separated from the body. It is a state of conscious existence; the body alone slumbers in the tomb. It is also a place of spiritual intelligence; the realities of the unseen world are apprehended and realised. To Lazarus it was a place, or state, of highest enjoyment and heavenly communion. To the rich man after death it was the place, or condition, of suffering and woe. The scene of heavenly enjoyment and fellowship was beheld, but it was seen afar off.

According to the flesh Abraham was his father, but not being a partaker of Abraham's faith, they are now for ever separated. What he asks is some little alleviation of his sufferings; he evidently entertains no hope of entire deliverance. Even now there is no turning of the heart to God; it is Abraham, and not God, he appeals to.

Of course, the terms "finger," "water," "tongue," "flame," are symbolic, figures drawn from things natural to express what is spiritual. In the parable "hades" is contemplated, and not the resurrection state.

Verses 25, 26. "But Abraham said, 'Son [child], remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now here he is comforted and thou art tormented. And beside

all this, between us and you there is a great gulf [chasm] fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.'

In this world and in this life man is placed in a state of probation; a choice has to be made, and the results of that choice are eternal. On the one hand, the world without God; on the other hand, God, and leaving God to give, or to withhold, worldly goods. The choice of this world without God involves the loss of God, and separation from Him throughout eternity.

But when God is chosen as the portion of the soul in time, He becomes the satisfying portion of the soul throughout the ages to come. In the unseen state the broad line of demarcation between the children of this world and the children of faith is fixed, immovable, and eternal: the gulf, or chasm, is impassable.

Solemn truth! This leaves no room whatever for any "larger hope."

"Verses 27-31. "Then he said, 'I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify [earnestly testify] unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' Abraham saith unto him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.' And he said unto him, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from [from among] the dead.'

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

The belief of doctrines, creeds, or the testimony of men, apart from faith in God, availeth nothing to the saving and sanctifying of the soul, whether that testimony be borne by men, by angels, or by men risen from the dead. It is God's testimony to His beloved Son, as recorded in the inspired Word, brought home to the soul by the Holy Spirit. This is the life-germ of immortality to the soul, the Word of God living and abiding for ever. The resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany from the dead did not convince or convert the Pharisees or scribes; they consulted that they might put him to death a second time.

And the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, though borne witness to by the men who had eaten and drank with Him after

He had risen, failed to convince the Jews that He was their Messiah.

The salvation of the soul is threefold. It is the result of the sovereign love of the Father, the atoning work of the Son, and the regenerating, sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—V.

THE CHRISTIAN, A STEWARD.

By DR. J. N. CASE, China.

THIS is one of the most searching and humbling aspects of the Christian life. Searching, because it tells of the responsibility placed upon us; humbling, too, for when we examine our past in its light we cannot but see that there has been great failure in acting up to the position. In the several scriptures where this figure is used, *wisdom* and *faithfulness* are the special virtues illustrated and commended (see Luke xii. 42; Luke xvi. 1-13; 1 Cor. iv. 2; 1 Peter v. 10). The lesson our Lord would have us learn from the unjust steward is to act with true prudence and foresight.

While touching on that parable it may be well to observe that the lord of the parable is not the Lord Jesus. He represents a smart, worldly man, who, not being himself above doing a shady or dishonest action, admired and commended it in his servants. Our Lord could never praise the dishonesty, though he could and did commend the foresight manifested, and held it up to his disciples for imitation. How true is the word still, "The children of this age are in their generation more prudent than the children of light". But in this connection it has been well remarked, "This is only as night-birds see better in the dark than those of the day, owls than eagles".

A steward is simply a superior servant. In days of old a slave was not unfrequently raised to the position, as in the case of Abraham's steward, Eliezer, and Joseph in Potiphar's house. And it is interesting to notice how our Lord in one place interchanges the one for the other. "Who, then, is that faithful and wise steward? . . . blessed is that bond-servant," &c.

Strictly speaking, a slave could own noth-

ing; even his wife and children were the property of his master. So with the Christian—*Christ's son*—he is the hand-servant of Christ Jesus. He belongs to the Lord, with all that he is and has. This is well expressed in a few lines we often sing:

"Nought that I have mine own I'll call,
I'll hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my strength, my life, my all,
Are His, and His for ever."

As a doctrine all true Christians would subscribe to this statement, but in practice it is too often denied. Few, if any, believers at all times, and under all circumstances, act as those who are Christ's stewards. But not to think of others just now, let us each one honestly ask himself, as in God's light, how far he even aims at reaching this divine standard.

I. The parable of Luke xvi., already referred to, plainly teaches that even "the mammon of unrighteousness"—the gold and silver of this world—is held by us, not owned. Yet we are graciously allowed, yea, exhorted, by a wise use thereof to make to ourselves *friends for eternity*. "And I say unto you," the Lord emphatically says, "make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when it shall fail they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles." These words, I judge, must be taken literally. We can easily see how it may be fulfilled; widows relieved, orphans succoured, poor saints assisted will be ready to welcome their Christian benefactor to heaven when the time comes for him to leave this world. It corresponds somewhat with the word in the Proverbs, "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and his good deed will He pay him again" (Prov. xix. 17). Surely this is a good and safe investment that most Christians take too little stock in.

II. To the Church has been entrusted by God the Gospel, and a complete body of spiritual truth. So that though we may not be over-supplied with "the mammon of unrighteousness" wherewith to make to ourselves friends, in the Gospel we have something of infinitely greater value, by which we can accomplish the same thing. And it is not altogether a loss to the servant of Christ if at times he has to say, "Silver

and gold have I none," if he has the spiritual power which enables him to say to the sin and Satan-bound one, "Rise up and walk!"

The apostle Paul always realised that the Gospel had been entrusted to him to preserve in its purity, and to propagate. "But," he writes, "as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel" (1 Thess. ii. 4). And again, "For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16, &c. &c.). Such also was the spirit which animated the whole early Church (see Acts viii. 1-4 and xi. 19). But for centuries the professing Church, and even true believers in it, felt no special obligations to preach the Gospel to all men. But, thank God, a change has come. For a century past, and notably during the past fifty years, all evangelical Christians have been more or less awakened to a sense of their responsibility in this matter, though even now one is occasionally met who calls himself a Christian, and yet questions the wisdom, need, or utility of preaching the Gospel to the heathen. Such have not yet learnt the A B C of the New Covenant, however learned they may be in Hebrew or Greek, or however clear they may be on prophecy and dispensational truth.

There is, then, ground for thanksgiving, yet we cannot afford to rest on our oars. Little comparatively has been accomplished; there is yet very much territory to be possessed for our Saviour and Lord. And the time is short. Saved ourselves by Christ, we are under obligations, as far as in us lies, to make His Name and Gospel known to the uttermost parts of the earth. "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give Him no rest." Reader, are you taking some definite part in this divine enterprise? If not, why not? How will you meet Him whom you call Lord?

III. The natural talents and spiritual gifts possessed by the Lord's people are a deposit to be developed and used for the help and up building of fellow-saints. No Christian is a unit standing alone, neither may he live to himself. Christ, my brethren, and the world have claims upon me. Hence it is written: "According as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

One who can open up the Scriptures to the profit of others is responsible to do so; one who can apply Scripture-teaching to heart and conscience, and exhort his brethren to godly living and earnest service, owes it to the Lord and his fellow-members to do so; another who is able to visit saints who are in doubt, temptation, sorrow, or distress, and help and comfort such, is under obligation to engage in such service. Can you profitably conduct a Bible-class for young Christians, or teach and interest a class of unruly boys, or address a roomful of children or grown-up people helpfully, or speak at the street corner, or deal with a troubled soul? Then, in God's name, do it. Ability, grace, and opportunity for such work constitute a call from the Lord to engage in it. On-lookers among Christians are many, hearty workers are few. Remember, you are but a steward, and are responsible to use your time, talent, and influence for Him to whom you belong.

IV. Among men, the chief requirement in a steward is that he be found faithful (1 Cor. iv. 2, R.V.). So in heavenly matters. To be a faithful steward it is not necessary to have a great deal entrusted to one. Though our gift, influence, opportunity, and worldly wealth are small, by grace we can prove faithful therein. What is committed to us is according as the Lord wills; the use we make thereof rests with ourselves. It is not without significance that in the parable of the talents it was the man to whom only one was entrusted who digged in the earth and hid his lord's money. For it is the man with small or mediocre gift who is most exposed to the temptation to stand idle in the vineyard, to allow his talent to remain unused.

Brethren, however small the estate over which we have been made stewards, let us aim to be among those whom our Lord even now recognises as wise and faithful servants. The time is short. Soon each one of us shall hear the word, "Give an account of thy stewardship!" Good will it be for us if we are welcomed up there by many who have been saved and benefited by us down here; but best of all if we are among those whom the Lord, when He comes, shall find faithful in that which is another's, for then He will give to us that which shall be our own—the real, the eternal riches.

LIFE'S OCEAN.

LAUNCHED by a mighty unseen hand,
 On ocean wide,
 Without some aid I ne'er can stand
 On yonder side.

How can I hope to steer my way
 O'er trackless deep?

A wiser hand than mine each day
 The helm must keep.

I'll trust; nor wind nor waves can harm,
 God pilots me;

He speaks, and quickly comes a calm
 O'er troubled sea.

Toss'd by the wind I sometimes float
 On stormy wave;

But, ah! the hand that guides my boat
 Doth also save.

By breath divine I'll cross the tide,
 Secure and blest;

The hav'n reached, my bark shall ride
 Ever at rest.

F. R. W.

BRIEF NARRATIVE OF FACTS.*

MANY of the readers of *The Witness* have been refreshed, cheered, humbled, and strengthened through the perusal of Mr. George Müller's annual "Narrative of Facts." Mr. Müller departed to be with Christ on the morning of 10th March, in his ninety-third year. Mr. Wright—Mr. Müller's son-in-law, and for twenty-six years co-director—has issued his first annual report. It is an exceedingly interesting and instructive "narrative," and is eminently calculated to expand the sympathies and enlarge the hearts of God's dear people. Self-occupation is one of our greatest snares. We need to be reminded of the fact that we were not saved from eternal woe in order that we might lead a life of spiritual slothfulness and indolence. We have been saved for a purpose—to please Him whose "meat" it was to do the will of Him that sent Him. We are exhorted not only to "pray for all men" (1 Tim. ii. 1), but "to do good unto all men" (Gal. vi. 10). The founder of the "Scriptural Knowledge Institution" was a

remarkable man. During the seventy years of his Christian career he toiled unremittingly, making it his daily business to please God irrespective of consequences.

Three distinguished men have been removed by death during the present year—*Prince Bismarck*, a great diplomatist and statesman; *Mr. W. E. Gladstone*, an eminent scholar and orator; and *George Müller*, a man of faith and prayer. Mr. Müller may not have been a great theologian or ecclesiastic, but he was one whose faith we may well follow. Simplicity and humility of mind characterised this "man of God." When asked by a stranger if he was the man of great faith, he characteristically replied, "No, I am the man of little faith in a great God." Though that was doubtless his estimate of himself, it was not the estimate of those who knew him best. His faith "grew exceedingly," and one of his sayings was this: "When anxiety begins faith ends; when faith begins anxiety ends." In his last published report he states that "The primary object I had in view in carrying on this work was that it might be seen that now in the nineteenth century God is still the living God, and that now, as well as thousands of years ago, He listens to the prayers of His children, and helps those who trust in Him." This desire has been fully accomplished. When written to for pecuniary help he was accustomed to say to Mr. Wright, "Ah! these dear people entirely miss the lesson I am trying to teach them, for they come to me instead of going to God."

In his will Mr. Müller appoints Mr. Wright his successor, and states that all the property connected with the New Orphan Houses on Ashley Down is invested in the hands of eleven gentlemen whom he has chosen as trustees, the deeds being enrolled in Chancery. Mr. Müller's "personal estate" consisted of furniture, money, and books, and amounted—not to £160,000, as some newspapers said—but to £166 6s. Mr. Müller

PRACTISED WHAT HE PREACHED.

Although he received during his lifetime

* *Narrative of Facts.* By James Wright. Price 3d. Witness Office.

gifts and legacies, for his own absolute use, amounting to tens of thousands of pounds, he never laid up or invested any money for himself or his relations. Mr. Wright states that from papers which have come into his possession, Mr. Müller gave of the money entrusted to him by the Lord for his personal use the sum of £81,490 18s. 8d. A Christian relates an interview that he had with Mr. Müller in 1892. In the course of conversation he said, "Then, of course, you have never thought of saving for yourself?" After a brief pause, during which his face was a sermon, and the depths of his clear eyes flashed fire, he unbuttoned his coat, and drew from his pocket an old-fashioned purse, with rings in the middle separating the character of the coins. He placed it in my hand, saying, 'All I am possessed of is in that purse—every penny! Save for myself! Never! When money is sent for my own use I pass it on to God. As much as £1000 has thus been sent on to me at one time, but I do not regard these gifts as belonging to me; they belong to Him whose I am and whom I serve. Save for myself! I dare not save!'"

DID NOT MAKE KNOWN HIS WANTS TO MAN.

When he started the "Scriptural Knowledge Institution" he resolved (1) never to ask any human being for money for the work; (2) not to state the need of pecuniary help when in want, either directly or indirectly, even if asked so to do. These principles were strictly carried out to the letter. When funds were required for the orphans it was Mr. Müller's custom to deal with God about the matter. And God was always "as good as His word."

MR. MÜLLER'S FUNERAL.

The funeral procession was probably the largest and most interesting that was ever seen in Bristol. God's eternal principle was beautifully illustrated: "Them that honour Me *I will honour*." The man who in life sought not his own glory became in death the one to whom all classes delighted to show respect and honour. "From the masses of sympathising spectators that lined the streets; from the tearful eyes and

the audible, prayerful ejaculations that escaped the lips of bystanders (many of them the poorest of the poor), as the orphans filed past following the hearse; from the suspension of all traffic in the principal streets, the tolling of muffled bells and half-masted flags; and from the dense crowds in the cemetery that awaited the arrival of the funeral company, it seemed as if the whole city had spontaneously resolved to do honour to the man who had not lived for himself, but for the glory of God and the good of his fellows.'

When a citizen of Bristol wrote to Mr. Wright about

A PUBLIC MEMORIAL

being raised to Mr. Müller's memory, Mr. Wright, in declining to entertain the proposal, remarked that "Every soul converted to God (instrumentally) through his words or example constitutes a permanent memorial to him as the father in Christ of such an one. Every believer strengthened in faith (instrumentally) through his words or example constitutes a similar memorial to his spiritual teacher. 'A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above,' and therefore it is the blessed *Giver* and not the poor *receiver* that is to be glorified."

"GOD BURIES HIS WORKMEN AND CARRIES ON HIS WORK"

is the inscription on the Wesley memorial stone in Westminster Abbey. And it is perfectly true. The five Orphan Houses on Ashley Down, with their 1700 inmates, and the other branches of work carried on through the "Scriptural Knowledge Institution for Home and Abroad," will doubtless be sustained by Him who has cared for them for so many years. The founder of the Institution was accustomed to say that "The New Orphan Houses on Ashley Down, Bristol, are not *our* Orphan Houses, nor the Orphan Houses of any party or sect; but they are God's Orphan Houses, and the Orphan Houses for any and every destitute orphan who has lost *both* parents, provided, of course, there be room in them."

Doubtless some will be exercised and perhaps anxious about the continuance of such a blessed work. He who in Abraham's day

was called "the Possessor of heaven and earth," declares that "The silver is mine and the gold is mine." God has not conveyed away His ownership. Christians are not proprietors; they are but stewards. Oh, that we may be "good," "wise," and "faithful" stewards! "It is *required* in stewards that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. iv. 2).

FAITH HAS BEEN TESTED

very severely during the past year. From the *Report* we are told: "For many of the sixty-four years during which this work has been carried on, the former ('how to abound') was our experience; we abounded, and richly abounded. Latterly, and especially during the last two or three years, it has been the reverse. *Pressing need* has been the *rule*; a balance in hand over and above our need the rare exception. Yet we have never been forsaken. Our faithful resident helpers, loyal to the great principle of the Institution—dependence upon God alone for everything—have been cheerfully content to *wait* once and again for their salaries, rather than encumber the finances of the work; and then ere long a most timely deliverance has come; their needs have been met, and our hearts filled with praise. We have never been permitted to give way to unbelief; and, in the end, our Heavenly Father has invariably shown us that His only purpose in delaying the answer to prayer was to strengthen our confidence in Himself."

Numbers of illustrations of this are given in the *Report*.

Mr. Wright has associated with him in his work Mr. G. F. Bergin, a beloved friend and brother whom he has known for twenty-five years. Let special prayer to God be made by *Witness* readers for these dear brethren and their fellow-labourers.

In a private letter of Mr. Müller's (accompanying the will) to Mr. Wright, dated 13th May, 1896, he expresses the desire that those who minister the Word should bring before believers the deep importance of *systematic* and *proportionate* giving.

If *Christians* were to give *systematically* and *proportionately* of their means there would be more than enough to sustain the work of

the Lord in every department in the regions around and beyond. The "Narrative of Facts" will well repay perusal, and those who are stirred through reading it might send copies of it to labourers who are depending on God alone for the supply of all their needs, and to Christians who are "settling down" and *hasting* to be rich.

A. M.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.—III.

A HEAVENLY PLACE OF WORSHIP.

By GEORGE ADAM, STRANRAER.

IT may be well in commencing this paper to say a word on what worship is. It is not ministry, and ministry is not worship. Ministry comes down from God, worship goes up to God. Ministry is receiving from God, and passing on to others that which has been received; worship consists in giving back again to God of that which has been received. There is a very expressive illustration of what worship is in Deut. xxvi. 1-12. There was no command as to worship whilst Israel was in the wilderness. There it was all *getting from God*. They had nothing to *give*; but when they were to come into possession of the "land", and were dwelling in it, then they were to take of the first of all the fruit of the land which was given them by the LORD, "and put it in a basket, and go unto the priest that shall be in those days"; "and the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God" (verses 2-4). Then at verse 10 we read, "And thou shalt set it (*i.e.*, the basket) before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD thy God." Other Scriptures might be cited, but this one passage teaches clearly that worship in its nature is a giving back to God out of that which we have received from Him.

It is of the very first importance that the children of God should have correct thoughts as to what worship is, and of the way in which God desires to be worshipped, and also as to where

THE PLACE OF WORSHIP IN THE PRESENT AGE really is.

During Patriarchal times, worship would

seem to have been spontaneous. There was no command regarding it so far as we know. Individual men of God "buildded an altar", as they were moved by the Spirit, and worshipped. But when God called His people out of Egypt, He told them that, when they were come into the land which he had promised unto their fathers to give them, then there should be a PLACE, and thither they were to bring all the offerings which He had commanded, and all their freewill offerings.

Every Christian should read carefully Num. xv. 1-31, and Deut. xii. 1-32. The first passage tells how particular Jehovah was as to how He would be approached, and the other as to *where* He would be worshipped. The character of God has not changed since then. He is as particular regarding worship as ever He was, but under "grace" the principle on which He claims obedience is different from what it was under "the law". Then it was a *command*, now it is a *desire*. "The Father SEEKETH such to worship Him" (John iv. 23). Obedience was then enjoined upon the pain of death, now it is claimed on

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOVE.

"If ye love Me, keep My commandments" (John xiv. 15).

Again, under the law the divinely-chosen place of worship was upon earth, and when God resumes His dealing with His people Israel, after His present heavenly purpose is completed, He will have a place of worship upon the earth again. It is not necessary for me to quote Scriptures in order to prove this. Any inquiring believer can easily learn what was in the past from the historical books of the Old Testament, and what will be in the future in the prophetic books. What we are specially interested in just now is, what the Scriptures teach as to where the place of worship is during the present age.

In the passage already quoted from Deut. xxvi., the worshipper was commanded "to go to the priest that shall be in those days". In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told that the ordinances under the law were "FIGURES for the time then present"; "that they were PATTERNS (or similitudes) of things in the heavens" (Heb. ix. 9, 23, 24). Every part of the pattern represented some heavenly

truth. Israel had the shadows of that of which believers now have the substance; and if the place of worship for the Israelite was where "the priest was in those days", it must follow that the Christian's place of worship is where the Priest is in our day. The Lord Jesus Christ as the Great High Priest has gone once for all into the Holy Place (Heb. ix. 12). At verse 24 we are told that it was not the holy places made with hands into which He went, but

INTO "HEAVEN ITSELF,

now to appear in the presence of God for us." In chapter x. we are taught that those who are "partakers of the heavenly calling" (chapter iii. 1) have "boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus." It is evident that the expressions "the holy place" (ix. 12), "heaven itself" (verse 24), and "the holiest" (x. 19), all mean the same thing.

That is, the place "in the presence of God", where Christ is now exercising His heavenly Priesthood; and as the place of worship to God's earthly people was where the high priest was, so the place of worship for God's heavenly people must be where the High Priest now is. Let us mark well how the Spirit states the truth on this point. The priests under the law "served unto the *example* and *shadow* of heavenly things" (chapter viii. 5)—not a shadow of anything that was ever to be on the earth.

There has been a thought in the minds of many that saints in the present age gathering unto the Name of Jesus "outside the camp" are the anti-type of Israel of old gathering unto the one place chosen by Jehovah to place His name there. Now, this is a great mistake, and has caused much confusion. Believers following Jesus outside the camp is not what was foreshadowed by Israel gathering unto Jehovah's Name under the law. It is believers now following Jesus "inside the veil", into the very presence of God, where He now is, that is the *heavenly substance* of that of which Israel had the *earthly shadow*. And a company of saints gathering unto the Name of the Lord Jesus outside the camp is at the best but

AN EARTHLY REFLECTION

of the heavenly reality. And that which has

wrought much havoc amongst those who seek to gather according to New Testament principles is, that the earthly reflection has been made so much of, whilst the heavenly reality has been lost sight of, and so many have taken up a position, as they think, outside the camp, who have never found their place there *by the way of inside the veil*.

It is very blessed to observe the Spirit's way in leading believers inside the veil in Heb. x., before He exhorts them to follow Jesus outside the camp in chapter xiii. And if we would know the meaning of following our precious Lord in his present rejection by earth, we must take the divine path to it. We must first follow the Lord Jesus inside the veil.

He had a divine right as the Eternal Son of God to be where He now is, on the right hand of God; but He is now there in a new character, and on new ground. He is now exalted to heavenly glory as "Head over all to the Church", and as the Great High Priest of our God, and of all His people. He is also there on the ground of the perfection of His work on the Cross. And if we would be drawn by that "love that knows no measure" to follow Him as an outcast by the world, we need to follow Him first in spirit, by faith, into the presence of God, and there learn something of what He is to God on our behalf, and what He is to believers on God's behalf; and as we, through the glass of divine revelation, gaze on Him in His perfect acceptance now before God, and learn that His acceptance is the acceptance of every believer, we are constrained to turn our backs on the world that crucified Him, with all its religious pretensions, its political combinations, and its social attractions, and with the early followers of the Lord Jesus, "rejoice if we are counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name" (Acts v. 41).

Another thing we must notice on this point. Jehovah did not put His Name

WHERE ISRAEL CHOSE TO GATHER.

He *first* chose the place, and put His Name there, and commanded Israel to gather to His Name in the place WHICH HE HAD CHOSEN. And that verse which has been

made so much of (Matt. xviii. 20) does not read, "Where two or three gather together, there will I place My Name." It reads, "For where two or three are gathered together *unto My Name*, there am I in the midst of them." God has raised His Son Jesus to the highest seat in heaven, and given Him a Name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 9). If we would know what it is to gather together unto the Name of Jesus, we need first to follow Him inside the veil, and as the soul enters into the estimate which all heaven sets on the Name of JESUS, and the place it gives to Him who wears it, we gladly follow the "Man of Calvary" outside of all which nature and the world esteems; and gather around His precious Name with adoring hearts, joyfully sharing in his reproach, and waiting the time when all on earth, as well as all in heaven, shall bow before the NAME OF JESUS, "and crown Him Lord of all".

THE FATHER'S TENDER LOVE.

THERE is nothing that is beyond His power to do for us—nothing above His wisdom to contrive for us—nothing outside of His resources to supply us. And all His power, His wisdom, His resources, are at the disposal of His deep, hearty love for ourselves as His own dear children—a love which not only comes up to the height of an earthly father's, or an earthly mother's love, but goes infinitely beyond it. And this love has been exerting itself for our benefit, with all its tenderness and fervency, during all our past lives—is acting still, and will go on to love us, and watch over us, and bless us for ever. Do we really believe all this? If we do, we ought never to doubt that God's heart towards us is that of a tender Father, and living from hour to hour in the assured faith of it, we are to look to Him for everything. Now, the newborn babe is not left to earn its food, or to buy it, or to choose what it shall be, or to cook it. The parent most lovingly cares for all that, the helpless babe has only to take it; so with the feeding of a spiritual soul. God will look after it well; only the man must leave it all with God (1 Peter ii. 2).—JOHN DICKIE.

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.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

"IN CHRIST" AND "IN THE LORD."—What is the difference, if any, between "in Christ" and "in the Lord"?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

CHRIST'S REIGN.—If Christ delivers up the kingdom and becomes a subject—reigns till He has put down all enemies (1 Cor. xv. 24-28)—how then does He reign for ever and ever? (Rev. xi. 15).

WOMEN'S BIBLE READING.—Is there anything in the Word of our God that condemns believing women coming together an hour in the week for Bible reading? Some have no husbands, some have unsaved husbands, and others are not able to read for themselves. Some unsaved women can also be got in to the reading.

CHRISTIANS AND POLITICS.—If all Christians were to abstain from politics, the government of our country would be entirely in the hands of the unconverted. Would this be right or scriptural?

WHAT COMMANDMENTS?—What commandments are referred to in the following passages? (1) "One of these least commandments" (Matt. v. 19); (2) " whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 20); (3) "If ye keep my commandments" (John xv. 10). Are our Lord's commandments in Matt. v. and Luke vi. addressed to believers in the present dispensation?

PROPITIATION.—(1) Heb. ii. 17. Is the func-

tion of propitiation-making (see r.v.) referred to here an allusion to the service performed by the High Priest within the sanctuary (see Lev. xvi. 14-17) on the day of atonement, which was exclusively high-priestly?

(2) In view of Heb. viii. 4, which states the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and He gives the reasons for it (verses 4 and 5), where was the service of Heb. ii. 17 wrought? If the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and Heb. ii. 17 states He must be one to make propitiation, remembering, also, to introduce His priesthood before death would abrogate the force of Heb. v. 6 to and vii. 16, 17, 24, where and when was propitiation made?

(3) Heb. ix. 12. The Lord entered by blood—*by* (ζα characteristic), not in virtue of. Where did He enter? If the heavenly sanctuary, then it is in contrast to the earthly. But why *by* blood? If the entrance be relegated to the ascension-day, what necessity then *by* blood? Aaron entered the earthly sanctuary by or with blood; he is the type, and in the capacity of a High Priest. What for? Is it to make atonement? (Lev. xvi.) Will the antitype tell differently, remembering the capacity in which he did so? (Heb. ix. 11); and in what connection the entrance is mentioned? On the ascension day atonement in all its parts was assuredly complete.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE ARMY.

QUESTION 574.—Is there any warrant in the New Testament for God's redeemed children volunteering to fight the nation's battles? If not, how do you account for so many godly men being in the army—men clearly born again, such as Havelock, Vicars, Gordon, and many others?

Answer A.—There may not be any warrant in the New Testament for a believer to enter the army, but there is nothing said about his leaving it when converted in it, either by John Baptist, our Lord, or the Apostles. Acts x. is much to the point. It certainly is a *lawful* calling, even if it be "not expedient." It may be said that the profession of a soldier is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, but all the exhortations to live "peaceably with all men," "avenge not yourselves" (Rom. xii. 18, 19), and other Scriptures, are in relation to personal matters, and do not apply to fighting the nation's battles. A Christian soldier does not desire war, any more than a Christian doctor wishes for sickness; both are evils incident to the present age. The doctor's business is, under God, to save men's lives, and the soldier's to protect them. Many of those who first came out as "Brethren" were men of position in the army. For the most part

they saw it right to leave it when the way was made plain to do so. Nevertheless there have been many truly Godly men, who having joined the army before conversion yet remained in it, did good service for the Lord in it too, and were "good soldiers of Jesus Christ" as well as good soldiers of the Queen. As a rule those mentioned did not enter the army as converted men, but General Havelock seems to have been converted as a lad, chose the army as his profession, lived and died in it, and never was there a brighter light anywhere. All truly converted men do not see what is spoken of as "the heavenly calling" of the Christian, and some have not faith to act it out if they see it. We must not judge our brethren who are in the army; to their own Master they stand or fall. "Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." M. S.

Answer B.—In the New Testament life is treated under four aspects—(1) collectively, as members of Christ's Body; (2) individually, in our personal relation to our Lord; (3) the relations of family life, parents to children, children to parents, servants to masters, etc.; and (4) national life (Rom. xiii. 1-7; Titus iii. 1). Thus, national life is recognised equally with family life; and, it being necessary that some shall defend the rights and honour of the nation, it would be un-Christian to allow others to do for us that which we are not willing to do ourselves. If it be right for any man, it is also right for the follower of Christ to fight the battles of the nation into which he is incorporated by the will of God. S. R. R.

Editor's Note.—We give two replies in defence of the Christian being a soldier.

To the first (A.) it must be frankly conceded that there is a vast moral distinction between personal vindictiveness and acting in the capacity of a soldier in defence of his country or in vindicating the national honour. It is further admitted that there is no instruction to soldiers directly to abandon their calling, though, whilst saying so much, it remains to be shown that it is a calling wherein a Christian can abide "with God." But there are two passages bearing upon the point that must not be ignored—Matthew xxvi. 52, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," and Rev. xiii. 10, "He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." These passages must mean more than a re-affirmation of Gen. ix. 6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." That remains as a fundamental principle of all human government, and had no need to be re-affirmed. The verses must therefore apply to the taking of the sword in self-defence,

and are a distinct prohibition of such a course, and if so, surely an implied prohibition of taking the sword voluntarily under any circumstances.

The army is said to exist for the defence of the rights and liberty of the nation. This, no doubt, is its first use, but as a matter of fact it has much more frequently been used for purposes of aggression upon weaker nations, and for asserting the principle that "might is right."

The great civil war in America turned on the question of slavery, and doubtless many Christians fought on both sides. To justify the soldier's calling on the ground of its being for defence seems contrary to the principle of the passages quoted above, and to justify it on the ground of maintaining just rights and liberty is altogether futile, for the right cannot be on both sides, though often both sides are wrong, and in a war between two of the great nominally Christian nations there would undoubtedly be Christians on both sides defending their position upon the same grounds.

The wars engaged in by Israel against the nations of the land did not originate in human passion, but in the divine command. They were "the wars of Jehovah." No modern expedition can lay claim to any such warrant. Wars are the outcome of human pride and greed and intolerance of restraint. They are the strivings of the nations for supremacy: the deadly, savage struggle as of wild beasts cruel and monstrous to which the nations are likened in Daniel vii.

To liken the calling of the soldier to that of the doctor is surely inappropriate. The one strives after proficiency in saving life: the other in killing.

The Lord Jesus came not to destroy men's lives, but to save. If His kingdom had been of this world, then would His servants have fought. But the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, as the kingdom for which they contend is not earthly. How can a Christian, ordered to take aim at another even though of a different nation, seek help of his Master, "the Prince of Peace," to kill his man? Even if it could be granted that the position was lawful, could anything be more utterly inexpedient? It is vain to argue that he may never be called to actual warfare, or that if engaged in it he may not have to kill another who is a member of the body of Christ; is it any more Christ-like to fire the gun that launches a poor, ignorant sinner into an undone eternity?

These are not possible difficulties merely that may arise: they are of the essence of the soldier's calling, and must be reckoned upon.

But after all the root question is, What is the relation of the Christian to the world's government? His position as a subject is recognised,

and as such his duty is laid down as stated in Answer B. But do any of the instructions given touch the position of a soldier? He is to honour all in authority, to be subject to the law, to pay taxes, to live peaceably, but where is there a syllable to guide him either as a magistrate, a politician, or a soldier? It is written: "Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called." But the essential qualification is added, "Let him therein abide *with God*." There are many callings wherein this would be impossible. The only course in such a case is to seek honourably to be made free. As to that of a bond-servant, it is, "if thou mayest be made free use it rather."

Would the Holy Spirit ever lead a man to choose a calling involving such issues? To one converted in the army the way out of it might not be open for years, and to such it is a relief to know that there is no explicit command to leave; therefore till the way is open he can remain with a good conscience. But voluntarily to enter it, or to remain in it after freedom is attainable, has, so far as we can see, no shadow of sanction in Scripture.

Since the alliance of the Church with the State there is a vague idea in the minds of most Christians that the nations of the present time are Christian, and that to serve in their armies is very different from serving in the armies of Pagan Rome. That the doctrines of the Bible and the lives of Christians have largely modified the world's ideas of government cannot be denied. But the Church has suffered in the loss of its heavenly character far more by its alliance with the State than all

the world could possibly gain. But the world is still the world, and till "the nations of this world have become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ," their policy will in the main be instigated by him who is their prince and their god. That men of highest Christian character have been in the army, and have borne their testimony there, and been blessed to the salvation of many, is undeniable. Doubtless they walked according to their light, and acted up to what they saw. But however estimable the man may be, if the position he occupies is a wrong one, the fact of his being there cannot justify it.

As the end of the age approaches difficulties increase. In countries where every man is compelled to undergo drill, and act as a soldier if called, there is no course open to the Christian but to submit, praying that his way may be cleared for him, which God is as able to do now as in the times of Daniel (i. 8. 9).

One of the many glories of that happy time to come when He shall reign whom we now own as Lord will be "they shall learn war no more." That the world should glory in its shame is not to be wondered at, but that Christians should volunteer for warfare, and think they are serving Christ by training boys in the love and practice of the military art, seems to be a strange inconsistency.

P.S.—The writer of Answer B. must not forget that the Christian pays his proportion of the taxes which are used for the support of the Government, army and navy included. He therefore righteously accepts its protection and privileges, though he does not take part in its administration.

THE TWENTY-NINTH YEAR OF *THE WITNESS*.

IN continuing the issue of *The Witness* for 1899 we purpose (D.V.) adhering to the object for which it was begun twenty-eight years ago, viz., to present the Truth, in its variety and breadth, with definiteness and moderation, keeping back nothing that we deem to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as to give no unnecessary offence to anyone. We would again record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed in the past, and for blessing given through the truth ministered in the pages of *The Witness*, of which many of the Lord's people in various lands have communicated their testimony and thanks, to our joy and encouragement. During next year, amongst many others, we hope to have the following papers:

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE: A Historic and Prophetic Outline of God's ways with Israel, as well as Original Papers, by the Editor.

THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD: Original Notes, completing the series, also a new series of about ten articles on THE LORD'S PRAYER (as commonly called), by our venerable brother, Thos. Newberry, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*, now in his 89th year.

THE ROME-GRADE: A series of Papers by John S. Anderson, of Florence.

THE CHRISTIAN IN VARIOUS ASPECTS, following up those already issued. By Dr. Case, of China.

SHORTHAND NOTES of Addresses by Dr. Neathy, Alex. Stewart, Henry Heath, James Wright, Robert C. Chapman, George Muller, J. R. Caldwell, M. I. Reich, and others.

Articles on VARIOUS SUBJECTS OF INTEREST by Messrs. W. H. Bennet, Wm. Collingwood, George Adam, Wm. Shaw, Max Isaac Reich, George F. Trench, and many others.

As well as REVIEWS of profitable books; ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS on a variety of Subjects; INTELLIGENCE from all lands; Missionary Reports, Correspondence, Bible Notes, &c.

We desire the continued assistance of those competent to write on Scripture subjects, or those who send in Answers to Questions, and shall be thankful for the prayers of all who love the Lord Jesus, for wisdom and grace to continue this service, and for increased blessing thereon.

J. R. CALDWELL.