

VOLUME NUMBER 1

THINGS NEW AND OLD

An avenue of ministry to the whole church
and Gospel for the whole world.



Edited by A. E. BOOTH
1160 Palm Terrace
Pasadena, Calif.

Published by F. B. TOMKINSON
910 French Street
Erie, Pa.

Printed in the U. S. A.

INDEX

Introduction	1
The Dying Soldier.....	4
The Deity of Christ.....	9
Feeding on the Manna.....	12
Assembly Order.....	14-38-62
Items of Interest.....	23-47-69-95-118-144-168-191-212-239-261 287-310
Christ the Key.....	25
Thine and Mine.....	27
The Storm and the Calm.....	28
Toiling and Rowing.....	32
Fragments	36
The New Year.....	49
The Cross of Christ.....	50
Tract Distribution.....	53
The Church Which Is Christ's Body.....	56
The Person of Christ.....	61
A Terrible Mistake.....	74
My Conversion.....	77
The Psalm and the Shepherd.....	79
Can We Go Back to the Beginning?.....	80
Things That Are Wanting.....	86-111-138
Passing Away.....	94
A Magazine and Its Use.....	97
The Word of God.....	98
Must I Go Empty-Handed.....	100
Some Facts About Acts.....	101
Crushed and Broken.....	121
The Perfection of Christ.....	126
Be Ye Thankful.....	128
Address P. J. L.....	131
California Earthquake.....	145
Another Comforter.....	149

Rich in Glory.....	151
On His Head Were Many Crowns.....	153
A Brief Memorial.....	159
A Warning.....	166
A Moment of Time.....	169
The Love of Christ.....	172
Unity—What Is It?.....	176
Opportunity in Times of Failure.....	186
Call Us Back.....	189
The Little Plant.....	193
The Lord's Day.....	195
The Spirit of Truth.....	196
Be Ye Steadfast.....	197
A Famine in the Land.....	198
Ye Should Have Hearkened—etc.....	201
The Ministry of Peter.....	204 229
Unity.....	217
The Subject of Giving.....	221
The Oxford Movement.....	235
The Second Coming.....	241
They That Are Christ's.....	244
Our Hope.....	248
John's Ministry.....	250 277
The Bright Morning Star.....	265
Our Lord's Return.....	269
The Second Coming.....	273
A Hymn Revised.....	274
Uniform Testimonials.....	275
Assembly Discipline.....	289
Personal Discipline.....	291
The Cheering Voice.....	292
Chastisement.....	293
Independency.....	294
The Second Coming.....	295
Our Lord's Return.....	297
Paul's Ministry.....	300-321
Jehovah Is My Shepherd.....	313
Letters of Sympathy.....	316
The Last Interview.....	319
Thine and Mine.....	320
Our Thanks.....	336

Things New and Old

Introduction

It is purposed with this issue to begin a new magazine under the above title. We fully recognize the fact that there are already a number of monthly periodicals issued and that some of them furnish needful ministry. Some of them are evangelical, some prophetic, and some embrace ecclesiastical instruction, and each of these ministries have a place in the Sacred Scriptures.

A number of brethren beloved, have been impressed in recent years that there is within the church sphere yet room for another monthly. In some of the present periodicals limited space has been given to the New Testament epistles and very specially the Pauline. Those fourteen letters from the apostle's pen cover a broad field of thought and divine intelligence, and every part is necessary if we aim to secure the whole truth as given for our time and day.

As we survey the whole inspired Word from first to last we exclaim, What a wonderful Book! and this spiritual instruction is furnished in such minute detail and every part is given by inspiration of God, lit., God breathed, God given, God spoken, hence the very Word of God. In this what a wonderful treasure we possess of infinite fulness.

I.

In each issue we hope to furnish papers according to the title we have chosen, "Things New and Old," and to serve in this properly, we expect to be able to supply suited ministry from the pen of different servants of the Lord with us.

II.

Added to this we purpose to select ministry, which has been left us as a precious heritage by honored servants of the past generation, whose labors on earth have ceased and who have entered their well earned rest, but in every case their works do follow them.

Some of us have in our libraries, upon our shelves and tables, a rich supply of such spiritual ministry which may be compared to a well filled pantry furnished with choice food. The names of such men are still *fragrant* among us, and the ministry which they have left in the printed page remains the same. Some of this ministry has dropped out of print. We hope from month to month to draw from such sources what we feel may be "meat in due season."

III

It is hoped to print articles of an evangelical character from time to time and papers that will be calculated to encourage and stimulate Gospel activity, for the Gospel is the great need in the world while it is still the day of grace. It is also the first part of the apostle's ministry. "The Gospel to *all creation* which is under heaven." (Col. 1:23 R.V.) All this has a beautiful illustration in the apostle's labors as seen in the Book of the Acts, and the added features which are developed in his Epistles.

IV.

We hope to give a prominent place in our pages to the second part of the apostolic ministry—the church, the body of Christ, the mystery which was “hid in God before the ages began,” but which has now been revealed in the New Testament, surrounding this theme there is a magnificent cluster of rich spiritual instruction. Its formation here on earth and relation to Christ the Head in heaven, as also fellowship, ministry and government; all are developed in marvelous detail and intended to be the governing teaching of the church throughout this age until the rapture of the whole company to the glory, when the church as a bride will take her special place beside her glorified Saviour forever. Then, as part of the church testimony there comes the responsibility and testimony by each local assembly to be borne, and the intended unity of assembly, with assembly where scripturally gathered together with the presence of the One Spirit in their midst, and which should ever be consistent and in harmony with the divinely established relationship.

Alas we know in all this the church has failed. Yea, we have failed, yet if the number be ever so small, even “two or three gathered” to His Name (Math. 18: 20) we still have His promise and the unerring Word, and that will abide to the end of the chapter.

V.

Then, to complete the testimony of New Testament teaching, we also plan to give the Truth of the second coming of our Lord its due place. This important truth has been the hope of the church from the beginning,

“to wait for His Son from heaven.” Characteristic features of the closing days of our age, as predicted in the New Testament Epistles, now impresses pious believers everywhere, that His coming is drawing very nigh. May it find us all with the girded loins and trimmed lamp so that we may be like unto those *who are looking for their Lord.* (Luke 12:35-36 R.V.)

VI.

Brief notes concerning the Lord's servants and their work will be inserted, as well as items of interest in general. All this it is hoped will not only furnish intelligence, but also cultivate fellowship and interest in His work and lead to fervent prayer for His servants in the field.

A. E. B.

THE DYING SOLDIER

It was on the morning of the 20th of December, 1899, during the dark days when Britain was waging war with the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State, when so many of her brave, strong sons fell on the battlefields of South Africa and stained those distant fields with blood. How many, then, were hurriedly ushered into eternity!

Trooper Tom Duff, the subject of our narrative, was reared from childhood's days across the sea on Canadian soil. And now, in the prime of life, strong and full of courage, he responded to the call to arms from the

motherland. Leaving friends and relations behind, he was soon engaged in active service amid the roar of cannon and the clash of arms.

He was in Colonel Damant's column, and more than once was promoted for his courage and bravery; but upon the morning of the day above mentioned, the Boers greatly outnumbered the British in the engagement. The regiment to which Tom belonged were mostly all shot down, and their guns captured. Tom Duff and a companion were among the exceptions. They lay in a small depression of a hill, surrounded by a broken stone wall, to which may be attributed their safety up to that time. Two grey-bearded Boers came along, and looking down into the knoll where Trooper Duff lay, they called out, "Hands up." Seeing they were quite overpowered, Duff rose up and put his rifle and revolver down in token of his surrender. One of the Boers immediately fired two shots, the second of which passed through Duff's stomach, and from that wound he died about half an hour afterwards by internal bleeding. The Boers then went off and left him there.

Laidlaw, his comrade, who had been lying in the long grass close by, was overlooked, and went to Duff's side. That last half hour of the young soldier's life was a touching and pathetic scene. Only one remains to tell the tale, and we here pass it on for each reader.

The wounded man asked his comrade to remove his belt and clothing, and examine the injured part. No surgeon was near. No gentle hand of a nurse was there to alleviate the pain. When Laidlaw reached the wounded part, he saw at once that the wound was fatal, and that

there was no hope for his comrade.

It was a happy and providential thing that Laidlaw was a believer on the Lord Jesus and knew and loved his Bible. He broke the news to Duff, and told him that his case was hopeless. During those moments the two soldiers wept tears together, for there was but one step between Duff and death, and every moment was precious for both Duff and Laidlaw. After some moments of silence the dying man asked his comrade to put his arms around him and hold him tight, which he did. Each could feel the throb of the other's heart, as the great realities of the next world—ETERNITY—stood before them.

The dying man, from his boyhood days, had often thought of the future, and the burden of sins committed had again and again given him concern. He had heard the Gospel message announced, which tells so sweetly of salvation and forgiveness of sins for the guilty and the lost, but Duff, like many more today, had not eagerly searched the Bible for light himself, and hence there was a lack of *decision* in his life concerning those matters, and he had *no assurance* concerning his prospects in the life to come. Only a few more fleeting moments of life were now before him, and eternity so near made things very real for Duff. He broke the silence, and said, "George, where shall I go?"

This earnest enquiry showed Laidlaw that there was no rest of heart or conscience regarding the salvation of his soul. Yet it was proof of concern, and that the dying man was now fully alive to the importance of having all settled. He was, like the jailer at Philippi, awakened, and desired to know the way of salvation. This is a blessed

thing to behold today, a proof that the Holy Spirit is still at work preparing hearts for THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

“Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, Tom?” was Laidlaw’s reply to Duff. The answer was brief and to the point. It showed that with Trooper Duff there was now, if never before, *decision for Christ*, and as the dying thief turned to the Saviour in his last moments, and trusted Him and was saved, and many more since, so Duff’s reply was, “Yes, I do, George.” What joy and relief for the Christian soldier to know that Tom would pass from this life to the next, saved and washed in the atoning blood of the Saviour.

Then Laidlaw replied tenderly, “You have nothing, Tom, to fear; those who believe on the Lord Jesus will be all right. ‘If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved’ (Rom. x. 9). ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life’ (John vi. 47); and again, ‘Who-soever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins’ (Acts x. 43). ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved’” (Acts xvi. 31). What a triumph of the grace of a Saviour God!

But the life of the dying soldier was fast ebbing out—the brittle thread was weakening, soon to break. His words had dropped to a whisper. Among his last words, he said, “Tell the folks at home how I died.” Then the cord loosened, and the spirit took its flight, but so quietly that Laidlaw could not tell the exact moment.

His last faint whisper was the desire of a soul passing

into eternity, resting upon the atoning sacrifice of Christ for salvation and the precious *assurance* which the Word of God gives to all who believe on Christ, and know Him as a personal Saviour, that all under the parental roof should know how happily he died. May Trooper Duff's confession and message be as seed dropped into good soil, and bear fruit an hundredfold.

Long ere the message reached home, a few weeks later, Tom Duff was in heaven, "Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

Next morning, the earthly casket in which the departed soldier had lived his short life and faced a cruel death, was buried with the rest of the killed. A short solemn service was held, and with officers and soldiers and the chaplain standing by, the remains of Trooper Duff were covered under the earth of that African field, until the day when the dead in Christ shall rise. A tombstone now stands over the spot to commemorate the name of one who died a true believer on the Lord Jesus.

Dear reader, what are your prospects, in view of all the great and solemn issues of eternity? If I pass Laidlaw's inquiry on to you, "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" can you, along with the dying soldier, reply with decision, "Yes, I do"? Is He your firm Rock, your strong Tower, your Passport from time to eternity? If all this is true of you delay not to confess Him. Let your friends, the world, yea, heaven itself, hear your bold and fearless decision for the glorified Saviour, and present peace and everlasting blessing shall be yours.

A. E. B.

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

For one who is in possession of the New Testament, it scarcely needs to quote a text to prove the deity of Christ. It is only *will* that can fail to find it there; though it would be another thing entirely to say that there are no difficulties in the comprehension of it. *Of course* there are difficulties. That a babe born in Bethlehem, growing in wisdom and stature in the carpenter's house in Nazareth, should be at the same time the God of all men, this is a difficulty which no one thinks of denying. The Old Testament states it, however, and draws attention to it twice over, for the wonder of it, in words that were written, as every Jew is clear, long before the day of Christ. So Isaiah (9:6): "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace." And again, Micah (v. 2): "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall He come forth to Me who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting."

Mystery it surely is, but no less clear that the fact is affirmed, and affirmed of One to whom from the beginning, as the "Seed of the woman," the generations of men looked forward—to whom, since He came, the generations have looked back; and He the unique Man in human history! The marvelous explanation suits well the marvel of fact, while it concentrates every faculty of the soul upon it. He who made the world, from whom it had

slipped away, has entered it again, in strange guise indeed, but so as to show the most tender interest in it. When we know Who it is, the self-abasement, the child-speech of the Eternal, learning the conditions of creaturehood, but so far removed from paradise: what a revelation is in this obscurity He has assumed!

Himself has come after us! who, after all, so likely as He? Shall we measure Him by the height of His throne—and then He is far from us indeed; or by the depths of a divine nature, which has planted even in man (capable of being seen in him still, spite of his ruin) the capacity of a self-sacrificing love, which can only be the dim reflection of his Maker?

Can it be another than He—a creature—to whom He has left it to win our hearts *away from Himself* by the glory of so great a work achieved for us, No; impossible! And when we realize this work, not as provincial merely, as done for a mere corner of creation, but as under the eyes of angelic principalities and powers, “that He might show in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness to us”—how impossible for it to be any other than Himself who should do this!—for it to be no manifestation of God at all, but of some creature merely; God, in His central glory of being, yet unknown!

“All things were created by Him and for Him (Col. 1-16) is said of Christ; and such sayings are almost more positive affirmations of His Godhead than the most direct statements could be. How impossible to imagine a mere creature centre for the universe to revolve about! or even an inferior God! Go back to the account of creation, and

how naturally it reads now of Him who is God and with God, as the gospel of John declares Him: "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." Or again, look forward in thought to where we are carried in that prophecy of Isaiah with which we began, by that title of His, NOT "the everlasting Father," as the text of the common version has it, but as the Hebrew and the margin of the Revised, "The Father of eternity:" the One who having made all things at the beginning, shall give them at last their final shape.

Thus we realize that at the Centre of the universe there is not merely a Power that controls and holds it together—which is again true of Him "in whom all things consist (Col. 1:17)—but a Heart: perfectly told out as the MORAL POWER which is manifested now as the "Be-loved" of "Love" Itself. Here in the Incarnation and Atonement is it told out to us. There could be no other. It is no satellite which has become a sun, but the diffusive Sun itself—yea, the Sun of all suns.

F. W. G. in "The Crowned Christ."

"It was not *what* Christ did only, but the *way* He did it that elicited the note of admiration, 'He hath done all things well'."

I should be greatly grieved if brethren ceased to be an evangelizing set of Christians. Indeed they would fade in their own spiritual standing, and get probably sectarian, not in theory but in practice, because the enlarging principle of love would not be there. Thank God it is not yet so, but grace alone can maintain the testimony.

Letters, Vol. II. p. 386.

J. N. D.

FEEDING ON THE MANNA

John. vi; 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.

Feeding on the manna is not simply the soul's contemplation of a humbled Christ—that is, of Christ come from heaven to walk in lowliness among men; but faith in Him who came from heaven and died upon the cross, by which the life (eternal life) we have in Him exists and is sustained in the desert.

John vi. is the Lord's own unfolding of this. He feeds the multitude in the desert—a living picture of the truth, and then preaches to them the doctrine—"Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; *and the bread that I will give is My flesh*, which I will give for the life of the world."

The passover is our shelter from judgment, as well as food; the manna, our sustenance in the desert, but equally through death. "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood." The one is safety from judgment prominently; the other, life sustained where naturally there is no supply.

Some, offended by the thought of eating His flesh, went back, and walked no more with Him; but Peter and the rest were true believers, and possessed this life, and lived it, and followed on, though with so little apprehension or understanding that they couldn't bear to hear that Christ must die.

May we eat and drink, that our souls may be fed. The

desert gives no supply. In the desert, they all ate "the same spiritual food," and all drank "the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." Here again death comes in—the water flowed from a smitten Rock. The figures of Scripture are bold and free. They *ate*, and they also *drank*, and they drank of a *Rock*. The whole together simply means that a crucified Saviour is the soul's food. They fed on One who was to die for them: we feed on One who has died for us.

The Rock "followed them"—how full of grace! The tenderness of the Shepherd's care. How free and bold the figure, to suit the rich fullness of Scripture thought, and the blessings of God's grace for the soul, in constant attendance upon us! No wonder that the Lord makes us feel that we are in a desert, that we may realize His supply. He suffered them to hunger, only that He might feed them with manna. How much we lose if we are insnared into making this scene our abiding-place! for then there is no hunger, and no eating and drinking—like the human system become inactive by disease—and the soul is famished into spiritual death.

E. S. L.

"Our God is light; and though we go
Across a trackless wild,
Our Jesus' footsteps ever show
The path for every child.
"Death's bitter waters met our thirst;
Thy cross has made them sweet;
Then on our gladdened vision burst
God's shady, cool retreat.
"The manna and the springing well
Suffice for every need,
And Eschol's grapes the story tell
Of where Thy path doth lead."

ASSEMBLY ORDER

A Reading

This paper inserted is a reprint and will be continued in the December issue. It is the substance of a reading at a Conference in Toronto, July, 1900 (now over thirty-two years ago). Messrs. Ridout, Greenman, Enefer, and Booth were the chief speakers. The first three are with us no longer; they have been called Home. Their voices we shall hear no more in Bible readings. The reading had in view the correction of certain views and practices in the assemblies of an independent character. The reading was published in pamphlet form (now out of print) and is again printed that all our readers may benefit by it and consider afresh the truths contained therein. Guides may pass away, but Christ our Lord and the Truth ever abide. "Remember them that had the rule (guides) over you, men that spake unto you the Word of God and considering the manner of their life, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and forever." (Heb. 13; 7-8. R. V.)

B. C. G.—1 Cor. xii. 18-27. It is very important in reading a scripture like this to recognize the twofold application of it; that is, if we rejoice, as we do, in our blessed privilege as members of the body of Christ, we must also recognize the same unity as to the visible local representations of the body of Christ as there is between the individual members of it. Hence Paul says: "Now ye are the body of Christ," addressing the Corinthians, "and members in particular." He addresses them as though there were no other Christians in the world, and says: "Ye are the body of Christ." Would that each child of God would get into his soul the blessed sense of this—a member of that body, of which Christ is the Head, in which the Holy Spirit dwells. What honor that places upon us. A little assembly might say that we are set in this world to be a perfect representation of what the body of Christ is; a body ruled by the Head, and indwelt, every member of it, by the same Holy Spirit. We could

not possibly think of a body in which the parts of it were at variance with each other, except the head is wrong. The Head being right, all the members of the body are supposed to be governed by that Head, and energized by the Spirit that dwells throughout it. That which has caused all the sad denial of this, practically and otherwise, is a lack of knowledge as to the way this works practically. So, neglect in getting a letter of commendation shows ignorance or indifference. When leaving home, with the same care as a man gets his railroad ticket, he should get his letter of commendation from his brethren. He should not leave the place that he goes from without a letter of credit to the meeting that he goes to, and if we expect a fellowship worth anything to us, it should be a fellowship that we seek to maintain in all its integrity; and if we value it in that way, we expect others to value it likewise; because a thing that puts down all fences—a field that has no fence around it, is soon a common, and has nothing for anybody.

A. E. B.—I will read a verse giving the Church as the house, 1 Tim. iii. 15.

B. C. G.—The thought added to the previous one is, that there the Church was presented as the body of Christ, and that truth must be maintained by all of us. In this, the Church is the House of God and we must maintain an order suitable to Him that dwells there.

S. R.—Eph. iv. 2-4. That is, the unity of the Spirit is the unity which we are to keep in the bond of peace. There is a unity of the body, and the order of the house; and the power which is to make practical the unity of the body and the order of the house, is the unity of the Spirit.

One thought; one mind; one principle; one truth; one government—one control throughout the body and throughout the house. The unity of the Spirit is a different thing from the unity of the body or the order of the house, in this that it gives us the vital principle in which we are to live and act as members of the body and as being in the house. As the *body* gives us the activities and ministries of the Church, so the *house* gives us the order and the government of the Church, but the unity of the Spirit gives us the oneness in ministry and the oneness in government. Whether we look at the Church as the body or the house, there is the oneness of the Spirit which we are to keep in the bond of peace. This requires lowliness, meekness, forbearance, but at the same time it must express itself identically wherever the house is or wherever the body is. That is a most important principle. The unity of the body always exists, but if we are practically to be a testimony to it there must be the endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit.

B. C. G.—As an illustration of what our brother has been presenting, there are two species of things in contrast with it which are found in Christendom. The one is the thought of union, which is not unity, which puts contradictory things together and just glosses that over with a union, the elements of which are not put together by the Spirit of God. That is man's substitute for a divine truth. If I cut off all the fingers of my hand and tie them together, that would be a union but it would not be a unity. The fingers would be together, but they are not together as united, running to the centre of the palm of

the hand. If I took a piece off the tips of the taller ones, making them all of the same size, that would be another phase of things—uniformity. The Word of God does not present either of those things; it presents unity. There are differences of attainment; differences as to growth, but there is a unity which God forms, and He forms it with relation to Christ the Head, so that now, as God has given us a hand we have not any of us to make a hand; we have to keep one. God has given us the various parts of our bodies to maintain intact, and so He has formed the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, and it is our business to keep the unity of the Spirit.

S. R.—As illustrating that in a very simple way: here we are together this morning from all parts, and soon we will have to be separated, bodily. We will suppose that we were to break bread this morning, or, what is the same thing, take some action as gathered to our Lord. Let us notice it—we are always at the Lord's table; not simply on Lord's day morning, but we keep the Passover seven days. That is, there is no time when we are not at the Lord's table. Our whole life is at the Lord's table, just as Mephibosheth was always at the king's table. Not that he was eating all the time, but his position was that he was at the king's table. Now, someone seeks, we will say, to minister, and it is not the truth of God; it is not for edification; then, of course, it fails to edify us as gathered here. I judge that we would say that ministry was more particularly connected with the body, just as government is more particularly connected with the house. You would say that if one's ministry is not edifying or is not true, he would come under the government of the

house—that is, we would have to deal with him. Would we not, if some one came here and taught Unitarianism or something that denied Christ, would we not arise at once and put him from our midst? We would not go on with it at all. That is the order of the house, of course. If a person applied for fellowship who was not in a right state or held false doctrine or anything of that sort, we would not receive him. That is connected with our responsibility as members of the one body and as members of the house.

But now we separate. Have those principles changed in the least? Some of us go to western Ontario; some of us into the States; some of us to Nova Scotia, and all that. There is the same precious gospel; the same kind of ministry; the same application for fellowship. What would you do in any one place differently from what we have done as gathered together? Would not our act be identically the same if it were done in some local assembly as if it were done in this large and representative gathering? There is the application of the unity of the Spirit—the truth of the unity of the Spirit to the saints as gathered in various places; and if we are to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, it must be acting separately just as we would act were we all together and the act of the separate assembly representing the action of the Church of God—the action of the House of God, just as much as if we were all together in one large united meeting. There is no separation; in other words it is identical.

B. C. G.—The first is a thought which may be new to some—“we are always at the Lord’s table”—are never

seen distinct and severed from it. We are not always in the act of taking the bread and wine, but you see we are identified with that. Read 1 Cor. x., beginning at the seventeenth verse—"For we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is anything or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lords' table, and of the table of devils." So he puts it upon them seriously: How can people who are partakers of the Lord's table—that is their every-day character—how can they ally themselves with what is the most distinct denial of that?

S. R.—We ought to have it stamped upon us; we are people in this world who are identified with His name and His table.

Ques.—How can that be carried out practically, that we are always at the Lord's table?

B. C. G.—Having the sense upon us that we are associated with Him in that fellowship which is expressed at the Lord's table.

W. McC.—And in our practices during the week or any of the intervals between the time that we would be sitting at the Lord's table, actually partaking of the loaf and the cup, our associations and all should be consistent with the moral significance of the feast that we partake

of, we should not be playing fast and loose with things as we see some. The authority of His name must be maintained there; so, as those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, we are bound to refuse any who are careless. We are the stewards of the Lord's table; we are to keep His name clear in relation to what is associated with it. So the very name, Lord's table, puts it upon us that we cannot be indifferent to the Lord's holy claim to it.

G. M.—To illustrate what our brother R.— said: A few weeks ago, I was very deeply and forcibly impressed, when I was at a place, that whatever I was doing there, though as an individual, I was doing for all, and it was not a question of any personal estimation of persons or liberty that I could have myself, but it was a question of all—the whole body.

A. E. B.—That is important. It would be nice if all the laborers would remember that.

S. R.—Acting not as individuals, but for all. That what was sought to be done was to carry out the Lord's interests for all His people, and that nothing inconsistent with that should be done.

A. E. B.—I wish all the laborers would just keep that same thought before them. In all our service, that we are *to act for the whole*, and especially where little gatherings are formed and the Lord's table is spread.

S. R.—Just there is a point of importance; the formation of new gatherings. *It is a very important thing that new gatherings should be formed*, but the table should not be spread in any place *without, if possible, the practical fellowship of some gathering near by*—at any rate,

with the written fellowship. Let it be known that the saints are contemplating breaking bread, and seeking the fellowship of their brethren. I think some of the brethren here could give very interesting illustrations of how the neglect of that has worked harm, and how the observance of that principle has been for blessing.

B. C. G.—It would be just as imperative—it is just the same thing—supposing there were two or three suburban meetings here, that the same fellowship should be between them as if it were two or three meetings here in the city. The point is to recognize fellowship with each other, and if these little gatherings are formed, they should be formed in relation to those which already exist.

To follow up what we have been saying; when persons would ask us for some definite scripture with reference to it, I would like to call attention to two or three passages to show that there was not a diverse order as to assemblies in the earlier days, and there should be no more now.

1 Cor. vii. 17. Without looking at what was in the beginning, it says in the last part of the verse, "And so ordain I in all churches." That is, what the apostle insisted upon there he insisted upon everywhere. The arrangement of things was universal. *He had not one order for Corinth and another for Ephesus.* God's order he claimed was divine authority.

S. R.—Just with your finger on that verse, I would like to quote what has been said, "What has Ephesus to do with evil at Corinth?" How absolutely contrary to the word of God such an expression as that would be,

which has been used and maintained as a principle of independency.

B. C. G.—The sixteenth verse of the eleventh chapter is in the same line. And this is the epistle of order in the house of God. This is what might be deemed an unimportant matter, but the apostle insisted upon it here, (and he would if he were here now), "If any man seem to contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." That is, he could not yield to any man who wanted to set aside God's order.

W. McC.—Let us remember in studying first² Corinthians that it was not confined in its address to the church of God in Corinth, but to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours"; so that its application is as much for us in the last days and last hours, and for every saint of God, as it was for them. That was a special remark that widened out to all; while we know that all Scripture is of universal application, in another way this has a special stamp upon it.

A. E. B.—"If any one think to be contentious, we have no such custom,"—*that is, we the laborers, nor the assemblies of God.* There is *perfect unity amongst the laborers, and perfect unity amongst all the gatherings.* That is a very important thing.

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Extracts from the Summary of the Minneapolis Conference, June, 1932

The first three days were seasons of happy fellowship in an atmosphere of prayer and Scripture ministry of a uniting and constructive character.

The two morning readings were from 2 Timothy 1 and 2. Various laborers addressed the afternoon and evening services.

In view of the nearness of the Lord's return, and the appalling worldliness of Christendom and the unsatisfactory spiritual state even of the assemblies, much earnest exhortation was given throughout the Conference, calling the saints to keep in closer touch with the Word of God and to make much of daily communion with Christ our Lord.

Laboring servants, and local men of oversight, it is felt should keep a watchful eye upon the sheep and lambs of the flock of Christ entrusted to them, exercising godly care to correct existing evils, to protect against impending perils, and to develop and maintain the highest possible standards of life and service in all.

The conference distinctly and repeatedly emphasized the importance of maintaining the proper relations and balance between the two Pauline ministries (Colossians 1), viz., the Gospel of salvation for the world, and the assembly for the saints—CHRIST being "every thing" in either sphere.

The Gospel testimony going forth constantly brings souls to Christ; and the babes in Christ converted are directed to the assembly where they should be fed and guided into paths of service for Christ our Lord. The assembly thus is strengthened and fitted for proper evangelical testimony. In this place of testimony, united efforts are enjoined (Phil. 1:27). When this zeal in the Gospel is neglected or wanes, the assembly decreases in numbers as also in spiritual warmth and fervor.

The goal aimed at then, is a heart state and an assembly life answering to the principles which the New Testament demands that we uphold; thus binding together (1) *a spiritual position*, according to God, and (2) *a spiritual condition*, individually and collectively, which are required to manifest the proper features of a Christian testimony.

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Rev. 3:11.

Brief Notes on a Day's Conference at Reading, Eng.

We had a good time, I think. Brought to God (1 Peter iii.) was the opening subject. Then followed what He is—a God who raiseth the dead (Rom. iv). After that we were reminded that He is the Creator who ministers to the faint (Isaiah xl.).

In the evening we were directed to the disciples, and their prayer (Acts iv.) to God, who was carrying out His purposes, and fulfilling His word by what was taking place. The effect on the disciples was, that with *great* power the apostles witnessed of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and *great* grace was upon them all. Next we were taken to Exodus xxxiii., the intercession of Moses for a people who had failed, and God's response, His presence should go with them. And Moses the mediator accepted, he asked to see God's glory, and had all His goodness passed before him. After that we were recalled to 1 Peter iii. to sanctify the Lord in our hearts, and activity and interest in the Lord's work pressed upon all. Then Mark ii. 1-10 was read, and commented on by the reader and another; the four bearers showing what ministry on behalf of others in sympathy with Christ could do; and finally we had read to us God's encouraging address to Joshua i. 1-7.

C. E. STUART.

The present magazine found its birth-place decision at the "Lake Erie Bible Conference" in Dunkirk during the month of August of the present year. A number of brethren who were gathered there expressed the desire for such a monthly, but the writer little expected that the chief work of such an undertaking would fall upon him and with a great feeling of reluctance eventually accepted the task, after the unanimous call and warm desire expressed on the part of the brethren, coupled with the ready response by different servants to assist us in this service by prayer and the contribution of papers. All these things made the acceptance more easy.

At the time of writing as we begin the task, there is already real joy in the anticipative labor before us. The earnest and constant prayers of God's beloved people are desired, for prayer is the vital breath of all true service for Christ our Lord.

With those chief features in view we have begun, and commend each issue of our monthly to the God of All Grace for His direction and approval.

A. E. B.

CHRIST, THE KEY TO THE BIBLE

“Christ” is the key that unlocks the whole Book, the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation. He is the very *heart* and *center* of the first verse of Gen. i. 1. Yea, the very *heart* of the first *word* or *name* that greets us as we open up the sacred Scriptures.

“In the beginning” is a coming out of the *past eternity* as a boundless sea; and placing our foot upon *terra firma*, the name of “*God*” greets the reader, a *plural name* of the Godhead embracing *Father, Son* and *Spirit*.

The name of the “*Son*” is the central figure in this great work of Gen. i. 1 (John i. 1-14, Col. i. 15-17, Heb. i. 1-3). As we enter the study of this peerless Volume, with the spirit of a disciple, like Mary of old, we find ourselves at the *feet* of the *Master*, and the “disciple indeed,” will ever exclaim, as one of old, “*Who teacheth like Him?*”

In Gen. i. we see His majesty and glory as the *Creator*.

Then, as we pass through the various pages of the whole Book, we can trace a rich unfolding of His glories.

In *type*, in *prophecy*, in the *Gospels*, *Acts*, *Epistles*, and also *Revelation*, it is *Christ, Christ, Christ* that is revealed—Christ as *Sacrifice*, Christ as *Saviour*, Christ as *Judge*, Christ as *King*, etc., etc. His glories, personal and official are all fully given. We cannot afford to pass one verse by unread, *not even a word*.

Then as we reach Rev. xxii. 21, and emerge from the fields we have passed over in the reading and study of

these sacred Scriptures, we feel *sanctified* and *blest* as no other reading produces (John xvii. 17).

And as we close the Book we are yet in the company of the One who greeted us in Gen. i. 1. He conducts us through the whole Book, and as we rise up in Rev. xxii. 21, we feel more at home in His presence; we know Him as we did not at first in Gen. i. 1; we know Him as we could not then. Then we were amazed, yea, confounded before Him as we beheld His *glory, majesty, and power* in creation (Job xxxviii. 3-7).

But, in Rev. xxii. 21, we know Him now as *Saviour* and *Redeemer*. The passage through the whole Book has given us *never-to-be-forgotten lessons*. The story of the *fall* of man, *sin*, etc., as in Gen. iii., led to repentance and confession; then the Gospel message was a welcome sound for *our cars*—*Christ*, the Saviour of *men*; we heard the blessed news, received the message, received the Saviour, and we pursue the rest of the journey until the end in His fellowship, and as we reach the last *book*, the last *chapter*, and eventually the last *verse*, we are about ready to begin the whole journey over again. Here it is we look up into His face, fall down at those feet and exclaim, “Unto *Him* who *loves* us and has washed us from our sins in His blood, and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father: to Him be the glory and the might to the ages of ages (eternity itself). Amen” (New Trans., J. N. D.). We have crossed the whole Book, and then as a sweet heavenly benediction there falls upon the devout and reverent reader, as precious dew from heaven, the closing Word, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

A. E. B.

THINE AND MINE

LORD, I am thine, and Thou art mine,
Together linked are we;
On Thy great love may I recline
Until Thy face I see.
I am not mine, but ever Thine,
And Thou art now and ever mine.
I love to whisper Thy sweet Name,
So full of charm and power;
Jesus, eternally the same,
Gilding in darkest hour.
Peace, rest, and joy—full, rich, and free—
In endless store are found in Thee.
As I am Thine, and Thou art mine,
Oh, never let me stray!
But keep me ever at Thy side
Throughout my pilgrim way.
Doing each little thing for Thee—
Thy servant, Lord, oh, may I be.
I am to sit upon Thy throne,
I am to walk with Thee,
I am to share Thy glorious home,
And all Thy glories see.
Help me to love Thy cross and shame,
Faithful and true to Thy dear Name.

E. R. W.

THE STORM AND THE CALM

(Mark iv. 35-41)

When reading the Gospels we must ever remember that the incidents given us were not chosen haphazard, but deliberately by the Spirit of God; and of them it can be said that they are written, that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing we might have life through His Name. Each sign, each incident, serves to open out the perfections and glories of our Lord; to display to our wondering eyes, the grace and power that were in Him; and thus to confirm our faith in His adorable Person.

One of our Lord's busy days had come to a close. With many parables—that being His customary way of teaching—He had spoken unto the multitude. And “when the even was come, He saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.” They were to take the journey together. He would be there with them. So the multitude is dismissed and “they took Him even as He was in the ship” (ver. 36). His labours over for a time, the Master, *with head resting on a cushion, is soon asleep in the hinder part of the vessel.* How sweetly such a sight speaks to our hearts of the perfect way in which He had come into man's place and circumstances—into all those circumstances incidental to true humanity. Perfect, peerless Man He was!

But soon they were in the throes of “a great storm of

wind." From the language used, it was evidently a storm of unusual severity. The surging waves dashed over the sides of the ship, and "it was filling." But the Master was undisturbed by the storm. He slept, but His rest was broken by His perturbed followers, who were evidently amazed at their Master's apparent indifference. The storm raged, but He slept on. Disaster appeared inevitable. They would perish, for they could not possibly weather such a storm. Yet He slept on!

So their wonderment found vent in an utterance that revealed how earnest they were in their fears—and how faithless. Awakening Him, they cry, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" What a question! And yet how the facts, the bald facts of the case, such as men take into consideration, appeared to bear them out. The storm was real—the ship was filling fast—to the bottom they must go!

But no! They are to learn that their Master with them was their salvation. They are to see what He could do. His apparent indifference but tested their faith in Him. That test proved their faithlessness, but notwithstanding, they behold the salvation of the Lord—salvation from the prevailing circumstances; and they are made to realize that His power, when need arose, was available for them.

And let us note the calm dignity of the Lord. Their cry is heard; and in the quiet realism of power that they should have reposed in, He arose, administered rebuke to the wind, and to the sea He said, "Peace, be still." The rebuke was heeded. The command was heard. "The wind ceased, and there was a great calm." Then, when

He had thus graciously allayed their fears, He said to them, "Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" Two questions He put to them, difficult in one way, to answer, but in another, easy of explanation—difficult when we think of Him, but easy when we remember their frailty. They had not made much progress in learning *who* their Master was: and even here, as we note the grace that actuated Him, the *power* manifested for them is the prominent thing before their eyes, and that produced "a fear exceeding," and their exclamation is instructive as to this: "*What manner of man is this?*" Ah indeed! The like had never been seen here! One was with them to whom the wind and sea yielded ready obedience. The Creator was in company with the creature, and we can exclaim with adoring hearts,

"Oh! what grace, what power were His."

And taking up their words for ourselves, how very much there is in them for us: "Even the winds and sea obey Him." "He sits above the waterfloods," and He is Lord of all. And the wind and sea may well stand for the circumstances against which we have to battle in the journey of life. Often allowed doubtless for the specific purpose of testing our faith, how often that opportunity is missed, and our lack of that precious element is made apparent. Does it not sometimes appear as if the Lord were asleep? indifferent to our trials and troubles? Have we not thought so, as circumstances, like the wild waves of a storm-tossed sea, have incessantly dashed about us, threatening at every moment to overwhelm us? The cry, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" tells of the

passing of faith—our inability to grasp a golden opportunity for showing spiritual perception and confidence in Him.

But deliverance comes. Our failure to trust makes manifest the resources that there are in Him, though the lesson *could be learnt* in allowing the storm to have its vent, meanwhile seeking grace to quell the rising fears of the heart. Amid varying experiences, the psalmist said, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." Blessed resolve! But better still the heart utterance of one whose soul waited only upon God; "Trust in Him *at all times.*" We need the sunshine and the shower; the cold cutting north wind, as well as the balmy south, to bring forth the sweet perfumes of faith and quiet confidence in His love and changeless purpose concerning us. He holds our hands, and lifts up our heads. Perish we cannot. But He will glorify Himself, and magnify His grace, bringing us nearer to His heart as we pass through storm and stress. Blessed be His Name for it; and let us say, "For this we than Thee."
H. FRIEND (ENG.)

GRACE AND GLORY

"The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psa. 84:11).

The Lord who says that He will give grace, now tells you that He will give glory.

Wait a little longer. The sun which shineth more and more will come to the perfect day. "It is better on before." Glory will soon be in our actual possession, much sooner than you think. Between you and heaven there may be but a step. Perhaps e'er another sun has risen on the earth, you may behold the face "of the King in his beauty in the land that is very far off." At any rate, there is comfort for you; the same Lord who will give grace will also give glory.

C. H. SPURGEON.

TOILING IN ROWING

“He saw them toiling in rowing, for the wind was contrary to them; and . . . He talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid.”
(Mark 6:48-50)

Night had settled down upon the Sea of Galilee. Storm clouds gathered, the wind rose, and waves seemed insurmountable. The thought of crossing the angry sea in an open boat, filled the hearts of the disciples with fear: they “toiled in rowing,” and the herculean task seemed hopeless, yet the Master had constrained them to get into the ship, and they had but gone *at His bidding*. Did He not know a storm was brewing? Did He not recognize the danger they would be exposed to? Yet He had left them and gone *to the mountain to pray*. How significant was that act, in the light of His soon going to the Father. But of this they knew not! Doubtless their fearful hearts felt His absence and longed that He might have been with them, as He had been on a previous occasion. (Mark 4:38-41) when “He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea **BE STILL.**” Scarcely had they felt the longing when suddenly in the darkest part of the night—when all seemed hopeless, He came to them, walking upon the water; and His well known voice, reassured them as He said: “**IT IS I, BE NOT AFRAID.**”

May we not say, that what these disciples were called to pass through in actual circumstance, many of the Lord’s people experience in a *moral* way?

The days grow darker, and the path for the people of

God who desire to be here for His pleasure, becomes more difficult.

The storm of persecution may arise, waves of adversity may threaten, friends may fail us, and we may have to witness the break up of everything here, but faith can still say "THOU REMAINEST."

Troubles may multiply, and storm tossed and distressed, we may be like these mariners of old—at our "wits end" (Psalm 107:23-30) "toiling in rowing," ready to give up the unequal contest, but shall we not remember the words: "Call upon ME in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify ME" (Psalm 50:15).

The blessed Lord delights in His people, and desires our whole hearted confidence.

The feeblest cry reaches His blessed ear, He is at all times a present Saviour. He knows the heartaches, the anguished spirit, the disappointments, the loneliness, which surges and sweeps over the soul. All has been anticipated by Him, and His tender heart is ever touched with our weakness.

Is it not worth the storm, to experience the strength of His love? How else can we grow, in the knowledge of Him? And then to know the sweetness of intimacy, to hear—by faith His voice, bidding us "Be of good cheer" to be assured "IT IS I" and He, stilling every fear. Oh! that we "may know Him, and the power of His resurrection."

And then, in His own good time the storms of life will be over, our warfare will end and our blessed Lord

and Master will rebuke the wind and waves, and there shall be a great calm. "Then they be glad because they be quiet, so He bringeth them unto their desired haven" (Psalm 107:30).

The following hymn, said to have been written by Saint Anatolius of Constantinople in the year A. D. 458 and supposed to be the oldest hymn extant, is full of comfort.

"Fierce were the wild billows,
Dark was the night ;
Oars laboured heavily,
Foam glittered white ;
Trembled the mariners
Peril was nigh
Then said the God of Gods
'PEACE, IT IS I.'

"Ridge of the mountain wave,
Lower thy crest.
Wail of Euroclydon,
Be thou at rest.
Sorrow can never be,
Darkness must fly,
When saith the LIGHT of lights
'PEACE, IT IS I.'"

Surely, we may say "What time I am afraid. I will trust in THEE." (Psalm 56.3)

J. W. H. NICHOLS.

We commend these two papers this month with their suggestive thoughts for prayerful study, the first concerning the storm on the sea of Galilee, with the Lord in the ship with the disciples amid the great storm. Note with care the beautiful features of the lesson, His perfect manhood, "Asleep on a Pillow," His Godhead, power and glory displayed. "Peace Be Still," "and there was a great calm" (Mark 4: 35-41).

The second narrative, the disciples alone in the ship amid the lashing of winds and waves, and the Lord upon the mountain top praying. See the record as given by the three Gospels (Math. 14: 22-36, Mark 6: 45-51, John 6: 15-21.) The historical narrative is the basis to illustrate deeper lessons. Weave into the history the present *moral lesson* for each believer now. On account of our links with a rejected Saviour we find conditions adverse to our life testimony for Him. But He is on the mountain top praying, "Ever liveth to make intercession for us." How perfect are His provisions! He *died* for us; He *lives* for us, and He *is coming* for us.

Then again observe how the history briefly illustrates *dispensational* teaching, for the germ seed of all prophesy lie here. The present Church age is outlined, while Christ our Lord is on high. The Church as well as the Jew, have their peculiar difficulties in the world. Peter represents the Church in going forth to the Lord on the boisterous waters. He leaves a remnant behind him in the ship. His faith is manifest at the beginning, clear and distinct, because his eye is upon the Lord. Failing in this he further becomes an illustration of the Church (Rev. Ch. 2: and 3:).

Yet he meets the Lord face to face as will the whole Church, every believer, according to I. Thess. 4: 13-18.

Then he returns with the Lord, as we shall at the proper time, and they find the remnant left behind in peril. This represents the tribulation yet future, and the Jewish remnant. When they reached the ship, the wind ceased, illustrating the days of tribulation which will give place to a new condition. Then they in the ship worship Him and confess "of a truth thou art the Son of God."

Finally, when they reached the shore *the multitudes* are brought to Him and as many as touch but the hem of His garment are healed by his Divine power and blessed. This, a beautiful Millennial picture, when Nations shall be healed and blessed through Him. "And the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the whole earth as the waters do the bed of the sea." This will be "*the age to come*" when the real virtues of the Tree of Life will be perfectly displayed and the leaves will be for the healing of the Nations. (Ed.)

FRAGMENTS

To many I would especially commend, at the present moment, the study of the Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13).

The Word detected and proved the hostile character of Satan, (ver. 4, 19); the shallowness of the human mind (ver. 5, 20); the choking character of the world (ver. 7, 22); as well as (blessed be God for His unspeakable grace) that it was (ver. 8, 23), a life-giving, fruit-bearing seed in His own people.

The conversion of five thousand in a place would in nothing change the responsibility of a gathering of saints, to examine carefully the converts ere receiving them. For no excitement, as of a great and holy movement, can set aside responsibility, as to either the holiness of the House of God, or tender compassion toward the souls of men.

Every man's work will be tried of what sort it is: may piety, modesty and firmness increase and abound.

—"The Present Testimony."

"I wish attention could be raised to this question—'Have you any principles?' And if you have, are they Divine and such as will make good for you, if you are consistent with them, *a steady position when all things are shaking round you?* . . . There are two things one has to remember as *a learner* in the school of God; one is, that God, the Holy Ghost, *never unteaches what Himself has taught*; the other is that by *our misapprehension*

of, or addition to, what He has taught, our minds are often hindered from further progress . . . To honor God and retain an unspotted conscience are of more worth than intercourse with good men—communion with saints I will not say, for that can never be found apart from His honor and a pure conscience, without which being maintained in the conscience of the individual, it is mere intercourse of good men, if not confederacy; but is never to be called communion of saints . . . To attempt to make good in display, the unity of the body on earth, when God has been dishonored, is really to turn back from the Tabernacle of Testimony outside the Camp (where is the mediator and the avenger of His dishonor), to honor the place out of which He has been driven by the golden calf and its worship."

—"Principles of Gathering" in
THE PRESENT TESTIMONY.

WHEN THEIR SHIPS WENT OUT

A rich man was down at the river front waiting the departure of an ocean liner. He was joined by an acquaintance, who said to him, "You seem to be much pleased about something."

"Yes," said the man, "I do feel unusually happy today. Do you see that vessel at anchor in the North River? Well, I have on that vessel ten thousand dollars' worth of equipment for a hospital in China, and I just came down to see the vessel safely off."

"Well, that is interesting, and I am glad you made that gift," said the friend. "But you know, I also have a gift on that ship. My only daughter is on that vessel, going to China to give her life as a missionary."

The wealthy man looked touchingly into the eyes of his friend and exclaimed, "My dear brother, I feel as though I have given nothing, as I think of what this sacrifice means to you."

—Selected.

ASSEMBLY ORDER

A Reading

This paper inserted is a reprint and is continued from the November issue. It is the substance of a reading at a Conference in Toronto, July, 1900 (now over thirty-two years ago). Messrs. Ridout, Greenman, Encfer, and Booth were the chief speakers.

B. C. G.—Here he has spent half a chapter upon such an unimportant matter, seemingly, as to how brethren should be distinct from sisters in the Church of God. But some have said that Paul says, if any one objects to that, he does not hold to this. If any one objects, we have no such custom—we yield. That is not true in the least. If any one is objecting and is contentious, why he is rejecting the universal custom of the laborers, of course, and the universal custom of the assemblies of God.

F. J. E.—That should be well taken notice of, because there has been a great misconception about that verse. It has often been quoted the way you have put it with reference to what you have stated just now in connection with the sisters.

S. R.—The apostle says in another place, “If any man will be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” Such an one is still ignorant, that is all.

B. C. G.—Chapter xiv., verse 33 is on the same line; and we know that is the chapter that regulates the ministry of the Church when it comes together. It is a sample case. After giving all these directions, he says the reason is, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.” In all the churches it is the same. How could the apostle say this—how could he vouch for the various

gatherings if this were not so? It is not but that gatherings may differ in their spiritual condition, but there was but one order maintained. There was but one centre; but one order of the assemblies coming together. So he can speak for all the assemblies of the saints. *Now this is specially to be noticed, for I was challenged more than once across the sea, and have been this side, as to this expression which has been used, as to the "Circle of Fellowship."* A person said to me: I do not agree with what some of you American brethren say as to *the Circle of Fellowship*. Well, I said, if you can give us a better name to express a divine fact, we will be glad for any good name, because we know the name is but human but the thing is divine, and we do not want you, in objecting to the name, to do away with the thing. Here is a circle of fellowship—here is an order that the apostle can vouch for—that if you leave Corinth and go to Ephesus you will find it there too. So we have got to look into it to see what this order is. If we go to Ephesus, what ought we to do? We bear a letter from Corinth, we go to the same fellowship in Ephesus that we leave in Corinth; we are in the fellowship wherever it may be. Some people, for convenience or other reasons, do not put in their claim elsewhere, and they say they do not belong there for the time. That is not true. The day they land at the other place they belong there.

S. R.—Yes, and are under the discipline of that place—of the saints as gathered there. We, for instance, have been under the discipline of the assembly at Toronto for the last three days; subject to the discipline of the House of God as expressed in the assembly of Toronto of which

for the time being we form part.

B. C. G.—In connection with that, then, if we had presented something here that the brethren were assured was a very evil thing, and they protested against it, and we still held to it, then the next thing, inasmuch as the order of the Church of God is but one, there should at once be an appeal made from us to those we came from. Why? because they are responsible—they sent us in a sense, or commended us; so that would stop any such mischievous notion as that we should deal with evil short and sharp and cut people off before those they came from have a full opportunity to identify themselves with the matter. If you are right in taking us up for something we have presented here, then the brethren, in deference to them should have an opportunity to act with you in all that is done.

F. J. E.—In connection with *the circle of fellowship*, would you say now that in view of the failure that has come in amongst those professing to be and actually gathered out to the name of the Lord, that that “circle of fellowship” is confined to those who are holding to the truth of God as it was accepted when the movement first took place?

B. C. G.—Certainly.

F. J. E.—That is to say, to take ourselves, for instance: Is it not confined to that “circle of fellowship” apart from other companies of those who are called brethren?

S. R.—Certainly. We cannot vouch for other people maintaining that which we do not know they are maintaining.

F. J. E.—If that is the case, we would say we are in the “*circle of fellowship*” on what ground? For what reason?

S. R.—To maintain the truth which we find in the Scriptures.

F. J. E.—Then that practically condemns the other circles.

S. R.—It does, unquestionably, brethren, and I do not believe we ought to have the slightest hesitation in saying that we are *where we are by conviction*, and that by God’s grace we maintain in love and lowliness, but with all firmness, our separate position as gathered to the Lord’s name in subjection to His word, and that we look on our dear brethren in the sects, and on our dear brethren who are not, but who are practically forming sections in that way, we look on them all alike; we test them all by the word of God. Some have more truth; some have less truth, but none of them, for one reason and another—none of them can have that which commends them to us as being on the ground of God’s word simply and only. The only way we can leave the ground we occupy is by conviction that it is wrong and unscriptural. That is the only upright and conscientious way that we can *change our position*—that it is not according to God, and take a position that is according to God, whether it be with some other company or if we have to stand alone.

W. McC.—There are some today who have the thought that the corporate testimony is gone, and that there is nothing remaining for Christians now, but individual Christian testimony. They do not set themselves—they

do not intend to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; they do not recognize that there is any more responsibility, or at least that there is any more possibility of the children of God—the members of the body of Christ gathering together as such, and maintaining together the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace; they have given up that idea. They have expressed it in words like this: “Oh, your theory of the one body is exploded,” and they point to the numerous defects among us to prove it. But that does not prove that we are cleared from the responsibility of still obeying the fourth chapter of Ephesians; that does not change the fact that God had made of twain one new man, so making peace, that He has joined Jews and Gentiles together by the baptism of the Spirit into one body. That fact remains, and will remain until Christ takes the Church out of the world, but as long as it does remain, we, as individuals are responsible to endeavor, collectively—every individual that sees the truth, is responsible with every other individual who sees the truth, to maintain that truth, to walk together in the uniting bond of peace. Ignoring this, many give up this endeavor—the endeavor which should arise from a firm belief of the truth as to this.

B. C. G.—That is a most mischievous notion; it is wider spread than we have any idea of.

S. R.—And it shows really that they have had their eyes on their fellow-brethren instead of on the Word of God and on the Lord Jesus Christ. They have been looking at one another; and if we have failed, then everything is gone.

F. J. E.—It would be wrong for me then, believing that I am where the truth is, to say to these other circles: Now let us come together; we are all wrong?

S. R.—Certainly. Why should I confess as wrong that which is the truth of God? There may be details which one would be glad to clear up, provided they were not understood as giving up the ground of God's truth.

A. E. B.—Another point as to this. Not only has the Scripture put us in this position, but certain circumstances in connection with our brethren have compelled it. *We all know that our hearts' desire is not to be separated from them*, but it is because they will not follow the truth, we have been forced into separation from them. And on the other side there are others from whom our hearts' desire is not to be separated but who take unscriptural, sectarian ground. So in that way I think that our consciences are perfectly clear before God as to practice.

F. J. E.—If I believe I am where the truth is, it would not be right for me to go to another company of brethren and say, Now let us get together; we are all wrong, and make a confession and see if we cannot get together again.

S. R.—That is going out to one of the cities. Leaving Jerusalem and going out to Ono. (Neh. vi. 2.)

B. C. G.—Except we have something to turn to in Scripture to tell us the principles that God established at the beginning have been rendered null and void by any failure of His people, we must go back and see what was that order that God established at the beginning, and we must aim definitely and continuously to carry out that order. We never can buy off from those things, and it

is just the devil's trick to get us to excuse ourselves from responsibility and say: "everything is gone; we cannot maintain anything," which is to say that Christ is no longer head of His Church; His word is not sufficient guidance for us in all our pathways here, and the Spirit of God is not competency to obey the will of God. It is a surrender of everything.

S. R.—Speaking of going back reminds me of another thing that is very important. In the movements towards union that have been made, and which have brought such sorrow in some quarters, there has been a distinct refusal to go back to the start of the trouble. If I see aright in Scripture, the only way to get right with God and to get right with one another, is to go back to the root of the thing and judge that. Here is a division, for instance, which took place many years ago. They plead the statute of limitations and say, That happened fifty years ago; what do we know about it? Let us take things as we find them now. Here is a company of saints; they love the Lord Jesus, and their walk is right. Well, beloved, how about fifty years ago? If they love the Lord Jesus, and if their walk is right, is it such a hard thing to walk back fifty years with the Word of God in our hand, and say: Here was something said; here was a principle adopted that was contrary to the word of God, and it was wrong? We go back 6000 years. We take our Bibles and turn to to the first part of Genesis, and we say Adam and Eve *sinned*. We have no hesitation in saying this thing. Somebody might say: That happened 6000 years ago; what difference does that make? It is just as fresh to-day as it was then. And so a principle adopted fifty years ago

and acted upon as the principle of fellowship amongst Christians is just as fresh to-day, and has got to be judged. If it is a right principle, dear brethren, you and I have got to go back those fifty years and confess before God our wrong in resisting that principle. If it is unscriptural, our brethren, no matter how dear they may be as children of God, no matter how nice their companies may appear, they must go back and judge that principle too, or there can be no godly basis of fellowship.

B. C. G.—We have definite Scripture as to that: the apostle speaks of some who walk in the way of Cain; so, though Cain is dead and gone, his ways are here yet. And the Lord tells the people who are rejecting Him, in the eleventh of Luke, forty-ninth verse, “Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute; that the blood of the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.” The point which is of great value there, is this; that there was a people who never shed Abel’s blood, who are charged with it; there were people who never shed the blood of Zacharias, but they were held accountable for it. Why? Because they identified themselves with the people who did it. We cannot get out of it; this principle of association is one of the most serious things possible, and if we learn it well and deeply it will root us out of things which people are so utterly careless about now.

I give you one good example. When we were remon-

strating with a brother whom we heard was associated with the Free Masons, and he said he was not much of a Mason—he scarcely ever went; just kept his name on the books by paying up his dues once in a while—we followed him up by this: that if he was a Mason at all, he ought to be a good Mason. It is a good thing for a man to be zealously affected in a good thing, and if it is a good thing he ought to get his brethren to join too. We would like to belong to a good thing. We sought to show him that he was identified before God with what Masonry was in God's sight. We said, Now, we will give you time to consider it duly, but if the Scripture says; "Love the Brotherhood," that shuts out every brotherhood but one; there is only one to which the definite article is applied, and that is the Brotherhood of the people of God; these are the devices of the enemy, for God is an exclusive God and says, I am God and there is none else. The brotherhood of His people is an exclusive brotherhood which shuts all other brotherhoods. Thank God, the dear man, after a good deal of exercise, decided to withdraw entirely from Masonry. Another way the devil has of holding a Christian is because he has insured his life, and has paid out a good deal of money to a society and he wants to get his money's worth.

Let us carefully discriminate. Supposing we say that is an unequal yoke; but it is an unequal yoke of a very serious nature. Here is another man who thinks he sees what a terrible curse intemperance is, and he sees the misery that it brings, and so on, and believing he is here partly to set the world right, he goes in with others in a temperance movement. It would be very ill-used judg-

ment, and not weighing things properly to put those things down side by side as of equal gravity; while both are unequal yokes. Free Masonry is not only an unequal yoke, but it has most serious things attached to it, and we have to discriminate as to it.

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Our brother, William Dewar, whose permanent address is Route 4, Spokane, Wash., has spent the whole summer in the Middlewest and East, attending both Minneapolis and Dunkirk Conferences; also visiting many of the gatherings, even as far as Norfolk, Va., then returning through the different assemblies here and there, expecting to reach home in November. Our brother's ministry has brought comfort and encouragement to many at each place. We will do well to pray for more Pastors.

Mr. J. F. Stebbins, 2307 Mississippi avenue, Tampa, Fla., accompanied by his wife in their auto, have been north since the month of May, calling at different places until they reached Dunkirk Conference, which was a happy season, both in fellowship and in ministry. After this they turned towards the South again, calling different places and expecting to reach Tampa about the middle of December. Our brother's ministry has been appreciated, both in the Gospel and among the Lord's people.

Mr. William G. Amies, 145 South Davis avenue, Audubon, N. J., after the Dunkirk Conference, visited Detroit, Indianapolis and St. Louis, enroute to Minnesota as his objective point. Our brother, who has spent some time in Africa as a missionary, is now exercised about needy fields closer to hand. We pray for the Lord to direct his path. In the meantime, he is using his time and energy to help in whatever comes to hand, for which many feel grateful.

Mr. M. R. Keim, 69 Herkimer street, Rochester, N. Y., has been held at home a good deal with his children since his wife's death, but has filled a needed place in that city. He expects now to arrange at times to get off to other fields, especially in the assemblies.

Who can fail to see the fields are white unto harvest, and the coming of our Lord draweth nigh? Shall we not comply with the Lord's standing request, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His Harvest." (Luke 10:2.)

Forwarding Address,
1034 15th Ave S. E., Minneapolis, Minn.

Dear Brother Booth:

Since leaving the Iron Range towns June 1st for our summer gospel work, we have been kept busy. Our first visit was with a brother, C. W. Sommers, living ten miles north of Bovey, Minn., who was saved about three years ago at some school-house meetings. He has always given us a hearty welcome since, and during our meetings now, his wife and a young man working on his farm confessed the Lord Jesus as their Saviour. Joy and peace are as ever the blessed results of faith in Christ.

Spent about two weeks with meetings in homes and school-houses, besides doing house to house work around the country.

We attended the Conference at Minneapolis and can say that it was surely a profitable and happy season together with the *Lord's people*. *Have gone over notes taken of the readings on 2nd Timothy and found help by doing so.*

After a short visit to Duluth, we drove with our car and camp trailer to Pine River, spending about three weeks with our Brother Wm. Doty and family. Held meetings at our brother's home, at schoolhouses, and on the street corner on Saturday evenings, besides usual house to house work.

Our next place was eighteen miles southwest of Remer. At some meetings in a schoolhouse, two women and a young girl confessed the Lord. In the house to house work, many conversations take place, which we trust will result in eternal blessing.

At Puposky, Minn., we camped for four weeks on the farm of our Sister Mrs. Etta Watson, who a good many years ago lived at Lowry. She is a sister of our Brothers Duncan and William McKenzie who have gone to be with the Lord.* Meetings at homes and schoolhouses, with nice interest, besides country home visitation.

Indifference and infidelity are general. Worldly pleasure and amusements will draw the crowds, but for the gospel there is proportionately little interest with the masses. However, we keep on, knowing that the gospel is still God's power unto salvation to all who will believe God's spirit is here, and He works. How long-suffering our God is, not willing that any should perish.

Albert J. Adolffson.

*The mention of those names from Lowry, Minn., touch a tender place in our hearts. The McKenzie family were *part of the first fruits* of a precious work of the Lord wrought some forty-five years ago, when Brother A. Scott and the writer first visited those parts. It is refreshing to learn that those who moved away to distant parts carried the gospel with them. All the fruits will be seen bye and bye. (Ed.)

A NEW YEAR TEXT AND COMMENT

God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46. 1.

The Psalm begins well. The word GOD is the first articulate syllable that breaks the silence. No wonder that with such a start we should immediately find such words as "our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble"—a strong Tower to run to for safety, an unlimited power to still the breast in the face of fearful perils, and that just when needed, "a very *present* help in trouble."

"Therefore." Happy deduction! Splendid reasoning! GOD is superior to every possible hostile combination of circumstances. The God who is sufficient for the whole universe, can care for a sparrow, and the God of Psalm 46 is enough for you and for me.

A. J. FOLLOK.

THE NEW YEAR

Another year is dawning,
O Savior, let it be,
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee.

Another year of mercies,
Of faithfulness and grace,
Another year of gladness,
In the shining of Thy face.

Another year of witness,
Another year of praise,
Another year of proving
Thy presence all the days.

Another year is dawning,
O Savior, let it be,
On earth or else in heaven,
Another year with Thee.

FRANCES R. HAVERGAL.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and the sufferings He endured there, stand out before us in the Holy Scriptures as the *grand central stem of the golden lamp-stand*.

It has a *central* place in the purposes of God from a past eternity, and will be the wonder, admiration, and joy of myriads in eternity to come.

It occupies a *central* place in the midst of the dispensations, or ages of the Bible, placing three on one side and three on the other. During the past ages, from Adam to Noah, Noah to Abraham, Abraham to Christ, *prophecies, promises, types, shadows*, all kept this great, grand, and wondrous subject continually before the heart and mind of God and man.

It lays now at the foundation of our Christian faith: it is the foundation of all God's dealings with man, and the very foundation of the grand superstructure of eternal glory in which God and His redeemed shall dwell forever. This solid, impregnable, rock-foundation is the cross, the sufferings, the death, the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus.

The new heavens and new earth will find not only the cross as the foundation, but the cross shall furnish the inhabitants, garnish the scene and superstructure, and beautify the place and people. The Lamb of God shall take away the sin of the world (John i. 29), remove every blur that sin brought to the present heavens and present earth. And when this is done and we behold the great change and shape the new heavens and new earth will take—eternity, we shall turn to Him who suffered upon the cross, who died for our sins, who shed His blood, and own Him as the Holy Spirit presents Him in Isaiah ix. 6, "The Father of eternity" (R. V.).

When we see this great central truth of such importance in the Scriptures, we need to keep the cross before us and

give it a prominent place in our thoughts, and also in our preaching and teaching.

We preach a Person, and that Person the Son of God—"the only begotten Son." He became flesh and dwelt among us (John i. 14). "That *holy thing* that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). Palestine was graced by His visit of grace and tender love; yea, the world beheld Him but knew Him not.

And now, not in Palestine, not on earth, but upon the throne of God in the heavens we see "the *Man Christ Jesus*." "In Him dwells all the fullness of the *Godhead bodily*" (Col. ii. 9).

As we read the four Gospels we trace His footsteps across the burning sand, and at the close we stand beside the cross and there we see His sufferings and His death.

We view Him as a victim suffering for our sins; as the great Antitype fulfilling all the types that preceded; and then carrying out the purposes of eternity concerning our redemption. In all this we see the sufferings and work of the Lord Jesus for us. We preach this, we preach the cross, the death, and blood-shedding of Christ. We preach His Person, we exalt the glory of His precious, peerless Name; we announce to all mankind the glorious good news concerning Jesus the Son of God.

We preach also His atoning sufferings. We know He has gone to heaven, and abides in the sanctuary above as the Great High Priest with all the value of His atoning sufferings for His people. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Yea, more, we know He shall come again—"a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry," but these truths which follow and have their place must not take the place of the cross and sufferings of Christ. Christ is the grand and precious theme of the whole Word of God—Christ's Person.

And next to this the cross of Christ where He suffered, where He died, where His blood was shed, all, all meeting the claims of infinite justice; all, all meeting the need of the human race,

Here is where the preacher finds what fully equips him for service, what man's conscience needs, what the anxious sin-burdened heart yearns after—the truth of the cross.

It pictures man's hatred and enmity to God and His Son on one side, and therein we find the first great lesson of the whole Bible for men to-day to learn, to know themselves. Man crucified the Saviour, and for three hours His sufferings were from man's hand.

But when the dark cloud fell upon the scene and enveloped the cross for three hours we behold sufferings now deeper, sufferings from God's hand, atoning sufferings, which end in death. Two lessons shine out amid all the darkness of Calvary; first, "God is light," and hence the victim must undergo all the judgment due to the offender.

But then God *planned*, God *provided*, God *gave*, God *sent*, is again and again the unerring testimony of the Scriptures; His throne *demand*ed, but His heart His love provided, and hence in this we behold His love, the love of a Saviour God. "God so loved the world." At the cross we have all this fully and perfectly expressed. "God is love."

This truth gives men a true estimate of themselves, gives light for the weary conscience, full relief for the heart, and also gives a right and proper conception of God Himself. The cross of Christ spreads out before the Christian what will give solidity to life and walk, and provides the preacher with material to go forth in His service and lay in men's consciences and souls a solid foundation for permanent and good work, which will be manifest now and abide for eternity.

A. E. B.

TRACT DISTRIBUTION

The happy, fruitful service of distributing tracts should ever be encouraged. It was a four page tract some fifty-five years ago that gave us our first ray of light. Four words on the first page, "Man's Condition, God's Salvation," were used by the Holy Spirit to give great concern as to the solemn issues of eternity. This led to a further search of the Word of God, and that marvelous verse John 3:16 was used to bring peace and assurance concerning the present possession of eternal life.

During this long period we could relate many instances where sinners have been convicted, converted, and God's people helped and encouraged by the reading of a small tract or Gospel booklet. Several passages come to our mind as we consider the printing and distribution of tracts, Prov. 11; 24, 25, 30, Eccl. 11; 1-6, Isa. 32; 20, Eph. 5; 16.

As age creeps over some of us, we discover that we cannot now as in earlier days, canvass from street to street and door to door, which younger men and women will always find a helpful and fruitful field for service, in tract distribution. Yet there are other ways in which many opportunities are afforded us. Have a good selection ready to hand on the table, or desk, and inclose suited ones when writing far or near. This reminds us of the one passage, "Redeem the time," or "buy up opportunities." We hope later to insert further papers to revive and encourage such service for Christ.

On our last trip from New York State to the Pacific, which took three days and nights, we had a fine illustra-

tion of such an opportunity and the joy and refreshment which such service affords.

The trip included one Lord's day. In the previous days we got acquainted with some of the passengers. On Lord's day morning we thought of the assemblies in different places that would be gathered together, but on this Lord's day we were deprived of that favor. After about one hour with our Bible upon our knees and J. N. D.'s translation by our side, we looked out on the coach, well filled with passengers, and a happy service came to mind. That was to go through the coach and give each passenger a tract. A short season of silent *prayer* was followed by a little *courage*. We took a nice selection of tracts, some for children with a picture on the front page, some for the unconverted, and some such as "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment," for the more intelligent. We placed one or more in the hands of each passenger. We then entered the second coach. There were about eighty or ninety passengers in all. Upon our return the sight well repaid us for the effort. Almost every passenger was reading the Gospel message. This was about ten o'clock in the forenoon. Had we failed to buy up this opportunity, what a loss for us, and for those people on the Lord's day morning, because we may never meet one of those passengers again. In view of such a service as this we read, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Ecc. 11:6)

All this little, or as the Scotch people say, "Wee bit of service," cost us little—little time—little strength—and

but little money, but who can tell what results may follow such service as this and what fruit in eternity.

A second opportunity opened up after lunch hour, for in the forenoon we had not gone through the first-class Pullman. We had spoken with both conductor and porter previous, and concluded things would be favorable, so we attempted the same service as in the morning, but now among passengers of a different social scale. This required courage of a different form. Again a short season of prayer that the Lord might direct, and also a little *more* courage. Then with another selection of tracts we entered the Pullman. Soon we discovered that the Lord had given us another congregation for each passenger, numbering about thirty-five, took the papers respectfully. Upon our return again to our seat we found all the passengers reading the "glad tidings of great joy," from the printed page. Then we considered for a little season that this Lord's day on the train was not lost time, for the number in all who read the gospel message, about one hundred and twenty-five, was more than many of our preachers were able to speak to in our assemblies on the Lord's day.

In view of such service and the nearness of the Lord's coming we add, "Lord stir us all up and grant us a revival. Call us back to our *first* love and then enable us to begin afresh our *first* works, and everywhere increase our spiritual activity in this line of service ere the day of grace closes," so that when we meet our blessed Saviour face to face we may be able to discern distinctly, in view of all done here, a beaming smile, and His one brief sentence, "Well done."

A. E. B.

THE CHURCH WHICH IS CHRIST'S BODY

(Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:24-25)

It is the business of faith to receive the testimony of God in all its fulness. Yet how many are quite content with the knowledge of the forgiveness of their sins, and the prospect of going to heaven (as it is termed) some time in the future. God has revealed much, very much, more than this. It is not the Gospel in its completeness by a long way. The Gospel of God (see Rom.) is about a Person, and that Person is the Son of God: "Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Son of God from all eternity, He became, or was (in time and God's time too) made of the seed of David. He became a man. What a Person! Divine and human! God and man!

That Person had to die for sinners. He had to surrender the life He had taken as born of a woman to meet our deep need, to glorify God, to take up the whole question of sin, and finally to put away sin altogether, morally by His sacrifice, but removed by power on the ground of the sacrifice of Himself. Jesus died. He who was the source of life, the Creator of all things, the only begotten of the Father, became flesh that He might be able to die for men, for sinners, and thus open a way for God to accomplish His plans and purposes, settled even before the heavens and the earth were created.

What a wonderful work He did for God, and what a

lot God must needs do for Him. The question is, What can Divine righteousness do for the Son of God as a man who lay in the grave? What can the Father's love do for His beloved Son in whom He found His delight? To take up the subject in the measure in which it is unfolded in the Word, even if the writer were equal to the task, would be too long for the pages of this magazine.

We will look for a little at Eph. 1. Paul prays for the saints, and passing over verses 17 and 18, we come to "the exceeding greatness of God's power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world (or age) but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." That One who was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who died and was laid in the tomb, has been raised from the dead by the power of God, and is seated at His right hand in the heavens, above all things, and all persons; everything everywhere given unto Him, and put under His feet; and given Him in all this wealth of power, dominion, and glory, to the Church which is His Body, the fulness (or complement) of Him that filleth all in all. Christ is the Head of His Body, the Church. To Him personally all is given, but the Church, viewed as forming a part of that mystic Man of whom we read in chap. ii.: "To make in

Himself of twain (Jew and Gentile) one new man, making peace" is associated with Christ in all this vast inheritance and blessedness.

We are told what Divine power has already done for Christ. We are instructed, too, about what that power is pledged to do for believers in Him; what, in Divine reckoning, has been already accomplished; for our God calls those things that be not as though they were. So we read of "quickened together with Christ, and raised up together," and of being "seated in the heavenlies in Him." It is done as a moral fact. It awaits literal accomplishment until the Lord Jesus comes for His own. Then His Body will be complete. Then He will obtain His Bride, the future Wife of the Lamb. Do we not read, "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Chap. v. 25-27).

He gave Himself for it at the cross. His love is active in serving now in view of the future. But there is a present service of love suited to the need here below. "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; for we are members of His Body." How blessed a part of Himself! How deeply He cares! He must do so! He cannot forget the least members of His Body. He has, moreover, provided for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. This is accomplished by gifts which He, who has ascended up far

above all heavens that He might fill all things, has given. Provision is thus made that each one should come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Babyhood is to pass; saints are to be proof against winds of doctrine on the one hand, and the cunning craftiness of deceivers on the other. Their business is to speak the truth in love; to grow up into Him in all things who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.

It was given to Paul to fulfil (or complete) the word (Col. 1, 25); not by writing the last book, which John did, but by unfolding the truth of the mystery. Need we wonder, then, at the deep concern he had for the saints at Colosse and Laodicea, and in fact for all who had not seen His face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God; in Whom (or in Which) are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?

The Church, or rather, Christ and His Body, the Church, is the crowning of the story of grace. God has surpassed in this every other thing. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are displayed here as never before. How our hearts should prize it! How we should earnestly long to have, to hold, to love, to keep, to live in the joy thereof.

There is but one Christ, and He is seated at the right hand of God; a man, but a man who is also God, and in Whom, when here in flesh, all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell. All that God is has been revealed in and by Him. The story is told. The truth is revealed. Philosophy and man's intellect are left far in the rear; and now that this blessed Man has been into death and the grave and is risen and glorified, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in Him bodily. Christ is all. We are complete in Him. This is not acceptance, but the concentration in Him of all that can be required for need, for delight, for the whole range of truth. Go where you will; look where you will: to God in His supremacy and majesty—to angels—to principalities and powers—to the heavens—to the earth—to creation in the past—to new creation—Christ is all; and He is the head of His Body, the Church. Oh, the grace of it! A sinner saved by His blood has become a necessity to Him, a member of His Body, a part of Himself.

Did we as saints of God really enter into these grand realities? How we should stand apart from all contradictions thereof! Sectarianism is from beneath for it denies the truth of the one Body, and it gives a false view of Christ's relation to the Church—one Head, one Body, one Christ. How often people say we cannot act on this truth now. See how divided things are. It is fully admitted that the times are difficult, but Christ suffices. Two or three gathered together unto His name and there He is in the midst. These companies may be very feeble, and not have much intelligence, but if truly gathered unto Christ's

name, He is with them. Satan has succeeded because of difficulties in introducing the error of independency. That surrenders all; for there is but one Body, one Assembly of God on the earth. Independency has a charm for indolent souls, for moral cowards, but not for those who are holding the Head. Far better to find oneself alone if faithfulness should call for it, than be in a big company by sacrificing any part of divine truth. Truth is God's, not man's. Oh, to know the preciousness of Christ as God desires that we should, and to reach the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ! E. R. WILLS.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

"If the soul were but impregnated with the thought, that this blessed One (seen *where* He may be, or *as* He may be) was the very One who from all eternity lay in the divine bosom; if such a thought were kept vivid in the soul by the Holy Ghost, it would arrest many a tendency in the minds which now defiles it." J. G. B.

"To enter upon subtle questions as to the person of Jesus tends to wither and trouble the soul, to destroy the spirit of worship and affection, and to substitute thorny inquiries, as if the spirit of man could solve the manner in which the humanity and the divinity of Jesus were united to each other. In this sense it is said, 'No one knoweth the Son but the Father' . . . That He is really man, Son of man, dependent on God as such, and without sin in this state of dependence, really God in His unspeakable perfection—to this I hold, I hope, more than to my life. To define is what I do not pretend . . . If I find something which enfeebles one or other of these truths, or which dishonors what they have for object, I should oppose it, God calling me to it, with all my might.

"May God give you to believe all that the Word teaches with regard to Jesus! It is our peace and our nourishment to understand, and all that the Spirit gives us to understand, and not to seek to define what God does not call us to define; but to worship on the one hand, to feed on the other, and to live in every way, according to the grace of the Holy Ghost." J. N. D.

ASSEMBLY ORDER

A Reading

This paper inserted is a reprint and is continued from the December issue. It is the substance of a reading at a Conference in Toronto, July, 1900 (now over thirty-two years ago). Messrs. Ridout, Greenman, Enefer, and Booth were the chief speakers.

S. R.—As to the principle involved, we must remember that each case has its details which render it distinct. We must take into account that discipline is by the priests, as you might say, and that, by the way, includes all the assembly; not the brothers only. The brothers may be the Levites and have their meeting, and get things in order so that the priests may examine the case and decide upon it, but the brothers alone do not settle cases *of discipline*. It requires communion with God, and discernment, which comes from communion with God, of the state of soul. But you see in the plague of leprosy there were all kinds of things; there was a freckle; there was a bald head; there was a boil—there were such things. There were things that speak of mere natural infirmities or the ebullition of nature which do not represent the deep root of leprosy or association with leprosy; so we have to use wisdom and discernment, and as our brother has pointed out, give the brother who is entangled in these things time, and let him understand that we are not standing with a pistol pointed at him, and counting, so to speak;—we are to give him time in that way, and have our arms about him and helping him out of the thing.

I would not say that life insurance was an immoral

thing; I would say it was a distinct lack of faith. It shows a state of soul, but it is not exactly an unequal yoke with unbelievers; and being a question of faith, we cannot give people faith, but we can exhort them and counsel them; that is all. But in the case of the Christian identified with Frée Masonry, we could not put it on that ground. That is a question of obedience and not of faith.

F. J. E.—There are many who join Free Masonry for the benefits that their wives and children may get, and themselves too.

S. R.—There are two distinct errors there. We must sympathize with one another in a want of faith, but not sympathize with each other in direct disobedience. A man might be tempted to insure his life, and we could ask God to encourage his faith; but if he associates himself with Free Masonry, put things before him showing him the extreme gravity of one in distinction to the other. Things are going to become more and more difficult.

It is the question of association that is the far graver question. And there is another thing about association that reaches a little more widely than that even; and that is that association by one who is clear individually with those who are not clear, which is worse than the association of a person who is not clear. For instance, if I, knowing the truth of God, associate with those, we will say, who are Unitarians, I am far worse than if one ignorant were to associate with Unitarians. One might say, These are nice people, and I do not accept their heretical doctrine of annihilation or whatever it might be; I repudiate that. Then I say to such a person, you are a great

deal worse than a person who is blinded. You are in the thing with your eyes open. And so, personal clearness, if it is associated with evil, is worse than blindness associated with evil. So, when they say—We received this person as an individual; he is personally clear. I say, What? personally clear and yet associated with evil? What is his moral state, then?

B. C. G.—Some would like scriptures to look up, possibly. As we cannot consider them all this morning, and as this is a very important thing, and far reaching in its consequences, I would like to call your attention to two or three which you can easily remember. The thirteenth of Deuteronomy, and just note very briefly the points in it. It points really to a false prophet. That you could mark in ver. 1.

S. R.—One interruption at the beginning. It is frequently said: We object to this use of Old Testament Scriptures for New Testament saints. The apostles trod on this ground themselves. When the apostle was establishing an order amongst the Corinthians, speaking of the maintenance of God's servants there, he goes to the Old Testament for several Scriptures to prove it; and inasmuch as God has laid down there principles for the maintenance of what is due to His Name in connection with His people, those principles are never altered or changed in any dispensation. If you cannot find the same thing in the New Testament, it would be folly to go to the Old Testament for it. And that is exactly how the apostles did themselves, and we cannot teach any better. Is not the Old Testament the book of divine government

just as the New Testament is the book of divine grace? I mean broadly speaking. And so when you get the principles of government you will find they are the same from Eden down to the pearly gates of Heaven itself. Government is always the same.

A. E. B.—Only they become clearer with revelation. The fifth Book, Deuteronomy, is the book of divine government—not simply law—law is part of it—so you go through the whole Book, and it is the book that opens up the government of God in a marvelous way.

B. C. G.—Here we have now amongst a number of other laws, we might say, principles which some reject and say: Some of these laws have passed away. But no moral principle ever passes away. It is true, that prohibition as to eating certain things which were ceremonially unclean, have passed away, but the underlying principles have not. We are to eat to the glory of God. Just as in this chapter, the first verse is their relation to the prophet, and they were not to listen to him, for he leads them away from God.

The sixth verse is their relation to a brother. The prophet in the Old Testament answering to the teacher in the New; the brother in the Old Testament answering to the brother in the New.

The twelfth verse: "If thou hear say in one of thy cities." And a city in the Old Testament would answer to a company—a shut in company of God's people in the New. A city had walls, and just as a city had walls so the assembly has its bounds, and the people outside

are not in. That is sufficient. You can look it up with care; I take it they are easily remembered. The thirteenth of Deuteronomy is a sample case of how God called His people to refuse false testimony; not to go on in fellowship with one disowning His name, and that the same rule existing between brother and brother existed between city and city.

S. R.—In connection with the city, we might add 2 Sam. xx. from the sixteenth verse. You have one wrong doer in a city who embroils the whole city. The whole city is responsible for the presence of one wrong doer, and unless he is judged, the people of God must be against that whole city. From the sixteenth to the twenty-second verse. The whole tribe of Benjamin in the book of Judges were all guilty on account of evil-doers allowed among them.

B. C. G.—There is the principle announced in the thirteenth of Deuteronomy; the application is given in that chapter of 2 Samuel. In the thirteenth of 1 Kings, we have this lesson emphasized for us in connection with the division. This is important. A division among the people of Israel, between the ten tribes and the two, and how God chose a servant of His who was in Judah—a man of God out of Judah to go down to Bethel to bear testimony against an altar there which was associated with idolatry. How was he to go? Sent by God, he was to go and bear his testimony against it, and then his practice must be like his testimony; what he said must be like what he did. See how serious the charge was. Eat no bread and drink no water there, nor come back

by the way you went. Three pointed things: he was not to get any strength there; eat no bread. He was not to be refreshed there, and he was not to come back upon the same track, which would look as if he made a mistake in going there. He must come back another way. He goes and delivers the testimony faithfully, and when the king tempts him with great reward to come into his house, he says, openly and frankly, in the eighth verse—"If thou give me half thine house I will not go with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place." He holds definitely to his original orders. I will do what I am told. And see how he was holding—"For so it was charged me by the word of the Lord, saying: Eat no bread nor drink water nor turn again by the way that thou camest." But now, the next thing we see an old prophet of Bethel finds out what has happened and goes out to him and tells him an angel has told him to go and get him back. Meantime the Lord's word seems to have weakened in this man's soul. He does not say as he said to the king, "I *will* not," but "I *may* not return with thee nor go in with thee" (ver. 16). And he does not say, "It was charged me by the word of the Lord," but he says, "It was *said* to me." Now there is something in that. In the first case he realized under the solemn charge how he must not deviate a hair's breadth from it. In the second case that does not seem to have the same hold upon his soul and he goes back and dies under the judgment of God. And the eighteenth verse, "The old prophet said unto him I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has spoken to me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat

bread and drink water ; but he lied unto him." He said he was a prophet too. I am like you—I am just like you ; but then it was an angel only that spoke to him, so he said. Paul says : "Though we, or an angel from heaven." Not an angel—but the Word of God. The written Word of God is better than all the prophets and all the angels or anything else : it is just the simple Word of God. We must not trust an angel against the Divine testimony. How careful we need to be as to all the commands of God. "Barnabas was carried away by their dissimulation." He thought a good deal of Peter, and when Peter just goes wrong, the whole thing was gone, if it had not been that the apostle Paul stood for God. Barnabas was carried away, so we have got to guard against those who are near and dear to us. If they do go wrong, we have got to keep to God's word.

S. R.—To not eat bread and all that, applies in many ways. People are put away from the Lord's table. If we have the truth as to the Lord's table, we know, that includes the whole life. But if putting away from the Lord's table means merely putting away from eating bread on Lord's day morning, that is not being put away at all. "Put away from among yourselves," is what the apostle says, "the wicked person." As to companies of the Lord's dear people, of course, they are not wicked persons, let us remember that ; and God will never go with us in using stronger language than He does. Let us never do that. Let us treat in all love, in tenderness and compassion, those with whom we cannot be identified ; but notice, "Not to eat bread there." Of course, that

would be, primarily, not to break bread. We could not go and break bread with a company that is not clear. So we can only go and bear our testimony and then come back. As our brother said, not treading the same path twice even,—not making it an accustomed thing even,—just to go around and come back—just to circle through as bearing witness against a thing, in love, tenderness and in meekness, seeking to deliver souls, but not going on with their course.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(With a View to Inform, Exhort, Stimulate, and Encourage)

Our brother, Mr. Lee W. Ames, who was formerly connected with the Moody Institute, Chicago, and of recent years attracted to and helped by the written ministry of brethren, came into our fellowship in Norfolk, Va., over two years ago. Brethren there happily recommended our brother who has labored continuously since among many of our assemblies throughout different states, as also in Ontario, Canada.

During the past summer he reached as far into the middle west as Minneapolis for the conference, then later was with us at the Dunkirk conference. It was at those two places we had the pleasure of meeting him for the first time. The fellowship and ministry at both places was such that the laborers were very much drawn together, in which our brother shared freely.

Our prayers accompany him for distinct guidance in all future service, both in the gospel and in the gatherings.

His forwarding address for the present is, Box 152, Champaign, Ill.

ERIE, PA.

We are pleased to note that there has been a steady interest in the Lord's work in Erie, Pa., for sometime.

Our Brother Tomkinson has had good openings for service in the Gospel and in Bible readings, both in the assembly hall and other places, and a fine feature of the work there is the unity and whole-hearted fellowship of the assembly with our brother, for they not only attend well wherever the interest centers, but diligently labor to bring others under the sound of the Word, and as a result, conversions have followed this ministry, and believers have again and again been added to the assembly.

When we visited Erie during July last, we were cheered and refreshed as we ministered the word in such an earnest and united atmosphere. Monday evening when Brother Tomkinson usually has a Bible reading in a private home, more than sixty people were gathered. Tuesday evening in the hall, where perhaps sixty in all are in fellowship, about double that number were present. We long to see this whole-hearted energetic feature characterize all our gatherings. Where there has been the least neglect, let us begin afresh this God-given effort this present year with more purpose of heart than ever. (Heb. 10:25.)

BAHAMA ISLANDS

Our brother, Robert S. Stratton, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas, has written us briefly concerning the terrible suffering there caused by the recent hurricane. All this has touched the hearts of brethren in our more favored land, and we rejoice in the hearty response in sending to the relief of brethren in the Islands. Such love and sympathy is very sweet in the closing days of our church age.

Our brother's energetic service in that nearby mission field has been most commendable, for he has served as dentist and doctor, and added to such labors, has done fine pioneer work in the gospel among those needy people, many conversions have been reported throughout the different Islands, and further, the exercising of his shepherd care among the assemblies in those parts.

We commend the work in those Islands to the prayerful consideration of the Lord's people. We hope in future issues of this magazine to touch on work there more fully.

Our brother, Edgar W. Wallis, Box 27, Darien, New York, writes: "Our family greatly enjoyed the short stay at the Lake Erie conference, Dunkirk, and we appreciated very much the warm welcome, the splendid arrangement, and the

sweet fellowship, I have been busy ever since. During part of September and October I visited several assemblies in eastern Pennsylvania and was greatly encouraged in seeing interest and commendable exercise. Have more recently returned from a visit to Grand Rapids and some nearby points. At Grand Rapids we remained about two weeks; gave addresses and readings on the church; many there love the word. I had also a happy visit at Holland, and spent a few days at Oak Park, Chicago. There was interest, and left with my heart warmed. I expect to have a busy season ahead; now going to Amsterdam, Albany, Schenectady, etc."

Our Brother Wallis was once a minister in the Methodist denomination, but brought to us largely by the example and help of Brother Howell (now with the Lord), who separated years ago from the Baptist Church in Dunkirk. Later Mr. Wallis separated also, and since has labored energetically in new fields and in the assemblies.

We commend him in all future labor for the direct guidance of the Lord.

SAN FRANCISCO

We spent a few weeks in the Bay District in and around San Francisco. We had fine interest both in the Bible readings and in addresses, and observed the good local care in maintaining Scriptural features of assembly testimony. The Brethren in San Francisco invited the surrounding assemblies to gather in for Thanksgiving Day and we had a very nice company three times, including people in San Francisco from the Missions who seemed to enjoy the Word ministered. Mr. Nichols was also with us for the day.

We spent our last week between Burlingame and San Jose. The meetings were well attended in both places. Brethren in each place converted their auto service. The distance between being 30 miles. The interest was refreshing. We enjoyed the hospitality and cheerful atmosphere of Ebenezer Home under the management of Mrs. Butler (formerly of Villard, Minnesota). The precious sentiment of Psalm 133 was full of encouragement and comfort.

May all our assemblies preserve an even balance testimony, whole-hearted evangelism, seeking the salvation of the unconverted. Then added to this pastoral care and teaching within, and also seeking to preserve a Scriptural standard of piety, especially among the younger generation. (Col. 2:5)

In the December issue the last line of the article "The Storm and the Calm" should read "for this we thank Thee."

LOS ANGELES

We spent almost two months during part of October, November at Parkview Assembly, Los Angeles. The morning Bible class was larger than it has been for a long time and a keener interest in Bible study. We had Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy each week.

The Sunday evening gospel addresses combined with ministry for believers gave us a better continued interest than hitherto, but in the midst of a population of 1,300,000, what a small dot does this interest cover? May our sympathies, energies and interest expand and widen out more and more, as we think of the opportunities of ministering the Word of Truth to Christians, and also preaching the Gospel, because we are expected to sow the good seed if we expect to reap by and by.

SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS

"I find that the older brethren were diligent *tract and magazine* distributors, but the younger generation are not. Is there no way of getting them interested?" (A. J. P.)

Three things we can do. First: *Pray* much to the Lord wherever these abnormal conditions are to be found. Second: When opportunity is given, *counsel and exhort* to diligence in testimony in view of the nearness of Christ's second coming. (Heb. 10:25.) Third: Let us also *each set an example* by using the printed page more freely ourselves, and scatter the good seed everywhere. (Psa. 126:5-6, Prov. 11:24-26.)

"I am rejoicing in the Lord and finding His Word more precious every day. The truth of *the one* body has opened up the Word to me anew. I never realized how much more there was to be seen there in the light of this truth." (Selected.)

This testimony is encouraging in a day when so many never seem to get beyond the first stage of New Testament joy—the Gospel. We begin with the Gospel, but that is as the water of life. Paul's ministry carries us beyond the water of life and opens up to us the deep things of God. God's purposes and counsels of the past eternity are unfolded in those marvelous epistles, and that is "meat—strong meat." May we seek grace to press on and lay hold of the deeper things in the New Testament Scriptures, and when this is enjoyed, the truth concerning the Church—the body of Christ which was a mystery in past ages, but now revealed in the new, will ever be our constant joy and no part ever overlooked or slighted. (Ed.)

A TERRIBLE MISTAKE

The whole country of Great Britain was aroused with horror as the daily papers conveyed the appalling news of the disaster to the Liverpool and Southport Electric Express on the evening of the 28th of August, 1905. The train was flying across the country at its usual high speed, filled with men, women and children, little thinking of the great calamity so soon to befall them.

When the express reached Hall Road station, it turned off the main line and dashed into another train standing on a side track, and in a few moments twenty souls were ushered into eternity, while others were made prisoners in the wreckage, injured, bleeding and groaning. Ready hands were soon at work to remove the dead and release the injured.

Again and again the inquiry was made, "What has caused the collision?" Who was responsible for the dreadful accident which had such terrible effects? The discovery was soon made, but that did not avert the calamity, nor relieve the distressed sufferers; and it could not bring back the dead. It was a terrible mistake. The signalman, through some oversight, turned the switch wrong, and the express dashed off her course, and the calamity followed. The next moment the man discovered his fatal mistake. As the papers conveyed the intelligence next morning, many exclaimed with sorrow for both the man and those who suffered from the act: "A terrible mistake!"

No mind can rightly or fully estimate the great loss and momentous issues which may arise from one terrible mistake. A preacher of the Gospel, with his wife waiting at Southport station for their much loved and only son, received the sad news that he was one of the dead. A young man, who was to be married the following week, was informed that his bride was among the killed. A couple of sisters who only a few hours before had clasped in their arms another loved sister, and bade her good bye for a few days, little realized that they were pressing the last kiss upon her cheek, for she also was numbered

among the dead. Oh, the suffering, the tears, the many heart breaks that followed that accident, and all on account of one "terrible mistake."

The story may be yet fresh in the mind of the reader of these pages, and this paper may reach some of the friends of the injured or the dead, and they join us and sadly say, "Yes, it was a terrible mistake."

This calamity leads us back further, and we will note mistakes of even a more serious and far reaching character. The Bible records that many of the angels of heaven made a "terrible mistake." They sinned against God and His throne, "kept not their first estate," and fell, and the result was that they were cast down, and are today "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6). Oh, what a terrible mistake for such privileged creatures. For them there was no remedy.

As we trace the history of man on earth we read similar lessons. The first man, Adam, made "a terrible mistake." He sinned, and death followed; and after death, judgment; and all the sorrows of the human race flow from that one mistake.

The Ante-diluvians also made "a terrible mistake," for they plunged into vices corrupt and degrading, regardless of the testimony of a man who walked with God like Enoch, and a preacher of righteousness like Noah, and the result was that the flood came, and all were destroyed—Noah only, and his family, being saved.

Again, when the Saviour, the Lord of life and glory, came to the earth, the Jews made "a terrible mistake." They refused Him, and crucified God's only begotten Son, and today they are reaping the sad fruit of that fatal mistake. As a nation they are broken and scattered from their land; God has driven them out from their place, and they are "wanderers among the nations," and "among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure" (Hosea viii. 7-8; ix. 9, 12, 15, 17). They made a terrible mistake.

Many men and women today are making "a terrible mistake." Human life is very brief at the best—but a span across and all is past—a vapour that rises and in a few moments is gone. It is spent "swifter than a weaver's shuttle;" then each soul passes over the line between the present seen and the great unseen, where all the solemn issues of life are fixed forever.

After death claims the body, the soul that never dies (Matt. x. 28) enters the unseen world beyond—the Sheol of the Old Testament, the Hades of the New Testament. The two sides of that scene will then be brought to view. On the grand and beautiful summit of the heavenly side, Christ will be seen, and those loved and near to Him, "saved by grace," and redeemed by His precious blood—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—and all the redeemed of the past ages, and those of a later age—His disciples, such as Peter, James, and John, men who stirred Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost with their zeal and testimony in the Gospel—Paul, too, who planted the glorious Gospel first in Europe, and who laid down his life for the Master in the metropolis of the Roman Empire. All those and millions more, shall swell the company who shall sing the praises of the Lord Jesus for all eternity.

But upon the lower side of the impassable gulf, there shall also be an immense throng, such as ungodly Cain who slew his brother; the antediluvian sinners who followed Cain in violence, and Lamech, in his life of corruption and vice; the many wicked men that filled Sodom and Gomorrah with their vile deeds, which have left a dark stain on their memory ever since they were removed from the earth by fire and brimstone. Even now all these are in the unseen world, awaiting the day of judgment to receive their final and eternal judgment. The Jews who cried, "Away with Him," also Pontius Pilate and Herod, these two will be among that vast throng of unbelievers and unsaved, who will lift their wailing voices over the "terrible mistake" they have made.

My dear reader, as you review the subject and the great

lesson it would teach you, let me urge you not to make this terrible mistake. For the angels that sinned there was no remedy; for men there *is* a remedy. Christ came from heaven and suffered on the cross and died for sinners, and by His atoning death He has provided a remedy. To-day God, by His servants, is proclaiming to the ends of the earth His love and grace in the gift of His beloved Son. He desires that all should be saved, and should avert the fatal mistake that so many have made, and are still making. As we pen these lines, we beseech every unconverted reader to fly now to the outstretched arms of the Lord Jesus, while grace receives, welcomes, and forgives all who come to Him.

Your sins need be no barrier. They need not keep you away; yea, they are your title to Him. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). Open your heart wide to Him. Confess your sins, your need, and forgiveness will be extended fully and freely; receive Him and salvation and eternal life shall be yours now and forever.

You may this day be very near the verge of eternity. Do not let this message pass by. Another day, another hour, another minute, may be forever too late. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," said the Saviour (John vi. 37).

A. E. B.

Build your nest upon no tree here, for ye see God hath sold the forest to death, and every tree whereupon we would rest is ready to be cut down; to the end we may fly and mount up, and build upon the Rock, and dwell in the holes of the Rock.—*Samuel Rutherford*.

MY CONVERSION

Good instructions as to the contents of the Bible were mine at school, at *seventeen*, under a John the Baptist ministry; but I never knew the gospel till, at *nineteen*, I went abroad, full of the animal pleasures of a military life. I and my comrade spent a long and tiring day on the field of Waterloo, in June, 1824. Arriving late at night at —, I soon went to my bedroom. It struck me, "I will say my prayers." It was the habit of childhood, neglected in youth. I knelt down by my bedside, but I found I had forgotten what to say. I looked up, as if trying to remember, when suddenly there came on my soul a something I had never known before. It was as if some One, Infinite and Almighty, knowing everything, full of the deepest, tenderest interest in myself, though utterly and entirely abhorring everything in, and connected with, me, made known to me that He pitied and loved myself. My eye saw no one, but I knew assuredly that the One whom I knew not, and never had met, had met me *for the first time*, and made me to know that we were together. There was a light no sense or faculty of my own human nature ever knew; there was a presence of what seemed infinite in greatness—something altogether of a class that was apart and supreme, and yet at the same time making itself known to me in a way that I, as a man, could thoroughly feel, and taste, and enjoy. The Light made all light, Himself withal; but it did not destroy, for it was love itself, and I was loved individually by Him. The exquisite tenderness and fulness of that love, the way it appropriated me myself for Him, in whom it all was, while the light from which it was inseparable in Him, discovered to me the contrast I had been to all that was light and love. I wept for a while on my knees, said nothing, then got into bed. The next morning's thought was, "Get a Bible." I got one, and it was thence forward my handbook. My clergyman companion noticed this, and also my entire change of life and thought.

We journeyed on together to Geneva, where there was

an active persecution of the faithful going on. He went to Italy, and I found my own company—stayed with those who were suffering for Christ.

I could quite now, after fifty years' trial, adopt to myself these few lines, as descriptive of that night's experience:

“Christ, the Father's rest eternal,
Jesus once looked down on me,
Called me by my name external,
And revealed Himself to me,
With His whisper, light, life-giving,
Glowed in me—the dark, the dead;
Made me live, Himself receiving,
Who once died for me and bled.”

—G. V. WIGRAM.

We insert this interesting account of George V. Wigram's conversion which we secured in England during our last visit there. Mr. W. was a man of deep piety and a marked scholar of the first rank in his day. He wrote much, especially of a devotional character, and some very scholarly works, chiefly the Hebrew Chaldea, and Greek Concordances which have become standard works for reference. His scholarship and talent were early and wholly dedicated to spiritual service. He was a companion and bosom friend of the late J. N. Darby; both served their Lord faithfully in their day, and are with Him now on high. Their works do follow them, and all await the day of manifestation when each will receive their reward for all service and labor. We hope in the future issues to insert extracts from his pen.

WHOLE HEARTED TESTIMONY

A prayerful united assembly is a beautiful thing to see in the closing days of the Church age. Wherever brethren plan to attend meetings as regularly each week as they plan to go to their daily work, true love and devotion to Christ our Lord will ever lead pious believers to think of the welfare of others, hence renewed efforts to gather other Christians in to fresh hearty *Bible readings* and share with them around the table the precious things that we have in possession. Then added to this there is *the Gospel* for the unsaved, especially Sunday evenings our meeting rooms ever should be a rallying center of Gospel activity. Our departed Brother, Mr. Ridout, used to say, “our meeting rooms ever should be a bee hive of spiritual industry.” Our activity in seeking out the needy is in value far beyond silver and gold. This we shall discover to be true when we stand before *the judgment seat of Christ*.
(Ed.)

THE PSALM AND THE SHEPHERD

There was once a great actor, who was asked at a drawing room function if he would recite to the guests. He readily acquiesced and asked if there was anything special that his audience would like him to recite. After a moment's pause an old minister of God, who happened to be present, said, "Sir, could you recite to us *the twenty-third Psalm?*"

A strange look passed over the actor's face. He paused for a moment and then said, "I could, and will upon one condition, and that is, that after I have recited it, you, my friend, will do the same."

"I!" said the minister in surprise, "But I am not an elocutionist. However, if you wish it I will do so."

Impressively the great actor began the Psalm. His voice, his intonation were perfect. He held his audience spell-bound, and as he finished a great burst of applause broke from the guests.

Then as it died down the old minister rose and began the same Psalm. His voice was not remarkable, his intonation was not faultless. When he had finished no sound of applause broke the silence, but there was not a dry eye in the whole of that crowded drawing room, and many heads were bowed.

Then the actor rose to his feet again. His voice shook as he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the old minister and said,

"I reached your ears, my friends, but he reached your hearts. *The difference is just this, I know the Psalm, BUT HE KNOWS THE SHEPHERD!*"—*Selected.*

CAN WE GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING?

The remark is often made by those who desire a wider path, "We must go back to the beginning; to the original ground that brethren took: they received all godly souls that came; we have become too narrow and exclusive, etc." Now the question really is, can we go back to the beginning? If we think or speak of the Person of Christ, we can, and indeed **MUST** go back to "that which is from the beginning," and refuse all "development," as we are taught in John's epistles. The blessed Person of the Lord Jesus stands "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. xiii. 8), and knows no change or development. We cannot be too clear, or insist too strongly on that.

Then there can be no question we are bound to go back to Scripture and "hold fast" all the truth as taught therein: *it* never alters. But the point is, can we go back to the beginning of the Church's history and act only on that today? Or can we even go back to the early days of "brethren" and act as they did, in the midst of the present changed circumstances, and with the fuller light of the written Word which God has so blessedly unfolded to us in His grace through those beloved brethren, and which they had to learn gradually themselves? Impossible! We cannot put the hands of the clock back; nor can we ignore the past, or undo that which has been done. But let us look at this a little.

When the Church was formed by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.), we read of three thousand souls who gladly received the Word through Peter's preaching, and were "added" to the already formed Assembly. Up to that time there were only the two classes in the world, Jews and Gentiles, out of which the Church was to be formed, and the door had not yet been opened for the Gentiles to come in; neither was there any corrupt Christianity as in later days, from which souls might come, calling for care and discrimination in their reception. At the start they evidently received all who came; and it is certain that none came who were not prepared, professedly at least, to renounce Judaism and

be henceforth known as DISCIPLES of the rejected and crucified Jesus.

Of these it is said, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' DOCTRINE, and FELLOWSHIP, and in BREAKING OF BREAD, and in PRAYERS" (Acts ii. 42). Now what did that doctrine or teaching embrace at that time? It could set forth the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus, and also the descent of the Holy Ghost; but it certainly could not take in the Church as the Body of Christ, or the House of God, with all the distinctive teaching set forth in the Pauline epistles, for of these there had been no revelation as yet. Could we then, in this day, limit ourselves to the apostles' doctrine as known in those days, and ignore the further, fuller, and final light and teaching revealed to the apostle of the Gentiles by the Holy Ghost to "complete the Word of God?" (Col. i. 25.) Surely not!

Acts ii. was the dawning of the light of Christianity. An advance certainly upon what they knew or experienced during the Lord's life on earth: but not yet the clear shining of the full light and teaching about the Church as the Body of Christ, or the House, or dwelling-place of God by His Spirit (Eph. i. 22, 23; and ii. 22).

It was blessedly true, of course, that those at Pentecost FORMED THE CHURCH; it existed then; but they knew it not. That it was not Judaism, they were well aware; but what it was they could not then have said. All they could know was, there was a new thing in existence, formed by the presence of the Holy Ghost, and into which all who severed themselves from Judaism by baptism were received. And we read "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' DOCTRINE." They had received it and it formed them as a distinct company. Their FELLOWSHIP was based on it. The BREAKING OF BREAD was the OUTWARD expression of that fellowship, while PRAYER was the expression of their dependence on God to sustain them in it; three very important things surely.

With the conversion and commission of Paul, how-

ever, the sun rises higher in the heavens and the light of Divine truth waxes brighter. That which existed in Acts ii. becomes definitely known as the Church, the Body of Christ, united to Him by the Holy Ghost: as also the House of God, the dwelling-place of God by His Spirit; while His "within" and "without" are clearly defined, and saints exhorted to keep the Spirit's unity in the bond of peace. Discipline, too, is insisted on in accordance with the holiness which becomes God's house forever, and the presence of the Lord in the midst. In fact the full revelation of the mind of God as to the mystery which had been hidden in Himself was now made known and the Word of God completed (Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 25). In the light of this, then, we cannot act on a *partial* revelation of truth, but must take in the complete revelation, and the just proportions and relations of one truth to another. It is one perfect and complete whole, and must be treated as such.

Today we are living in the midst of the ruin of the Church. We cannot restore it. We cannot even aim at being an expression of it. We are only witnesses to its ruin. God's Word, however, is not ruined. The principles of the Church therein revealed are the same today, and imperatively binding on all saints as much as when they were first revealed. Do the Lord's people grasp this great fact? and are we to believe it and act upon it? Or must we believe that those principles were only meant for the bright and palmy apostolic days before the ruin had set in?

The excuses and the excusers of today practically say this latter is so, and that those principles cannot be carried out any longer, and therefore we must give up our exclusive practice, and receive all true Christians irrespective of *where* they come from, provided they are personally godly; and thus by so doing get back to the beginning again. That the *where they come from* has been unduly pressed, and the *state* of the person ought to be considered more than their associations, etc. Alas, what a manifestation of the blinding influence and delusions of the last days, and what utter indifference all this displays to the

claims of Christ and the teachings of Scripture in order to escape difficulties and obtain an easier path.

We are being constantly reminded that brethren did this at the start when God recovered the truth to them, and they received all the godly who came irrespective of the places from which they came, and without requiring their disassociation from them, and that we have got away from their simplicity, and become too *exclusive*, and we ought to get back to the principles and practice which obtained amongst them at the first. This certainly *sounds* very plausible; but the question again arises, can we do this any more than we can go back to the state of things in Acts ii.? Certainly not! We cannot put the hands of the clock back, as I have before remarked. A state of things has come in since then and exists, and cannot be ignored in that easy fashion.

We must remember that when God began again to gather saints together unto the Name of the Lord Jesus by once more unfolding truths that had been buried for centuries, the truth did not burst forth in all its fulness and clearness at once. It shone gradually, as it had been revealed gradually at the first. Brethren learned it little by little, and in some cases by painful experience.

It would appear that at the start, when godly souls got exercised in the different denominations here and there, they simply saw that it was their privilege to meet together as Christians to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread; and this was done without any thought, on the part of many at least, of separation from those systems as denying the truth of the one body and one Spirit. Moreover, the bulk of those systems, if not all of them, were, at that time at least, what might be termed orthodox. The ritualism, rationalism, and open infidelity which honeycombs them today was certainly not so advanced then, if it really existed at all. God, however, did not leave His saints with the mere glimmerings of light. He increased it and led them on step by step (mainly through the instrumentality of one man, the late J. N. Darby) until Paul's doctrine became fully known, and the prin-

ciples of the Church of God were apprehended and acted on, though, like all truth, it had to be *bought*, and, alas, bought dearly, too!

The proper relation of saint to saint, and assemblies to assemblies, amid the general ruin of the Church as a whole, became more clearly apprehended and acted on; while the Lord's presence in the midst of His gathered saints as the "Holy and the True," with the Personality, presence, and power of the Holy Ghost in the assembly as guiding and controlling, whether in worship, service, or discipline, became an acknowledged fact and power in their lives, and separated them from all that would not bear the searchlight of God's holy Word.

The truth of the "one body and one Spirit" (Eph. iv.), became to them something more than a mere expression—it was a fact—a *truth to be acted on*. They knew that the body of Christ was composed of all true Christians, but it was through man's failure invisible. That the Church as a visible testimony on earth was a wreck. They had learned that. But they knew likewise that the truth was not a wreck, *it still remains*, and holds good for faith to act on at all times till the Lord comes to take the saints to be with Himself, and therefore they acted on the truth. They made no attempt to restore the Church. They did not even profess to be a testimony to the truth of it. They simply acknowledged the ruin, but acted on the divinely given principles of Scripture, in the power of a divinely given faith, and found the Lord's presence and blessing in the path of obedience and separation to Himself according to His Word (Matt. xviii. 20).

Today, the reception of saints from the systems around, owing to the prevalence of so much evil doctrine in them, calls for far greater care than would have been necessary in earlier days, and for greater exercise of soul and dependence on God for guidance; so that the question of "association" becomes a very prominent and important one, yea, more important than ever. (See 2 Tim. 2:19-22.)

The danger, however, to which we are most exposed today, and which the enemy is most active in using, is

not the reception of saints from the systems; few, if any, are likely to come, or want to come; but it is the effort of some within to break down the barriers which a Scriptural discipline has erected, and which bars numbers of saints from our fellowship through this very question of association. They would compel us to receive from places, without any acknowledgment, on the part of these, of wrong done to the Lord and His people (even though in ignorance), so that communion might be restored in a righteous and godly way. In fact, an effort, and that of a very determined character, has been made to force on us intercommunion with companies from which we were compelled to separate; and that spite of our conscience, our protests, and our repudiation of such principles and practices; and under the plea of getting back to the beginning. This is Satan's present effort, and must be resisted. It is *unrighteous* and therefore *unscriptural*.

We cannot ignore this serious question of *association*, and treat those desirous of coming from assemblies from which we were compelled to separate because of unfaithfulness to Christ, in the same way as we might treat other Christians who occupy an altogether different position. "Of some making a difference" (Jude 22) is a seasonable word in this connection.

We live in the midst of the light of the full revelation of God; and, alas, in the midst of the ruin of the Church and must act accordingly. We cannot ignore what exists, nor can we go back. If the path has been left, there must be confession and return; and if there is wilful association with such companies it must be owned and given up. No success in service will compensate for lack of obedience in this. God is sovereign and can act and bless where and when He pleases. Our path is the path of obedience; and "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" may well sound in our ears and hearts today in the midst of the increasing apostasy. The Lord keep all our hearts and minds and make us true to Himself till the end.

New Zealand.

WM. EASTON (1906)

THINGS THAT ARE WANTING

(Titus 1:5)

It is our purpose to develop some of the New Testament teaching concerning a few principles and practices that should ever characterize assemblies of God's people who profess to be gathered to His Name and to be governed by His Word as a guide.

It becomes more evident that we are now in the difficult or perilous days that have been predicted in the New Testament epistles for the close of the Church age. Those features are developed largely in the last epistles, 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, and Jude. They instruct us that we should expect departure from *the truth* and from *the faith*, and in all that we shall now present from the Word we do not expect to correct present evils that confront us, nor do we expect to recover all assemblies that have departed and are on a downgrade move, but pious, faithful, devoted men and women who love, search, and desire to follow New Testament teaching, we expect to be exercised. Many, many are asking the question what are we to do amidst all the difficulties of the present Church exercises in our assembly testimony?

Our answer to all such queries ever should be, "What saith the Scriptures?" and if this is not the answer at all times, the clear indication is that we have already departed from the old paths.

To those Sacred Scriptures we will now turn. Our present subject will be, godly order in the Assemblies where His people are professedly gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus which we verily believe are at this day, "the things that are wanting." Who can fail to see the evil tendency to looseness and lawlessness of a grave character almost everywhere?

In political circles it is felt keenly, "who despise government" (the outbreak of man's will against authority and government as ordained of God). The cry of democracy

(man's rule) is to be heard everywhere.

Almost all nations under heaven are battling with this state of things, from favored England and America on to Germany, France, and further still, Russia, China, Turkey, etc. We observe democracy, Socialism expand to Anarchism and Nihilism, and when fully developed, Bolshevism, and the same spirit of democracy has entered the Church circles also. Whether it may be in the most popular denominations of Christendom down to the comparatively little flock of God's people professedly gathered to the Lord Jesus, and in professed subjection to the Word of God. To these last we pen our lines, for with doctrines such as Higher Criticism (present day modernism) and other evils which sap the foundation of our most holy faith, we have nothing whatever to do, save to testify against and seek in love to get earnest and honest hearts delivered from such. Our path is truly in separation from all such persons, and systems, and gathered out to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in true hearty subjection to the Word of God. This we accept without a reserve, as "a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path." This is our profession, as it was also that of the early Christians in the apostle's day; yet he left a Titus at Crete to "set in order things that were wanting." The Word of God alone can meet this need, and establish one or more in the matter of godly order.

We verily believe the great lack among many at this present time is not rightly distinguishing between privilege and responsibility, and the difference is immense and important, and the calm, sober, and godly heart will always seek to give each its due proportion. Yet we plainly see the tendency with many, and the snare into which some have fallen, is accepting all the gracious privileges of Christianity, and at the same time shirking the many responsibilities. These we insist never can be divorced without great loss to those who do so, and great dishonor to the Lord. Yea, more, each one of us can but own how that the tendency of his own heart, considering the char-

acter of the times, is to fall into line with such, and the path for nature will appear easier. But then what are the holy claims of our Lord Jesus upon us? and what is the very Word of God left us for? Surely to guide us in these as every other form of our path in this world; and true subjection to God, and the Word of His grace, alone will preserve us from such disaster. Men today want broader principles, they tell us, more liberal thought, broader lines to work upon, and hence by some we learn of a "larger Christ," and a "larger hope," etc.; and in a day like this, when everything almost everywhere is enlarging its stakes, and in the world we get among professing Christians a much larger scope than the Word of God will permit, then I put it to the reader, is our remedy to change our position, our principles, to suit the breadth of man's thought today? Surely, surely not, will be the answer we are sure, of every upright mind and loyal heart taught of God. To do so would be to drop into the down grade movement and surrender part of that most holy faith delivered to the saints. We believe from the very depths of our heart we need nothing more than the Word of God, and the same breadth of principles there taught by the Head of the Church, and left to guide us in an evil day, amid all the dangers of a hostile world, and an adversary such as the devil, ever on the watch to destroy any testimony on earth for God and His beloved Son. Let us now look for a brief space at some of the privileges and responsibilities in connection with the Church of God.

To those for whom I write, the broad truth as to the Church will be clear. Yet *its divine unity* needs again and again to be emphasized. If we look at the Church as a pearl, to adorn the Person of the Lord Jesus forever and ever, yet it is but *one pearl*; if as a flock, with its many sheep and lambs for His care, the good Shepherd, yet it is but *one flock*; if an epistle, with its many pages, yet it is but *one epistle*; if as a body, and there are various members, yet but *one body*; if as a bride, yet but *one bride*, a chaste virgin; and if as a house, for God Him-

self to dwell in, yet *one house*. These are a few of the blessings and privileges of the large wealthy place into which we the people of God are brought, in this highly favored dispensation. Great is the grace that has enriched us, and great the riches we have been enriched with, yet in receiving those blessings and riches from His hand still marked with all the solemn memories of the cross, we need to ponder well, what claims has our ever blessed Lord upon us? what are our responsibilities? Some of them it will be our task to point out to the reader.

The Church is one, as we have before said, and comprises all God's people through the wide world (Matt. xvi. ; I Cor. xii.), and although (as in the apostle's day) many local representations of that Church were to be found in various places here and there, yet all were subject to one Head, taught by one Spirit and guided by the same Word. This, to commence with, will be an immense help if rightly understood. To that Church left here to represent the Head while He personally is in the glory, a close tie existed, her relationship very near; yet while all this was true, grave and solemn responsibilities remained with her, and only as she rightly fulfilled these, would she be preserved as a vessel from wreck and disaster. Did that Church, so fair and beautiful as she was, and careful in practice, fulfill her responsibilities and keep her first estate? is a question which scarce needs an answer. Failure is stamped on everything left to man to fulfill. While she walked in a path of separation, a path of holiness, a path of faith, watchful and careful, all went well; when, instead of keeping true to her post, as a faithful watchman, as the night grew on, she grew careless about the interests of Him to whom she owed her all. Soon, like Sampson, she fell asleep in the arms of this evil world. Need we wonder if her strength is shorn as his? and to find even now her very enemies using her to furnish them sport and entertainment, as did Sampson? Very humiliating are these lessons for us, and we need to lay them more to heart.

Now we will commence at the door, for here we believe responsibility commences, and this in connection with whom she receives among her number.

RECEPTION. The Lord Himself, ere He left, gave part of the instructions to guide her, and those instructions are completed in the Acts and Epistles. May we glean in this field what God has for us in this respect. If the reader carefully reads Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;" and again, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained"—in this we get some of the responsibilities resting upon the Church of God as the House of God; for in a house we expect to find rule, order, good government. This has been sadly overlooked by some, and hence confusion has been the result. Some that we have met of late boldly affirm we have no responsibility here at all, but it remains solely with the one who comes, and we are simply to trust the Lord. But Scripture teaches far differently, and we propose to abide by Scripture precept and example. "Whosoever sins ye remit," and "whatsoever ye shall loose" we verily believe furnish us with instruction in the reception of individuals into the fellowship which belongs to such a place as Christians occupy according to the Word. The Church as a whole, we grant, has failed; but has God's Word failed? Is not God's order ever the same? and does not the foundation of God stand sure? Surely, surely it does. If the persons coming are received, all that might have been against them in their past life, be it a Paul, a persecutor, yet they are forgiven, between men and men; all that was righteously against them is now no more so. We believe God has forgiven them, and hence all being now right with the Lord, we forgive (upon the same principle as 2 Cor. ii. 7 and Eph. iv. 32). This applies to one upon his first reception, or after, if ever excommunicated, as 2 Cor. ii. applies. How wise our God is, thus ever providing for His poor

weak people in an evil day.

Now as we enter the doors of the house of God upon earth (for such is every rightly gathered company of saints), we ought to have the humility to inquire diligently from the Word of God, what is the order and government of such a holy place, for "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever." (Ps. xciii. 5.) And "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him." (Ps. lxxxix. 7.) And again, to a Timothy, "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxix.) All these passages herein quoted have not been seriously thought of by many of us. We know there have been other extremes, rigid rules have been laid down by some *and wherever this is true, such a fellowship would be legal and sectarian bondage*; and we are aware of late years Matt. xviii. 18 has been abused, used even to sanction subjection to unholy and unrighteous acts, and yet bound in heaven; and the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness, is made to sanction unrighteous actions. Far be the thought. This we believe worse than Rome. She says her *actions are infallible, and must be submitted to*. The others say, they may fail and be wrong, yet all must submit. We are indeed thankful to be outside of both systems, Rome and the other, although we feel deeply sorry for God's dear people in either. But because this extreme is taken by some, are we to allow the pendulum to swing and carry us to the opposite? Surely, surely not. See the care exercised in the apostle's case (Acts ix. 26, 28). They knew what his past life had been. Now he professed conversion. But more than profession was required, and so Barnabas came forward, and declared not only the truth of Paul's conversion, but also gave them positive marks which verified the truth, "how he preached boldly," etc., and hence to their satisfaction, he was received. They did not fold their arms and say, This is his responsibility.

and we will just trust the Lord, as to whether it is right or wrong; and so, in such a free and easy way, permit him to come among them, and partake of that sacred institution given by the Lord Himself. (Luke xxii.) Surely, Abraham's care in watching the sacrifices of old would have put them to shame (Gen. 15-9-11). The Church as yet had not got so far down the stream of time as Matt. xiii. 25, Rev. ii. 13; but understood too well the need, as the Levites, who as porters, guarded the doors and gates of the Lord's house of old. (1 Chron, xxvi. and 1's. lxxxiv.) The holiness of God's house they understood too well and holy government of such a place, to be guilty of such grave neglect.

The things we believe essential to all coming, are,

1st. That they are known believers.

2nd. That they are known to be sound in Christian doctrine, and godly in life.

3rd. That they are known to be free from associations, which would introduce disorder or *defile* a gathering.

The importance of this we believe we cannot too earnestly press, and this responsibility rests not upon one or two merely, but we believe with the whole gathering as such, every one ought to be exercised about a question which concerns the glory of the Lord Jesus. Matt. xviii. and Jno. xx. were given to all, not one or two leaders to legislate for all. We are quite aware some have the place of rule or government, and "the elders which rule well are counted worthy of double honor," and "he that ruleth, with diligence," is enjoined, Rom. xii. 8; 1 Cor. xii. 28; 1 Tim. v. 17. God forbid we should pen one word to weaken the force of such passages, and God be praised in an unruly age as this is, to find faithful men who have this place and amid the many difficulties, "rule with diligence," "rule well." They will meet the Lord's approval in that day we are sure, if not always from their brethren now. Yet their place and importance need a word. Amid difficult times such men understand the Word and point out to the gathering what is proper and in accord with

the holiness and government of God's House, from the Word, and when this is done, the rest ought to thank God for such; and if it is otherwise, we may rest assured self-will is at work, and 1 Thess. v. 14 may be a word at such a time, "warn the unruly." But when godly order is thus made known, and the holiness of such a place pointed out, every conscience ought to be in exercise, and not one godly exercised conscience overlooked. We believe in this as all else it should be true, "He that believeth shall not make haste," ought to characterize one taking such a step, and as to the gathering itself in receiving, the principle also true "lay hands suddenly upon no man." This we believe is of paramount importance, if we are to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" as we are enjoined in Eph. iv. If even one sister has a serious doubt in her mind as to the one coming, and the person coming would press his reception, his spirit would be far from what the Scriptures enjoin, and if the gathering would receive among them people, to the disregard of any exercised one among them, they override the conscience, and commit we believe a grave sin. What fellowship in the Spirit could such an one coming, or such a gathering receiving, enjoy at such a time when they knew they had by such an act already crushed and wounded some hearts, and broken the unity of the Spirit of Eph. iv.? Would such be in accord with Ver. 2, "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love?"

A. E. B.

(To Be Continued)

We are in the wilderness, and there we have to meet with trial, sorrow and difficulty; but so long as we have the happy privilege of betaking ourselves at all times, and under all circumstances, to One who reveals Himself in His manifold grace, in connection with our every necessity and weakness, we need not fear the wilderness.

PASSING AWAY

All glories of this earth decay,
In smoke and ashes pass away,
Nor rock nor steel can last;
What here gives pleasure to our eyes,
What we as most enduring prize,
Is but an airy dream that fadeth fast.

What are the things whereof we boast?
What are they worth we value most?
They are but simply naught.
What is the very life of man,
So brief, uncertain, void of plan?
Time's passing fancy with no substance fraught.

There is no laughter here, no joy,
But some heart-sorrow, some annoy
Will poison it ere long;
Where wilt thou find unmixed delight;
Where honour that is always bright,
Undimmed by scorn and hate, unvexed by wrong?

Up, heart, awake, as one who knows
Of all the gifts that Time bestows,
But one belongs to thee—
The Present; for the Past doth fly
As a swift stream goes shooting by;
The Future—ah! who knows whose that shall be?

Laugh at the world, her honours vain,
Her fears and hopes, her love disdain;
Find refuge with the One
Who is and ever shall be King,
To whom no Time a change can bring,
From whom eternal life can come alone.

Ah! well for him whose trust is here!
Built on the Rock, he need not fear
Time's changes and decay;
Though he may fall, he yet shall stand
For ever in the unchanging land,
For very Strength itself shall be his stay.

—*From the German of Andreas Gryphius (17th century).*

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

The address for Dr. R. C. Woodham and family, Miss Cornelia DeJonge and Miss Esther A. Creighton is Mombasa, Irumu, Congo Belge, Africa, (via Suez).

Recent letters from Miss Creighton stated that after many months of illness Miss DeJonge had been relieved by an operation and was coming along slowly but steadily. She is now able to be on her feet again. During the month of September the Congo has been drenched and flooded by terrific storms, causing rivers to overflow, destroying ferries, sinking Government autos, washing out bridges and doing much damage. The Mission people were all safe.

The R. C. Belgian Government official, who so opposed their work, has been removed but the damage done has not been repaired. A year ago there would be from two to three hundred for medical treatment on clinic day. Before receiving treatment they had to listen to the Gospel. Now but two or three dozen come.

It will be well if brethren everywhere have special season of prayer for Dr. Woodham and the staff of helpers in the Congo, that all those efforts may be overruled for even greater blessing so that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified in that far distant and needy field. Ps. 76:10. 2 Thes. 3:1, 2.

Ladies' Sewing Circles and all who desire to send clothing for poor children to Dr. Woodham's Mission, especially those who reside on the Pacific Coast will save time and trouble if they write to or send direct to Mr. J. T. Creighton, 433 E. Bellevue Avenue, San Mateo, California. Mr. C. will give due attention to such service freely, and has arrangement for shipping direct to Congo, Africa, from San Francisco.

BAHAMA ISLANDS

Our brother J. S. Hall, Box 404, Nassau, Bahamas, has written us recently in which there is encouraging news regarding the work on the Islands. During the last two years he and others have gone forth to Cat Island and some distinct cases of conversion have taken place, and another little Assembly has been gathered to the Lord's Name, and there is encouraging work in a new Sunday School.

An open door in the Gospel is a special mark of favor from the Lord in our days. Then it shows shepherd care when such a work is followed up with teaching, leading young converts further on into the joys of fellowship together, as fellow members of one body. We should encourage younger men who show gift for such service and who are commended by their home Assembly for piety and fitness in such labor, for there are many Mission fields in the United States and Canada, as well as fields like the Bahamas nearby. Every month special prayer should be made for the laborers and the Assemblies in the Bahamas.

MONTREAL

We are pleased to read the report from Brother S. J. Holwell, 5233 Wellington St., Verdun, Montreal, Province Quebec, Canada, concerning his work on the ships in that port during the past season. We insert a few extracts. "Altogether 265 ships have been worked with the Gospel (Tracts and Testaments, etc.) and altogether the number may not seem much but it is a record, never having reached so many before. This work has also brought both joy and tears, but they are altogether too numerous and can be better told than written. Any of the Lord's people who are interested in this work and would care to know more about it, will find that there are many ways of helping and ways that they would never think of. I will be pleased to answer any correspondence in connection with this."

"And I wish to thank all those in different parts who have already been my helpers this past year."

This being the main port (if not the only one) in Canada where such important service is carried on, we specially commend our brother to Brethren generally, especially Brethren in Canada, for their prayers and fellowship in whatever way they can help.—(Ed.)

A MAGAZINE AND ITS USE

A monthly magazine (as also all printed ministry) has its use, but its chief use is to place the reader in closer touch and intelligence with the sacred Scriptures—the very Word of God itself. No magazine nor any form of printed ministry should be permitted to take the place of Scripture. That would mean giving up a Divine standard for a human one, leaving God and turning to man.

It is the Word alone—God given, God spoken, that carries with it Divine authority. It is the Word that informs and furnishes us with light, and it is the Word that feeds the soul, and the constant reading of Scripture with a reverential and prayerful spirit, brings the reader into continual acquaintanceship with the revealed mind and will of God; for in it we discern the purpose and will of God respecting ourselves individually, and our collective association with the church, which is Christ's body, and next, the world that we are passing through with its present features, as also future destiny, and those are of first importance for us to understand. Hence, to lack true and proper intelligence concerning those things means for us a serious loss now, as also in the future.

The chief intent of all Spiritual ministry and especially a monthly magazine, is to open the Word, unfold its contents that readers may understand it better, and this month we will offer a suggestion to our readers and one that has proved of great value to ourselves, and that is always when reading a paper through from the first page to the last, that we keep the Bible beside us, and when reference is made to any passage of the Scripture, open the Word and read the entire passage. This alone will comply with the Divine design in such ministry.

When a monthly arrives, we may open the pages, and take a brief glance at the different papers to see the leading features, but do not end with such. Let this be but the starting point, and when the quiet hour comes around,

and always arrange for this, buy up the opportunity and never neglect it. Afresh take up the magazine but not now for a casual glance, but rather with a purpose to master all the contents prayerfully under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, page after page, paper after paper, and read every Scripture referred to. Do not trust to memory as if you understand all that the passage contains, but read it again, take one more look into its familiar face, for therein you may discover a fresh lesson, receive a new ray of light never seen before; in searching the Scriptures this way, we will feel instinctively that we are in His presence, and under the shadow of His wings. In this atmosphere, the sweets of fellowship with the Father and His Son becomes our joy and our delight. This will be in harmony with another passage, "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." (Jas. 4:8). And never should we be satisfied short of this nearness to Him. These suggestions, if followed, will fulfill the desire of gifted and God-given writers whom we may never see here face to face, and fulfill the intended use of a magazine to explain, unfold and apply the Word of God. (Ed.)

THE WORD OF GOD

(1 Peter 1:23, 25)

In these days when the Word of God is so called in question, it is blessed to think how a single verse of Scripture was sufficient for Christ for authority, and sufficient for the devil, who had not a word to say.

I do not care for novel interpretations of Scripture; cream lies on the surface.

But, oh, how is the Word its own proof; and how has it its own power, though surely nothing but the Spirit of God can give it that power in us. But in walking with God alone can we draw out its sweetness and feed upon it. I believe that the Spirit of God is a positive teacher in this respect, and may give, if He sees good, developed thoughts of its contents; but if rivers are to flow out, we

must drink for ourselves as thirsty for it.

Let us now stop and ask ourselves, what has my mind been occupied with today? What has it been running after? Could you say, "The Word of Christ has dwelt in me richly"? Now, perhaps, we have been occupied with politics, perhaps with the town talk, or with something of our own. Has the word of our own heart, the work of our own mind, filled up the greater part of our day? That is not Christ.

There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the Word apart from the Spirit . . . I know nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it.

God reveals not His things "to the wise and prudent," but unto "babes." It is not the strength of man's mind judging about "the things of God" that gets the blessing from Him; it is the spirit of the babe desiring "the sincere milk of the Word" . . . The strongest mind must come to the Word of God as the new-born babe.

There is not a single word in the Book of God which cannot feed our souls.

Study the Bible . . . with prayer. Seek the Lord there, and not knowledge—that will come too; but the heart is well directed in seeking the Lord.

I think . . . you have studied too much, and read the Bible too little. I always find that I have to be on my guard on this point. It is the teaching of God, and not the labour of man, that makes us enter into the thoughts and purposes of God in the Bible . . . I do not think that any one will believe that I do not wish it should be much read, but I do wish it should be read with God.

There is one Man who knows the truth, because He is the Truth, who is satisfied with the written Word, and that is the Lord. There is no craft of Satan that the Word of God is not sufficient to meet.

When this fleeting life shall be over, that only shall abide which has been produced *by the Word*.

Where'er we ope the pages,
In which Thy wondrous Word!
Man's path through varied ages
Is given us to record—
Of failure, ruin, sorrow,
The story still we find;
God's love but brings the morrow
Of evil in mankind.

J. N. Darby,
(Pilgrim Portions for the Day of Rest.)

MUST I GO EMPTY-HANDED?

"Not at death I shrink and falter,
For my Saviour saves me now;
But to meet Him *empty* handed!
Thought of that now clouds my brow."

These words were quoted by a young man, converted upon his dying bed. True, grace had saved him at the "eleventh hour," and he rejoiced in the knowledge of a Saviour's love, but as he looked back upon his past life—so full of possibilities, but wasted in self-gratification—he longed that the years *might have* been used in the interest of the One he now loved. If only he had known his precious Saviour sooner, and employed his years in His service for His glory! He felt that though saved, and departing to be with his Saviour, *he had sent nothing on before.*

Reader, have *you?* As a Christian, heaven has been secured to you at the infinite cost of the Saviour's loving sacrifice, and therefore, you will be forever in the glory to which we are hastening; but do not let us forget that though there is no judgment as to our sins (for the judgment was borne by the Lord Jesus)—there *is* the "judgment seat of Christ" before which we must all appear.

"Nothing but leaves." Shall it be thus we meet Him? Nothing He can commend! Wasted days, hours and years! Precious time spent in self-indulgence, golden opportunities wasted, gone, gone, FOREVER!

"Must I go in empty handed?
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give Him,
Lay no trophy at His feet?"

Regrets can never undo the past, or recall wasted opportunities! Once we have left this world, we have left behind the last privilege of witnessing for the Lord in the world where He is still *unwanted, unknown*. Surely "It is high time to awake out of sleep" (Rom. : 13.11). The days and months are gliding past; the Lord's coming draws near; at the longest too, our stay here is brief, and every day seen opportunities lessening! May we then be alert, redeeming the time, and be able to look forward to the day of manifestation with joy. We can hardly hope to hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," but what a deep and inestimable joy to hear Him say, "She (or he) hath done what she (or he) could." May our hearts be deeply stirred to use the "little while," in view of the future.

J. W. H. Nichols.

SOME FACTS ABOUT "ACTS"

The Book of Acts is one of the transitional Books of Scripture. It is a *Book of changes*. In it God "rings out the old, and rings in the new." It is like March 1st among farm tenants—moving time.

To lose sight of this fact is to miss the meaning and the message of the *Book*. In Acts we need to remember the familiar warning, "Watch your step." Failing at this point, many have tripped and fallen here. Extreme movements of various kinds have been built and propagated on hasty, careless conclusions from Acts.

Acts 1:8 is a key to the structure and movement of the *Book*:—"but ye will receive power, the Holy Spirit having come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (New Translation). Let us notice some of the *changes* in this *Book*.

I. When Acts opens, our LORD JESUS CHRIST

was upon the earth; when it closes He is in heaven, and we have the promise that He will return. In Chapter 1 He is showing Himself alive after His passion, to His apostles; but in Chapter 28, though still possessing the same life, He is the One "in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The Book of Acts commences in the first advent of Christ, records the end of that advent in an ascent, and promises His second advent by a descent, until which time He is absent.

This leaves on earth a people attached to His Person, gathered to His Name, "remembering" Him in His death, "until He come." This is the assembly, of which, as we learn in the Epistles, He is the exalted Head.

II. At the beginning of Acts, the HOLY SPIRIT was in the glory; at its close, on the earth, in the assembly. In the first instance "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39); in the latter, "This Jesus . . . being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:32, 33).

The Book opens anticipating "ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit after now not many days" (Ch. 1:5, N. T.); narrates the fulfillment of that promise by *His* first advent (Ch. 2); introduces the earth history of the assembly, indwelt by the Spirit; and by more than 50 references to that Holy One, emphasizes the vital place He occupies in the life, testimony, and conflicts of God's people on the earth.

III. In the first Chapter, we meet a question about restoring the kingdom to ISRAEL (Ch. 1:7); in the last, "this salvation of God has been sent to the NATIONS" (Ch. 28:28). In Acts, as in our Lord's earthly ministry, the order is "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

The Book opens in Jerusalem, the center of Jewish

earthly interests; and works out from that point until it closes in Rome, the center and throne of Gentile world rulership. Accompanying this, we behold a movement of the Spirit from the people of Israel, who persistently refuse His testimony to the risen Messiah, out to the Gentiles.

Peter's ministry on the day of Pentecost was to Jews (Ch. 2); but in the house of Cornelius (Ch. 10) he reaches out to the Gentiles. This is definitely recognized at the conference in Acts 15, as the work of God (vv. 7-18).

Paul's ministry follows a similar course. In the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, after the Jews had rejected their message, Paul and Barnabas said to them, "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Ch. 13:46). When the Jews at Corinth, in response to Paul's testimony to Christ, "opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles" (Ch. 18:6). And finally, when the Jews in Rome agreed not among themselves after hearing his message concerning Christ, he quoted from Isaiah 6 as to their blindness, and said, "Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Ch. 28:28).

"And to this agree the words of the prophets" (Ch. 15:15). This transition is in harmony with the rest of Divine revelation. It is demanded by other Scripture. It agrees with the prophets, fulfills the prophets. This fact is not incidental, but fundamental, giving a distinctive character to the Book.

Thus the assembly, or outcalling, begins with Jewish material, separated by divine call from the unbelieving nation (Matt. 16:13-18; Acts 2:40-41); and is extended to include on equal footing believing Gentiles, whom God

now for the first time visits "to take out of them a people for His Name" (Acts 15:14).

We are further assured (verse 16) that there is to be an "after this;" this age is not the end of God's earthly program; He has not cast off His people Israel—they are only blinded in part "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25); an outcalling does not exhaust His purpose toward either Israel or the Gentiles.

"After this"—(1) He will return; (2) He will build again the tabernacle of David, now fallen down; (3) He will reach out in a larger way toward the nations, through the nation.

But for the present He is occupied with the assembly, as for 2,000 years He had been with the nation Israel; though for the doctrine of this we must go especially to Paul. "The kingdom" will "come" (Matt. 6:10); but it is not here now.

Acts shows us, not the kingdom restored to Israel, and prospering in a world-wide administration under King Messiah; but rather an outcalling, from Jews and Gentiles, walking together in a beautiful fellowship which we learn in Paul's Epistles involves the truth of membership in the One Body.

IV. At the beginning of Acts, THE CHURCH (Assembly, literally "outcalling") is a subject of prophecy; but at the end it is a fact of history. Previously it had been foretold (Matt. 16:18); here it was founded.

At the opening of Acts 2, the assembly was not here, though the exalted Head was in His place in Glory (Eph. 1:20-23); at the close of this chapter a new order of things existed: the Holy Spirit was here, the assembly was formed (1 Cor. 12:13), and a testimony to the risen Christ, ultimately to encircle the earth, went forth through the assembly in the Spirit's power.

The assembly, though composed at first of Jewish believers, was not merely a new kind of synagogue; it was on entirely different ground. Apostolic ministry points out the way of life to a convicted remnant in Israel

(Ch. 2:37-40) ; and apostolic teaching instructs the newly formed company, as to its normal life (Ch. 2:42), in its problems (Ch. 6:2-4), and in its growth (Ch. 8:14-17).

What a beautiful picture do Chapters 2, 3, and 4, present, as to the assembly's early simplicity, unity, energy and testimony, in the power of an ungrieved Spirit! How soon man marred this! How sad is our present state, in contrast, despite the unchanged fulness and sufficiency of our glorious Head and the indwelling Spirit! May God give us grace to say, with Daniel (9:5), "*We have sinned;*" yea, with Nehemiah (1:6), "*I . . . have sinned.*"

V. There is to be observed a distinct transition in the early church itself. At the beginning, all is Jewish, through the first seven chapters. These believers, though saved through grace (Ch. 15:11), were "*zealous of the law*" (Ch. 21:20).

Following Stephen's martyr death, the testimony moved out to the Samaritans (Ch. 8). The harmony and unity of this work of the Spirit with that at Jerusalem was certified (8:14-17).

From this point, further extension took place: first, through Peter (Ch. 10) ; then through others unnamed (Ch. 11:20) ; and finally, through Barnabas and Paul (from Ch. 13 on).

Resulting from Peter's mission in Ch. 10, "they that were of the circumcision" (Ch. 11:2) admitted (Ch. 11:18), "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

When the Gospel was preached to the Greeks in Antioch (11:20), Barnabas was sent forth from the assembly in Jerusalem, thus showing the oneness of the assemblies.

The mission of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13-14), resulted in the opening of the door of faith unto the Gentiles (Ch. 14:27), who were associated in assembly capacity and in one common fellowship with Jerusalem, Samaria, etc. (14:23)

When this unity was challenged (Ch. 15:1), the matter was decided, *at Jerusalem*, and believers of the Gentiles

were recognized as "the brethren" equally with those who wrote (Ch. 15:23). To be in fellowship at Antioch was to be in fellowship in Jerusalem. Enlargement maintained and manifested the fundamental and practical unity of the people of God.

VI. In the first 12 chapters of Acts, PETER and the twelve are prominent; while in the remainder of the Book, PAUL fills the scene as a worker.

Peter was minister of the circumcision; Paul of the Gentiles and of the assembly. To Peter and the twelve was given the care of "as many as received Him" in Israel; while Paul should go unto the nations (Gal. 2:9) and have "the burden of all the assemblies" (2 Cor. 11:28).

"The apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42), details of which are not left with us, gave character to the assembly in the beginning, when all was Jewish; but when the Gentiles had been admitted, their equal standing with believers of the circumcision established, and thus a settled condition reached for the age, God gave through Paul, in fourteen inspired Epistles, the full revelation of His whole purpose in the assembly, wherein is made known "the all various wisdom of God."

Our failure today is simply departure from apostolic teaching; as seen in the Pauline epistles, our responsibility is to return to it, carrying it out with those who are willing to do so.

VII. Acts is an "exodus," a "going forth" from LAW to GRACE.

The first verse of the Book connects it with Luke's Gospel. Our Lord's doing and teachings there recorded took place while He was "a minister of the circumcision" (Rom. 15:8), "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4), which He had come to fulfill.

On the cross all the claims of the law were fully met; so Paul can declare, as he does in the synagogue (Acts 13:39), "And by Him all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the

law of Moses.”

Yes, Paul went into the synagogue and preached; but the synagogue was never the same afterward. His message, if received, would deliver all in the synagogue from a law which could not justify and link them with a Saviour in Whom is justification. What need, then, for the continuation of the synagogue? God had something else—even the assembly.

And this brings us to observe an important distinction between the two: those in the synagogue were occupied with the shadows, looking forward to a redemption which their entire company must keep out of their reach; the assembly is occupied with Himself, Who has accomplished redemption. The one is a company desiring salvation, professedly at least; the other a company enjoying salvation.

Legalism dies hard, however. The message of free grace was *contested* then, as now. Ignorant zeal for the law shut Israel out of the very righteousness she claimed to be working for (Rom. 10:3). Even so, those zealous of the law would fasten it upon justified Gentiles (Acts 15:5). But there, in the very center of Judaism, the matter was settled (Acts 15:19-29); “ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). Would that all who name the Name of the Lord might really *believe* this glorious truth!

VIII. Up to this time—in the four Gospels—the word “disciple” or “disciples” occurs over 230 times; in the Acts it is found about 30 times, confined to the first 21 chapters; and thereafter is never again used in the Bible. The Epistles, in which Christian position is set forth and the doctrine of the assembly unfolded, never call us disciples.

May we not learn from this that, while we must remain, to the end of our earthly journey, “learners” (as the word “disciples” signifies), yet our calling involves other names which carry us beyond this one in intimacy, privilege and responsibility?

Take, for instance, the word “saints” (holy ones).

We are saints by calling (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2); we are to conduct ourselves "as becometh saints" (Eph. 5:3). Surely, this fits well with Hebrews 6:1, here we are seen "leaving the word of the beginning of the Christ" and going on to what belongs "to full growth." So Peter would tell us (2 Pet. 3:18) to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; referring us, however, to Paul's epistles (vv. 15-16) for material beyond that given to him.

IX. JOHN THE BAPTIST, forerunner of the Lord, is referred to frequently in the Gospels. He is also mentioned in the early part of Acts. But after Chapter 19 of the transition Book, he and his baptism are never heard of again in Scripture.

Seven times is John's ministry brought before us in Acts. Its nature and purpose are clearly indicated. He preached "the baptism of *repentance* unto all the people of *Israel*" (Acts 13:24); in John 1:31 he declared, speaking of our Lord, "I knew Him not; but that He should be made manifest to *Israel*, therefore am I come baptizing with water."

Some today would take us to John's baptism as being the great need, for power and holiness, at the present time. Not so; his work was Jewish; it was timed—was exercised and belonged *before* and *up to* the time of the manifestation of the Messiah in ministry (John 3:28-30).

It looked forward to the first advent work of Christ; "saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after Him, that is, on Christ Jesus" (Acts 19:4).

It pointed to the day of Pentecost, when the One to Whom the Baptist bore witness baptized with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5; 1 Cor. 12:13).

It anticipated our Lord's second advent, when He shall also baptize with fire (Matt. 3:11-12; Acts 1:5).

John's work has been finished, and that without doing any miracle (John 10:41). And as God moves out among the Gentiles, in the Book of Acts, He emphasizes the

temporary, preparatory, transitory nature of the Baptist's ministry, and then drops it, leaving us occupied altogether with the One "mightier than I," to Whom he so faithfully testified. Who *could* desire to go back to John's period and position, from the height of Christian position and assembly privileges? See Acts 18:24—19:7.

X. Let us note some interesting facts concerning the Spirit in Acts. In the Gospels He came upon the holy Person of our Lord, at His baptism, no preparatory sacrifice being necessary.

In Acts 2, consequent upon our Saviour's work and exaltation, He came upon the waiting company of believers, who thereupon were constituted "one Body." Peter's message on that day assured exercised Jewish souls that upon identifying themselves with the Name of Jesus Christ they too would "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

When Samaria received the Word of God, the oneness of God's people must be manifested, even between Jerusalem and Samaria, which had been rival centers, beyond the power of Judaism to overcome. The Spirit was not given to Samaritan believers, then, until the two apostles from Jerusalem came and laid hands on them, after praying (Acts 8:14-17).

In Acts 10, the Spirit was given to Gentile believers, to the great surprise of Hebrews present, six of whom were Peter's witnesses, which fact settled the question with his brethren at Jerusalem (Acts 11:15-18) and was of prime importance in the later conference concerning the status of Gentiles who believed (Acts 15:7-9).

In Acts 19:1-7, Paul ministered to twelve men at Ephesus, whose need was to be brought over from John's baptism into Christian position. Today no believer starts on the other side of the cross, hence, has the Holy Spirit immediately upon believing (Romans 5:5; 8:9).

It is to be noted that in each of these cases, the Spirit's coming was definitely testified by means of tangible evidences—they saw, heard, etc. And in Acts, apostolic

ministry was employed, which is no longer with us. We need to beware of the fanaticism sometimes found associated with extravagant claims as to "Holy Ghost manifestations," often resting entirely on subjective ground and requiring that we accept the claimant's own interpretation of alleged experiences. The Word, submitted to in the power of the Spirit, will protect us alike from fanaticism on the one hand and rationalism on the other, both of which are dread enemies—though in opposite ways—of true Christian experience.

In closing, let us note that we are today where Acts leaves us, in several important respects:

Our blessed Lord was then, and is now, in heaven, waiting.

The Holy Spirit was then, and is now, on earth.

The Jews were then, and are now, blinded in part, rejecting their Messiah-King.

The Gentiles were then, and are now, undelivered, awaiting Israel's ministry, yet to be realized when they receive Him.

The truth of God was then, and is now, going forth.

Souls were then, and are now, being saved through the Gospel. What is the reader's condition in this respect—saved, or unsaved? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."

The assembly was, and is yet, on the earth, united to its Head in Heaven, indwelt by the Spirit, blessed with privileges, enriched by gifts, responsible to maintain a proper testimony and order until He come. Where is the reader, in view of such a revelation and such an obligation?

Lee Wilfred Ames.



THINGS THAT ARE WANTING

(Titus 1:5)

Continued

The Time and Place for such questions, we believe is not when the Lord's people are gathered around the table to remember Him in the breaking of bread. If what is due to such a place is cared for, all such questions as to reception or any others, ought to be settled before. Think, beloved, in view of Him to whom we are gathered, "the Holy and the True," and in the presence of the emblems which present to every eye and heart all the solemn memories of the Cross,—there people introduced for fellowship without any time given for the larger part to learn the least thing about the persons coming, when many are not even satisfied, yet individuals are thrust upon a gathering, some for and some against. Such scenes (which of late have been frequent) are foreign to the whole spirit of such a place and drag down the most holy season and ordinance to the level of an ordinary meal, and sometimes even lower. Beloved brethren, is it not high time we should awake to all this, and again seek to learn somewhat of the modesty and propriety becoming to such a place and such a time? Now if a brief space of time is given for inquiry, when those who are received come, the fellowship will be real and according to the truth. We would not say always a whole week nor yet only a week. Yet in most cases, especially in towns and cities, we believe a week is required. If the person is well known, and all are satisfied, even a week in these cases may not be required. But when the persons are not well known, or if there are known to be serious doubts in the minds of any, ample time ought to be given to confer and investigate, so that there may be unity of action. By this we believe several ends will be accomplished; the holiness of God's House cared for; the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus thought of; the unity of the Spirit among those already gathered is kept, and the permanent good

of those coming is considered. If wrongs are known in their life, or associations, there is ample opportunity to point it out, and a godly effort made to get such delivered. This, we believe, is a grave responsibility, little understood by many, and less cared for by some. Yet as divinely true in our day as that of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. xv. 19-21; Jude 22, 23).

We fear the spirit of things around us has taken possession of many of us, and there has been too great a desire to get people with us, to have the numbers swelled; but as to the people themselves perhaps never delivered and set free by the truth. Need we wonder then if soon many swell our ranks, and confusion follows when grave questions arise, which require to be dealt with? morally as at Corinth, doctrinally as in Galatia. Need we be surprised to find, instead of standing true to the ground, as Shammah the son of Agee (2 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12), they fly off like the faint hearted Israelites of Shammah's day? History does repeat itself, and human nature is human nature still.

Now when we pass inside the doors of such a place, we learn from Rom. xiv.—xv. 7 that there ought to be fellowship indeed. Weakness would not shut one out from our full and hearty fellowship. Nay, they need it most, and that service of love enjoined in 1 Thess. v. "support the weak." "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God," a passage which ought to cover the whole ground and draw true hearts together, that "with one mind and one mouth we glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is part of the sweet and precious fellowship to be enjoyed by those whose hearts are by the Holy Spirit drawn together, and so as to preserve a fellowship true and real, there must be the utmost care in reception. Not that one if known, as before said, to be godly in life and association is to be debarred. But what we here press is that there should be the utmost vigilance in every case, and unity of action sought after by the whole gathering, lest roots of bitterness spring up, and leave trouble for long after.

THE RECEPTION OF STRANGERS OR VISITORS. And we are not left in the dark as to instruction concerning this, nor yet without example furnished by the Holy Spirit. Even Apollos, a servant of Christ, a preacher, and a man mighty in the Scriptures, when passing from Ephesus to Achaia, carries a letter. "The brethren (not a brother) wrote, exhorting the disciples (not a disciple) to receive him." And so beautiful order is preserved, and also fellowship. The brethren wrote,—there was fellowship in Ephesus in writing; no one apart from the other brethren did this, and act independently. This honored servant is sent off with the fellowship of the brethren, and commended by them to the disciples in Achaia, and is there not a beautiful lesson in this act? Why did they commend him to the disciples in Achaia? Because they by this owned they were not independent congregations, but they were one. They entered into the spirit of the truth, "there is one body," written to them at an after period by the apostle (Eph. iv.). And then when he arrived there, he was received, because the disciples in Achaia recognized the same truth,—they were one with those at Ephesus. Miles of distance were nothing to them, they in God's sight were one, and in receiving Apollos they owned this. This served many ends. When Apollos arrived there, it placed him beyond suspicion. He could labor unhinderedly. And beautiful fellowship according to God is thus preserved by this order. And need we then be surprised to learn at such a time, "who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace?" (Acts xviii. 27, 28.)

Then again we get the case of Phebe (Rom. xvi.). Some might say a woman will be least apt to cause any trouble, taking no part in public meetings, no preacher, nor teacher; yet the Scripture does not pass her over, and hence, "I commend unto you Phebe, our sister," was written to the saints at the great metropolis of the Roman Empire. How perfect in its place. She had in her sphere served the church at Cenchrea, and the apostle says: I

commend her to you. She thus could be received beyond doubt or suspicion, and enjoy while in that city, the hearty fellowship of those gathered to the Lord Jesus. But the apostle adds even more, for if Phebe rendered assistance to the saints at Cenchræa, they now at Rome could render her assistance in the large city where perhaps she would be a total stranger, and so he adds, so beautiful and perfect in its place, "and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you"; and adds further, "for she hath been a succourer of many and of myself also."

Now we will pass on to the apostle himself (2 Cor. iii.). Writing to the church at Corinth he pens, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" Surely not, we would reply, and so ought every saint at Corinth, for through him they were brought to the truth (1 Cor. iv.). Yet in this very passage we learn of the "others." They required letters, namely strangers passing from place to place.

This, we believe, is to guard against people who are not entitled to such fellowship; for do we not learn in Jude 4, "for there are certain men crept in unawares"? The saints were off their guard and the enemy takes advantage and men creep in unawares; and in this very epistle we find he presses the importance of "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," and that because of these "certain men." Then again in Gal. ii. 2-5, he writes about "false brethren brought in unawares, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour." Here he does not speak to the praise of the assemblies. These men were brought in "unawares," the saints again off their guard. Such crafty men cared not for the "unity of the Spirit," but crept in to lead the saints astray and bring them into bondage. The apostle gave no place to such; and to avert similar trouble and confusion at another time (Acts xx.) he gathers the elders of Ephesus

together and gives them the solemn charge (vers. 28-32), "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers; for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch," etc. Oh that the Church had thus kept a watchful eye, a prayerful spirit! Oh that God's dear people now would awake to the importance of giving heed to these words of the apostle, and seek more and more to preserve the divine order and example as given in the New Testament! We would earnestly urge all the Lord's people in moving from place to place to seek "letters of commendation," so as to preserve apostolic example and teaching, and avoid any confusion in visiting places where not known. In this way we believe the confusion of late years, in some quarters, by this neglect, will be averted; and as in Nehemiah's day, the foundations once more discovered, joined together, the wall built, and the gates set up with their bolts and bars. Thus order, Godly order, will be restored and maintained according to the Word of God. We do not pretend to say this will preserve from all after trouble, yet it will from much. There will be the constant need of the watchful eye, of great care, both in reception as we have pointed out, and afterwards for those who have been received into such a place.

The epistles need all to be carefully read, that we may be thoroughly furnished, as to this as all else. In the matter of discipline there are often great extremes; sometimes assemblies are too loose, and sometimes too severe. A few of the different stages of discipline may need a word.

"A MAN OVERTAKEN IN A FAULT" (Gal vi. 1). This is a case which needs great wisdom, great caution. The person is not following a persistent course of evil, but for the moment has left his watchtower, and in his weakness has given way to the temptation presented to him by the enemy, ever watchful to take advantage. He

is one otherwise devoted, and when we consider such a case, and look back over our own lives and remember how near this precipice time and again we have been ourselves, yea more, perhaps ourselves have fallen,—this awakens in the Spirit-taught mind tender compassion, and the burden upon the heart will be the restoration of such an erring one. “Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.”

WARN THE UNRULY (1 Thess. v.). This is a different case; not weakness giving way in time of temptation, but self-will breaking out and seeking to lead in the things of God, or to despise His order. This, if not checked would introduce disorder and confusion into the most holy place upon earth, God’s dwelling place, and hence present to the eyes of men a poor witness for God as to the order and government of His house. Such conduct can never be tolerated, and hence we read, “warn the unruly.” This requires care also. 1st Tim. v. 1 needs to be kept before the young especially. Although Timothy, a young man, had a gift and of such we read, “let no man despise thy youth”—yet this was in his capacity as a servant in ministering the Word. But although gifted and with a ministry to fulfill, yet such an one is cautioned, “Rebuke not an elder sharply but entreat him as a father.” If it is the aged in whom self-will breaks out, and he becomes “unruly” it remains with those riper in age to rebuke such. To younger men even nature would say, (and so would Scripture, if having to do with one of ripe years who fails), “Entreat him as a father.” This we believe is all intended by the Holy Spirit to guard against iniquity in a most holy place where the order and authority of only One can be recognized, even Jesus the Lord.

OPEN REBUKE. “Them that sin rebuke before all” (1st Tim. v. 20). This we believe is failure in a further stage; it might be the same one who upon being warned gave no heed, and hence the failure was open; but still not so far as to call for putting away. To check such a course

and put the person to shame, in order that self-judgment and confession may be wrought, but one course is left, "rebuke before all." This, if it does not lead the erring one to repentance, will lead others to fear and the standard of holiness will be kept before the people of God. But for all this there needs the utmost caution. We have heard of those who were overtaken in a fault being rebuked before all, but this we believe unduly severe. Bowels of compassion would be rather required there; but when it is an open case of self-will that distresses the whole assembly, and if faithful private warning fails to check, the person falls under the solemn instruction here given, "Them that sin rebuke before all."

A HERETIC. Such, "after the first and second admonition reject," or have done with (Titus iii. 10). Here we get another form of evil—a man may be pressing points and doctrines in a way so as to cause parties and dissensions in a gathering; doctrines which may be quite true in themselves, yet giving them an unduly prominent place and occupying God's people with doctrines and questions instead of Christ. If Christ is occupying the right place then each line of instruction will have its right place, all doctrines are connected and lead to and from Christ, if presented in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, just as all spokes center in the hub of a wheel. Here is the importance of having Christ before the soul, and doctrines in due relation to Him. David's harp had not only one string but ten, so we need not harp upon one string only. God has variety, and yet in all truth a perfect unity. But a heretic is marked by a different course: certain doctrines and theories are favorites with him, and to carry out this he presses them; parties are formed, and distraction is sure to follow. Now if Titus, a servant, met such a man, he was to admonish him once and twice. If there was not self-judgment, and if this did not effect the desired result, have done with him. Here we do not yet get the instruction of 1 Cor. v., "put away from among yourselves." So far it is mostly individual, yet for "damnable heresy" as 2 Pet. ii. it would require the

extreme act of 1 Cor. v. Damnable heresy could under no consideration be tolerated in an assembly of God's people according to the truth, nor yet fellowship in a social way (2 Jno. 9-11). Yet Titus iii. does not go that far, and hence there is still grace, but righteousness so far will "have done with." Such cases if dealt with faithfully, and there was no check, we believe would not frequently meet the apostle's desire expressed in Gal. v., "I would they would even cut themselves off which trouble you" (Greek). Then the saints are free. Rom. xvi. 17, 18, would give instruction how to treat such cases, and is a passage which needs to be carefully adhered to. "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrines ye have learned: and avoid them." A. E. B.

(To be Continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(With a view to inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

THE PACIFIC COAST

Our beloved brother, A. V. Steeples, whose present address is 2502 Queets Avenue, Hoquiam, Washington, has returned to the North Pacific, having spent the entire summer in the Middle West preaching and teaching in different places, especially in the State of Minnesota. Our brother, who is blind, is accompanied by his wife on all his journeys, a very suited companion for him and quite acceptable among the Lord's people. His expositions and teaching has brought many commendations. Upon their return trip to the Pacific, they called upon different out-of-the-way and needy places, doing pastoral work. Prayers should be made continually for them both.—Hoquiam is near to both Seattle and Tacoma, where our brother ministers the Word at times.

Mr. J. W. H. Nichols, 414 Hurlingham Avenue, San Mateo, California, which adjoins Burlingame, has been held near his home for some time since his return from fields further north. He has been dividing his time between his home assembly, San Francisco and San Jose, and we are pleased to note that from letters just received, they express appreciation for his ministry.

Our brother also is Superintendent of the "Ebenezer Home," Burlingame. This service of love that he renders, when at home or away is gratis, entirely for the good of the Lord's people.

We can readily commend the Home to any that require a rest or change for a few months; or for permanent residence. It is in a beautiful district and a nice mild climate all the year. Usually there are six or seven guests, all children of God. Mrs. Butler (formerly of Villard, Minnesota) is the present matron. Prices are especially moderate, and should any require further information, write Mr. Nichols to his home address and all the information will be cheerfully given.

FAITHFUL MEN

When the dark clouds began to cover the sky before the Apostle passed on, and such conditions he observed to be an earnest of features that will be more fully manifest at the close of the Church age, in his last Epistle to his son Timothy, he wrote: "The things that thou hast heard of me—commit thou to *faithful men* who shall be able to teach others also." All this indicated clearly that the Holy Spirit through the Apostle intended that we should be informed that at the end, Apostolic teaching, and *faithfulness* in following it, would be rare.

The Psalmist by the same Spirit wrote concerning a time immediately following our age, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth. For the *faithful* fail from among the children of men." (Psa. 12:1). We are convinced that we have reached a time when the conditions described as departure from *the faith—the truth*, are with us, and in view of this, and the conviction that the coming of the Lord is near, we will do well to remember that the Word remains. Hence the need for each of us to gird our loins afresh and trim our lamps and be as men who wait for their Lord.

EXAMPLES

In the days of Ezra, when he and his company returned from the Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem (Ezra 7:1-28, 8:21-36) special features marked them. First, *their faith* in God. The journey was through countries where difficulties and perils might beset them, but on account of their faith, they refused a soldier escort from the King. God was supreme and God was sufficient for the whole path (Ch. 8:21-23).

Then further, a sacred deposit had been committed to them, to safe-guard, and preserve, and deliver up in the temple at Jerusalem—gold, silver, and vessels of immense value for the service of the sanctuary in Jerusalem (Ch. 8:24-30). All these were

delivered to them by *weight*; before and at the beginning, prayer and fasting was a special feature. They began the long journey, they continued faithfully, and finally reached the destined city, and in the temple before the priests they delivered up the treasures; and here be it noted by *weight*; all were *weighed* according to the strict balance of the sanctuary. During that whole journey, that faithful band safe-guarded all delivered to them to keep, and at the end delivered all entrusted to them. Those are beautiful and wholesome lessons for us to consider today.

Again, as we open the New Testament we read of a similar lesson in connection with the Apostle Paul, in his last Epistle to Timothy when he had reached the end of his path on earth. He looked back and considered all that had been committed to him,—the truth of *the Gospel*, the truth for *the Church* in its beginning and what was intended to guide her throughout the entire Church age. In this Epistle he wrote: "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." He had been tested. He had been tested severely, specially towards the close, and writes: "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Whole Assemblies had departed from him. Men of note had also turned away, and of one he writes: "Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much evil,—of whom be thou ware also, for he hath greatly withstood our words" (Ch. 4:14-15).

Notwithstanding all those perils encountered, especially at the close of the Apostle's life, *this faithful man* of God preserved, maintained, guarded, preached and taught the truth as committed to him. He gave up nothing. He lost nothing on the way, and when about to depart this life and enter the heavenly sanctuary above, he had with him all the sacred deposit which had been entrusted to him *by proper weight*.

We are now near the end of the age. Apostate conditions surround us on every hand. Declension and departure are visible features, even in our assemblies. We are tested also, but Ezra and Paul serve us well as examples. The precious treasure committed to us, the whole truth of Scripture, especially the Pauline ministry. All this has been preserved and abides with us, and from this we should not depart. May we seek in our feeble way to preserve an even balanced testimony for Christ. It is yet the day of grace, and the world is in sore need of the Gospel. May we be faithful in this ministry, and the Church needs more than ever Paul's teaching to preserve. The second coming is but a few paces ahead. Then the judgment seat, and then for all believers, Eternity with and like our blessed Lord.

"Lord haste that day of cloudless ray,—
That prospect bright, unfailing;
Where God shall shine in light divine,
In glory never fading."

(Ed.)

CRUSHED AND BROKEN

The Holy Spirit selects from different parts of both the Old Testament and the New, illustrations from Nature and customs of everyday life to convey spiritual teaching. So also our Lord and Saviour in His teachings when here on earth borrowed suited figures from the same sources. "The water of life," "the bread of life," "a great Supper," etc., etc. Then again the salvation prophet (Isaiah) made reference to the precious grain that is sown in and springs up out of the earth. These things have ever in view the need and blessing of mankind, and are full of rich instruction.

(1) Hence we read that "bread corn is bruised" (Isa. 28:28). "The bread corn crushed" between the upper and the nether millstones furnish us with material for food. Crush, bruise the corn (grain) and you have "bread to strengthen the heart." (Psa. 104:15)

In this we get a suited illustration of Christ our Saviour. He was the precious corn of wheat that fell into the earth and died (John 12:24), but that corn of wheat was bruised, crushed; the full weight of both the upper and nether millstones were made to meet upon Him. Man put Him on the tree and He suffered from man's hand as a martyr.

Then the dark cloud for *three hours*, and the sufferings from God's hand, while bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, was as the *upper millstone*, and under the full weight of this heavy judgment when the *corn* was *bruised* and *crushed*, we hear the Holy Sufferer's cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" No sorrow, no suffering can be compared to this bruising. "He was *oppressed*, and He was afflicted;" "He was *bruised* for our iniquities" (Isa. liii. 5). Then the fire prepares all for the table as food for God's people *for ever*. The fire (*God's holiness*) prepared the bread.

What a cluster of thoughts that fills our vision as we meditate upon the *Cross of Calvary!*

The crushing from man, and then from God. The fire preparing the *food* (the *bread*), the victim bearing our sins, taking our judgment, and suffering the just for the unjust, and then dying in our stead. This is all past and over, but we have a table spread, and *bread to eat*, "bread from heaven." "Lord, evermore give us this bread to eat," is the language of our hearts.

(2) The *vine crushed*. Next we contemplate the *vine grape*; this must also be *crushed* in order to get the *wine* that cheers both the heart of God and man (Judges ix. 13; Ps. civ. 13).

Jesus, the true *vine*, was crushed, and again we view the *cross* as the great *vinepress*, when He was *pressed*, was *crushed*, and we see the *blood* of the grape flow from that awful *press*. But that crushing and pressing fills the cup now for us, a *cup of cheer*, a cup of blessing. We see God contemplating the sufferings of the cross, and the perfections of Him who was there, and a cup of cheer is placed in His hands, and so God's heart is cheered. We contemplate that cross, as His redeemed people, and we hold in our hand a cup that gives us cheer, and a cup of blessing, and the language of *faith*, and of *communion*. "I have drunk my wine;" "eat, O *friends*, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved" (Songs v. 1).

Thus we see that the cross has not only prepared *bread* (*food*), but *drink* (*wine*) to cheer the heart of God and man. Thus out of the eater came forth meat and drink to be ours for evermore.

The blood made *atonement*, procures *forgiveness*, *redemption*, *nearness* to God and His Son, *access* to the Holiest, where Jesus now has gone, and it shall be the theme of our *praises for ever*.

(3) Then we behold the precious and lovely bloom of the *rose*, but in order to get the *full fragrance* we must see the *rose crushed also*, and when crushed, in man's hand. Oh, how it pours forth the sweet fragrance of heaven! The sweetness of the rose was poured out when our Lord suffered, and the *more* it was crushed the sweeter

and stronger the fragrance. Crushed He was, but the crushing of *the wheat* gave fine flour for bread. The pressing or crushing of the Vine prepared the wine, "wine, on the lees well refined." And then when the rose was crushed all the sweet fragrance of His *perfect* and *heavenly* life and nature was manifested.

"He was reviled and reviled not again." They buffet Him—He prays for them. These sweet graces give the positive and the negative side of His nature; all, all emit a *sweet savour*.

Thus we are indebted to the cross, His sufferings, for the *bread*, the *wine*, and sweet perfume of the rose.

(4) Now we will look at the "*broken box*." This was the possession of a woman (John xii.), one who loved His *company*, and His *ministry of love*: "She sat at Jesus' *feet* and heard His Word," it is recorded. Sorrow also had crossed her path, had entered that sweet home at Bethany, and she fell down at His *feet* when she saw Him now for comfort and consolation (John xi.), as previously she had for light and truth (Luke x.). Those feet, "beautiful feet that brought glad tidings to Zion," had a peculiar charm for Mary.

Now His end on earth had come. She perceives this, and so she gathers all the accumulated money and buys a box of ointment to anoint Him for *His burial*.

At the suited time she *draws near*, and all this precious ointment *must* be spent on Him. It was not waste in her estimation. She *broke the box*, it is said, and, in John xii., she "anointed the feet of Jesus." He was the choice object of her heart, and when this precious service was done in that little company, the Spirit records the fact, "the house was filled with the odour of the ointment."

In this we get a very precious lesson of what the Spirit had wrought in a sinner saved by grace, a child of God, and wherever this Gospel is preached this also must be told what this woman did, as a memorial of her. Precious this appreciation on the part of her Saviour and her Lord!

The other disciples evidently did not understand *devo-*

tion and intelligence so real in her, but the Lord did, and that was the all-important thing for her.

She sets forth in figure what each believer yet may do, gathering up the *praises, thanksgiving*, and homage of hearts touched by His grace and tender love, until the heart is full. Then *we break the box*, as did this Mary of Bethany, and all is poured upon Him—His *head* (in Mark xiv. 3), His feet (John xii.). It is the Spirit's presence in us that enables us to gather this *ointment*, and when full by *diligence* and communion of heart, the Spirit it is who breaks the box and Jesus gets what belongs to Him. Yea, there is worship to both the *Father* and the *Son*. If there is no ointment poured forth, no sweet fragrance in the house, a lesson is told already. There has been lack of *devotion* to Him in past days, and lack of *diligence* in sitting at His feet. Hence, the precious graces of the Spirit are not filling *the heart, the box*. "A broken and a contrite heart," a broken *box*, Jehovah of old did not despise, nor Jesus now. This woman then sets forth, with her broken box, what we ought to be continually at home, and in the assembly, true *worshippers*.

(5) *A broken "vessel"* comes next in our study (2 Cor. iv. 6-12; Judges vii. 15-20). Gideon with his *three hundred* men set the example. They had a vessel, as in 2 Cor. iv., an earthen pitcher, but there was *light within*. Here we see devotedness and *service* true and real; but while the light was there the vessel needed to be *broken*. We have as they the vessel. There is light within; there is life also—"the *life of Jesus*;" and there is a treasure; "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, but as Gideons we need to break the *vessel*, and then men see *the light, the life, the treasure*."

We poor creatures cling by nature to the earthen vessel and care not to have it *marred* nor *broken*; but God puts the light within, and His purpose is that the same may *shine out*, and so the pitcher must be *broken*. Here we pause. *A broken pitcher*, a will not our own, "not my will but thine be done," "a broken and a contrite heart," in the world an unselfish heart, a whole-hearted heart for

Christ and His interests upon the earth. When there is this, that precious treasure within will be seen—a life resplendent with the glory of the Lord Jesus. Such is His work—the work of the Spirit in us. This is *life, testimony, and service* of a divine and heavenly order.

These last two, *a broken box*, and a broken pitcher (vessel) set forth the two sides of the Christian's life. The inner side and the outer side: worship all for God and His Son, testimony and service before man.

In the *broken box* we see the Holy Spirit's work in us gardened. *Worship* rises up to the Father and the Son; worship in spirit and in truth. This will be part of our sweet and happy employ for *eternity*.

In the *vessel* (pitcher) *broken*, an *unselfish, whole-hearted* life, "a broken and a contrite spirit, and one who trembles at God's word," we have the powerful work of the Spirit also. These are themselves the *graces* of the Spirit that characterized Christ Himself, who was "meek and lowly in heart."

"Always bearing about in our bodies the *dying of the Lord Jesus*, that the *life also* of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal bodies." A. E. B.

A sanctified heart is better than a silver tongue.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

Occupation with our state will never bring us one whit nearer the Lord; it will only distress, cast down, and enslave our souls. Occupation *with Christ* will produce any moment increasing conformity to His image. The true remedy, therefore, for a bad state is *Christ* so completely filling our vision—Christ in what He is and in what He has done—that self cannot be seen in the light of His glory. State is not everything; but Christ is everything; and in proportion as we learn this lesson will our state meet His mind. J. N. DARBY.

Every day we may see some new thing in Christ; His love hath neither brim nor bottom. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

THE PERFECTIONS OF CHRIST

(Song of Songs, v. 16)

The Lord Jesus is the summing up of all possible beauty and perfection in Himself.

What was then, the life of this Jesus, the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? A life of activity in obscurity, causing the love of God to penetrate the most hidden corners of society, wherever needs were greatest—this life did not shelter itself from the misery of the world—but it brought into it—precious grace! the love of God.

As Adam's first act was to seek his own will, Christ was in this world of misery, devoting Himself to do His Father's will. He came here emptying Himself. He came here by an act of devotedness to His Father, at all cost to Himself, that God might be glorified.

The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit; but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. How blessed is the picture of the Lord's ways!

The more faithful He was, the more despised and opposed; the more meek, the less esteemed: but all this altered nothing, because He did all to God alone: with the multitude, with His disciples, or before His unjust judges, nothing altered the perfectness of His ways, because in all circumstances all was done to God.

The Man Christ Jesus grew in favor with God and man. He was always the Servant of every one. The first thing that struck me some years ago in reading the gospels was, Here is a man that never did anything for Himself. What a miracle to see a man not living to himself, for He had got God for Himself.

The gospels display the One in Whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, He always cared for others. He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was

above circumstances, never acting under them, but ever according to God in them.

Self-pleasing, self-exalting, self-advancing are ever principles of men's actions. In the blessed Lord there was true devotedness of heart and affection, and service, without the smallest particle of self-seeking. The very thing man so much covets, there was the perfect absence of in Him. "I receive not honour from man."

We find admirable affections in the apostles—we find works, as Jesus said, greater than His own; we find exercises of heart and astonishing heights by grace—but we do not find the evenness that was in Christ. He was the Son of man Who was in heaven. Such as Paul are chords on which God strikes, and on which He produces a wondrous music; but Christ is all the music itself.

May God grant unto us to value the perfect beauty of that Jesus Who came to us.

Yet sure, if in Thy presence
My soul still constant were,
Mine eye would more familiar
Its brighter glories learn:
And thus Thy deep perfection
Much better should I know,
And with adoring fervour
In this Thy nature grow.

J. N. D.

(From Pilgrim Portions for
the Day of Rest.)

PERFECT IN CHRIST

The believer is perfect in Christ; but in himself he is a poor feeble creature, ever liable to fall. Hence the unspeakable blessedness of having One who can manage all his affairs for him; at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens—One who upholds him continually by the right hand of His righteousness — One who will never let him go — One who is able to save to the uttermost — One who is "the same yesterday, today and for ever" — One who will bear him triumphantly through all the difficulties and dangers which surround him; and, finally, "present him faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

C. H. MACKINTOSH.

He is His own best evidence,
His witness is within. WHITTIER.

BE YE THANKFUL

(Col. 3:15)

When you find one professing to be a Christian yet having no spirit of praise and thanksgiving, you have to conclude either that the person is not a believer at all, or that he has made little progress. Thanksgiving to God is spoken of more than 125 times in the Bible, and we cannot obey His Word without giving of thanks. Christian life is largely composed of prayer and thanksgiving, if it is what it should be. We might go so far as to say that if a person is a real Christian, prayer and thanksgiving will certainly form a part of the life. The Christian loves prayer, loves to thank God for the blessings received. Cold, hard duty has nothing to do with thanking the One we love more than all else for what He has given and is giving to us.

Thanksgiving is a sure sign of happiness. The Christian is happy because he has salvation from sin, has the presence and guidance of Christ, and has the Spirit of God dwelling within. When you think of what it means to have Christ dwelling within, you do not wonder at the words, "I have Christ, what want I more?" To have Him as Saviour, as our Sin-bearer, our Redeemer, to have Him for all things, what can we want more? Day by day He is giving us life, food, shelter, a degree of health, and so much besides. Every good and perfect gift is from Him, and such gifts will bring out our thanks, unless we are very thoughtless.

To be thankful is to live with thanksgiving in our hearts, and often expressed in words, perhaps silent words in the heart, but the thankfulness dwells within. "Be ye thankful," means a state of mind and heart, our attitude towards God. It does not mean that we give thanks for some great gift, though we always have the gifts of Christ and the Holy Spirit to be thankful for. It means realizing more and more of the goodness of God, and how He gives us all things richly to enjoy. How great an advance it is to learn to be "giving thanks always

for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).

Think what this means; "giving thanks ALWAYS FOR ALL THINGS." There are many times we are thankful when some great blessing comes to us. There are great gifts we are sure to be thankful for, but here it is expressly declared that the believer in Christ is to be "giving thanks always," and in so doing there would of necessity be thanksgiving for all things. This is the proper, normal feature of the Christian life; this is one of the crowning blessings of the Spirit of God dwelling within us. See how it makes one an overcomer to be always giving thanks for whatever comes to us. It means that we know God controls all persons and all things. It means receiving all that comes to us as coming from Him. Good things certainly do not come from our enemies, human or satanic. And the bad things are made to work together for good to us. That is victory. It is what God gives to us to realize. It is not dead philosophy, or any kind of philosophical reasoning, which is all that they of the world have for comfort. It is not only a teaching, a doctrine, an abstract truth which the child of God has; he has a Person, the Son of God, the Man Christ Jesus to be thankful for, to give thanks to.

This is the wonder of God's salvation; we are brought to know a Person to Whom we can give thanks and for Whom we can be thankful. We read of Him in Scripture, learn its teaching concerning Him, what He is to us, what He has done, is doing and will do for us; and it is all something to thank God for, to have Christ call us His brethren, and to learn to thank Him for coming into the world for us, bearing our sins on that cross of agony and shame, dying for sinners, rising for them, and now making intercession for them. What truths to be thankful for! They are precious realities, events which really took place, and upon them is founded our present and eternal blessing.

Scripture places before mankind that which differs from all man-made religions; it gives man a Person to

love and praise and the work of that Person to be thankful for. Search, if you will, all the chronicles of all the religions of mankind and see if in any of them you find a divine Person who is both God and Man, to love, to praise, to *thank* for being the Sin-bearer for men. Christ is all this and more. He is a perfect Saviour. Think of what it means to have all our sins gone forever, blotted out by the work of Christ, a new nature given; light, and life and love and hope given in place of the darkness of the world, with an eternity of joy after this life.

Ought not those to whom all this belongs, be thankful? We love Christ now; we are going to love Him much more when He has transferred us to the glory at His coming and given us His own likeness. We are now the children of God, on the way to receive an inheritance from and with Christ our Lord. He is a King but not our King; He is our Lord and Saviour, and a part of His will concerning us while we are here is that we should BE THANKFUL. Can we wonder that Christ is called "His unspeakable Gift"? (according to the Greek text "free gift"). He is God's gift to sinful men, women, children, given freely to all who will receive Him. There is nothing to pay; Christ has paid all; nothing to do, as men count doing to gain salvation; Christ has done it all.

Christ receives sinners and sinners receive Christ. And as soon as a sinner receives Him, the life of thanksgiving begins. One *may* lose the spirit of thankfulness, but it should be cherished. Many forms of temptation and snares are avoided by always being thankful. We should often offer thanks to God for this and that blessing. It opens our hearts to His great goodness when we *often* praise Him for the gifts we enjoy. It is a banisher of depression and fear when we recount to Him what He has done for us in the past, and think what He has promised to do, thanking Him for the blessings we enjoy. "Count your many blessings, name them one by one." Looking on their number, their greatness, their value, is it strange that God would have his children thankful?

J. W. Newton.

ADDRESS BY P. J. LOIZEAUX

San Francisco, 1900

Scripture Reading—1 John 5:1-6

(Extract No. 1)

John, beloved friends, is the apostle of the family, and there we find, therefore, in a special way the relationship of Father and children. Peter speaks especially of the experiences of these children along their wilderness journey whilst Paul teaches the counsels of God concerning His children—the collective place He gives them in the different spheres in which He puts them. He points out to us what God had in His mind; reveals that to us, and the place which we have according to those thoughts of God, entirely regardless of our experiences; while our experiences are simply the product—that which flows from the measure of our apprehension of those things. To illustrate this, take the heavens; the sun, the moon, the stars, the vast system above: they are built on such a perfect plan that men who have learned that plan can tell us, way ahead, just at which nick of time the moon will cover the sun. They have learned the plan, they understand the relations of each to each, and they get a true experience.

Again take a physician; what is his wisdom? To learn how God has composed and made up man's body; how all the parts of that body act upon each other, so that if a certain part is sick he may know what it springs from and how to treat it.

So the apostle Paul gives us God's plan in things spiritual, a plan formed before the world was made; in view of which indeed He created the world, that this plan might be fulfilled. He chose us in Christ before the world was; all this vast world was created of God that He might get to Himself what He is getting now in His people. And so, like an engineer who is building a vast bridge, forms the plan, maps it all out beforehand, before one single stone is laid or a piece of iron is cast, so also God has had a plan. What is called *the truth* is that plan,

—and Paul is the chief instrument in the revelation of it. The rent in eternity which is called Time is the scene of God's operations in the fulfilment of this plan, but in eternity alone shall we *see* it all fulfilled, and the glory of it. *Now* it is faith only that sees it, because faith only receives the revelation of God. How blessed, beloved friends, to know the truth! What holy freedom is ours when, hearing and heeding the voice of God in His Word, we fall in with Him in what He reveals. But this implies subjection—a humble mind, that of a little child, and readiness to walk in the path which the truth appoints. And not only does the truth received in the heart produce freedom, but it produces worship.

Gaze upon the beauties of creation all around; see in them the might of the Creator's hand, and you become a worshiper of the Creator. So let faith once perceive the glories of the new creation revealed in the truth, and the worship which arises from it surpasses the other as the brightness of the sun surpasses that of the stars. Indeed it makes them all disappear. Jesus, beloved, is the center of this new creation glory.

As already mentioned, the apostle Paul is the instrument of this revelation. There we find that we who are the children of God in this dispensation—since the Lord Jesus went back to heaven and the Holy Spirit was sent down here—are all formed into one body, the bride of Christ, whose home is to be in heaven with Christ, and His special companion throughout all the ages of eternity; that she is to inherit all things with Him, reign with Him when He reigns, as she now suffers with Him in her passage through this world, the scene of His sufferings and rejection.

But in John, where our present lesson is, we find not that, but the revelation of what prepares us for that; not the external structure, so to speak, but the internal work of God; that in us which is the root of all—life from God Himself; bestowed upon us who believe; abiding in us and fitting us to enjoy God Himself and all that He enjoys. It is a real birth, the *new* birth, the im-

partation of eternal life, by which we are constituted "the children of God." We do not *grow* into this, though all true growth springs from this. It is an act of the sovereign grace of God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; never needs to be repeated, because it is the creation of God *in Christ Jesus*. It is of such importance that if a man has not this he cannot see the Kingdom of God; he cannot understand nor enjoy God, nor anything that is of God. A man put into heaven without this would flee out of it as fast as he could. The "outer darkness," terrible as it is, will be the only place where such will find their proper abode. They have "loved darkness rather than light," and in darkness they must now abide.

Moreover, it is from this point alone that subjection to God is found in man. Insubjection is the very essence of sin. In the garden of Eden God had put one tree, and said to man in substance, You are lord of everything I have made; all is put under you, but you are under Me; I am your Lord, and that tree will remind you of it for I forbid you to eat of its fruit. In eating of it man virtually said, I will be subject to God no longer. This rebellion against God is the very root and nature of sin; it is in every child of Adam by very birth, and displays itself in all mankind. In the New Birth alone does man receive that nature which produces subjection to God, and this is practical holiness. In Christ we see absolute and perfect holiness, for in Him was nothing but absolute subjection to God. In thought, and word, and deed, He never deviated from His Father's will. He could say, "I came not to do my own will." "The word that I speak, I speak not of myself." "My meat and my drink is to do the will of Him that sent me." Beloved, according to the degree in which we who have been born of God return to that spirit of subjection to God, accordingly we are practically holy; it will not do for us to make great professions to holiness while perhaps we are insubject to the plainest statements of the Word of God.

(Extract No. 2)

We find, then, in John that which enables us to enjoy

the things of the new creation, and to walk in a manner worthy of it. As the life which we have in nature enables us to enjoy the things of earth, being suited to earth, so the life which we possess in Christ enables us to enjoy Christ and the things of Christ. God then has given us a new life, to enjoy these new things, and God's way of imparting that life is "Whosoever *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Not, may *hope to be*, but he *is*. The eye is the means by which the light comes in; the moment I open my eye to the sun, the light has come in. So the moment I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the life has come in. It is the power of God, of course, the sovereign power of God to bring life into me; but it is through believing on Jesus. And so, beloved, it is said, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, *believing*, ye might have life through His name" (Jno. 20:31). Faith in the Son of God is the appointed means through which God's Almighty power bestows eternal life upon a poor sinner. Sometimes in looking upon those whom I love, these words: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" have terrified me. I said, I cannot help them to be born again; I am as helpless there as in creating a sun; it is impossible to me; to the almighty power of God, therefore, I must turn for my only hope, while untiringly holding up before them the Lord Jesus Christ. But how sweet this is: you cannot have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ without being a possessor of eternal life. Nor is it any experience we may have passed through which is proof sufficient of such a possession. We have *collateral* proofs, such as love to the brethren, a change in our practical life, the witness of the Spirit with our spirit, etc., but we need *incontrovertible* proof for a matter of such eternal importance. If without being born again I *cannot* see the Kingdom of God, my soul needs proof that cannot be shaken before I can rest as to the matter. This we have in the Word of God alone; "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." *Is* born. Just as I learn from my father and mother that I was born of

them, and am therefore their child, so do I learn from God that, believing in His Son Jesus Christ, I am born of Him and am therefore His child. If I can trust my father and mother, surely God is far more worthy to be trusted, and on His own testimony I can rest, and be forever at peace. But the nature of that life is love, and so He goes on to say: "Everyone that loveth Him that begeth, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him," that is, every other child of God.

The first expression of that life is toward God—always God first; if God is not first all is wrong; then the children of God. Our hearts go out to all who, like ourselves, are born of Him and love Him. We need but satisfactory marks of this birth in the confession of their lips and of their lives to draw our affections to them, no matter what sphere of social life they may hail from. The new-born babe is welcomed and loved in the family, not because of its virtues but because it is *born* there. But even "by this we know that we love the children of God, *when we love God, and keep His commandments*, for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous." Love, according to God, does not go beyond our faithfulness to God. There is no real blessing for the people of God save as we walk in His will, and so any deviation from the will of God to please any of the people of God is not love. In the measure in which we are bent on pleasing God, in that measure we serve each other, are useful to one another. If all the people of God were heartily subject to Him there would be perfect unity and love among them. Love and unity apart from that are no longer divine, and only a snare. If I am walking in insubjection to God, my brethren walk in love and blessing to me in refusing to company with me.

People will say sometimes, *If you have such good things, come and mingle with us.* We reply, If we do we cannot keep these good things; we lose them both for ourselves and for you. Mere love to you, therefore, demands that we walk apart from you that we may be able

to keep the things which are for the blessing of both you and us. To be "a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use," we must be free from all that displeases God. This, of course, will be with sorrow, and therefore it will not make us hard to one another; it will not make us throw stones at God's people with whom we may not be able to walk. Oh, no! I believe from all my soul that the throwing stones at God's people, no matter in what error they may be, is never of God. We may be thoroughly unable to walk with them because we have to condemn the things they are in to maintain the truth, but we are to maintain it in such a way as to convince them that it is conscience with us and not human will.

Now we are told that, "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" It is a wonderful thing to be able to overcome a world like this through which we are passing. It is away from God, and full of things—arrangements, organizations, societies, pleasures—which spring out of its estrangement from God. Faith in Jesus the Son of God brings us back to God, reconciles us to Him, destroys the enmity which sin had produced in our hearts. By this very thing it strikes the death blow to our connection with the world and with all those things in the world which have grown out of the world's alienation from God. The world in that condition cannot, of course, trust God. But to trust God is the very nature and delight of faith. Faith is so thoroughly at home with God that it thrives best where there is even nothing to show that what God says is true. As it is natural to the new life to love God and His people, so it is natural to faith to trust God in all that He has to say. Beloved, the more faith is in activity in us, the more we shall be able to trust ourselves in God's hands, and the more it will separate us from all the schemes, and inventions, and arrangements which this world has brought about to give itself security and rest without God. The Son of God who

has come from His Father to redeem us at great cost, has thereby brought us into acquaintance with His Father, who is our Father too, now. We can call Him that in fullest confidence, and there is not a detail in the sweet relation of Father and child for which we may not trust Him. Christians ask, Is this wrong? Is that wrong? Ask, rather, Is it according to faith? Is it in keeping with this blessed tie which exists between your soul and God? How many puzzling questions are answered by this! And how impossible to have one understand this who does not know this blessed tie! Such will call our path fanaticism, but God calls it faith, by which we overcome the world.

GOD'S FOOD FOR HIS PEOPLE

"This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."

(Exod. 16: 15; Jno. 6: 35)

These were the words that fell upon the ears of God's people of old in the "wilderness of Sin"—a picture of the world as it now is to His New Testament people.

This bread was God's provision for their need. They had escaped Egypt, and were now feeling their needs on the way to the goodly inheritance where God was leading them. They needed food.

So He gave them "manna." Now, manna is but the type of the real food for our souls which we have in Jesus, as the Holy Spirit is leading us on through this world on our way to heaven. The sixth chapter of John is a lovely exposition of this great truth. God sent the bread each day. His people were to gather it morning by morning. What a lesson! *Yesterday's* food gathered, *yesterday's* experience, *yesterday's* enjoyment of Christ, *the true bread from heaven*, will not suffice for today. The bread must be gathered every day. Christ sought, Christ enjoyed each day, becomes for us "the bread of the mighty" (Ps. 78:25, *margin*). This will give health and strength for the day, and make us strong for the way. Oh for heart exercise and hunger for this bread, for the precious and heavenly ministry of Christ to our hearts by the Spirit for the desert way!

A. E. B.

THINGS THAT ARE WANTING

(Titus 1:5)

(Continued)

PERSONAL TRESPASS needs also a few lines ere we close this part of the subject. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established; and if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 15-18). This is the way to act in every case of personal trespass. How much trouble would often be averted if this course were adopted—to go to such an one in the spirit of the Shepherd of this chapter (verses 12, 13), and seek to recover the offender. We are all guilty ones, and if we had been left by the Shepherd until we came to Him and owned our guilt, we would never have come. He knew our guilt, our rebellion, our pride of heart; but notwithstanding all that He sought us, the erring ones and found us, and we were brought to confession and repentance, yea were delivered; what grace! Now our Lord Himself would by this example even teach us how we are to deal with those who do us a personal injury. "Go and tell him his fault," go in love to the person himself. But how often instead of this, pride of heart gets the advantage. Our reputation is first, and we tell almost everyone else but the person himself; does this better matters? Surely not. For in this way trouble which a personal talk in love might settle forever, the erring brother be thereby gained, is left sometimes for years, and roots of bitterness nourished which trouble and defile many. Oh, for real faithfulness with one another in this respect!

But, if after this effort fails to reach and gain the person, take one or two more; and if this second effort fails, the last effort to reach him is, "tell it to the Church." Now the desire of the whole gathering ought to be to

reach and gain the offender, get him to see his sin and trespass and seek to reclaim him. If such a course were pursued, in most cases of personal trespass, we believe restoration would follow. But how often we meet to give the offender a good lecture, instead of in love and grace seeking to soften him! How ready we are to take the judgment-seat, instead of, even as a gathering, seeking to effect restoration!

But if all efforts fail, surely the state of such a heart must be lamentable, and needs now another course of action. Grace has sought his recovery; but when it has failed, righteousness must now give him the place of distance until the sin is owned, and judged. The Lord therefore adds, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." This is the course the Lord teaches us to pursue, although it may cause sorrow of heart to do so, yet the Lord sanctions it and adds "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." This leads us on to the last and final act of discipline as presented in 1 Cor. v. yet even in this the restoration of the offender is thought of.

PUT AWAY FROM AMONG YOURSELVES. If this chapter is carefully read, we see when evil develops in an individual, either doctrinally as in 2 Jno. or morally as here, the only course to pursue would be (verses 4, 13) when the whole assembly is gathered, "put away from among yourselves." This is not the act of one, or a few, but the action of the gathering as such. A serious and trying task; would that it was always considered so; there would be care and caution; each would move and act only according to the Word, and with care and caution that they did of old in the case of leprosy (see Lev. xiii, xiv). Yet, if after investigation and waiting upon God the wickedness is clearly proven, then the gathering must act *with Christ's authority and the wicked person must be "put away."* True, this is not evangelistic work, but which sometimes follows it. The same Lord who gives authority to His own to preach the gospel (Matt. xxviii), gives His people this authority also to act (Matt. xviii; Jno. xx and 1 Cor. v. 4). The evangelist

seeks after the unconverted and does so by Christ's authority; the assembly cares for the holiness of God's house and does so by the authority of the same Lord. One is as much the work of Christ as the other. One is gospel work; the other, righteous discipline upon one gathered in by the gospel, but whose walk, or conduct, or teaching, would not permit his continuing in the fellowship of God's people walking according to the truth. One (the Gospel) is the delightful work the heart loves to pursue; the other is the serious, yet righteous work that falls upon those who keep His Word.

1 Cor. v. 11, gives some of the kinds of evil for which one was to be put away; among them railing is mentioned. We fear this is a sin thought too lightly of by many today. God cares too much for the peace of His people to allow such a course to continue, and when it is not judged by the individual the Word abides "do not ye judge them that are within?"—"therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

THE OBJECT OF DISCIPLINE we again say is care for the glory of God, the holiness of His house, and the restoration of the offender. Hence, while denied for the time all Christian fellowship in a religious and also social way, as 1 Cor. v. would teach, yet we should ever be on the watch for the marks of repentance, and this not only looked for but also the burden of the heart in prayer, if the person under discipline is really the Lord's. When repentance is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, how beautiful it is to see grace again permitted to flow out, as in 2 Cor. ii. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment . . . so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." We have seen already how such an act as putting away, was by the Lord's authority on high—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven"—and now if restoration is effected, the same Lord in His tender compassion also adds, "Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This we say is the object and desire in this extreme act of discipline, and we

believe everything that would hinder this righteous work needs to be carefully guarded against.

HOW FAR DOES THIS DISCIPLINE EXTEND UPON EARTH? This, if understood, will be a great help. We verily believe if God's people everywhere understood their relationship with one another, and their direct responsibility to the Lord, such acts of discipline would be owned everywhere. The offender would be held to be in the place of distance by every rightly gathered company of God's people, as much as in the very gathering where such discipline took place. This is an important principle to lay hold of. God's people in every place ought to seek to act together, and the same relationship and responsibility is as binding although miles separate. If this is not owned and there is not an earnest desire among all to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," then independency is the result, and all over the world we would have merely independent congregations—discipline in one not recognized in another. How could the "Holy and the True" endorse such independency? We believe seeing the truth of our oneness, and having the authority of Christ for each act of discipline, such an action is binding wherever His authority is owned. Thus the holiness of God's house is cared for, and the permanent good of offenders sought after. If gatherings are scripturally gathered, several in one town, one state or province, yet they are one in heart and ought to be one in practice. We own but one authority, one relationship, one discipline, and one body, and we have but one common object, the glory of the Lord Jesus and the permanent good of all of God's people.

We are quite aware some gatherings have overstepped the mark in discipline, and in haste have acted wrongly, yet in such cases if our relationship is rightly understood it will be easy to solve this difficulty. A person is put away at gathering No. 1. Now how ought gatherings No. 2 and No. 3 to act? Our answer would be: Without suspicion accept the action. But if facts are presented which would lead us to doubt whether such an act was right, we believe here there would be great need of cau-

tion. The remedy would not be to receive the individual, but to go to the place where he was put away and investigate carefully both sides, and if clear proof is given that it was a righteous decision, the offender under discipline would under no consideration be received at No. 2, or No. 3, for gatherings 1, 2, and 3, own the authority of the same Lord and hence act together because before God they are one, and they express this oneness by "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

But if after investigation it is clear from facts gathered, and the Word by which we are all judged, that gathering No. 1 has acted unrighteously and they are the guilty persons, and the one or more under professed discipline innocent, our remedy would not be to stand apart on neutral ground and receive from either. Such an act, would be a serious denial of our whole relationship and gloss over evil of a serious nature. If gathering No. 1 has acted wrongly, would not the godly way be to seek to reach their consciences, and by doing so seek to get them to retrace their steps and lead them to repentance? This might take weeks; patience and love would be required, and, where exercised, have resulted frequently in blessing and restoration. Thus fellowship is resumed according to holiness and truth.

If gathering No. 1 refused to own their unrighteous act, after, in grace, a space of time for repentance had been given, then gatherings No. 2 and No. 3 would refuse them further fellowship, and own the other or others. Even during this time of investigation the assembly might be treated as the house in which there was supposed leprosy (Lev. xiv.), and of which we read "he that goeth into the house all the while it is shut up, shall be unclean until the even."

We would earnestly press upon each reader the importance of these things, because of late, we believe, the enemy has been seeking to overthrow in the minds of some this godly order and care, which should ever characterize the people of God. And we would press upon the Lord's people in every case when the extreme discipline

of 1 Cor. v. is the only course, that grace and patience should ever characterize us. When this has been wanting in some places, weak believers not understanding the principles at stake, have been stumbled at the spirit and manner of those who otherwise were carrying out the government of God's house.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS REQUIREMENTS, in the case of sin committed by an individual, or a gathering, and dishonor and reproach brought upon the Lord's Name. We believe the righteousness and holiness that characterize God's dwelling place demands more than mere reformation—it calls for repentance and self-judgment. This is ever true in the sinner; reformation will not do for God—a very clear principle. "God requireth that which is past," and this principle is ever true in the lives of God's people. Years may run their course, and reformation in life and practice be effected by this circumstance or that, yet for God and those who care for the principles of truth and righteousness, repentance and self-judgment are required. True, we are not now in apostolic days, and that visible unity once so fair is not presented to our eyes; yet apostolic order and teaching ever abide. We can truly say we are in the days of 2 Tim. Yet we have a faithful God, who never forgets His people; and hence amid all the confusion of the closing days of Christianity, He even here, in these days of ruin, provides for those who desire to walk with Him in holiness and truth. Such a path is in separation from iniquity, as 2 Tim. ii. 19, 21—gathered to the Lord Jesus as a centre, and following righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those who call upon the Lord with a pure heart. To this we would add the apostle's exhortation, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. xiv. 19), and somewhat of the joy which will fill the hearts of God's people by-and-by will be ours even now. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. (Ps. cxxxiii.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(With a view to inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage.)

The *annual Conference* at Minneapolis, Minn., for prayer, Bible study, and general ministry of the Word of God, D. V., will begin 10 o'clock Thursday morning, June 22nd, and continue over the Lord's day. For further information, address Mr. Frank Hoel, 713 Chamber of Commerce, Minneapolis.

THE CHURCH

(1) The Church was typically foreshadowed in the *Old Testament* but not the subject of prophecy (it was then a mystery hid in God). Aaron's priestly house foreshadowed the Church as a priestly house, and the various brides, as Eve, Rebecca, Asenath, Zipporah, etc., etc., beautifully foreshadow the Church as the Bride of Christ.

(2) *In the Gospels* it is prophetically announced especially as the House of God, consequent upon his rejection by the Jewish Nation, and was intended to replace the temple then God's House on earth. (Math. 16:18.)

(3) *In the Book of Acts*, the Church was historically formed and established in its beginning as a company separate from Judaism (now set aside), and from the Gentile world then in pagan darkness.

(4) *In the Epistles* (especially Paul's) we have the doctrine concerning the Church, especially as the *House of God* (the place of established Government). Also the *body of Christ* linked with the head in heaven. And the *Bride of Christ* now espoused and soon to be presented as a chaste virgin to Him. (Eph. 2:19-22, 4:4-13, 5:23-33.)

(5) *In Revelation* the marriage supper, and the home of Christ and the Heavenly Bride are marked out in the new and heavenly Jerusalem. The Heavenly sphere of blessing forever, but not as Israel and the nations, who shall be blessed upon the earth, not Heaven.

PERENNIAL SPRINGS

A testimony for Christ by individuals as also in the assembly does not consist in holding certain correct views of Scripture merely, although that to begin with is to be commended and never to be slighted, but a full testimony is rather holding the truth as subject to Him, this will include holding such under the influence, power and energy of the Holy Spirit. When our assembly testimony corresponds to this, there will ever be the seeking the good of others, both converted and unconverted. "Go ye into all the world" abides as a gospel injunction while it is yet the day of grace, and these are words indited by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Next: "By love serve one another," these also are the Spirit's indited words, as long as the Church and the assemblies are here left to represent Him.

With those features present, the assembly of saints will resemble *perennial springs*, continually receiving from the fountain source the pure, clear, refreshing water. Then the overflow from us will meet the need of the dry, parched, sin stricken mass of mankind that surrounds us everywhere. The New Testament scriptures teem with instructions and exhortations enjoining us to lay hold of the *great possibilities* that lie before us in our time and day, and in view of such, we can properly pray, "Lord revive us everywhere and give us afresh what was so clearly seen in the early Church in the first days, as also a marked feature in the early days of our own history."—(Ed.)

CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE

“Over all, God reigns! The all-wise and beneficent Creator manifestly has fashioned this globe, through countless ages, for the habitation of man, His highest creation. It is unthinkable that God would abandon either this physical earth or man, created in His image. The earthquake, the tornado, elemental disaster of any kind, endures but a moment and is a mere ephemeral episode in the long stretches of time. God is good and His mercy and His tenderness over-rule even the fury of the elements.”

We insert the above clipping from the Pasadena Star-News daily paper, March 23, 1933, concerning the earthquake on the evening of March 10th. The Editor, differing from many of our newspaper men today, is neither a skeptic nor an atheist, and the regard with which he writes concerning God—Creator, and upholder of the Universe is to be appreciated, and especially in a day of widespread infidelity.

When such dread calamities as earthquakes, tornadoes, tidal waves occur, where human life is so suddenly cut off, and people are made to suffer, people need to pause and thoughtfully inquire the reason and the intended lessons. In every such calamity, we could not always say they came *directly* from the hand of God, yet ye can always say *that every such circumstance is permitted* by Him, which is quite a different thing. God has not only created all, but He has established a perfect government in His own Universe, over which He is the Superintendent. As it is written, “All things subsist (are held together) by Him.” And He “upholds all things by the Word of His Power.” (Col. I: 17. Gr. Heb. 1:3). So *that no such calamity could be without His permission* and at times may be *directly* from Him. His wisdom and knowledge surpasses our highest thought, so under all such circumstances creatures such as we are, will be wise if we bow low and rather listen and inquire than dogmatize and dictate. God is supreme. He is Creator. We are

but His creatures, small and puny at best. None can deny the appalling condition in the world at present, the tremendous strides which evil and the dread word *sin* has made, especially since the war-times. Sins against God and sins against humanity, so that our great cities in their evil course are but a reproduction of Sodom of old.

Do men vainly think that God (who is Holy) can wink upon and take no notice of what surrounds us on every hand today? Sin is rife and bold everywhere and in such a brazen form. If our parents and grandparents were with us now, they would *blush* compared with former years. Hence when such calamities occur, they are *intended to be a voice from God, and people everywhere* should be deeply exercised and warned, but alas, men live so far from God in self-indulgence that they do not hear, much less give heed. Hence, do not benefit by the lesson and the warnings.

Creation itself is a marvelous witness to the Creator, and in the whole order of nature that surrounds us, God speaks day by day to all mankind in every part of the earth, and thoughtful observers read their Divine lessons. (Psa. 19:1-6.)

God also speaks to men by the circumstances that happen. He watches all the various movements and changes in His own Universe. His eye is constantly upon the Nations and men, and observes every change from the crowned head to the republic, and then in time they return to dictatorship. And each event is but a further link in the great chain of events that lead to the final end. When evil will display itself in the future "*Man of sin,*" then suddenly the once-rejected and crucified Saviour will re-appear from heaven and all evil will be put down, and blessed be God, He shall be Governor among the Nations, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

In the meantime, so minute are His observations and knowledge of every event on earth that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." In Old Testament history, as far back as Elijah the Prophet, we observe lessons there. At a critical time in Israel's history, it is written

that "a great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind." Then there followed "an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake," and further, "a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire." Then, after all those manifestations of power, there followed "a still, small voice," or as a more correct reading of the text, "a soft, gentle voice." What a contrast to all the prophet had previously seen and heard! (1 Kings 19:11, 13). And we observe the same lessons today. The plowman always precedes the sower, and such circumstances as earthquakes precede "the soft, gentle voice" of the Savior in the Gospel message. The first may arouse and awaken, but the last brings to us the glad tidings of great joy. "The soft, gentle voice" revealing God's great love in the gift of His own Son.

We now turn from Elijah's day to that of Paul, when the Gospel was first brought to Europe, (then in pagan darkness). At Philippi a work was begun; the enemy was aroused, and the two servants of God were imprisoned. All this seemed as if the enemy were victorious, and the efforts to liberate men from darkness and degradation defeated. But lo, at midnight, there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken, and this, it would seem, was sent *directly* from the Lord. God intervening on behalf of His own work and His servants, in answer to prayer. And this was intended that night, to arouse and awaken the jailer from his spiritual slumber, so that he, in desperation, cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" The earthquake had a voice to awaken, to convict, but He needed more than the earthquake. The first was intended to prepare the way for something later. That is, "the soft, gentle voice" that the Gospel message brings, and this he heard that night through the lips of the Apostle, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." (Acts. 16:25 to 32.)

Earthquakes thus display an immense power in creation, but in the written Word of God we are furnished

with a Divine intelligence that is seen nowhere else; by the Light that Holy Scripture affords, we understand the creation itself *more intelligently*: man's place on the earth, the world's history from its beginning, and the future destiny of the human race. Hence, if the earthquake leads men to God and to search His Word, what a blessing will follow in time and through Eternity!

Further, before we close this paper, let us add that the Scriptures speak of earthquakes, etc., etc., as features of the closing days before the second coming of Christ, and thoughtful people who read Scripture are convinced that His second coming is very near. The Lord Himself, before He left the earth, said, "Great earthquakes shall be in divers places," and further, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." (Luke 21:11, 25, 26.) Those words were intended to awaken men concerning future events and concerning the fact that the Lord Jesus shall again return, but here let us warn each reader against setting dates, for no dates in the Old Testament or New have any reference to our Christian age, but rather for a future time for Israel and the Nations, in the period called "The Great Tribulation."

It is the Gospel message that meets the needs of exercised and troubled minds and hearts today, because it announces "a soft, gentle voice," a voice which speaks of salvation, and this magnificent theme fills the whole New Testament page. (John 3:16.)

In the recent earthquake in Southern California, the toll of human life exceeded one hundred, and those injured, many hundreds more. The city of Long Beach, a beautiful watering resort, suffered most, both in life and property. Pasadena, twenty to thirty miles distant from the severe earthquake zone, felt the quake. Houses shook, but no lives lost and no property destroyed, and in the different gatherings of Brethren none were injured; all were marvelously preserved. For this, we have given unfeigned thanks, and worship at His sacred footstool. (Ed.)

ANOTHER COMFORTER

(Jno. 14:16)

Let me ask you how you treat this divine Guest. I am now speaking reverently of God's presence. How often do you think of it in the day, that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? If the queen were to come, and for a time take up her abode with any of us, we should think of nothing else—but what of the Holy Ghost who dwells in us? We think not of it half the day, we think of it if we do all things so as to please the Lord.

The effectual presence of the Spirit crucifies egotism, and gives freedom of thought about ourselves while on the way; it occupies us with one object—Jesus.

Where the life of the flesh ends, the life of the Spirit begins, and practically we have power in the life of the Spirit in proportion as the flesh is dead.

To have the Spirit is one thing; to be filled with the Holy Ghost is another. When He is the one source of my thought, I am filled with Him. When He has possession of my heart, there is power to silence what is not of God, to keep my soul from evil, and to guide in every act of my life and walk.

Sometime there may be need to rebuke—but the flesh cannot rebuke the flesh, nor will the flesh submit to it; but if you indeed walk in the Spirit, you will have God's authority according to your measure, and Satan will yield to the Spirit.

Habitual unprofitable speaking, I think, ought to be stopped—I never could understand why the church of God is to be the only place where the flesh is to have its way unrestrained. It is folly to suppose this. I desire the fullest liberty for the Spirit, but not the least for the flesh.

The Spirit is overflowing like "rivers of living water" from the soul of him in whom He has entered, flowing on all around; it may be on the good soil, or on the barren sand, but still His nature and power is ever to flow forth.

We ought to be able to confound every enemy, not with man's wisdom, intellect and understanding, but in the power of the Spirit. Do others not believe in it (the Word of God)? I am not going to give up the sword of the Spirit because you do not think it will cut. I know it will cut, and therefore use it.

When a man is not filled with the Spirit of God, who gives force to truth in his heart and clearness to his moral vision, the seductive power of the enemy dazzles his imagination. He loves the marvelous, unbelieving as he may be with regard to the truth. He lacks holy discernment, because he is ignorant of the holiness and character of God, and has not the stability of a soul that possesses the knowledge of God—as his treasure—of a soul which knows that it has all in Him and needs no other marvels.

But God, in love, has freely given:
His Spirit Who reveals
All He's prepared for those in heaven
Whom here on earth He seals.

J. N. Darby

(Pilgrim Portions for the Day of Rest)

"COME, LORD JESUS"
The days are darkening!
Kingdoms all are shaking!
And more and more we see
Earth is not home:
Full many evils o'er the world are breaking.
And thus our hearts would cry
"LORD JESUS, come!"

Come quickly, LORD!
Cut short earth's night of sorrow!
Come quickly, LORD, and catch Thy Church away!
Then haste that glad, that blessed, golden morrow
When Thou shall reign with undisputed sway.

J. DANSON SMITH.

RICH IN GLORY

Throughout the New Testament, there are many passages which—though not expressly stating the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ—infer it. Among these, the beautiful incentive to Christian giving in 2 Cor. 8:9, holds a unique place.

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He *was* rich, yet for your sakes He *became* poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”

“Though He *was* rich.”

This could not be applied to His earthly pathway, for the circumstances surrounding His birth all point to poverty. The manger cradle, the offering brought by Mary on the day of purification and the Lord's presentation (see Luke 2:22, 24) was the poorest admissible by the law, which read, “If she be not able to bring a lamb, then shall she bring two turtle doves or two young pigeons” (Lev. 12:8). Then too the Nazareth home and lowly connections: “Is not this the carpenter,” they said of Him. No regal splendour is seen in all this, but the reverse.

In His earthly pathway, in ministry to others, it is evident that *earthly* riches He had not. Dependent upon the ministrations of others (Luke 8:3, etc.), with nowhere to lay His head, “a homeless stranger here,” He certainly was not rich—as this world counts wealth!

The words, therefore, in 2 Cor. 8:9, can have but *one* application, viz.: to a prior condition. In these words His deity is implied! “He was rich.” Yes! rich in glory: the One Whom Angels worshipped and served, the One Who *was* before all things, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things! the Creator and Upholder, by Whom all things subsist—The ETERNAL GOD! He laid aside His Godhead glory, left His glorious estate, became poor, was found in fashion as a man.

No creature could rightly leave his first estate, to do

so would be to violate the bounds which God Himself set. Our first parents did this with direful consequence; a path of self-will has produced and ever must produce the bitterest fruit.

But this, in self-abnegation Deity expressed itself, and the rich grace of a Saviour—God was made known.

That mighty downstoop, was taken in deepest love and grace, and out of the depths of His voluntary poverty, we have been eternally enriched—rich in *blessing* now, enriched in glory with Him presently.

The memory of it surely bows our hearts in adoration, and we sing:

“Rich in glory Thou didst stoop,
Thence is all Thy peoples’ hope.
Thou wast poor, that we might be
Rich in glory, Lord, with Thee.”

“When we think of love like this,
Joy and shame our hearts possess.
Joy that Thou shouldst pity thus,
Shame for such return from us.”

May the memory of that unselfish love and infinite grace ever be before us, while we wait the full realization of our hope, and see His face. J. W. H. Nichols.

My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up.
PSALM v. 3.

Thou dost meet me in the morning;
Thou hast raised me up once more,
Raised me up to work and witness
For Thyself, whom I adore.

Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.
HOSEA vi. 1.

Yes, let us turn to Him, in deep soul sorrow
For all the past that was so stained and dim,
For all the present ills,—and for a morrow
Founded and built and consecrate to Him.

“ON HIS HEAD WERE MANY CROWNS”

(Rev. 19:12)

There are two words translated “crown” in the New Testament, *diadeema* and *stephanos*. The distinction between these words and their usage are both important and interesting.

Stephanos is used by Greek writers to indicate the wreath awarded to a conqueror, the prize awarded to a victorious athlete in the Grecian games, the crown conferred on a citizen in token of public services. The wreath was composed of leaves: of wild thyme at the Olympic games, of laurel at the Pythian, of parsley at the Nemean, of ivy at the Isthmian. Such crowns were perishable. Placed on the victors’ heads, they looked fresh and green whilst the shouting lasted, but in a few hours they began to fade. Hence the Apostle Peter writes in contrast of “a crown (*stephanos*) of glory that *fadeth NOT away*.” (1 Peter 5. 4.)

The word stephanos was NEVER used in the sense of an IMPERIAL crown.

Diadeema was used originally to indicate the blue band worked with white, which went round the turban (or tiara) of the Persian king; hence our English word, *diadem*. The word is used to indicate an imperial crown.

Believers have crowns awarded to them, but they are always *stephanos*, and not *diadeema*.

The Lord Jesus is pre-eminent; He wears both *stephanos* and *diadeema*.

An artist will paint the background of his picture in neutral colors, so as to bring into prominence his main idea in the foreground depicted in brighter colours. In the same manner the writer would describe the crowns the believers have in order to bring into prominence the glorious crowns the Lord Jesus wears.

The writer, as it were, would convey the reader along a pleasing road full of interest and beauty in order to bring him to a spot of surpassing glory and charm.

“A CROWN (*stephanos*) OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”

See the aged warrior—the Apostle Paul. His course is nearly over. From that memorable day when he was stricken down by the light above the brightness of the sun he was captured for Christ. He served Him diligently and faithfully for long years. Now, at the close of his career, he says to Timothy, his son in the faith, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 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 (*stephanos*) 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. 4. 6-8.)

How stimulating and encouraging is this reward! And mark, it is not beyond the reach of any of us. We should shrink from instituting a parallel between ourselves and the great Apostle Paul. Look at his wondrous office: “the Apostle of the Gentiles;” see his gifts, his zeal, his labours, his suffering even to martyrdom. But it is open for us all to “love His appearing.” This supposes, however, a happy, earnest state of soul. Who would love the Lord’s appearing, but those who are seeking to order their Christian course in the light of His presence and according to the ordering of His Word!

This *righteousness* is not the fruit of the Lord’s work on the cross, but the result of the practical ways of the Christian, “the righteousness which is by faith” is clearly a gift: this righteousness is, as clearly, reward. How gracious of the Lord to open to us such an incentive in our Christian path! May we respond to it more and more.

“THE CROWN (*stephanos*) OF LIFE”

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive *the crown* (*stephanos*) of *life*, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him” (James 1. 12).

Here again the reward is held out to all those that love the Lord. If we love the Lord we shall fear to grieve Him, and when temptation, whatever form it may assume, is permitted to try us, we shall endure it. It is by

enduring temptation that the reality of our faith is proved and so God is honoured, and life will be the reward of faithfulness. Here again it is not life in the sense of God's sovereign gift, or the entering into eternal life as the result of faith in the uplifted Son of God, but life as the practical result of our Christian life. Men of God in all ages have endured the trial of their faith, and in consequence God is not ashamed to be called their God. The same privilege is ours.

In Revelation 2. 10 the temptation depicted is tremendous. This scripture presents such temptation as would imperil physical life, if yielded to, but no such thing as *surrender comes into the Lord's mind for His own*. "Be thou faithful *unto death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." How deeply encouraging is all this!

"A CROWN (*stephanos*) OF GLORY"

Encouraging the shepherds of the flock of God to faithfulness this incentive is held forth, "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a *crown (stephanos) of glory*, that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5. 4). We can all do our little bit in encouraging each other. Some are gifted by the Chief Shepherd with special pastoral gift, leading them to a very helpful ministry, having in view the whole church of God upon the earth, but we can all act in the spirit of the pastor, that is to *minister Christ and to help and cheer and encourage*, and, if need be, in faithfulness and humility rebuke and exhort those with whom we have access.

A word of warning comes in. It occurs in 2 Timothy, where the Apostle Paul describes the condition of things in "the last days." Surely these last days are fast running to a speedy close. What lawlessness there is, what loosening of what is according to God! Hence the warning: "If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not *crowned (stephanos)*, except he strive lawfully" (2. Tim. 2. 5). The rules of the game are put down clearly in God's Word. Do we allow expediency, *laissez faire*, shrinking from unpleasant consequences, to hinder us from acting on God's Word and shaping our conduct by it, personally,

domestically, ecclesiastically? May we have grace not to do this.

Let us now consider the subject in relation to the Lord Himself.

“A CROWN (*stephanos*) OF THORNS”

“And when they had platted a crown (*stephanos*) of thorns, they put it upon His head” (Matt. 27. 29). Could irony and scorn have gone further? To put upon His head a crown indicative of winning a prize, of honour, of glory, not made of laurel or parsley or ivy, but of—THORNS; how complete was the dishonour done to God’s blessed Son, the delight of the Father’s heart, the joy of heaven.

In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem there can still be gathered the material from which this crown was made. Such thorns, so long and sharp, it would be difficult to find.

But the verdict of the world is not that of heaven. Quoting from Psalm 8., that wonderful *night* psalm, which still awaits its fulfilment in a future day, Hebrews 2. 7 says, “Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst (*stephanos*) Him with glory and honour.” But at any rate the central figure of Psalm 8. is before our eyes. “We see Jesus . . . crowned (*stephanos*) with glory and honour.”

Thank God, we turn from the verdict of the world to bow before our Lord Jesus Christ, and adore Him as worthy of God’s highest honour.

If the world put its mocking *stephanos* upon His blessed brow, God has in ascension glory put HIS *stephanos* upon His brow—the mark of His approval.

Let us now examine the word crown (*diadema*), designating an imperial crown, which is only thrice mentioned in the Scriptures, and each time in the Book of Revelation.

The first mention occurs thus. “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns (*diadema*) upon his heads” (Rev. 12. 3).

Here we get the great usurper, Satan. What right has he to the diadem? "The last words of David," a man of long experience, were, "He that ruleth over men must be just; ruling in the fear of God" (2 Sam. 23. 3). How opposite to this is Satan's course! He may be allowed to wear his diadems for a day or two ("a thousand years is as one day" with God), but his triumph and power will be short-lived. He is king over the myriad demons connected with the bottomless pit, but the day is coming when he shall be cast with his dupes into the lake of fire.

The second mention of diadem is as follows: "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horn ten crowns (*diadecma*), and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (Rev. 13. 1). Here we have presented to us, in symbolic language, the political head and form of the revived Roman Empire. We are told the dragon, Satan, gives the Beast his power and his seat and great authority. To take anything from the hand of Satan is to court disaster, and in the great battle of Armageddon the diadems will be struck off the head of the Beast, and he will find he serves ill who serves Satan.

Satan usurps the diadem for himself, and he gives the diadem to his tool and dupe, the Beast, but both their triumphs shall be shortlived, and hell will be their everlasting doom.

How serious it is that the spirit of all this is in the world now. How conscious one is of special Satanic power in connection with the Kaiser's ill-starred effort to snatch the diadem of world-empire.

Doubtless things are shaping themselves for the manifestation of Satanic power to be seen after the assembly of God has been caught up to glory, but even now there are ominous premonitory signs of what will soon take place in this world that is fast throwing off every restraint of God, whether in creation or revelation.

The last mention of *diadecma* in the Bible brings us very happily to the title of our article. The Lord Jesus comes out of heaven with his armies to act decisively in

the Battle of Armageddon. With the breath of His mouth He will righteously destroy all His foes. The description of Him is terrible for His foes, entrancing for His own. His titles are "Faithful and True"—"The Word of God"—"King of kings (=Lord Emperor), and Lord of lords." We read, "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns (*diadeema*); and He had a Name written, that no man knew, but He Himself" (Rev. 19. 12).

We have presented to us the *only* One who has the right to wear *the diadem*. From the foul brow of Satan his usurped diadems shall be struck; his myrmidon, his tool, the Beast, will find diadems of Satan's conferring an illegal burden, soon to be lost when the true Emperor asserts His rights, and makes His foes His footstool.

But upon *His* worthy brow, once bound by the crown (*stephanos*) of thorns in bitter mockery, shall be placed MANY *diadems*. "On His head were many crowns" (*diadeema*). We repeat, the *only* person who has the right to wear them, and the only person in the end to wear them, is the Lord Jesus Christ. He will be pre-eminent. Then in the glorious millennium shall be brought to pass David's last words, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

The dragon's triumph will be shortlived; the Lord alone is worthy, and from His brow His diadems never shall fall. The dragon is said to have seven diadems; the beast ten diadems; "upon His (Christ's) head" shall be "*many diadems*." No definite number is stated, for His glory is beyond measure.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall;

Bring forth the royal DIADEM,

And crown Him Lord of all!

"Let every kindred, every tribe,

On this terrestrial ball,

To Him all majesty ascribe,

And crown Him Lord of all!"

Blessed Saviour, my Lord and my God, Thou art indeed thrice worthy. Language utterly fails to express Thy worthiness and glory.

A. J. Pollock.

A BRIEF MEMORIAL OF GERALD HOPE SCOTT

(who died at Bournemouth Feb. 3, 1879, aged 25 years)

Sunday evening Gerald was lying upon the sofa in the drawing room. We were alone and had a little talk. I said to him after a little time, "And now as to this illness, what do you think about it? Do you see God's hand in it?"

"Yes, Mother, I can see nothing else. Indeed I have been looking for something of this sort all along. I felt it must come, that nothing else would do. I had become too hard—too far off—my conscience enameled over, but His time has come. God must have His way, and has He not said, 'Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap?'"

"But why do you say that no other dealing but *this* would do? If you had returned to Him (and you could have done it in obedience to His Word) a heavy stroke like this would not have been needed."

"Mother, you know nothing about it. My state was such that I could not return. Had you told me to fly up to Heaven I could as easily have done it."

"And now, my dear son, can you say that you have returned to Him?"

"Yes, I can. My conscience was *walled in*; nothing reached it. Scriptures, letters, appeals, all no use, but in my heart I suppose there was *one spot* reserved and into it God dropped a word. It was this, 'And 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.' When the Father's arms are about your neck you can hold out no longer."

"What will the course of this illness be? Do you think that you will recover?"

"No, I do not expect to recover, (see 1 Jno. 5:16) nor can I say that I desire it."

"But there is something worth living for, fruit to be borne for Him, and a lost crown to be recovered."

“Mother, I do not think that the Lord could use me again and for myself, I fear that the world looks but a dim small speck to me now as I lie here, but if strength returned—”

“But, my dear boy, God knows how to keep His own, and He has done so. He could keep you.”

“Yes, surely, but for myself—I do not look to live.”
October 11—

As Gerald sat on the garden terrace today reading his “little old” Bible, he told his father what comfort he had been finding in Psa. 94: 12, 13, “Blessed is the man whom thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law, etc.” (It was this little Bible which he afterward bequeathed to me, with this remark, “I have so few things here, I cannot think of anything to leave you, Mother, but my little old Bible. But remember, it was my greatest blessing when I found (some years ago) that it was *all for me* how I used to devour it!”)

Sunday, October 13—

Gerald was received back at the Lord’s table, from which he departed three and a half years ago. It was a solemn, sweet moment for him and for us, and a deeply felt privilege; but this once sufficed in the Lord’s dealings and discipline. He never had strength to be present again. In conversation with a friend at this time, he said, “I can say as to my state of health, I have not a wish but that His will may be done. I have at times a longing desire to pierce into the future to know whether at this time next year, He will have come and taken us all away, or will have trusted me to live, or will have taken me to be with Himself.”

November 11—

Gerald, after having sat some time with his eyes closed, said to his father, “I have been resting here enjoying the fact that I am a child of God.”

November 24—

Sunday. He asked me to open the piano, handing me a hymn book open at No. 334. When it was ended he

said, "Thanks," and repeated slowly the two closing lines, "Or in living, or in dying, all must be well." (It was the last time I ever sang to him.)

January 1, 1879—

When I greeted my dear one this morning, he smiled a beaming smile and said, "I wish you to have a very happy birthday, Mother. You smile, but not as if you expected it."

I answered, "All is bright there above."

"It is all bright," he replied, "here—everywhere."

"Mothers here are poor, weak things. I suffer, perhaps more than you do when I see you suffering, and this weighs me down, and how can I look bright?"

"Mother, dear, bodily sufferings are not unhappiness. The certainty of His love is everything. I can say that there is nothing I am so sure of as I am of that." Then he greatly praised the Austrian rug I threw over his bed and said how much too good it was for him, whispering as I bent over him, "We'd praise Him for all that is past and trust Him for all that's to come."

January 13—

He walked into the drawing room today for the last time (as it has proved). Very feeble he looked, his arm thrown heavily around his father's shoulder. He stayed through our dinner, of which he partook, while resting on his chair-bed, and then returned to his room.

Next Day, January 14—

In answer to his own question the doctor said, "Yes, you grow weaker. There has been a rapid decline in your state since Xmas. One month more will make a great change."

He waited a moment and said, "What it will be to see *Jesus* and to be done with this weak body!" A day indeed this has been very crushing to our hearts, though we were expecting nothing different. Still, when the blow comes one has to feel it. His father went first into his room after the doctor had told us the above. I could not for an hour or so.

He said, "Precious Father, precious Mother, I have caused you much sorrow, but what prospects are mine through His grace? I am to see Him face to face and to find that grace overstepping all my sin and failure." His words to me were all for my sustainment, he needed none. "Sad hearts and a blank, I know I shall leave, but for myself, filled with joy. And you, my Mother, you will not sorrow as one without hope."

On the evening of the 14th as he lay back upon his easy chair I noticed him take out of his vest pocket a tiny book, a recent gift from Ralph. He opened it, read and smiled, then glanced at the calendar on the mantel piece to verify the date and smiled again. I said, "What is it?"

He held out the little book and I found that the text for the day was this, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. (Psa. 6:1), weak in its full sense." In parting from me at night after a tender embrace, and seeing me much overcome, he pointed to the framed text, "God is love," (C. H. M.'s gift) and said, "Look at that, Mother, and remember that on Sunday evening, we had some happy converse."

I had brought him something to eat, and when he refused it, I was turning away, he said, "Darling little Mother, don't go away. Though I can't eat the stuff—it is such a bother—I do not see the use." He added with a smile, "I did not think it much bother to eat this time last year."

I said, "A good many changes have come to pass since this time last year, for better and for worse."

"All for better, Mother."

"Well," I said, "faith can sing through days of sorrow all, *all* is well."

"Yes," he replied, "the night will soon be over, it will be joy, *joy in the morning*." And yet again he said to Ralph, "I shall have all the joy!"

His friend, C. C., came to visit him. He said thus to him, "You see me in all my state and weakness, and yet I know not one with whom I would change places."

C. said, "There is still one thing I can pray for you, and that is that you may be spared severe suffering."

Gerald said, "Yes, it is a mercy that I do not suffer acutely, and yet, if He sent me suffering, He suffered, and I would like to go through it as entering into His will."

A few days later, when in severe pain from a congested state of the right lung, I recalled to him this, his word, and remarked that when we had said anything like that in the Lord's hearing, it was His way to bring it back to us, passing us through the trial and putting us to the proof.

He answered with a bright recollective look, "Yes, yes," and all at once the distressed expression went from his face and again all was patience and restfulness.

To C. he further said, "I long to see His face. There is not a cloud. I am *so* happy." Four months ago he said to a friend in London, "I am at rest in the Father's presence, but not happy as you are." Now there is not one he would change places with.

Speaking of his brother out in Canada, he said, "Do not be disconsolate about him. I feel sure that the Lord will restore him. He cannot be so far off as I was. I got so that I fairly hated Christ and used to leave the house often when I had no engagement, to get out of the sound of His Name. The Light was hateful to me. I used inwardly to laugh and mock at the truth. I reasoned myself into the belief I never had been converted at all."

February 1—

While I fed him this morning he moved the plate aside, saying, "I cannot see your face."

I answered, "And I like to see your face. You are ever so much dearer to me than you were a year ago and yet I have to part from you."

"Got to part from me?"

"Yes, there is that in it, for now you are once more all I wish you to be. How shall I do without you? I used to think you were cruel."

“And so I was. I hated all that you cared for and tried to get away from the Light. O Mother, if the light in you be darkness, how great is that darkness. I can now look back only in amazement at all that has taken place. Nothing but His mighty grace could have brought me back to where I now stand, knowing Him as I never knew Him before. I turned my back upon Him. I had a singular experience last night. *It was not a dream.* I found myself saying aloud, “Mother, I am wrapped in a sheet steeped in the love of Christ.”

February 2—

Alas! Pulse 120. Respirations 40 a minute, and the cough daily, hourly, always, for eleven long months, but through infinite grace his patience, *dear one*, does not fail, and mine must not. He said to the nurse about 4 P. M., “When do you think that I shall be at home?” And again, “O, to be at rest!”

His father and I had our last goodnight at 10 o'clock. “Goodnight, darling Mother. Goodnight, Father. Great is His faithfulness,” (after a few words of prayer from his father) and we turned and left the room, charging nurse, as usual, to ring the bell if there was the slightest change.

February 3—

At 5 P. M. his father and I, feeling restless, came downstairs and listened at his door. All was quiet save the sound of breathing. We returned upstairs, and before seven the bell rang. His father got downstairs first, and in a moment returned, crying in a joyful voice, “*He is in Heaven.*” So tender and gracious of our God. was it not, to take him just as we had asked? He alone knows how I anticipated and dreaded a final struggle with the last enemy, his servant, “whose office was thus quietly and blessedly fulfilled.” Nurse had arranged his pillows at 6 o'clock. He thanked her and said, “What would I do without you? Go now and rest.”

She said, “Now I hope you will sleep again.”

He answered, “I hope so. Ask God.” (His last words.) Nurse returned to her easy chair by the bed, and after a

short doze, awoke and found all quiet, silent and still, no more laboring in breathing; not a movement in him since she had stood beside him. His hand was still under his head and the blanket held firmly around his neck. The doctor thought he would be here another week, at least. The Lord only knows the moment when alone with Himself "He took him."

L.M.S.

Ottawa, May 26, 1888.

The subject of this touching narrative was the son of Capt. Scott, Bournemouth, England, then later Ottawa, Canada. Gerald professed conversion early in life. Both parents were marked by deep piety. Capt. Scott was a chief man amongst the brethren at that time. Gerald apparently made good progress for a time, preached in the open air and in the Assembly Hall; socially and morally was all that could be desired as far as the eye could see. But early business life brought him into contact with the world in various forms, and with temptations which were a real test. As time went on, those proved too strong and he yielded. Hence, in his testimony he failed. Illness followed (permitted under a Divine Government). Gerald was brought home to the parental roof but the atmosphere of that home was marked by grace and tender love and eventually through the grace of our Lord Jesus, Gerald was restored back to the joy of his salvation.

The brief notes written by the devoted Mother speak for themselves. I do not believe they were ever printed. Mrs. A. M. Dole, Minneapolis, gave me the copy which the Mother gave her when both lived in Ottawa. Each of those now, Mr. and Mrs. Dole, Gerald and both the parents are all with the Lord on high; and those notes not only show grace in Gerald's conversion, but the Lord's marvelous grace in his restoration, even when believers fail to witness for Him. (Ed.)

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord."

"And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it."—Amos. 8: 11, 12.

A WARNING

We quote an extract from a recent statement by Lord Hugh Cecil, British member of Parliament :

“In many ways we live in an age of disintegration: old things are passing away. There is now a general corroded atmosphere which may end, in not precisely revolution, but general disintegration of society. There is a growing weakness of all moral restrictions and a growing sense that every man may do as he likes.”

Those are weighty words uttered by a great statesman, but a keen observer of the trend of times as seen in the world today. Cannot we observe the same in the professing Church also? And shall we not say the same features are seen, which once we dreaded on the outside, manifest in many of our Assemblies, in the place where *piety* associated with love for the *Word of God*, and love for *prayer*? The world has entered and displays itself there.

We need to be recalled again to the freshness and power of first days, ministry of the Word of God that will bring us *back, back, far back*, and follow afresh; be imitators of that lowly, but par excellent life of Jesus among men, and then the example of the early Church that displayed the graces of His heavenly life in their testimony.

Once more we add, history is repeating itself. The Church of our day reproduces the history of Israel as recorded in the Book of Judges. When Moses and Joshua died, and when the elders that outlived Joshua died—men who were so favored as to walk side by side with those men of might, and who held the nation together as one while they lived—then Israel soon departed from Jehovah, their Savior God; they forgot Him; they departed from the teachings and commands that Moses and Joshua had so emphasized during their lifetime. Then, in that nation, so favored by Jehovah and where the word of Jehovah was once the supreme guide, and where unity and peace were distinct features, their departure brought

discord, distress, division, as the whole book relates. "There was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 2:7-23; Judges 3:1-7; Judges 17:6; Judges 21:23).

In this record we get a dark picture, yet when the history is written up afresh in the New Testament by the Holy Spirit (Heb. 11:32), we observe men *such as Gideon*, etc., who had *faith in God* and whom God used to accomplish His own purposes. They were His beacon lights in that dark day. Shall not the lessons of *the failure*, and also of men that found relief by *their faith* in Jehovah, serve to stir us in our time to take hold afresh? For God abides; the truth abides; and His coming is very near at hand.

(Ed.)

DEVOTION AND TESTIMONY

Two things ought ever to characterize us: a people given to *much earnest prayer continually*, and with this a keen *relish for the word of God*. Here is where God begins to work, with ourselves, and creates deeper longings after what is real and divine. Then the heart expands and goes out in those desires for others, and we become a hearty evangelistic people. "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." These were His words to Moses for Israel of old, and He is the same today. He brings His people out of Egypt, then through the wilderness; then into the land; and this God is our God. How much we owe Him until we see Him face to face!

From us there ought to be a *double line of service and ministry*, as in Col. i 23-25. Ministry first in the gospel, flowing out without stint to needy sinners around us. And then ministry continually flowing out to those who are saved and gathered by the gospel into the Church, the body of Christ. This double stream of ministry flowing through us, is the fruit of communion, and of the truth held with us in even balance.

(Ed.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

GENERAL MEETINGS

Lake Erie Bible Conference, at the Evangelical Training School Campus on Lake Erie, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., beginning, (D.V.) with supper Saturday, August 19th, and until after breakfast Monday, August 28th. For folder of rates and additional information, write F. B. Tomkinson, 910 French St., Erie, Pa.

Minneapolis, Minn.—The annual conference for prayer, Bible study, and general ministry of the *Word of God, D.V.*, will begin at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, June 22nd, and continue over Lord's day. For further information address Mr. Frank Hoel, 713 Chamber of Commerce, Minneapolis, Minn.

Key West, Florida

Our brother, J. F. Stebbins, spent a season in happy service and fellowship with the little gathering who meet at 720 Southard Street and reports that he had a nice interest in their midst. "They have a real gem of a hall, and on the Sunday I had about fifty in the Sunday School. Bible readings were held during the week, and all seemed happy and in peace." This news gladdened our hearts, for we have in former years given Key West different visits for ministry, and learned to love them all.

May all our Assemblies remember the importance of aggressive, energetic Sunday School work; to be able to lead children early in life to Christ is a prize won.

Rochester, New York

Brother Keim writes that he spent 10 days in Norfolk, Va., with nightly meetings and much visiting in Norfolk, as well as other places in Virginia, especially in Richmond where he heard of some being interested in learning the Truth more accurately. New places where people are anxious to hear are inviting places to visit, and we should ever keep on the lookout for such open doors, and enter in and open the Word according to the need.

Southern California

Mr. Dewar has been in California since the middle of February. First he labored in and around San Francisco, then came on South in his auto. Los Angeles was his center, from which he visited different places around. Now he has returned to the San Francisco district again and soon purposes to turn home to Spokane, Washington, before going East again for the summer. Our Brother is doing pastoral work in the needy gatherings. Evangelists are needed in the newer fields, and those fields are white to harvest, but the Assemblies need pastors and teachers, and such ministry is very easy for the servant if there is relish and appetite for the Word of God, and ministry that opens up heavenly things. The gatherings need ever to have a readiness to hear, and the servant always a readiness to give.

A MOMENT OF TIME

At Hampton Court, a few miles from London, on the River Thames, there yet stands the ancient royal palace frequently inhabited by Queen Elizabeth. Few who visit those parts fail to see this historic place. There the once Queen of England spent her last days and there she died. She ascended the throne when about the age of 25, and remained in power about 45 years.

She was professedly a Protestant, but was far from being a Christian, in the Bible sense of the term, and she passed away from this life just as she lived. During her reign she persecuted the Puritans for many years, and cruelty was manifested all through her public life. In the closing days of her reign, (the year 1603) she lay in her magnificent apartment, stricken down by illness, and her lamp was gradually dying out. By her side stood England's best and most noted physicians, as well as trained and tender nurses.

This was long previous to our modern railways and telegraphs. Beneath her window sat a messenger mounted on a fast steed, in readiness to gallop to the capital to announce the news. The drop of a white handkerchief from the nurse's hand through the window was to be the first token of the Queen's death.

As the royal patient drew near to the close, and while in the very throes of death, she was aroused for a moment by the consciousness of her departure, and exclaimed, "All my possessions for a moment of time." The brittle thread immediately broke, her spirit fled, and the physicians announced that she was gone. The nurse dropped the white handkerchief from the window, and the messenger hastened to the capital with the sad news that England's Queen was dead.

With many friends close beside, with good physicians in attendance, and willing hearts to help, and wealth and luxury all around her, yet even she could not purchase a moment of time, could not buy a pass-port to the heavenly palace above.

This circumstance reminds us of the prophet's words, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath" (Zeph. 1:18), and the wise preacher also wrote, "Riches profit not in the day of wrath" (Prov. 11:4).

None in her whole realm had more golden opportunities than she had; none had better access to the truth than she, had she been minded to procure it. All was within her reach, but she spurned the truth and persecuted those who sought to follow it. Coming to the close of her life, on the very border-line of eternity, she desired one moment of time to consider the great realities of life, death and eternity.

Dear reader, in view of her undying words, be warned by the folly of the past Queen of Britain; for it is written in the inspired Word, "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job 36:18). It is also written, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

God, who loves men and desires not the death of any, has announced the good news, "Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation," (2 Cor. 6:2). Today is God's time, this hour, this moment, as you read these lines; for before you lay aside this little paper your pulse may cease to beat and your heart throb no more. The slender thread that holds you to earth may snap, and all may then be over with you as regards this life, and you, like that great Queen, may pass away without Christ. Tomorrow may be too late.

The words of our Lord are conclusive and final, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." And if men die in their sins, he says, "Whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 8:21, 24). Two important things are here announced; first, if men refuse the Son of God, refuse to own Him as their Lord, refuse Him who came from heaven in infinite love to die for men, there is no alternative, "Ye shall die in your sins." What a solemn,

soul-searching thought, dear reader! The second thing is, that after death there is not the least ray of hope; there is no possibility of being saved. "Whither I go, ye cannot come." Those who die in their sins can never spend eternity in that scene of bliss where Christ has gone.

In view of those momentous facts and soul-stirring truths, let me further press the question and urge—yea, beseech every reader not to lay aside this paper until this subject of so vital importance is settled. God loves you; Christ died for you; the Holy Spirit strives with you, and the Lord's people join with those three Divine Persons, and plead with you to drop the arms of rebellion and resist the entreaties of Divine grace no longer. He who died upon the cross for sinners and who is now glorified in heaven, awaits to save and bless all who turn to Him. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God" (Jer. 3:13). "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9); and the Psalmist wrote, "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:3-4).

You need not question whether He will accept you, for the Saviour Himself has said, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Your sins need not keep you away, for the Apostle wrote by inspiration, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1. Tim. 1:15), and the yearning invitation of our Lord to all men was, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job 22:21). Believe on Him, the Father's only begotten Son, and you shall receive eternal life (John 3:16). Receive Him as your Saviour and you will be entitled to take your place as a child of God (John 1:12). Confess Him as your Lord and you shall be saved (Rom. 10:9).

Then, dear reader, you shall be right with God. Peace, perfect peace, shall be yours for ever, and should the end

come and the brittle thread break, you need not desire a moment more to consider the great issues of eternity. Death for the Christian is to depart and to be with Christ which is "far better." Should the Lord Himself come and call His people home, while the Christian reader is still alive, the Word gives the fullest assurance that the great change then shall be, "for ever with the Lord."

A. E. B.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

(Mark vi. 7-13, 30-44)

I take this Scripture in Mark, because it is, to me at least, *an unveiling of the heart of Christ*, and that is always good for our souls. Of course all the Lord's miracles were that; but *some* seem to show it more than others; or at least we seem to see it there clearer than in others. A light and a glory seem to gild the sacred page for us at such times, and Christ and His love shines forth, and shines in, in the power of the Holy Ghost, delighting our souls.

Now, to get a sight of the heart of Christ in whatever way, must of necessity draw forth the affections of our hearts to Himself, and lead us to speak well of Him. We have a lovely picture of that in The Song of Solomon ch. v, 9-16 and ch. vi. 1. It is an illustration, too, of that text, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34). There we see one so absorbed and ravished with the beauties and perfections of her Beloved, and who pours out her rapturous description of Him in such a way that the effects are seen in the inquiry, "Whither is thy Beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy Beloved turned aside? that we may seek Him with thee." May we all experience more of this!

In this passage in Mark's gospel, and the corresponding passages of Luke and John (for each of those Evangelists supply items which the others do not, and thus fill in the picture), we get a very remarkable unveiling of

the Saviour. The thoughtfulness and the compassion of the Lord Jesus shine out in a wonderful way; both for His own, and for the multitudes that followed Him, even though it might be out of curiosity or for what they could get. Then the lesson He would teach us all, both His disciples and us, is, that in Him we have *infinite resources* at all times, no matter how adverse the circumstances seem to be that call for their display.

"His *love* is as great as His *power*,
And knows neither *measure* nor *end*."

And such a fact as that we may well lay close to our hearts.

Let us observe in the first place that the Lord had sent out the disciples, as Luke tells us, "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke ix. 2); while Mark tells us (Chap. vi. 12), that "they went out and preached that men should repent." Both accounts of course are true, for they did both. Then after their strenuous labours "they gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things; both what they had *done* and what they had *taught*." And then it is, the heart of the blessed Lord shines out in those words in verse 31, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile."

But just before I touch that, let us turn back again for a moment to verse 30. Is it not a lovely picture? A beautiful example for us to follow in all our little services for the Master? "They gathered themselves together." There was a center of attraction—a magnet which drew them. It was "unto Jesus," and evidently it was the first thing they thought of and did. Then they told Him both "what they had *done*" as Luke ix. 10 tells us, while Mark adds, and "what they had *taught*." How good for all servants, at all times, to get back after each little effort for Him to His blessed feet, and pour out into His sympathetic ear all we have done, with our successes or failures, assured of His sympathy and compassion, and then realize a little holiday along with Himself in a quiet

retreat, where we can and may learn more of Himself and the resources we have in Him. And surely this is ever needful. We cannot successfully *give out* to others, unless we are constantly and consistently *taking in* from Him.

The Lord Jesus is no hard task-master. We need not be afraid of Him. There are times when both body and mind need rest. Nor would He have us to wear ourselves out. He knows what is needful for us, and delights to say to us, "Come ye." Not, Go ye; "Come ye, *yourselves apart*"; and in the quietness and restfulness of His own presence renew our strength. It is good to find oneself in a "desert place" sometimes, if it is *with Him*. In such a place there are no natural resources and we are shut up to Himself and all that comes from Him. All must come *down*. Happy place surely! Luke says, "*He took them and went aside privately into a desert place.*" Mark says, "*Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place.*" It does not seem as though, at that time at least, they got very much rest. Certainly there was none for Him. How could He rest where need was? Need ever sent its wireless message into His heart and it always found a ready response. See how His heart was moved with compassion as He saw them there in crowds, needy and sick, both physically and spiritually, a great flock of shepherdless sheep. How His heart was touched as He thought of the needs of their souls and their unfitness for the Kingdom of God, and responded to that of His teaching, and also healed all that had need of healing. Blessed be His holy Name for ever!

Then again, did He not know the day was dying? Was He not fully aware that the sun was low? Surely. He knew it all. Why then did He not send the multitude away? He seemed to work on, and on, and on, as if on set purpose to detain them, until the disciples reminded Him of the lateness of the hour, the people's hunger, and their own inability and helplessness to meet it. Ah! the Lord had a purpose in it all. He allowed the disciples to get into that tight corner to let them see that He is never in a tight corner: to teach them that there are boundless,

limitless resources in Himself: that there are no difficulties with Him, and they must learn to trust Him: and that moreover, however little they may have, if brought to Him, He can use it and make it suffice.

What wonderful lessons are these for us, dear brethren! How often He allows us to get into tight corners to put us to the test. And, alas, how often we fail in them! He allows us to get there that we may find out how beautifully and blessedly He can get us out of them and outwit the devil. We are not half awake to what He can do for us, and how He delights to come in for us. Yet how beautifully it is seen in this narrative.

Then think of the quiet and orderly way in which He ordered the whole affair. There was a Master-mind there. "Make them *sit down*," in ranks of hundreds and fifties. There was to be no unseemly rushing and crushing and trying to get served first. All was to be done quietly and orderly. "God is not the author of confusion." The five loaves and two fishes may have looked small in the eyes of the poor unbelieving disciples, but it was all they had: they could not help themselves. Yet in His hands it was more than enough, and they had to learn that. That is all He wants. We only have to take to Him what we have, and He will see it is enough for all who need it.

How simple, yet profound is the story. He blessed. He brake. He gavè. That was His part. The disciples carried it. The people ate it and were filled, and there was an abundance left. But not left to waste. It was to be gathered up that nothing be lost.

What a precious, blessed Saviour! May our hearts know Him better, and delight themselves in His company here, while we utilize His power for the blessing of others till earthly need is past, and heavenly joy and satisfaction begins in His company up there!

WM. EASTON.

UNITY: WHAT IS IT?

“Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is *one Jehovah*” (Deut. vi. 4). This was the great central truth enforced by the Lawgiver on Israel. Round it circled all others. There could be one object of love alone, this one Jehovah, to whom every affection should flow (v. 5), and but one object of worship and service (v. 13) quoted by our Lord in answer to Satan. This great truth was in contrast to the idols of the heathen—gods formed out of the imagination of the heart, in reality demons, to whom every unholy desire and evil passion were consecrated, and who were worshipped according to the varied passions, lusts, or fears that moved the human heart.

There was beside but *one place* (xii. 5) where this one Jehovah put His name, and in which alone He could be worshipped. Not a single association with what was of idols could be suffered. No high place, or mountain, or hill, or tree, where other gods had been served, but must be destroyed, as well as every vestige of their worship be it altar, pillar, or grove. Thus was the unity of the testimony committed to Israel to be maintained and preserved. God Himself the one Jehovah. The place of His name—“To His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come.” Every association with what was false had to be destroyed.

Connected with this was another truth; there was *one people* who were witnesses that Jehovah was God (Isaiah xliii. 10-12). They were and are *His* people. This is attested by their redemption out of Egypt, by their going through the floods and not being overwhelmed, and through the fire and not being burned; and finally, created as they had been for His glory, by their establishment in glory when their Jehovah shall have destroyed all the power of the enemy, and delivered them from every false god and all association with the idolatrous nations. Consequently this people must be separated from all others on the face of the earth (Exod. xxxiii. 16). It was the company of Jehovah with them which made it necessary.

They must *dwell alone*, and not be reckoned among the nations (Num. xxiii. 9). In God's mind, too, the tribes of Israel were one. Not so in the mind of the enemy. Balac says to Balaam, "Thou shalt see but the *utmost part* of them, and shall not see them all." Could not the part farthest off from the sanctuary be cursed? Nay, "He hath not beheld iniquity in *Jacob*, nor perverseness in Israel." It was in this uttermost part of the camp that the fire of the Lord burnt among them at Taberah (Num. xi. 2). He can and will chasten His own; but *Israel*, in the vision of the Almighty, is seen by Balaam abiding in their tents *according to their tribes*, and he had to declare of the farthest tent and tabernacle, as well as of the nearest, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!"

That the twelve tribes were this one people before the Lord, was represented also by the twelve loaves of shewbread on the one table in the sanctuary, with the pure frankincense upon them. Practically they should have corresponded to this representation of them before the Lord. They, as all others, failed to maintain their place as Jehovah's witnesses, and in the unity of their tribes to go up to the testimony of Israel. Ten tribes under Jeroboam rallied round the calves of Dan and Bethel, and the iniquity of the other two obliged the Lord to go far from His sanctuary and to scatter them among the heathen; but the twelve loaves, set in order before the Lord continually, taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant, with the memorial frankincense upon them, to be burnt to Him as most holy by a perpetual statute (Lev. xxiv. 5-9), was a figure that they have their place before Him continually (for God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew), according to the value of the frankincense upon the loaves; and in the end, gathered back from among the nations, they will be one nation, under one King and one Shepherd (Ezek. xxxvii.), and there shall be one Jehovah, and His name one (Zech. xiv. 9).

“To us,” says the apostle, “there is but *one God, the Father*, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and *one Lord Jesus Christ*, through whom are all things, and we through Him” (1 Cor. viii. 6). Sweet and precious thought when we know Him, that “of Him, and through Him, and for Him, are all things: to whom be glory.” He, the Center, and as everything has flowed from Him, and is by Him, so must it be for Him. This opens to us another thought as to unity; for the one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and the one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, are not two but One—“I and My Father are one” (John x. 30). And that is more than mere co-equality or co-eternity. His words were His Father’s words. His works done in His Father’s name bore witness Who He was. In the salvation and care of the sheep His Father’s and His own interests were identical, and whoever by faith had seen Him had seen the Father, while the rejecter who hated Him hated His Father also.

Unity as to God thus being made known in a way different to the revelation made to Israel as a nation in the flesh, it came out through the rejection of the Lord in words and works—a rejection which set aside man in the flesh altogether—that the people who were to be witnesses of this unity must be placed on an entirely different footing. It was the *death* of Christ which opened the way for the gathering together in one of the children of God who were scattered abroad (John. xi. 52). As Son of man lifted up out of the earth (xii. 32) He was to be the center of attraction for *all* men. On earth the temple at Jerusalem was the religious center, but those who boasted in it rejected Him who came in His Father’s name, and that name was to be declared by Him on earth no longer, but from the place He took consequent on being lifted up out of it. Thus a people were going to be formed into a *new unity*; not an elect nation separate from all others with an earthly center, but children of God, previously scattered abroad, now gathered in one, as the fruit of the corn or wheat which fell into the ground and died, His

death closing the hopes connected with an earthly Messiah.

It is in view of His death and taking this new place in glory that the Lord speaks in John xvii., and here we find unity spoken of in a threefold manner. He takes His place on high, to glorify the Father from thence, in becoming the source of eternal life to a people the Father had given Him, and the character of that life was the knowledge of the Father and the Son. But already on the earth there was a company to whom He had manifested the name of the Father, to whom He had given the Father's words, and who had known that He came out from the Father, and this company, the eleven, He asks the Holy Father to keep in oneness, "as we" (v. 11). We see how intimately this is connected with their taking His place on the earth, and His being glorified in them; and in this request the desire of His heart is expressed, that those whom He had hitherto kept in the Father's name should be kept in oneness during His absence "as we," and in the power of the name of the "Holy Father." There was besides the fellowship of this oneness "for those which shall believe on Me through their word" (v. 20). The inner power of *this* fellowship is contained in the words, "That they may be one *in us*." This we see in 1 John i. 3, "That which *we* have seen and heard declare we unto you, that *ye also* may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is *with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ*." The outer expression we see in Acts ii. 42-47. Alas! soon to be given up when grace became feeble in them, and the flesh began to work. What the Lord thus desired was, that there should be a *unity of testimony* rendered by the eleven, not of agreement merely, but of thought and purpose, "as we." And also that those believing through their word should be gathered into the fellowship of this unity, and became the manifestation on earth that the Father sent the Son, so that the world might believe it. In glory this unity will be *fully accomplished*. The day of faith over, the world will know, when the saints are seen in the same glory as

Christ, not only that the Son came as the sent One of the Father, and thus as the manifestation of all the grace and truth which are treasured up in that name of Father, but also that the Father loved them even as He loved the Son. Precious consummation in the heavens of the display of the Father's love in the unity of glory, "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one"; as there will be the display on earth of the glory of the one Jehovah, when Israel will dwell together in unity.

If we pondered the words spoken by Moses to Israel, "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," and those spoken by the Son when here on earth, "I and My Father are one," and the truths we have noticed as connected with either revelation, it should deepen in our souls the sense that all that is of God must gather to Himself according to His own blessed nature, whether in government for the earth or in the glory of His grace for the heavens. Both will be finally consummated; both should have been maintained as set up by God in their respective seasons. On the other hand, it is of the enemy to scatter and to lead man to propose himself as a center of unity. At the very beginning of his history the devil said, "Ye shall be as gods." Self-exaltation and pride—the crime of the devil—entered in, and as a necessary consequence begat in man the evil heart of unbelief which departs from the living God. The ultimate issue was a scene of unbridled corruption and violence, which was swept away by the judgment of God in the flood. Afterwards we do not find a surging sea of unrestrained self-will and passion; government having been established in Noah for its repression, but the self-sufficiency of man expresses itself in an evil confederation at Babel to set up himself and his works. It was there they said, "Let us make us a name," there they joined together to build a city and tower of slime and *brick* which should reach to *heaven* (compare Isa. xiv. 13, and 2 Thess. ii. 4), intending also to *make it the center of unity characterized by independence of God*. Its character sufficiently marked its author; nor need we trace the workings of the mystery of iniquity from

the time of its earliest germs seen in Babel onward, until the full result is reached in the Babylon of the Apocalypse and the man of sin, whose coming is after the working of Satan, to be assured that it was the arch-enemy of God who was then leading men into a *unity of independence*, which would culminate at the end in open revolt. What could a jealous God do—jealous that His creatures should turn to Him, not merely because He is supreme, but supreme in goodness and love—but scatter them abroad? Must He not gather to Himself in the supremacy of His own nature? Could He brook the pride and self-sufficiency that would do without Him and His love? Luke xv. tells us of the joy of the Father's bosom in receiving back the prodigal, first to His heart and then to His home; and we thus learn what will be the joy, tasting it in spirit now, when all are gathered to the Father's house in the enjoyment of the love wherewith He loves the Son, folded up for ever in it, and displayed also as the manifestation of it.

This leads us to another thought connected with the sphere and vessel of the display of this unity, rather than its nature and character. We have seen that it will be perfectly displayed in glory, and that the first man having been set aside in death by the cross, the center of unity now exists outside the earth altogether. The Son of man has been lifted up from the earth, and taken His place in glory. We have been reminded by a beloved servant of the Lord, now gone to be with Him, that while John speaks of the nature of what is to be displayed, Paul speaks of the sphere or dispensation in which it is displayed; but there are connecting links.

In John xx. we find those who had been scattered during those three days of His absence now gathered together by the news of His resurrection. There is a Person known as alive again, and this attracts them as to a common center. It is in weakness and fear they are together, but on the evening of that first day of the week the Saviour comes into the midst of the eleven, and those gathered with them. They are *the company* on earth that

the Saviour owns by His presence. Fifty days after, the same company, in principle, are together, and the Holy Ghost fills the place where they were sitting, and also each one assembled. They are owned by the coming of the Holy Ghost as the company now formed by His presence into the assembly of God—His dwelling-place. It has been sanctioned by the presence of the Saviour in their midst, and by the coming and dwelling of the Holy Ghost. The full revelation of this truth was not yet made known, though the fact was accomplished, nor the further truth that this assembly was the body of Christ. In the ways of God it needed that Jerusalem should consummate its guilt by the rejection of the Holy Ghost as the witness of a glorified Christ, ere it could be made known that the Son of man, who had been lifted up from the earth and taken His place in glory, was seated there as Head of His body, and that He esteemed those who believed in Him as part of Himself, or that the assembly which had been owned by the presence of the Saviour, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, was the vessel in which was to be displayed the mystery of God (Col. ii. 2). It is the man who wasted the assembly, and kept the clothes of those that stoned Stephen, who was chosen of God to minister the wondrous truth of the union of Christ and the Church, and to unfold as a consequence *a unity such as never existed before, presented to us in the figure of the unity of a body with its head and members*. We have to go back to the first man and woman in Gen. ii. to find a figure of the great mystery of Christ and the Church—"They twain shall be *one* flesh," but "He that is joined to the Lord is *one* Spirit." Let us remember too, that the man was created in the *image* of God. He stood for God as the center of creation in which he was placed, and the woman as one with him. It needed that He who is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of every creature, should take His place as First from the dead, the Beginning of the new creation, in order that He might become Head of the body the Church. In contrast with the first man who subjected everything to vanity, He has made peace by the blood of

His cross, and is the reconciler of all things to God both in heaven and earth, they are to be headed up in Him in the dispensation of the fulness of times. He is Head *over* all things, but Head *of* the body the Church. This body is now being formed by the Holy Ghost, and finally the Church will be presented by Him who gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water by the Word, in glory to Himself.

In 1 Cor. xii. we are told that it is by *one* Spirit that all the members have been baptised into *one* body; and further, that each has been made to drink of *one* Spirit. Each member is united to the Head, and each to each by the one Spirit; thus the unity is formed; but each has also drunk of the one Spirit, who formed it, and there is therefore a living power of unity. It is this which we are exhorted to keep in Eph. iv. 3. Moreover, whatever the gifts, ministrics, or operations, the apostle insists that it is the *same* Spirit, the *same* Lord, the *same* God, with Whom they are connected. Had this been realized by the Corinthians instead of schism, unity would have prevailed amongst them; they would not have been puffed up for one against the other. Whatever the distance which formerly had existed between man and man—Jew alienated from Gentile, bond from free—God has now tempered the whole body together. The only middle wall of partition set up by God has been broken down, and of twain in Christ *one* new man is made, and both are reconciled to God in one body by the cross.

It is the former strict Jew, now a prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles, who exhorts to walk worthy of such a calling, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bonds of peace. In Col. iii. love is the uniting bond of perfectness, and the peace of Christ is to preside in our hearts, to which we are called in *one* body. How necessary that love should be active, and that the lowliness and meekness that forbears should take the place of self-assertion, in order that we should walk worthy of our calling.

The unity of the body can never be separated from its source, or it ceases to be a living reality. "There is one body and one Spirit." If the Spirit that forms the body be one, the body also must be one; nor could there be, as of old, a separate calling and hope for the Jew and another for the Gentile. It is "one hope of your calling." And if there is one Lord, there cannot be many faiths or many baptisms. It may be called the faith of God's elect, the common faith, the faith once delivered to the saints, the faith of the gospel, the faith which is in Christ Jesus, the mystery of the faith; but it is one, consequent on the recognition of the one Person who has been made both Lord and Christ. The formation of different creeds and confessions of faith is the denial of the one Lord, and a source of division; and if the faith once delivered to the saints be a matter of doubt and perplexity, it is clear that the Church has been unfaithful to its deposit; for it is the pillar and support of *the* truth, not *a* truth; and Christ is "the truth," "the Spirit is truth," and "Thy Word is truth," not a creed, though every thing in it may be true. All that is connected with Christ, as manifested here in flesh, and anointed by the Holy Ghost, or now as the glorified Man in heaven, testified of by the Spirit in the written Word, is the truth to be maintained by the saints.

Baptism also is intimately connected with the name and authority of the one Lord. Separate from that it is easy to be divided as to the mode and subjects of it, or to be confused as to its signification—the name is all important. Would it be one baptism if the subjects were baptised in the name of Paul or Apollos, and not in the name of the one Lord, and unto the full revelation of the name of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? The spirit of the one baptism cannot be carried out if it be connected with the set of ideas held by this or that party.

The circle connected with the one Lord may be wider than the one body, because it depends on the *professed* acknowledgment of His title; and wider still in the whole universe is the confession of the one God and Father,

Who is over all, and through all, and in (you) all. A denial of His universal supremacy would be a denial of His Godhead. It is the fool that says in his heart "no God," the full-blown result of departure from Him; while the result of the heading up of everything in Christ will be that everything will be subjected so that God may be all in all. The saint now loves to own that all things are of God. He has drunk of the water of life which God gives to him that is athirst; he is brought to God to know Him as Father; and he forms part of that church which, as the heavenly Jerusalem, will descend out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. It will be the perfect display of the light that irradiates it. "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof." Not one saint composing it but will have arrived at complete conformity to Christ in glory, or there would be some parts of the city which could not ray forth the glory which fills it.

It is to *everyone of us*, in Eph. iv. 7, that grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ; no unit is left out, and the gifts for the perfecting of the saints, as well as for the work of the ministry, and the building up of the body of Christ, have been given by Him who has led captivity captive, and descended and ascended, that He might fill all things. That each individual saint should be perfected unto one is the care of Him who fills all things, and the gifts to this end are given "till *we all* arrive at the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, at a perfect man, at the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ." Paul could say, "The life I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." It was the Son of God whom he preached; for it pleased God to reveal His Son in him. Paul knew Him, preached Him, and lived by the faith of Him. Each saint also will arrive at the unity of the faith as well as of the knowledge of the Son of God, and each is "predestinated to be conformed to the image of His (God's) Son." Thus the unity will be established in each individual unit. As each one now grows up into Christ, the body makes in-

crease unto the edifying of itself in love.

Unity must flow from living connection with its source. That source is God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Apart from that, it is the will of man working, and the power of the enemy behind it to produce disruption and confusion. We need simplicity of soul, singleness of eye, and the knowledge of God, to discern these truths, and the power of the Holy Ghost also, by Whom alone we can act on the principle of unity, which would refuse everything that is inconsistent with the source of it—God in holiness and grace—and acknowledge only that which gathers to Himself according to the revelation given as to an expression of it here. The moment we descend to human wisdom or effort, the rudiments of the world, or the arrangements of men, we deny the power that is formative of unity. May we know better the blessed source of this unity, which loves to gather to itself according to the perfection of that nature from which it flows. *From Christian Friend.*

THE OPPORTUNITY IN TIMES OF FAILURE

Times of failure appear in every dispensation. Opportunities for faithfulness will never, therefore, be wanting. Shall we have the courage and the readiness to avail ourselves of them? This is the question.

In the closing days of the apostle Paul's ministry, failure was manifesting itself. Timothy who would survive him, was to learn how to conduct himself. A flowing tide of victory, to be borne on the crest of the wave to shore, was not to be expected. Evil was increasing, coldness was spreading, unsound teaching was boldly rearing its head. Hymenaeus and Philetus were teaching that the resurrection was past: spiritualizing, it would seem, that important doctrine. Concerning the truth they had erred, and some listening to them had been upset as to their faith. The power of evil was present, and appeared to be gaining sway.

Yet faithfulness was to be manifested, and encouragement is given, "The Lord knoweth them that are His."

Their fellows might reproach those desiring to be faithful, and vilify them before others—a common plan of the enemy—but “The Lord knoweth them that are His” (2 Tim. 2. 19). How cheering! How stimulating! Then the path for such is plain: “Let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord” (not Christ) “depart from unrighteousness.”

But how? it might be asked. What can I do?—an individual in a crowd—a unit in a company! Clear and distinct is the answer: “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor”—an illustration this is from common life, so like the Master in His way of teaching. Now comes the word of guidance: “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2. 20, 21). If a man, or rather anyone, writes the apostle. Again, individual faithfulness is inculcated. One may not be able to divert the current of things. Everyone has not commanding genius, or the eloquence of an Apollos or a Chrysostom; but everyone can be faithful. ’Tis true, the purging oneself as directed may bring obloquy on one’s head. Be it so; but let us remember Who is the Master whose Name we bear, and to Whom we are really accountable. What! stand alone? some may say. Be pointed at as singular? Be defamed? Be faithful, is the Master’s Word; and He would encourage His servants in that. The faithful ones He can use, and surely He will. And these will have true influence, who are used of Him. Nor need they fear being alone on earth, though for a time they may be in that condition **LOCALLY**. “With them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” the Master will number them, and put honor on them by using them.

But can it be that Christians may have to tread a path like this in the midst of Christians? Yes, it may be so. Paul foresaw the possibility of it. Paul warned Timothy as to it. Paul ministered encouragement in connection

with it. To be used of the Master! What an honor! How will that be regarded in the future? An opportunity indeed! May we know how to avail ourselves of it.

Then if the apostle would encourage saints to be faithful, whatever the trials incident may be, how much more would the Master. The apostle holds out encouragement as to the PRESENT; the Lord points the people to the FUTURE. A vessel unto honor fit for present use, writes Paul. "If a man serve Me; let him follow Me, and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor" (John 12. 26), said the Lord.

When He was on earth, people, women ministered to Him of their substance (Luke 8. 2, 3). He would soon leave earth. Such ministry would therefore necessarily cease, but service to Him would be within the reach of all. Individual, however, it might be, and His Words plainly intimate that. The servant might find himself doing it somewhat without the companionship of others. That, however, was not to damp his energies, or to check his ardor. "If any man serve Me, where I am there shall also My servant be." What favor!—the servant with the Master, and that on high! Further, such an one would be honored by the Father. He will show His appreciation of anyone now serving His Son by following Him. But again, we would remark, it is "IF ANY man," etc.,—no thought of a popular movement, or the going forward with a crowd. Are we content to go forth, like those who went outside the camp, to follow the Lord for a little time on earth? What inducements are held out! But, oh! how dull are we surely in heeding them; how slow, how fearful often, is it not the case, in profiting by them!

We have pointed out that we are not to wait for a multitude, nor halt for a leader, but just to do what we can, as we can, and when we can. Times generally do not get better, but the reverse. How Israel's history illustrates this; yet illustrating it tells us also of the faithful service and fearless conduct of some in times of national declension. Nothing of that was forgotten. The

record is on high, and the names of just a few are embalmed in the New Testament as encouragement for us that individual faithfulness will be remembered, and meet with its meed of reward. "Time would fail me," we read, "to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets" (Heb. 11. 32). Forward in their service each of these went, and God was with them in it, and this was written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. 10. 11).

To serve, to follow, this is put before us. "If any man" is the word. But how to serve? That is left undefined. The circumstances of those just named were different, yet each found his path in his day. Ours, too, may be different, but let each go forward as opportunity arises: now to be a vessel unto honor; if faithful, by and by to be with the Master; and, *oh, how wonderful, if faithful here, to be honored of His Father.*

C. E. Stuart, from "Words in Season" (1896).

CALL US BACK

Call Thy people back, O Lord,
As in the early days,
When love was warm, and fresh, and bright,
When first we knew Thy grace;
When first Thy light broke through our night,
And set our hearts ablaze.
Lord, call us back!

Call Thy people back, O Lord,
To that simplicity
Which marked Thy servants long ago;
Our yearning hearts would be
Full satisfied with Thee, although
The world against us be.
Lord, call us back!

From the many paths unmeet
Our wayward feet have trod,
From foolish words, and wilful ways,
Yea, turn us back, O God,
Afresh to taste Thy love and grace,
Else Thou must use Thy rod.
Lord, turn us back!

Call Thy loved ones back, O Lord,
From toilsome paths and steep;
From bearing burdens, all Thine own,
Which only makes us weep,
The while we moan, and toil alone,
And only sorrow reap.
Lord, call us back!

Call us back from hearts cast down,
And, oh, afresh inspire
Our souls to seek Thee more and more;
To burn with deep desire,
Till Hearts o'erflow, and faces glow
With holy, ardent fire.
Lord, call us back!

Call us back to those sweet days
When hearts were knit as one,
When prayer was as the breath of life;
Ere we were so undone,
Ere souls were rife with endless strife;
For Jesus' sake, Thy Son,
Lord, call us back!

Broken is the remnant, Lord,
And difficult the day;
What shame and sorrow cover us,
Our tears oft dim the way;
The tide runs high, Thy coming's nigh,
Our hearts are loath to stay;
Lord, take us home!

H. McD.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

GENERAL MEETINGS

Minneapolis, Minn.—The annual conference for prayer, Bible study, and general ministry of the Word of God, D.V., will begin at 10 o'clock Thursday morning, June 22nd, and continue over Lord's day. For further information address Mr. Frank Hoel, 713 Chamber of Commerce, Minneapolis, Minn.

Lake Erie Bible Conference, at the Evangelical Training School Campus on Lake Erie, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., beginning, (D.V.) with supper Saturday, August 19th, and until after breakfast Monday, August 28th. For folder of rates and additional information, write F. B. Tomkinson, 910 French St., Erie, Pa.

AFRICA MISSION FIELD

Miss Esther Creighton writes: "The opposition has seemed to turn, which was more personal antagonism of one official (now removed). The people are beginning to return to the hospital again. The present Belgium officials are very friendly. One is confessedly a Christian, and says that King Albert is also. Prince Leopold is due here March 9th. We are wondering if he will visit the Mission. We went to Deans' yesterday P.M. Had supper there and a Bible reading after. Left at 10:30 and arrived home just before midnight. We ask all your prayers for us here."

Dr. R. C. Woodham and the whole staff of fellow-workers can be reached any time by addressing Mombasa, Irumu, Congo, Belge, Africa (via Suez). Let us continually pray for the whole staff.

BAHAMAS

We have recently received communications from the Islands regarding the labors of Brothers Robert Stratton and J. S. Hall (of Cat Island). Both of these servants have devoted many years to the various places in the Islands, both in the Gospel and shepherd care among the Assemblies. For over forty years the Islands have been a fruitful field for the Gospel by different servants, but when the work of gathering out begins, the Assemblies are always a point of attack by a subtle enemy. He first seeks to hinder the Gospel. Then when people are converted, his object is to overthrow the testimony of those in the Assembly. In view of this there is a constant need of a prayerful spirit, and perseverance in the truth; both of the above Brethren can be reached by addressing: Box 404, Nassau, Bahamas.

ALL THE ASSEMBLIES

(I Cor. 4:17. 7:17. 11:16)

There may be ever so many assemblies, but the order of all is one, and Apostolic authority is universal. Nothing is more opposed to its true idea than ecclesiastical independency. The notion

of different bodies, each with a distinct regimen, is a modern invention, while the assumption of a continual power of regulation in or over the Church may be ancient but is no better. (As in the usual denominations of Christendom.)

Neither the one nor the other was "from the beginning," when the foundation was laid by the Apostles and prophets. There is no authoritative regulation now outside the Word of God, though He raises up those that guide and take the lead, but they, as all, are bound by Scripture to which the Spirit answers in power.

Wm. Kelly

Bible Treasury, Oct., 1875 (58 years ago).

A GOSPEL CAR

A MOTOR TRUCK, 1926 Chevrolet Model. Fitted up for Gospel or Pastoral Work, with sleeping accommodation for one (but could with a little addition be made for two). Has been run only 80 miles. Would sell for less than half cost price. Owner gone to be with the Lord. Apply for further information to:

Dr. Geo. A. Keith, 399 McLaren St., Ottawa, Ont., Canada.

This is a splendid opportunity for any who have such a service upon their hearts. A couple of prayerful, strong young men could reach many of the out-of-the-way fields between the months of June and October, and preach in the open, and distribute tracts, c.c. The investment, if taken up in faith will pay large dividends in the Glory. Write and get the particulars.

THE GOSPEL

We received a letter recently from a brother who writes: "I am in hopes there will be some Gospel energy here this summer. A laboring together in this work." This sentiment pleased us very much, for the nearer we get to the end of our pathway, the more we crave Gospel vigor and interest in all our Assemblies. Mr. William Kelly, an able teacher, was asked if he had to live his life over again would there be any difference. His answer was: "Yes, I would give more of my time to the Gospel, seeking the salvation of the lost."

In Paul's last Epistle to Timothy, after describing the features of the last days and the path of separation for the godly and exhorting Timothy to be steadfast and to continue in the things which he had learned, in the closing chapter he adds "Endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist." Where there is neglect in this line of ministry, numbers decrease and spiritual decay sets in, for the Holy Spirit works first with the Gospel while it is yet the day of grace. Then, secondly, gathers the believers together to the Lord's name, and new-born babes are a blessing to any Assembly, and the service of caring for and feeding babes in Christ is a healthful service, and develops nursing fathers and nursing mothers.—ED.

THE LITTLE PLANT

Leaving home for a few days' absence, we lowered the window shades and closed the doors. But we had left behind us in that dark house a beautiful little plant; and upon our return we soon discovered that a great change had taken place in it. Its freshness and beauty had passed away, and the flower had greatly wilted. We lost no time in letting in both *sunshine* and *fresh air*; then we poured *water* upon and around the plant.

Lacking those three things essential to vegetable life—*sunlight*, *fresh air*, and *water*—it had suffered and withered. With the loving care which ministered these things to it again, its freshness, color, and bloom began to reappear, and it made us rejoice. It seemed to smile in our faces, and be grateful for the care bestowed. At the same time we had learned a valuable lesson:

The Plant, spoke to us of each plant of our heavenly Father's planting—those who form part of His garden (Matt. 15:13; Song 4:12-16).

The Sunshine, so necessary for the health and beauty of the plant, told of communion of heart with our Lord now in the heavens. He is the true *Sun of righteousness*.

The Water that ministers to the life of the plant, is a symbol of the precious *ministry of the Holy Spirit* by means of the Word of God; and ministry like this, day by day, is the sustaining power of the Christian's life. It puts freshness and beauty upon it.

Fresh Air, so imperative for a healthy condition, speaks of the *moral, spiritual atmosphere* in which we live and move day by day, including the people with whom we enjoy heart-to-heart communion, and the things with which we are occupied.

Here we might pause for a little and take warning concerning those *three essentials* to all life:

First, the Sunlight. How diligently we need to guard ourselves lest there be any neglect of communion of heart and feeling with our Lord and Saviour. The least

neglect in this respect will show itself soon. It was communion with Him which made the faces of Moses and Stephen to shine (Ex. 34:35; Acts 6:15). Neglecting this, the lovely graces and the spirituality of the Christian life will disappear (2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:8-14).

Second, the Water. There will be no lack of the enjoyment of the Spirit's ministry if communion of heart with Christ is sought and enjoyed; for it is the Spirit's ministry, through the medium of the Holy Scripture, that puts us in touch with Christ where He now is, in the heavenly glory. This precious ministry to God's people is as the water to nourish and sustain the life; to impart bloom, freshness, beauty, and fill the life with such fragrance as we should look for from plants in the King's garden.

Third, the Fresh Air. No plant of God's planting can thrive except in the atmosphere of the new creation. Where can the devoted child of God find such an atmosphere? How important the question, and what exercise and searching of heart the subject requires: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jno. 2:16). Well might we search ourselves and ask, What is the fellowship which I seek? Is it that of the Father and the Son, or that of the world?

How we are drawn to the little plant to learn at its footstool the serious lessons from the school of Nature! Properly learned they will lead the soul away from the world-bordering spirit of the times in which we live, when the *theatre*, the *opera*, the *novel*, the *loose literature*, the *card table*, etc., etc., are often found with the profession of Christianity, which, as impure air robs the plant of its freshness, rob the Christian life of all spirituality! (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:19-22.)

May we, in view of all this, seek the bright *sunshine*, the good *water*, and the pure *atmosphere* of communion with the Father and the Son. Then growth, freshness, and fruitfulness will result, gladdening both God and His people.

A. E. B.

THE LORD'S DAY

There is a growing tendency, even among the professed people of God, to despise the Lord's day. They urge that we are not under the law, and therefore every day is alike. To the spiritual mind this is on a par with *sinning that grace may abound*. Were there no other reason to deter us from carelessness as to the Lord's day, it would be sufficient that no offence should be given to the world. *It* very easily appraises the man who seeks his own pleasure on that day. But there are higher reasons. All the week we are compelled to devote the most of our time to secular work. What an unspeakable privilege it is to drop all that, and devote to our blessed Lord the day that recalls His resurrection. We meet together to remember Him; we engage in His service, looking after His own, reading His Word and carrying His gospel to the unsaved. What a reproach it is for a child of God to seek relaxation in some worldly recreation, or to devote the precious hours to *merely* social visiting. Should we not exercise more conscience as to our conduct on the Lord's day? May there not also be a need for the busy housekeeper to consider? It is not a day of feasting, particularly if this should prevent the housekeeper from attending the meetings of God's people. A little prudent management and forethought on Saturday will enable her to have nearly everything in readiness, and nothing will then interfere with the true objects of the day. Members of the family too should guard against slothful ease on that day, thus keeping back the needful work. Let us show that we do not need law to keep us from despising this precious privilege. We will thus resume the routine of earthly concerns with spirits refreshed, conscience clear, and affections bright.—(Selected.)

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

(Jno. 16:12-24)

Let us learn now from the Lord's lips what this gift is of which He is speaking to us; the fruit of the Son's entreaty with the Father, a Divine Person with us—in us—never to leave us more! One who, with perfect wisdom, perfect love, and perfect power, takes our case into His hand, leaving us nothing to do but to walk with Him in restful confidence and certainty of unfailing good. Yet not to be led blindly, or without exercise, but as one being trained in communion with the Divine thoughts and affections, for eternal fellowship with the Father and the Son!

This Spirit is the "Spirit of truth;" the false halo of Satan's lure thrown over things, the mirage of the desert, is to depart; not to leave one with a mere sombre shadow in its place, but to substitute for it the true yet transfiguring light of an opened heaven, beckoning—inviting us to the abodes of the Father's House—the glory of God. Darkness there is still remaining, but it is passing away, as the Apostle says, and the true light already shines (1 John 2:8).

For the Spirit of truth is now to utter the "many things" of which the heart of Christ has long been full, but as yet unable to reveal itself; for there were none able to bear the things to be spoken. Think of it! all this is uttered now, to the very last we are to have of revelation; and the Revealer Himself is with us to give spiritual capacity for its reception. The light is now come to illumine all the ages past with the glory of the ages still to come! light that is its own convincing witness to the soul flooded with its brilliance. Yet the world, alas! cannot receive the Spirit. It has rejected the Word manifest in flesh, and will not receive One whom it cannot see: "It beholdeth Him not, nor knoweth Him."

But receptive, obedient souls have good cause to know Him: "for He dwelleth with you"—as Christ had dwelt

with them; but there was to be an intimacy even beyond this—"He dwelleth with you, and *shall be in you.*" This was to be the new blessedness—God no more dwelling in temples made with hands, but man to be His temple.

After this manner then, Christ would still be with them; they were not to be orphans, left to the helplessness that His very presence had discovered to them. The Spirit would be for them, the conscious link with the unseen but unforgetting Saviour. While the world would behold Him no more, they would still behold Him, with whose triumphant life in glory their life was bound up.

F. W. Grant.

"BE YE STEDFAST, UNMOVEABLE"

(1 Cor. XV:58)

If our hearts are not close to Christ, we are apt to get weary of the way.

All is a vain show around us, but that which is inside abides, and is true, being the life of Christ; all else goes! When the heart gets hold of this fact it becomes (as to things around) like one taken into a house to work for the day, who performs the duties well, but passes through, instead of living in the circumstances. To Israel the cloud came down, and they stayed; it lifted up, and on they went. It was all the same to them. Why? Because, had they stayed when the cloud went on, they would not have had the Lord. One may be daily at the desk for fifty years, yet with Christ, the desk is only the circumstance; it is the doing God's will, making manifest the savour of Christ, which is the simple and great thing. Whether I go or you go—I stay or you stay—may that one word be realized in each of us: "Steadfast, unmoveable." In whatever sphere as a matter of Providence we may be found, let the divine life be manifested, Christ manifested. This abides, all else changes, but the life remains and abides forever. Not a single thing in which we have served Christ shall be forgotten. Lazy, alas! we all are in service, but all shall come out that is *real*, and what is

real is Christ in us, and this only. The appearance now may be very little—not much even in a religious view, but what is real will abide. Our hearts clinging closely to Christ, we shall sustain one another in the body of Christ, the love of Christ shall hold the whole together, Christ being everything, and we content to be nothing, helping one another, praying one for the other. I ask not the prayers of the saints, I reckon on them. The Lord keep us going on in simplicity, fulfilling as the hireling our day till Christ shall come, and then “shall every man have praise of God.” Praise of God! Be that our object, and may God knit all our hearts together thoroughly and eternally.—J. N. D.

A FAMINE IN THE LAND

(2 Sam. 21:1-14; 24)

Notes of an address by Wm. Dewar

I would like to bring a few things before you this afternoon from these chapters. Were we to read Chronicles we would gather that David was the shepherd of the fold, but in Kings we find that there was *something wrong in Israel*. We find that there was a state that dishonored God. Something was seriously wrong there. The eye of God was searching the nation; the evil was there, and a famine was sent. “He called for a famine upon the land.” Famines do not come without cause. The famine came the second year, but apparently there is no turning to God. It comes the third year, and we read, “David inquired of the Lord.” When that which brought the famine is removed God was entreated for the land, and when we come to the 24th chapter we find that Israel is wrong again.

Things are also wrong today, God has a controversy *with us*. I am not speaking of any special company. There is a famine, surely there is, and it becomes us, like David, to inquire of the Lord; it becomes us to seek His face and ask, “Why this famine?” The end of the age is closing in upon us—with all the truth the people have today, we have expected the truth to hold us, but instead of that we have the Word in our hands and perhaps in

our heads, but not with us in the way that the Word of God should grip us. It has not had its right place in our hearts nor our lives.

We are aware that when David, in his earlier life, was persecuted, he was dependent on God; then, he turned to God.

Now, turn to 1 Chron. 21. But first, let me say that in chapter 18:19 and 20, you will find an epitome of David's *victories* and glories, you find that it is altogether different from Second Samuel, which is personal. David's victories and glories have brought him into a very dangerous place. Satan would not miss that; Satan knew what was going on. When David was *persecuted* he was dependent, when there is *pride* it leaves room for Satan. Satan provoked David to number Israel. David now, in pride, wants to know the strength of his fighting forces. Joab is brought before us again. I think most of us believe that Joab was a man of the least spirituality whatever, but in this case he has a deeper sense of discernment than David. Why? David was *out of communion*. Joab was never in communion. Joab, as a keen, sharp observer, sees what the end of this will be. The count was never made. David said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly." David bows to God. "I have sinned greatly." That is the language of a man that is broken. God reveals Himself to such a man, beautifully brought out later on. How lovely it is to see that as soon as the soul is ready to say, "I have sinned," God's messenger is there to deliver the message. In these days, when everything is breaking up, are we willing to bow to God and listen to that which will bring us out of the condition we have fallen into through neglecting His Word, and a close walk with Him? We find that when God delivers His message to David, in his great exercise and distress, David very beautifully says, "I am in a great strait." Well, in a great strait what is the best thing to do? He falls into the hands of the God whom he had bowed before. God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. This illustrates His perfect government. The Lord repented

Him of the evil and said, "It is enough." This was suited, needed *grace* to a humbled people—His people. Then David and the elders of Israel fell upon their faces, verse 17. David, with the elders of Israel, and no doubt Israel with them, there they are. Beloved, Israel is *morally nearer now than they were before Satan tempted them*. God allows things to come in almost insensibly; it is only when we take the place before God of repentance that there is recovery.

In the 18th verse the angel commands David to set up *an altar in the threshing floor*. David finds the floor, and Satan has helped to this result. God commonly permits Satan to go a certain length but He brings out good in the end and fulfills His own purpose. The effort of the enemy is allowed of God to result in David's finding *the floor*. In the present distress among the people of God, Satan has of course been an active factor in it all, but in the end God will use it to our blessing if we are humbled, broken and in a condition to receive. God has used it to help us find out things we have never discovered before, or perhaps things which we had let slip.

Towards the end of the chapter David is again in communion with God. It would be very evident to all of us that clear marks of *restoration* are there now. In the 25th verse, "David built there *an altar* unto the Lord." David is not counting his men now, he is building an altar unto the Lord. Not only the altar, but *the sacrifice* is there; he called upon the Lord. The Lord answered by fire, a token of divine pleasure and satisfaction.

Now, one word more, through Satan's malice and David's pride, a wonderful discovery has been made, the sword is put up, now, 1 Chron. 22:1, "This is the altar of burnt offering." 2 Chron. 3:1, "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem . . . in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite." There you are.

What impresses me here is this, the present moral and spiritual depression among the people of God—the famine that is very apparent, should cause us to stop and *con-*

sider our ways. That will bring us face to face with our moral condition in the sight of God, and such is sure to bring us upon our faces in repentance before God, and all our sorrows will turn us afresh to the Word of God, and no doubt to profit, or perhaps what we have let slip out of our hands until we are almost as ignorant as though we had never had them. I trust this lesson from David's life, his *sins*, his *repentance*, his *restoration*, and *deeper communion* with God after failure, will be a word to each of us this afternoon. God has given each of us a *conscience* and the only rule for that conscience is the *Word of God*.

"YE SHOULD HAVE HEARKENED UNTO ME"

(Acts 27:21)

What pointed words are those spoken by the Apostle, and how applicable to the Church history since that day and to our present day conditions in Christendom, and especially in our Assemblies as we approach the end of the age, for never has there been departure from the Apostle's ministry and the Truth of God more than in our present day.

Throughout the entire dispensation since its beginning, not to hearken unto Paul as revealed in his Epistles, has ever meant "shipwreck concerning the faith." On that eventful voyage towards Rome, the Apostle spoke with definiteness, notwithstanding "the centurion believed the master and owner of the ship more than those things spoken by Paul."

And as we transfer the lesson to our present day conditions, we can safely say that Paul's custodians hearken now also to those who seek to guide the ship (Church testimony) over the sea of life, rather than hearken to those things spoken by Paul. "Those things" illustrate the Pauline instruction as unfolded in his Epistles, especially "the mystery," hid in God throughout the past ages, but now revealed in his Epistles for therein we get the Truth concerning the Church—the body of Christ, its formation, character and final destiny with Christ in Eternal Glory.

“Those things” which he wrote by inspiration of God, and was intended to furnish the whole Church with a perfect chart, warning of danger points on the voyage, and suited instruction for the Church while here on earth, and as we see the adverse elements that threatened shipwreck in Church testimony before the Apostle was called home, we also learn how he was cheered in his closing days by the faith and devotion of individuals. “The unfeigned faith” of Timothy, and traces the same back three generations in the family circle, his mother (Eunice), and grandmother (Lois). V. 5.

And in view also of the breakup he pens words tending to spur him on to “stir up the gift of God” and to prepare him for the soldier valor needed in the conflict. “For God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and a sound mind” (wise discretion). And urges further that he “be not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me, his prisoner, but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of *the Gospel* according to the power of God.” Then as completing the Truth needed, he unfolds a marvelous range of inspired teaching, in which the Eternal *purpose* of God and grace in the believer's *calling, salvation*, and final blessing in Glory are unfolded. (2 Tim. 1:5-11.)

And, added to all this, he further opens up his own heart, assuring us of his own persuasion, “I know whom I have believed and am persuaded, etc.” And whatever Timothy may have to encounter after Paul's departure, he was exhorted to “hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me.” Faithful servants, generation after generation, through the entire Church age have had this Epistle from Paul, from God, and the call of the Holy Spirit is to all, to hold such with a firm grip this precious instruction and precious treasure (V. 12-14).

It was also needful that he be further reminded of what had taken place “all they which are in Asia be turned away from me of whom are Phygellus and Herogenes.”

What a heartbreak, Paul, now a prisoner, and those once professing what Paul possessed, now turn away from this man of God, and also the Divine instructions given by him! But even here, a cup of consolation was furnished him, because some, as Timothy, Onesiphorus, etc., etc., remained. This closes Chapter I.

In the next chapter, Timothy is further reminded of some "concerning the truth have erred," even denying the Resurrection. In all this we learn how far men had even in the first days, drifted from the Light, the Truth as taught by the Apostle. Those dark clouds that rose over the Apostle's head were an earnest of a darker Apostacy leading to the final end. Disorder and confusion had entered the Church doors, yet he declares, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure." Amid all the conditions arising in the mass of profession, faithful pious men are called to a path of *separation* (V. 19).

Separation from the great mass of unconverted false professors, "vessels of dishonor," and the confusion and iniquity attached to the different forms of such associations, very minute are the instructions, so that we might be safeguarded from an opposite evil—Pharasaic separation (V. 20-21).

Wherever pious people discern and discover people under similar exercises, and who desire to be led in the paths of righteousness, they receive instruction to "follow righteousness, faith, love and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (V. 22). Those are Apostolic instructions amid the fierce gales to encounter in present shipwreck, and we will do well if we hearken to Paul rather than to human voices today. This instruction closes Chapter II.

In the next chapter, we continue further, and learn more fully of features in our last days, when evils of many forms develop, and men "resist the Truth," and evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, but pious people as Timothy are to "continue in those things which thou hast learned, knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (V. 1-15). And every Scripture is given by in-

spiration of God, and profitable. What an unfailling guide we have in those inspired Scriptures. This lesson closes Chapter III.

Then the final message comes to us from the Apostle's pen, side by side with all those Apostate conditions which become darker and darker as the night goes on, and before the morning star appears and the glad future morning breaks. To Timothy he writes, "Preach the Word," for that abides ever untarnished, and "do the work of an evangelist," thus never forget nor neglect the Gospel message to all the world that saves men.

The whole Epistle is a marvelous survey of conditions on the earth and in Christendom, given by a master mind under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as he anticipates his own end, an expected and glorious end. This closes Chapter IV.

Praying continually,
Watching without ceasing,
Serving, always, until His coming, when we
Shall see Him face to face.

ROBERT S. STRATTON.

THE MINISTRY OF PETER

(A Bible Reading)

It is our purpose to develop the three distinct lines of ministry in the New Testament, namely, those of Peter, John and Paul, and to understand those ministries aright is to possess a key that will unlock the main features of the New Testament teaching, and enable each to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" as given in the New Testament page.

- (1) Peter's line is in a very special sense, the Kingdom.
- (2) John's great theme is the family of God.
- (3) Paul unfold's "the mystery" which is the Church as the body of Christ.

If we keep these distinctions before us, we shall not confound those different ministries. All are necessary in their place. We need to guard against dwelling overmuch upon any particular line, to the exclusion, or overlooking, of the other. David's harp had ten strings; so in the Scriptures we see different lines of teaching, with their different shades of thought; yet there is perfect harmony between all; and, to have the balance and sweetness of divine inspiration, we need every part of Scripture.

For want of this, we believe, even gifted teachers have gone astray, and been led into error in their teaching. For instance, take the scholarly B. W. Newton. In his interpretation of Rev. 2 and 3, he confused Paul's ministry, that of the one body, with John's line in these two chapters. In Rev. 2 and 3, we do get the Church on earth as the house of God, a vessel of testimony before the world; but there is no thought in those two chapters of the Church as the *one Body* of Christ. That is another subject entirely, and belongs wholly to the apostle Paul.

John's theme is especially the family of God. Hence new birth, eternal life, divine affections, are dwelt upon. *And if he touches the Church at times, it is simply as the house of God, as in Rev. 2 and 3; or as the Bride, in Rev. 19. But John never gives us the Church as the Body of Christ.*

Peter's Ministry—The Kingdom

Peter's distinctive line was the Kingdom. It was the keys of the *Kingdom* that the Lord gave him in Matt. 16:19, and it is the Kingdom line that he follows in his ministry in the Acts of the Apostles; and his epistles are a development of the same. Ever leading us forward to the future form of the Kingdom (2 Peter 1:10-11).

Ques.—Does not Peter give the Church also?

Ans.—Yes, he gives the Church in his first epistle, chap. 2; but, note with care, the Church *as a spiritual house*, namely, the house of God. That is a continuation of the revelation that the Lord gave him in Matt. 16:18.

If we read the first epistle of Peter with Matt. 16:18, the connection will be readily seen. I might also say that the vision which Peter and the others got on the mount of transfiguration in Matt. 17 furnishes a preface to his second epistle. Matt. 17 and 2 Peter ought to be read together. In this we get the Kingdom, not the Church; and the Kingdom as it shall be in the future, the "age to come."

With these thoughts before us now, we might take a general survey of the Kingdom-truth as we find it in the Scriptures, and thus get an outline of the subject.

1. *The Kingdom anticipated.*

Our blessed Lord in His Olivet discourse given to the disciples before He left the earth and returned to heaven, furnishes us with instruction concerning his millennial Kingdom, which will be introduced with power and glory at His second coming to the earth, and this Kingdom prepared *from*—(or since)—the foundation of the world, Math. 25:31-34.

But concerning the Church—the saints of this dispensation, we read they were chosen "*before* the foundation of the world." Eph. 1; 4. 3:9-11.

With this distinction in view, we will now take up that of *the Kingdom* which can be traced in its germ thought back as far as the history of man, and its features both in type and prophecy in the Scripture are given.

The Types

When God established the first man on earth with his companion bride, we read, "Let them have *dominion*, etc.," this was a remarkable type upon the sixth day of Christ as Son of Man and His companion bride, in governmental rule over the earth in His millennial Kingdom. Here type and anti-type fit perfectly. Gen. 1; 26-28. Ps. 8: 1-9 1st Cor. 15: 24-28. Eph. 1; 21-23. Heb. 2; 6-9. Rev. 20: 1-6.

Thus the Book of Genesis, the first book of Divine revelation, ever keeps the last book of the entire Bible in view and the last book gives us the complete fulfillment of all anticipated in the first one.

The Church then was the subject of an *eternal* purpose in the mind of God *before* the foundation of the world, but the Kingdom *from* (or *since*) the world began.

Further, no one man in the Old Testament could fully illustrate Christ our Lord in His glories as man, or as a King, and no one type could give all the features of such an exhaustive theme as the Kingdom. Hence we pass on from Gen. 1 to Gen. 14, a chapter that will be well to read with care. When Abram returned from the conflict with the Kings of the Nations at the time when he rescued Lot, Melchizedek, King of Salem (afterwards called Jerusalem) priest of the most high God, came forth with bread and wine to bless Abram. In this history we get another of those fine types which foreshadow Christ our Lord *as King* and *Priest* Who shall come forth from heaven to bless Abram's seed on earth—the Jewish remnant emerging from the great and final conflict of the nations on earth, this will be at the close of the period called the *Tribulation*. Melchizedek was the first recorded King in Salem. Christ will be the last. His Kingdom above and over all, supreme, and shall have no end. In its establishment, heaven and earth will be united under His Headship and governmental rule. (Gen. 14: 1-24. Daniel II: 44 45. Math. 25:31 46. Rev. 20:1-6.)

Prophecy

Having briefly considered the types, now we will examine the promises (or prophecies). In this first, we will see that the Lord gave Abram (now called Abraham) a promise "*Kings shall come out of thee,*" etc., Gen. 17:1-8. And later He gave a promise to Jacob "*And Kings shall come out of thy loins,* etc." Gen. 35:9-13.

Further, when Israel as a nation were brought out of Egypt and before they entered the promised inheritance, we learn that the Kingdom is afresh *anticipated*, and through Baalam He gives further information concerning Israel's *King*, the *Star*, the *Scepter*, and "*He that shall have dominion.*" (Num. 24:7-, 17-19.)

Then again, before Moses passed away, He informs

the nation concerning their future King and the Kingdom. (Deut. 17; 14-20.)

And finally, before the Kingdom was as yet established with Israel, Hannah's prophetic song *anticipated* the true *Anointed* and *King* of Jehovah's choice and appointment. (1 Sam. 2; 10.)

Soon after Hannah's prophecy, the nation in unbelief and rebellion desired a King, so that they might be like the nations around them, and we learn that God gave them Saul, "in his anger and took him away in His wrath," and he was a type of the future anti-Christ who also will precede the true King, Christ our blessed Lord. (1 Sam. 8:1-22, 9:1-27, 10:1-27, Hosea 13; 9-11.)

Of Christ the coming "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," David (not Saul) was the suited type, and the Kingdom of David and Solomon was meant to foreshadow the general features, (though with failure as all types are) the future ideal Kingdom of Christ our Lord.

2. The Kingdom *inaugurated*.

This we get in David's day, as will be seen in 2 Sam. 5:1-12, when Saul having been removed, the twelve tribes were gathered and anointed David as their king. This was the king of God's appointment over Israel, and whose rule soon extended over the Gentiles. Through Israel there was an open door for the nations to approach and worship Israel's God—"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

The queen of Sheba coming from the ends of the earth, in Solomon's day, is illustrative of the representatives of the Gentiles coming to Jerusalem, and owning the power and glory of God's rule in the midst of Israel. It is but a faint foreshadow, however, of that future millennial kingdom of our Lord, the true Son of David.

A suited expression and spirit for every one in that Kingdom, either in its past, present, or future form, we find in 2 Sam. 15:15—"And the king's servants said unto the king. Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint." This is a fine

illustration of devoted loyalty to the King whom God hath appointed. If David's true and loyal men could so express themselves in their day, how much more should we, who are delivered from the authority of darkness, and are brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son! Well may we challenge our hearts at the close of another year, and beginning of the new one just before us: can we look up into the face of our Lord, and say that these words express the desire of our hearts? It may cost us something, but those who pursue it with this purpose of heart will be well repaid; for "they that honor Me, I will honor," is a principle always true. David's subjects were not all as loyal as those mentioned in 2 Sam. 15:15. Many enjoyed the blessings and privileges of David's kingdom, yet sadly failed in fulfilling their responsibilities as his subjects.

David and his successors ruled over Israel for about five hundred years, as the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles show us. Alas, it is also a history of misrule and failure, by both king and people. Even David and Solomon did not really answer to God's thought; and only in certain ways did they answer as types of our Lord in His kingdom. The inspired record shows us the downgrade movement until we reach the Babylonish captivity. Then we get another change in the form of the Kingdom.

3. The Kingdom *transferred*.

At this point we might read Ezek. 21:25-27, as also Daniel, chap. 3. Zedekiah was the last of Israel's kings. Iniquity had by this time reached its height, and by order of Jehovah the diadem was to be removed from the head of this profane, wicked prince in Israel, and transferred to a Gentile ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. From this point we see the Kingdom, in its political form, transferred from the Jews to the Gentiles. Here "the times of the Gentiles" begin, and God's declaration was "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, till *He* come whose right it is, and I will give it to Him." This overturning again and again covers the whole period until the second coming of the Lord,

when He shall take the world-kingdom and reign in power and glory for a thousand years.

We have seen both in type and in prophetic Scripture, in Genesis, Numbers, Deut. and 1st Samuel that it was Christ that was before God's mind when the kingdom was but *anticipated*; and when it was inaugurated under David, we saw that David and Solomon were but types of Christ, the true King. And now, at this stage, when transferred to the Gentiles, it is with them only till *He* come whose right it is—that is, Christ. Thus we see at every step and every stage it is Christ that is before the heart and mind of God.

In every dispensation men have had their time of testing, and failed at the very outset. Adam, in dominion over the earth, failed. Noah, in the government entrusted to him, failed. Israel, having the true God as their Deliverer, failed even at the foot of mount Sinai. The priestly family failed even from the days of Nadab and Abihu to that of Eli and his sons. Then the kings, from David to Zedekiah, were marked also by failure, and in the end had to be set aside. We get a hint of this in Jesse's sons: seven sons passed before Samuel, but all were set aside. David, the eighth, the keeper of his father's sheep, was the chosen of God. Under him and his successors the kingdom was established, till Zedekiah was removed under God's judgment and the kingdom transferred to the Gentiles: it has since been "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24), which began with Nebuchadnezzar, and will continue until the Lord's second coming to the earth. Israel during this whole period are without a king, without a prince, as described in Hosea 3:4, 5.

But man proves to be no better among the Gentiles. Nebuchadnezzar and his successors also failed. The power is then transferred to the joint kingdom of the Medes and Persians; and in time God takes the power from them and puts it into the hands of Greece, under Alexander as their king. Early in his life his failure is very marked. He died a young man, and passed into a drunkard's grave. His kingdom broke up into four parts.

and was given to four of his generals. Eventually their kingdom fell into the hands of Rome. Thus Palestine and the Jews were subject to this power when the Saviour came to the earth, and was crucified. For an outline of these four Gentile kingdoms, covering the whole period of the times of the Gentiles. (See Daniel, chaps. 2 and 7.)

Like its predecessors, the Roman power passed away but of late years there has been a reviving of that ancient Empire which in the end of days will again rule over Palestine in opposition to Christ, and will suddenly be brought to an end by the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See Dan. 2:33-35, 40-45; Dan. 9:26, 27; Rev. 17:8-14.)

4. The Kingdom *presented* again to the Jews, but *refused*.

This brings us to the four Gospels of the New Testament. The preaching of John the Baptist was, to the Jews in the land, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven" (or, the heavens) "is at hand" (Matt. 3:1, 2). The Gentiles, as Israel, had all failed in their rule, and the time was drawing near for the Lord to fulfil His promises to Israel, if they would but receive them. John announces the coming King, and introduces Him. Hence the Kingdom is again offered to God's earthly people. This is the great theme of Matthew, and, in measure, that also of Mark and Luke. For five hundred years it had been in the hands of the Gentiles, and Israel had had no king. When the Lord came, Herod, an apostate Edomite, by Rome's appointment was reigning in Palestine.

The Lord's own ministry follows that of John, and He says: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:14, 15). This no doubt refers to how near Daniel's seventy weeks of years (four hundred and ninety) had run out, and hence the people were called upon to repent and believe the good news. Here the sermon on the mount appropriately comes in, and declares some of the blessings and principles of the Kingdom. While many of the blessings and principles of that sermon can be applied to us now, because we are in the

Kingdom, though in another form, yet two things are to be observed :

First, we do not get the Church there at all: that comes out later, and should not be confounded with the line of truth in these chapters.

Second, while much in principle is applicable to us, as well as the Jewish disciples to whom it was spoken, yet we cannot take every part literally; as, for instance, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit *the earth*." This is not meant for us in our time in any sense. This gives the inheritance and hope of God's earthly people, which, of course, was *the earth*—the millennial earth, and then the new earth. But it is not heaven; *that* is reserved for a later revelation, and is *our* hope, our inheritance. See 1 Peter 1:3-5.

After more than three years of the Lord's ministry, His people (who had refused God's rule, in Samuel) now refused *Him*—they crucified Him, and put Him to death. He spoke of this early in His ministry, and began to announce something further to take place: the Kingdom would be given to another people (Matt. 21:43).

A, E, B,

(To be Continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

Dunkirk Conference

Lake Erie Bible Conference, at the Evangelical Training School Campus on Lake Erie, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., beginning, (D.V.) with supper Saturday, August 19th, and until after breakfast Monday, August 28th. For folder of rates and additional information, write F. B. Tomkinson, 910 French St., Erie, Pa.

Prayer is asked that spiritual blessing may attend and follow the conference at Dunkirk.

Erie, Pa.

Prayer is solicited for the Erie book room that useful printed ministry may be used of God in definite conversions, and also bringing the Lord's people into closer touch with

such ministry that may produce a revival of the features of former years. Our brother F. Tomkinson has been kept in the depot a good part of his time, yet during periods when he was able to be away, has visited Dunkirk, Amsterdam, N. Y., Mosgrove, Pa., and Detroit, Mich. In each place, brethren report helpful ministry and hearty appreciation.

Key West, Fla.

A mistake was made in the May issue of our magazine as to the address of the meeting room. The proper address in Key West is 1127 Southard St., not 720 as previously given, and any future correspondence may be addressed to William A. Edwards, 1409 Albury St., Key West, Fla.

Montreal, Canada

A recent letter informs us that, "Our brother, F. J. Holwill, is back at the Harbor work again and enjoys it much. Brother Ross Frazer (Dr. Frazer's eldest son) goes with him at times. Am glad that he has a helper in the work."

This service of distributing Testaments, Tracts, etc., among the sailors on the different ships is one to be commended and worthy of the prayers and hearty cooperation of all who love to see the word of God scattered freely world-wide. Our brother's address is 5233 Wellington St., Verdun, Montreal, Que., Canada.

Norfolk, Va.

Our brother, Lee W. Ames, has spent a season visiting different places on his trip, beginning at Norfolk (where his wife and son are located) through the different States as far as Michigan, giving ten days to Detroit, where they report helpful ministry. During June his plan is (with wife and son) to start again for the Middle West, and hopes to reach Minneapolis Conference. By the time of this month's issue, the Conference in Minneapolis will be over.

McAuley Mission, New York City

We insert an extract from a letter recently received concerning the above Mission. When in New York City some years ago laboring, I took my wife out one evening to visit the City slums, and to buy up any opportunity that might be afforded. Our first place was the Jerry McAuley Mission, South Water St. The simplicity of this Mission commended itself to us. The hearty singing of good Gospel hymns and the leader, suspecting that I was a preacher, invited me to speak. This privilege was a great pleasure. We gave for a half hour a message from John 3:16, unfolding to them an A. B. C. Gospel, God's love for all the world, even for "down and outers." Such places need our constant prayers. A large

heart and narrow path we need to preserve with both grace and wisdom.—(Ed.)

New York, May 10.

"I must tell you about our visit to the McAuley Mission last evening. The young people have the second Tuesday in each month there. One of the young men bringing the Gospel message, last night Walter Smith, Jr., son of Mr. Smith, who was formerly with us. He spoke from Acts 17, Paul's discourse on Mars Hill. It was very good, and after the service a man sixty-five years of age confessed Christ. This is a wonderful work and needs our prayers. The man who is in charge of the Mission, Mr. Bolton, was saved there a little over six years ago. After leading a terrible life of sin and drunkenness, and had fallen into crime and prison, separated from wife and children and everything he had. The Lord led him in a half-intoxicated condition to the Mission one night, and there for the first time he heard the Gospel message, believed on the Lord Jesus and now is a living witness to His saving grace. His wife and children are again restored to him and happy in the Lord's work. About two months ago a brother Edwards from a fundamental church left all he had in the way of worldly goods, joined Mr. Bolton in this work and is devoting all his time to the Lord's work at the Mission. These men receive no salary.

"After the meeting last night, he was telling us a little of how the Lord had blessed them. He needed a car very badly (not ever having had one) to get the food supplies from the markets. You see they provide supper and breakfast as well as a place to sleep free of charge to over two hundred men and a meal at noon to all who ask for it. About two weeks ago a young man from Oklahoma came into the Mission. He had driven an old 1926 car from Okla. to New York, and when he got here was destitute—no money—hungry, nowhere to go, he saw the sign hanging outside the door 'Jesus Saves,' so he went in, and that night was saved. He is now happy in a new life, and the Lord has opened the way to a job for him too. He told Mr. Edwards about his car which was stranded some distance away; asked if he would give him \$10 for it, so Mr. Edwards went with him to see the car and found that with a small outlay it was just what they needed, so with an additional \$9, \$5 for 2 tires, and \$4 for a self-starter, they are now fixed up fine and he goes from place to place asking the market men for provisions for his work. I could tell you so much more were we able to speak face to face."

— — — South Hibbing, Minn.

"Dear Brother B—

"We came up to Hibbing early in January and resumed

most of our weekly meetings for young and old. Have four classes of children at Hibbing, a Gospel meeting every Lord's Day evening at Kinney (20 miles east of Hibbing) and a Gospel meeting on Friday evenings at Nashwauk (15 miles west of here). Each Tuesday evening we have a Bible reading in any one of three homes here. Our readings have been in the line of tracing the history of the assembly at Ephesus from its beginning in Acts 18, 19 and 20, through Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, and ending with the last message in Revelation 2. At Nashwauk we have been considering God's work at Philippi from Acts 16 and the epistle to Philippians, dwelling on the gospel and its results, and bringing in helpful things for believers. All this has been helpful to ourselves as well as those to whom we have ministered. There is an increased interest at Nashwauk, since we have been going from house to house there, and we know there will be blessing, for God's Word does not go forth in vain, but will accomplish that which He pleases.

"The house to house work is a most effectual way of reaching souls with the gospel by word of mouth and by tract, and we have many excellent opportunities to make the gospel clear to people. May God's Spirit move upon the face of the dark waters, and may the light that God has commanded to shine dispel the darkness from many hearts. Russelites, Mormons and Seventh-Day Adventists are busy; how much more should not we who have been saved and know the truth.

"In these mining towns are Austrians, Italians, Finns and Scandinavians, to whom we give tracts in their own language, and where they have not a Bible or New Testament, we leave a gospel portion.

"After the conference in Minneapolis in June (D. V.) we expect to resume our summer gospel work in different places, as the Lord opens up the way. Mrs. Adolfsen and baby John may not be able to go with me to every place.

ALBERT J. ADOLFSON."

Forwarding address:
1034 - 15th Ave. S. E.,
Minneapolis, Minn.

POWER

"I have in mind the importance of the present day, and that we might not find merely a right formal position, but that we may be marked by the features which properly belong to the Assembly of God, whilst no company on earth could rightly pretend to be the Assembly of God in a place, we must not give up the thought of the Assembly, some think everything is gone. It only proves they are gone. One would just desire that we might know more of the power of the Spirit. It is the power

we want. The form and order are necessary, but what we need is power. Knowledge is not power. We need to avail ourselves of the knowledge of Christ by knowing Him, our own present, powerful and perfect Saviour."

The above extract is from a brother's pen recently, who has had exercises concerning collective testimony for God. We have shared similar exercises for years. It will be well if we all be sharers in those sacred exercises in all our Assemblies. Such will lead us to self-judgment for much of the past, because He who has called us, called us out as a witness for Himself is the "Holy and True."

Knowledge and understanding of Scriptural things, and proper order in the Assembly are excellent features to be seen continually, but the Holy Spirit is here to lead us in all things, and if we are subject to the guidance of an ungrieved Spirit, the first and prominent feature shall be to give *Christ our Lord* His rightful place in our midst. Second, this will lead us on into the power proper—the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through us. Third, then *the result* will be, unbelievers will be brought under conviction, and also simple Christians, when present will be affected by the display of the power of the Holy Spirit working, and led to worship God, and further report God is indeed among you. This is the Divine objective. What we are set here for, a true testimony indeed. (1 Cor. 14; 23-25 N. T.)

(Ed.)

Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.—Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.
Eph. 4. 7; 1 Cor. 9. 16.

A REQUEST

If any of our subscribers change their address, be sure and inform the publisher, so that the magazine may reach you direct and save the P. O. officials extra work. We aim to send out the magazine the first week in each month.

ALL PREACHERS

An Egyptian Moslem, when offered a Bible by a Bible Society colporteur, took it into his hands, kissed it reverently, lifted his face to the sky, and said:

"O Almighty God, if the Christians were acting according to this Book, the whole world would be for You by now."

Then he returned the Bible to the colporteur and said: "Give this book to all whom you meet, that they may know the right way, even as I bought one and have found the right way through it."

All were preaching (Acts 11. 19). That there are especial gifts is evident in the Word, but it was love to Christ and souls that opened their mouths.

—J. N. Darby.

“UNITY”

In Ephesians 4 unity is presented in a threefold way. In verse 3 we have the “unity of the Spirit”; in verse 13, “the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God”; whilst in verse 4 we learn there is “one body.” In this verse the word “unity” does not occur; yet since the “one body” exists in the power of the one Spirit, and is indeed a unity of all the members of which it is composed, we may venture to term it the “unity of the body.”

It may be helpful to observe the differences between these three aspects of unity.

The unity of the body exists as the result of the purpose and work of God. Nothing that can happen during the time of the church’s pilgrimage on earth can possibly annul it. The Spirit of God is the source and power of it, and it therefore abides for ever. Man did not make it. The most devoted of saints could not maintain it, nor could the most perverse mar it. It stands connected not with the responsibility of saints, but with the sovereign purpose and power of God.

“There is one body,” come what may! In these days of ecclesiastical confusion, owing to the will of man asserting itself in God’s things, a great point will be gained if we thoroughly recognize this. It is a mark of faith so to do. Elijah recognized the unity of the twelve tribes of Israel when he built his altar of twelve stones, though the nation was divided and largely apostate (1 Kings 18:31). The same thing is found in James’s epistle, in regard of Israel, in the New Testament. He wrote to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, though at that time the larger part of them had disappeared. All outward manifestation of the unity of the body may today have disappeared as completely as the lost ten tribes have, still the unity of the body itself abides for God and for faith. Let us have faith to recognize it.

The unity of the Spirit based upon the foregoing is that practical oneness which will be found amongst all the

members of the one body, or any number of them, for just so long as they are really controlled by the one Spirit.

It is not *merely* an ecclesiastical unity; it goes much deeper than that, for it is possible to maintain outward ecclesiastical ties whilst disunion is rampant within. On the other hand, it certainly includes it. Should pride and self-sufficiency—the opposites of the excellent features mentioned in verse 4—so gain the upper hand amongst saints that even ecclesiastical bonds are riven asunder, then the unity of the Spirit is indeed broken as effectually as ever it can be.

The unity of the faith differs from both the above. It is neither something formed by God which exists today because maintained by Him, nor something produced by the Spirit and entrusted to our keeping. It is something not complete as yet, but at which we all should seek ultimately to arrive. It is the unity, not “of faith” but of “*the faith*,” i.e. the faith of Christianity, and as the whole faith of Christianity centers in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, it adds, “and of the knowledge of the Son of God.”

This verse may well be connected with Philippians 3. The knowledge of Christ is there seen to be the great object of the Apostle Paul’s desire (verses 8, 10, 12). After this he pursued, not counting that he had already attained, but still pressing on and urging all others to do likewise. Those who were thus minded with himself he terms “perfect,” or of full growth (ver. 15).

The more truly the faith of Christianity possesses us, the deeper our knowledge of the Son of God, the more will *this* unity be reached by us, though doubtless never in perfection until the resurrection day, as Philippians 3, indicates.

We might summarize the matter by saying:

1. *The unity of the body* is a unity of *life* which cannot be broken. The body is in the life of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

2. *The unity of the Spirit* is a unity of *love*. It is a plant of most tender and sensitive growth, easily injured, and must be therefore jealously guarded by us.

3. *The unity of the faith* is a unity of *light*. It is therefore a matter of apprehension and attainment. It is not that *with* which we *start*, but *to* which we are to *come*.

Now what are our responsibilities in regard to these things? As to the first, our responsibility is to recognize its truth and reality, and shape all our practical life and conduct in the light of it. "There *is* one body"; we need to remind ourselves of this fact again and again, just because Christians generally have so largely forgotten it, and walk individually and collectively in the truth of it. Since it *is* so, our every dealing with any saint we meet must be consistent with it. Equally so must all our collective actions and gatherings together be in the light of this fact. We are no more at liberty to act inconsistently with it in an assembly way than in a private and individual way. The natural mind always runs to one or other of two opposite extremes—easy-going looseness or sectarian narrowness. Careful recognition of the unity of the body will help us to steer clear of both.

As to the second, our responsibility is to *keep* it. "Endeavouring to *keep* the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." That this is an exceedingly difficult matter the whole history of the church bears witness. How are we to keep it? What will help us? The cultivation of "lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love," and that alone. Outward *uniformity* may be produced by ecclesiastical edicts, such as Rome and other bodies of professed Christians sometimes enforce; but *uniformity* is not *unity*. The latter can neither be formed nor maintained by such means.

In Mark 9, 33-37 we find the first recorded breach in the unity that marked the twelve apostles, and its root is discovered for our instruction. "They had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest." Its remedy is shown to be the cultivation of the spirit of the little child. Thus and thus alone can unity be kept.

As to the third, we must give diligence to *pursue* it. In order that we may reach it, gifts have been given. The most exalted gifts are no longer with us in flesh and blood—apostles and prophets I mean—but we have them in their writings. The Scriptures therefore practically take their place as far as we are concerned.

Whether, therefore, it be the Scriptures, or gifts from the ascended Christ still available for us, let us value and use them each in their place; always remembering that neither will be of much benefit apart from that diligent earnestness of soul which marked the Apostle in Philip-
pians 3.

Notice carefully that gifts find their place in connection with the *unity of the faith*, not *the unity of the Spirit*. No "gift" is necessary for the latter. If dissension appears amongst saints the sovereign remedy is *not* to send for some gifted servant of God, but rather to seek afresh that lowliness of mind which the Spirit of God produces. On the other hand, if believers are ill-taught in the faith and have but little knowledge of Christ, to send for a gifted servant of God would be a very appropriate thing.

Let us then beware of confusing these three "unities" in our minds. Has there not been a tendency to do so, especially in the case of the second and third above mentioned? They are *not* one and the same thing, and the unity of the Spirit is *not* a unity of *light*. Many a saint who has been but poorly instructed in the faith has excelled in keeping the unity of the Spirit over other saints whose degree of light has been greater than his. Many a time has the unity of the Spirit been broken by the enlightened brother who has refused and treated disdainfully the brother much less enlightened, but no less true to Christ than himself.

Let us each and all seek help from God that we may more fully recognize the unity of the body, more carefully keep the unity of the Spirit and more diligently pursue the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, until all three unities coalesce in the one

great unity of the church as of "one pearl of great price" in the glory of God. —F. B. HOLE (England)

* * * *

We must first be inside the veil before we can be truly outside the camp.

THE SUBJECT OF GIVING

God's servants need to live; and "the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:6). "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" These and other Scriptures show that the servant of the Lord is to be ministered to by those who have received the Word through him, and by other Christians. From the unsaved they were to take nothing. (See 3 John 5-8.) Think of the incongruity, to say the least, in preaching to a company of unsaved persons, telling them of God's gifts, beseeching them to accept it, assuring them they can give nothing to God till they receive Christ, that God will accept nothing from His enemies, then taking up a collection! Does it not make the ungodly scoff? Does it not belie the solemn truth that has been preached?

But to return. While the servant of God is to share in the temporal things of the saints, there is not a hint of a bargain between them. To fix and take a salary is to degrade the whole service, and to make the laborer not a servant of Christ, but of man. He is to look to the Lord who employed him for support—not to the world, nor even to his brethren. Deep may be the exercises through which he may pass to learn to trust his blessed Master, but precious and real are the results. He is free from all, that he may the better serve all; and his ministry has none of the savor of a bargain, the work of a hireling, but the freshness and spontaneity of love. While the ministrations of the saints are given not grudgingly, as under compulsion, but in the sweet constraint of love as unto Christ.

While the servant looks to his Lord for support, the Lord looks to His people to be the channels of that supply which is as unfailing as His love and care. From the form of the expression it is evidently expected that the Lord's servants should live in the same comfort that is enjoyed by those among whom he ministers. The Lord would not have His saints burdened beyond their means that His servants may be in affluence; nor would He have their appearance or circumstances to be a reproach at once to Himself and His people.

Very few and simple are the directions as to all this. "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). At the time when Christ and His love appeal to his heart, EACH ONE was to set apart an amount proportionate to his earnings: this was to be used for the Lord, as He might direct,—for the poor (as in that immediate case), for the Lord's servants laboring at home or abroad, or for whatever might call for such help. It was to be given "not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7)—as Himself is doing. We are all stewards of God's things, and are to minister them under His eye and for Him.—Extract from *The Church According to Scripture* by S. RIDOUT.

* * * *

There ought to be no doubt as to the principle. Those who labor in the Word, whether among those without, or among those within, are entitled to the care of the Church of God. The saints are bound to see that they should be supported without anxiety on their own part. The law itself lays it down, and this, the apostle's two-fold citation of Deuteronomy xxv. 4 shows, as regards not merely the traveling evangelists, but the stationary elders who labor in the Word and teaching. Divine love has its privileges, especially in honoring those who are its chief witnesses and workers. This no doubt is an appeal to the loving compassion of the saints; but no circumstances should hinder the privilege of loving respect and grateful

care for those who give themselves up to serve in the Word. Hence says the apostle (Gal. vi. 6), "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." There is such a thing as the activity of love, not the need of poverty only; and it would be a loss indeed and shame to the saints, if, because the teacher was not actually poor there was to be no room for love in the taught. Were such ideas to supplant or enfeeble plain scripture, the saints would be demoralized.

On the other hand it is a blessed testimony where a man possessed of the best gift and full of the most self-denying labors, like the apostle, is not above working with his hands in order to minister to the wants not of himself only but of others. In Paul's case it was not laying aside the Lord's work to acquire a respectable and lucrative profession, but the use of a trade he already knew to provide things honest and to help others in want. But, precious as this is, and not less in this day of clericalism than of old, THE CHURCH has no just claim to plead such a scripture to excuse her own selfishness and neglect. It is a good word from one so working to his fellow-laborers small or great; but it is quite out of place when pleaded by the saints in order to repress the faith of a spiritual laborer, or to forget their own duty to such as are given up to the Lord's work. Would they have Him and His work put in a subordinate place or the devotedness of the saints quenched? It is most of all serious, when one who has put his hand to the plow is exhorted to take up an occupation for the support of himself and his family, as if the Lord had said not a word to the contrary both for the exercise of his own faith and of love on the part of the saints.—WM. KELLY.

Extract from *The Bible Treasury*, August, 1874.

"Upon the first day of the week let *every one of you* lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). This was written to the Corinthians concerning a collection for the poor, but it contains a *principle* for our guidance, and we gather from it that we are to lay by in

store week by week, as *the Lord prospers*, in the same way that part of our income is laid aside to meet rent, etc. Those who have tried this plan can testify how helpful it is and how greatly their powers of giving have been increased thereby.

Should any ask, "What proportion is to be laid aside it is according as every man hath *purposed in his heart*. No rule can be laid down, as it was under the law, but it will be found that the pleasure and luxury of giving increases with the giving; for as we wait upon the Lord and ask Him what we are to give, we long to give more and more. This must ever be in proportion to that a man *hath*; but poor, as well as rich, can act on this principle for the Macedonian saints were in *deep poverty*, but they abounded in *rich liberality*.

The secret of it all was that they first "gave themselves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:2-5), then all that they possessed naturally and easily followed. Would this not be so with us if we truly realized that we wholly belonged to the Lord? That we are bought with a price, redeemed with the precious blood of Christ? All we have and all that we do belongs to Him. Let us no longer deny His claims by owning them in *deed* as well as in *word*, and give practical expression to our obedience to His will by devoting a right proportion of our earnings to further His interests, whether in caring for the poor, ministering to the Lord's servants, or evangelizing at home and abroad.

Let us do this prayerfully before the Lord, and if He should be pleased to ask us for more than we have set aside, let us thankfully give. We acquire no rights over what is *left* by laying aside a part. We are to give good measure, pressed down, running over, and give in faith laying up in store a good foundation for the time to come. Such givers can ever count upon what Paul said to the Philippians should their circumstances change: "My God shall supply all *your* need." He is not unrighteous to forget what is done to His Name.

Let us affectionately exhort the reader to give *liberally* and give *cheerfully*. If you have never put in practice this

scriptural way here advocated we ask you to *try it*. Many who have done so find it increases their power to help others to a far greater extent than they could have imagined, besides increasing their joy in being the channels of God's goodness to others. —COLONEL JACOB.

LIBERAL GIVING

We have received different inquiries concerning the proper method of distribution of temporal ministry in the Assemblies. This month we print the above short papers written by Brethren of weight and good judgment (men now with the Lord). We also pen a few added lines.

The Apostle who unfolded the Truth of the Church, its fellowship, order, privileges, and responsibilities, has set forth in his Epistles the principles of giving, with also many details, sufficient to inform all and guide us in this special grace.

In First Cor. 16:1-2, we are furnished with instruction concerning the *time* and *proportion* of all giving. "Upon the first day of the week." Upon this day, the Assemblies were gathered together to break bread and at such a sacred season, worship was a chief feature. At that time believers exercised their priestly functions and *gave* to God, thanks, praise, adoration—worship. All this was in return for what He had so freely given to them and such giving is called "the *sacrifice* of praise." (Heb. 13:15). Next at that same season they also gave their temporal means into the collection.

In the past dispensation Israel were instructed to give (a tenth) but now under grace, we give "as the Lord hath prospered." This is the Divine proportion under grace and this was intended to furnish supplies for the Lord's service and interests on earth, and can be properly called Assembly Fellowship, and this part of their service is also called a "sacrifice." As it is written, "to do good and communicate, forget not, for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16.)

The primary cause of this instruction in 1 Cor. 16 was for the poor, but in it a Divine principle was established that has served Assemblies as a guide all the years since

it was written. We who are the subjects of special grace and the present possessors of Eternal Life, as also redemption by the blood, are in truth the people of a liberal giver. The Lord hath dealt out to us from his immense stores of wealth liberally, and in this busy age in which we live, when men move and rush at a tremendous pace we need often to sit down in the presence of God and "count our blessings, name them one by one," and as we thus contemplate His love, grace, mercy and great goodness displayed in the many gifts to us, both spiritual and temporal, we are privileged as a return to give to Him and to others.

Men in the world who have all their possessions here (none in Christ above) oft are *covetous*, a sin which we are often warned against as believers. We need ever to be admonished against being small, narrow, or contracted in our temporal gifts, for such a feature is far beneath the proper standard of Christian testimony, and men of the world look for unselfishness among those who profess to be associated with Christ now in Heaven, and are ever ready to expose the inconsistency of Christians manifesting a money-loving spirit.

The Apostle, in order to encourage and stimulate the saints at Corinth furnished them with *three examples* of free-hearted liberality.

First, Macedonia

From the assemblies in Macedonia, we are furnished with a fine example of giving, for they "first gave their own selves to the Lord." The work of grace there was deep and thorough and they recognized the Lord's claims first upon themselves. (See Rom. 12:1-2. II Cor. 5:15.) This was their first offering to the Lord. They gave themselves. Then after this they poured out their further offerings as it is written "and unto us by the will of God." (2 Cor. 8:1-5.) How lovely to contemplate the *order* of this grace in giving. Then further, what they gave was out of "deep poverty." The Assemblies at Macedonia were not rich in this world's goods. They were poor and

thought of the poor elsewhere, and were stirred in heart by such need, yet in their poverty they could even then *deny themselves* and give liberally, and this grace is commended by the Holy Spirit through the Apostle, and is the first example furnished for the Corinthians who had previously come behind in such free-hearted liberality. (See 2 Cor. 11 :7-12.)

Second, The Lord Jesus

The next example furnished was that of our Lord Himself, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." V. 9. Little comment is necessary to add to those lines. The grace and tender love of Christ our Lord in leaving the heavens above and coming down to the earth, His humiliation and death upon the cross, in order that He might bring us out from under the burden of our sins, and deepest poverty and bring us into such a large wealthy place. As Hannah in her prophetic song has so beautifully expressed, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill; to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Sam. 2:8; Eph. 2:4-7.)

This perfect example of Christ our Lord was enough to stir and stimulate all at Corinth, to open up their hearts freely in giving to God first, and then to others, by the Spirit.

Third, The Manna

Israel as a nation, in their wilderness history, serve as another example, when the Lord gave them manna from heaven, their mutual love and care was expressed for each other, "As it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack." (V. 10-15.) The Lord gave them first. Then they shared with each other in this rich bounty.

We might add a few of the different spheres where such distributions meet a continual need.

(1) The poor are ever to be remembered. The Lord Himself said, "For ye have the poor with you always

and whensoever ye will ye may do them good." (Mark 14:7.)

(2) Servants of Christ who are called to give up their lives to preach the Gospel or to teach the Word. Men who take nothing from the world (3 John 5-8). Such men have no salary, or stipulated sums to depend upon. Such a sacred service calls for the constant care of the Assemblies and the Lord's stewards. Hence the Apostle wrote, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?—even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel." (1 Cor. 9:1-14.)

(3) Such servants may pass on to new fields of labor, and we learn by the example of the saints of Philippi that they remembered the Apostle who had first brought the light and truth to them. "Once and again ye sent to my necessities" and this is placed down to their credit, while concerning other churches, he writes, "No church communicated with me concerning giving or receiving but ye only," this is recorded to their loss. (Phil. 4:10-18.)

(4) Those who may be confined to local spheres of labor and who devote their lives to His service, it may be by word or by pen. Of those, the Apostle writes, "Him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth," and "The laborer is worthy of his hire." (1 Cor. 9:1-18—Gal. 6:6—I Tim. 5:17 and 18—Luke 10:7—Deut. 25:4.)

(5) Missionaries. Men and women who have gone to far-off fields to spread the fame of the precious, peerless Name of Jesus our Lord, and whose service in those fields, brings its own commendation. Such should ever be upon our hearts in prayer, and also remembered by the Assemblies in their distributions. All those special needs in the Lord's work and testimony, furnish the saints with privileges and opportunities; combined also with weighty responsibilities. Wisdom, good judgment, godly discernment and discrimination in such distributions are necessary that the mind of the Lord be discerned, so that none be over-supplied on the one hand, and others be

made to suffer. God will be the sufficiency for His people, if His face is properly sought.—(Ed.)

THE MINISTRY OF PETER

(A Bible Reading)

(Continued from July Issue)

5. The Kingdom *in mystery*.

In this we get the spiritual form of the Kingdom, not that political form which we saw transferred to the Gentiles. This character of the Kingdom we will need to examine with more care and perhaps at greater length, as presented in *our*, the Christian, dispensation. Early in the ministry of our Lord upon earth, He began to indicate, especially by parables, the change in the character of the Kingdom, as we shall now look at it. For, early in that ministry, clear signs were given that what He was offering them would be refused, as opposition daily increased.

In Matt. 13:1 He left *the house* and went out to the *seaside*. This gives us a hint He was about to leave Israel; "the house" speaks of His people; and going out to the "seaside" speaks of His place of service among the mass of the nations ever since. By the sea, He gave them parables illustrating the Kingdom during the whole period of His absence from Israel and the world until His return. This He styles the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," or the Kingdom in its mysterious form.

Ques.—What is mysterious about the Kingdom now?

Ans.—Because in this Kingdom, already formed upon the earth, there is present no visible king. It never was so before, nor will ever be so again—thousands and millions of subjects, *but no visible king!* With David, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, Alexander, or Caesar, there was not this mystery. The king was present. But now, no king of *this* kingdom is seen or present, yet multitudes on the earth profess to be subject to Him; and the Kingdom in its present form embraces this whole class. Many can say from their hearts what David's servants said in 2 Sam. 15:15.

This sets before us the Kingdom as *we* need to know and understand it. In the Millennium it will embrace the whole world; but *now* it includes only those who are His professed followers—not the heathen, not the Jews, but those only who profess subjection to Christ—whether it be real or only nominal. If you notice all the scriptures concerning the Kingdom in its present form, or as it will be in the Millennium, you will discover much in it that is not real, but the *imitation* of what is real. In the future there will be those who will yield but *feigned obedience* (Psa. 18:44; 66:3, margin). And in its present form there are tares as well as wheat, foolish as well as wise virgins. This is what the Lord Himself warned us of (Matt. 13; 25:1-10).

While Paul's line was the Church, yet we see that he did not set aside the Kingdom truth; and this led his adversaries to say that he preached another king, one Jesus (Acts 14:22; 17:7; 20:28). But when we study *Peter's line*, we see that his special ministry was the Kingdom itself—the Kingdom as it is now, and the Kingdom as it shall be by and by.

The Kingdom as announced by John the Baptist, and by the Lord afterward, the Jews refused; and of course in that form it is now in abeyance. It is deferred until the Lord returns, when the remnant of Israel will gladly receive Him, and His earthly kingdom will be established in power and glory upon the earth. But in this interval, while the King is away, the Kingdom is in this mystery form which we have been considering.

Ques.—Is it right to sing, with the poet, “He is my Prophet, Priest, and King?”

Ans.—Yes, I think so. The apostle preached “another King, even Jesus;” and we are in the kingdom of God's dear Son. What can He be to those in the Kingdom except our Sovereign Ruler?—that is, the King; and we are in the Kingdom, His subjects. We fill this place, and ought to recognize it as well as the truth of the Church.

In the writings of a few hundred years ago they never got much beyond the Kingdom truth. In the last seventy

years the truth as to the Church has come out so fully that many of us may have gone to the opposite extreme. We can see little anywhere but the Church. But we must not read the Church into John's Gospel. In John 17, where we get the oneness of God's people, it is the oneness of the children—that is, of the family; and this is *John's special line*.

Of course, we do not call Him King of the Church. He is *Head* of the Church; but when we touch the Kingdom, we give Him His true place there as King. When we turn to John's epistle, we do not see the Church and its Head, nor yet the King and the Kingdom, but rather the Father and the children. These lines are all distinct, and we must give to each its own distinctive place. Yet we belong to the three distinct spheres—the Church, the Family, and the Kingdom.

As we are developing the Kingdom in its present stage, we will be greatly helped if we see that there are two sides to the Kingdom now. Failing to see this, many are left in a fog, and there appear to be contradictions. So far we have been looking at it in its earthly aspect, where the advancement of it is in human hands, and of course failure can be seen, for there are tares in it as well as wheat. Our Lord declares this. But there is another side of the Kingdom also—the heavenly, or divine, side; and none but those who are real, those who are born of God, belong to that. This is the side spoken of in Col. 1:13. There is no contradiction between Matt. 13 and Col. 1; for one gives the earthly side of the Kingdom as it now is, and the other the divine side. By our profession here we are recognized as subjects and followers of our Lord on earth, and so we are in His Kingdom among men. But this might be only profession. If born again, converted, we belong to God and His Son, and by that fact belong to the Kingdom in its divine and heavenly aspect. Hence the great importance of distinguishing between these two sides of the Kingdom.

Ques.—What is the difference between the expressions “kingdom of God” and “the kingdom of heaven?”

Ans.—The difference is very simple. The expression “kingdom of God” gives us the idea of *the Person* whose rule is recognized; “the kingdom of heaven,” *the place* whence the rule comes. In Canada, if we ask them whose rule they recognize, one day they might say the rule of king George; that is the *person* whose rule is recognized. The next day they might say that it was the rule of England; that would be the *place* from which the rule came. In Matthew only do we get the expression “kingdom of heaven.” And there it is always the earth, that is, people on earth, recognizing the rule coming from the heavens. Now in the Gospel of Luke, where we get parables similar to those in Matthew, it is simply this change from place to Person. In Matthew, the *place* from which the rule comes; in Luke, it is the *Person* whose rule is recognized.

But in other places the kingdom of God may, and does, differ. Take, for instance, the much-abused verse, Luke 17:20, 21, “The kingdom of God is *within* you.” This passage is continually applied to the kingdom within a believer’s heart; but upon reading the context carefully we see that the Lord was not addressing His disciples, but the Pharisees, and it could not mean that the kingdom was in their hearts. They asked Him when the kingdom of God should appear. His answer was, “It is now *among* you”: that is, in the midst of you. This is the true reading. He was Himself the King, and the kingdom of God was represented there, and all its interests and character in Him, if they had but eyes to discern it.

There is another expression of it in Rom. 14:17: “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.” This passage does not refer to the dispensational form of the Kingdom as we have been considering it, nor yet as the passage in Luke 17. The truth embodied in the passage is *individual* and *moral*. Wherever a child of God walks in true subjection to God, the moral characteristics of his life are given here. He will not be a man characterized by little bickerings and

differences such as this chapter describes—meats and drinks—but, rather, the ennobling characteristics of the kingdom of God will be expressed in him—righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Such life is a miniature illustration of these features of the kingdom of God. Persons of such spirit are not contentiously occupied with trifles. Their hearts and lives are governed by God Himself. This is God's kingdom in the individual; *the moral and practical rule of God in man's soul*. This is a line of ministry we should keep more to the front, especially in our day, when the principles of righteousness are largely being given up. For, be it observed, the principle of righteousness is *first* in the kingdom of God.

6. The Kingdom in *Power and Glory*.

We pass on now to the Kingdom as it will be established over the whole earth in the Millennium, when the true King returns. It will take an entirely new form then, as predicted by the prophecies, and which the types in so many places illustrate: as, for instance, the times of David and Solomon.

We will get help in reading Luke 19:12. From this passage we learn that when Israel refused the Lord, He returned to heaven, "the far country," to receive a kingdom and return. He has gone to heaven; and during His absence the Holy Spirit is present on earth, gathering out the Church—His Bride. Christ coming for us, according to 1 Thess. 4:15-18, will close this period. A new scene then will open up, as described in Dan. 7:9-14, where the true reading is, "The thrones were *set up*," not "cast down." In this vision we see the "Ancient of Days" (God), and one like the "Son of man" (Christ), brought near to Him, and He receives the kingdom. This links well with Ezek. 21, "Until He comes whose right it is." This leads us on also to the time when the seventh, or last, angel sounds his trumpet, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). The crown, the throne, the sceptre, the kingdom, will all pass over into His hands.

Then in Rev. 19 He is seen as coming upon the white horse, and the crowns upon His head. The judgment of the "quick" will then follow—that is, all the ungodly then living upon the earth; and He will cast out of His kingdom all things that offend (Matt. 13:41-42).

Israel will then enter into their long-looked for blessing. Restored to the land, they will be all righteous. The *remnant*, that pass through the tribulation, will expand and multiply, and become a large nation (Isa. chapters 60 and 61).

The nations will also be brought into blessing. But, during the Millennium, many among them, while enjoying the blessings and favors of the millennial kingdom, will give only "feigned obedience" (see Psa. 18:44; 66:3, margin), and the end of the thousand years will manifest their true condition. Satan being loosed for a little while, under his leading they rise in rebellion.

Thus we see the Kingdom in its earthly side has in it both classes, true and false. In David's day we saw this. In our present dispensation there are wheat and tares; and in the Millennium, those who will be true and those who will give but feigned obedience. We see the long-suffering grace of God in the past, and in the present, and even in the future, although *righteousness* will be the leading characteristic of the future Kingdom. But for its perfect state we must wait for its final form—the Kingdom in eternity.

We have given the earthly side of the Kingdom in the Millennium, called the "kingdom of His Son" (Matt. 13:41). There will be also the heavenly side—in which *we* shall be—where the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the "kingdom of their Father." ver. 43. The Church, as also the Old Testament saints, will have their inheritance in that *heavenly* Kingdom; while Israel restored to Palestine, and the nations converted through them, shall be in the *earthly* Kingdom. Thus heaven and earth are included in the millennial Kingdom.

7. The *eternal* Kingdom.

“Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God”—at the close of the period called the Millennium, when the last enemy shall be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

We saw how, at the beginning of the Millennium, when the Lord comes to take possession of the Kingdom, it is filled with evil and rebellion, and He puts His enemies under His feet, as described in the second psalm. He begins by casting out “all things that offend.” After the thousand years of His righteous rule, the unrighteous dead are raised to appear before the great white throne; they are judged according to their works, and are cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15). The last enemy, Death, is destroyed; the whole Kingdom is cleansed; all traces of evil put away, and our Lord and Saviour then delivers up the Kingdom to God, in complete subjection to the Father. This will be the last and eternal form of the Kingdom, in which the Triune God—Father, Son, and Spirit—shall be all in all. This is the end (1 Cor. 15:24). The Church abides forever. The Family abides forever. The Kingdom also will abide forever. Jehovah is called the King of Eternity (Jer. 10:10, margin), and His kingdom is an “everlasting kingdom” (2 Peter 1:11).

And our notes of praise have already begun: “Unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim. 1:17).

A. E. B.

THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT

A number of this group reached our shores last winter suddenly, and rapidly passed through the larger cities of Canada and United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and finally returned to the place from whence they came. They were received and entertained by different Protestant Churches, a movement utterly void of almost every fundamental doctrine of the New Testament. When such a movement is received we are furnished with another illustration how dark many Protest-

ant ministers and church members are concerning the simplest features of the Christian faith as taught in the New Testament. In some places, people were carried away with this movement, because of their ignorance of the proper features of Gospel Truth. Others, we believe, were influenced because of the growing formalism of many present churches, combined with a lack of spiritual life and vigor, and in those cases a change is desired, and we believe another class have become tired of Bible teaching and like Israel of old when the manna was placed at their tent doors each morning, in time grew tired of such food, "and loathed the light bread." Today men also grow weary of hearing a continued ministry concerning Christ, the Life-giving and Life-sustaining Bread from heaven, and such are ever ready for something new, especially if those who bring it have a striking personality. But our preservative from this snare in this country was, many before they came were established in fundamental teaching, had read and searched the Scriptures and they knew the Good Shepherd's voice, and readily detected, discerned and *refused* this new voice. We praise God for all such.

A pamphlet has just reached us from the pen of our brother, A. J. Pollock, England, exposing the movement under four heads:

1. Its doctrine.
2. Its practices.
3. Its founder.
4. The conclusions.

We insert from the conclusions at the close a few paragraphs, but urge our readers to send to our publishing office for the pamphlet itself, price 10 cents, and after reading the whole pamphlet, each will be better able to help and enlighten others.—(Ed.)

"In examining the doctrines of The Movement as set forth in their literature, and the practices of the cult, and the character of its founder, we are now in a position to draw clear Conclusions.

The Movement is decidedly modernistic in trend. No

simple enquirer reading their literature can get a clear knowledge of the cross, of redemption, of the way to be saved. Here and there orthodox sentences are dropped in, but mixed up with them is vague teaching of a modernistic tendency as we have seen. Nor are its practices Scriptural, but fraught with danger and disaster to those who practice them. Further, the gospel received by the Groupers does not deliver from the world. It was said of a married couple, who had "surrendered" and become Groupers:

"Together they have begun to do great things for Christ. Although they go to dinners, dances, theatre parties, concerts with the old crowd, all their social life is permeated with the spirit of deeper understanding." (*Children of the Second Birth*, p. 50. S. M. Shoemaker, Jr.)

Again we read:

"All alone in the quiet of her room one night scarcely realizing all that was involved in it, she surrendered to God. A terrible restlessness had been tossing her soul; she lay there hinking rebellious and mutinous thoughts, and then she said to herself, 'I've tried my way and haven't found happiness, why not try God's way?' She did it there and then. All through the hours till morning she lay bathed in a wonderful Presence filled with unutterable calm and peace . . . A man she was dancing with, whom she had known for years, asked her, 'What makes you look so radiantly happy?' And with a twinkle she replied, 'I've got religion'."

(*Children of the Second Birth*, p. 165.)

We ask, what kind of conversion is this? Believers are told, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John II, 15.) What stern language we read, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James IV. 4.) A religion in which the offense of the cross has ceased is not the religion of the Bible. We note, too, how very, very seldom does the word "Lord" occur in the vocabulary of the Group. Yet we are told, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. XII. 3.) Constantly we read "Jesus" and "Jesus Christ" and "Christ," but scarcely

once does the word "Lord" appear. This is a bad sign indeed.

We are convinced that a religion founded on experience, and that experience not founded on the Word of God, is false and anti-christian.

The conclusion of the Rev. C. M. Chavasse as to The Oxford Group Movement is the mature judgment of one, who has had ample opportunities of examining into it first hand. He says:

"The Movement is Group-centered, not Christ-centered . . . Surrender is made to the Group. Witness is born in the Group. Loyalty is demanded for the Group. Guidance is checked by the Group. Inspiration is expected from the Group. Fellowship is centered in the Group. It is possible for a member not to believe in the Divinity of our Lord, and yet to be content . . . The collective guidance of the Group has become the accepted test of the guidance of each of its members. And it is well to remember that behind the many local groups there is the Inner Group with its head, which I dare to affirm with deliberation and knowledge can fairly be compared to the hierarchy of the Roman Church and an infallible Pope."

Where is the Spirit of God in all this, spite of their claim to His guidance in their Quiet Time?

What is our conclusion, come to reluctantly and after much thought and enquiry? We believe solemnly and before God that The Oxford Group Movement is one of the latter day delusions of Satan, posturing as an angel of light. Judged by the Bible and its own literature it stands condemned. Its own literature, written in its favour, we repeat, is its own blackest condemnation. Every true Christian should avoid this cult, and warn any they come across, who are likely to be ensnared by its subtilty and evil.

We are assured that many true Christians are caught by it, and we trust many such will be delivered by this attempt to set things in their true light.

May God be graciously pleased to bless this effort, and use it for His glory and the spiritual help of our readers."

A. J. POLLOCK (England).

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

Lake Erie Bible Conference, at the Evangelical Training School Campus on Lake Erie, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., beginning (D.V.) with supper Saturday, August 19th, and until after breakfast Monday, August 28th. For folder of rates and additional information, write F. B. Tomkinson, 910 French St., Erie, Pa.

Special prayer is requested for the coming Conference at Dunkirk, that much spiritual help may be extended to all the Lord's people present, as well as much power and blessing in the preaching of the Gospel.

The Lord willing there will be a conference at Nashua, Iowa, beginning Friday evening, August 25th, and continuing over Lord's Day. Those expecting to come please notify Charles Cross, Nashua, Iowa.

The annual Bible Conference at Minneapolis, June 22-25, was indeed El Nathan—a gift of God.

A goodly company was in attendance, representing a number of assemblies from nearby and distant states.

Laborers present included Wm. Dewar of Spokane; J. F. Stebbins of Tampa; W. G. Amies of Audubon, N. J.; and A. J. Adolfson of Hibbing, Minn. The presence of J. N. Mackenzie of California was appreciated.

The conference was marked by unity, joy and worship. Unfoldings of precious truth concerning the counsels of God and the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ were beautifully seasoned with devotional touches which provoked praise and with practical observations as to resultant responsibility in walk and conduct which had a sobering effect. The beauty, variety and sufficiency of the Word of God came in for repeated consideration in such a manner as to promote an eager longing in our hearts for a larger measure of personal intimate acquaintance with it and meditation upon it.

As usual, the Conference gatherings proper were preceded by the prayer meeting on Wednesday evening, and meetings for prayer were held daily at 9.

The three reading meetings took us into Ephesians 1:1-14, where our hearts were made to burn within us as we enjoyed the confidences of our God concerning His eternal counsels.

Outstanding among the subjects considered were: our "calling" and "sainthood" "in Christ"; our "spiritual" blessings, "in the heavenlies"; the eternal Sonship of Christ, which we found to be abundantly attested in many parts of Scripture; predestination and election; the "blameless" portion of God's children; the

"adoption," with its blessed privileges; the favor into which we have been brought; the redemption provided for us; the divine "abounding"; the sweet intimacies of "the mystery of His will"; the heading up of all things in Christ; our inheritance in Him; the Spirit's sealing; the earnest; the "praise," the "riches," and the "glory" of His grace.

Afternoon and evening platform services were distributed among the laborers, the latter being devoted to the Gospel for the unsaved. Open air meetings each evening except the first carried the Good News to many on the streets. The children were not overlooked, Bro. Adolfson meeting them daily except Lord's Day.

The breaking of bread service was one not soon to be forgotten, an appropriate climax to the days of ministry which had preceded. Our Lord, who had so richly ministered to our poor hearts, received somewhat of His portion in that season which no words could portray.

The hosts of the Conference had matters well in hand. Their orderly management of temporal arrangements harmonized well with the other features of the meeting.

In closing, I cannot do better than to insert the passages which appeared on one of the Scripture calendars for the opening day, which seem to summarize the Conference so well:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Ps. 133:1.

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:3.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Lee Wilfred Ames.

INSUBORDINATION

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:6).

It is for lack of subordination that we often miss the guidance we seek. There is a secret controversy between our will and God's. And we shall never be right till we have let Him take, and break, and make. Oh, do seek for that! Never rest till that attitude be yours. Hand yourself over to Him to work in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure. We must be as plastic clay, ready to take any shape that the great Potter may choose: so shall we be able to detect His guidance.

"By and by we shall serve God in a world of glory; now we are called to serve Him in a world of suffering."

"Joshua was Moses' servant (Joshua 1:1). Those only are fitted to rule who have learned to obey."

THE SECOND COMING

We purpose with this issue to begin a series of papers giving a more direct testimony concerning the second coming of our Lord, for the New Testament page is full of this great theme, and we cherish the hope that the subject will be viewed more fully in its relation to all that we will be brought into when we shall have our transfer to the Father's house above, and in due relation to what applies to the Christian life on earth while we wait for His coming, so that in view of this blessed hope we may comply more fully with the Lord's own express desire, "Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." And our hope is to insert papers and testimonials from prominent men in the past and present generation, men who loved and taught the Truth of the Lord's second coming.

During the past one hundred years the Lord has graciously raised up men of distinct ability and gifts, as also of marked spirituality, who have by oral ministry and by pen preached and taught the Truth of the Personal and imminent return of our Lord, so that never since the Apostolic Era has there been such a flood of light upon the Scriptures concerning this blessed hope of the Lord's return. The last one hundred years has witnessed a revival of this soul-stirring theme, and upon prophetic teaching in general; and the result of this revival is, there is both in the home and foreign fields a vast number of faithful men who preach and teach the truth of the second coming.

And further, the printing press has furnished literature in such abundance from the small four-page tract to immense volumes of great value, which unfold in marvelous detail this sacred theme. In all this we recognize a direct work of the Holy Spirit, and a fulfilment of our Lord's teaching in that wonderful parable of the ten virgins. "At midnight, there was a cry made, 'Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him'." (Math. 25:1-13)

Such facts bear witness afresh of the abiding faithfulness of our Lord on high Who yet remains Head of the church; and if during His absence from earth the church has drifted from the witness so distinctly borne during the Apostolic period, and has largely departed from the New Testament teaching, He abides as "the faithful and true witness." Such considerations and reflections give to pious believers great encouragement and produces the spirit of praise and thanksgiving to Him. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

THE COMING AND THE COMFORT

Three brief lessons we select from the sacred Scriptures concerning the future.

THE COMING

First. Our Lord and Saviour is coming again. On the basis of His atoning sacrifice *we who believe* on His Name are forgiven, possess now eternal life, and when He comes again we *shall see Him face to face*. The Old Testament predicted again and again for four thousand years His first Coming, and in due time He came, was crucified, rose from the dead, and then returned to heaven, and has now been upon the Father's throne for nineteen hundred years, but His parting promise before He left was "I will come again."—(John 14:1-3)

Soon after He returned to heaven, two heavenly messengers were sent to confirm all previous promises. "This same Jesus . . . shall so come . . . as ye have seen Him go."—(Acts 1:9-11). Then another message was sent to His people still later, "A little while and He that shall come will come and will not tarry."—(Heb. 10:37). The early church believed those promises, and looked for Him daily, but the day of grace has been extended, and God's long suffering with men (and seeming delay) has brought salvation to millions, but He is coming.

THE CHANGE

Second. When He comes a cluster of miraculous events will take place.

(1) All believers who have died will rise from their graves first.

(2) Then believers alive "shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

(3) And they "shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

What a great procession will pass from earth to heaven! The clouds, the royal chariots, will descend to meet, and then escort the whole company home to Glory. In the air we shall meet Him, and see Him face to face. This may be today, this very hour, then we shall be forever with the Lord. What a precious promise! What a bright prospect, and what glorious anticipation! — (1 Cor. 15:51-52. 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

THE COMFORT

Third. This great theme was intended to minister comfort to all who are born of God. The second coming begins like a golden chain, link after link through the entire New Testament, and is enshrined in more than three hundred verses. It begins with the four Gospels, runs through the book of Acts, also the twenty-one Epistles, and continues through the book of Revelation, from the first chapter to the last. In the last chapter the Divine light falls upon the promise of His coming like the magnificent glory of the Shekinah of old, thus making this precious theme sparkle with rich splendor and beauty. The last words of the risen and glorified Savior from heaven were expressed three times, "Behold I come quickly," and again, "And behold I come quickly," and again, "Surely I come quickly."

Are you poor in this world? He is coming. Have you lost friends near and dear? He is coming. Has death taken some of your loved ones home? He is coming. Have you experienced disappointments on earth? He is coming. Has the church and the church testimony failed, and disappointed you? Remember He—the Holy and True has never failed, will never disappoint, but will keep every promise. He is coming. This precious theme, the second

coming, is like a living spring, sparkling with purity and sweetness. Draw near to it, and receive from its supplies largely and freely, the comfort, the consolation, and the encouragement that it contains, and then as you think of the whole company of His redeemed, remember the Apostle's words, "Comfort one another with these words."

A. E. BOOTH

Lord Jesus, come!
Thine absence here we mourn;
No joys we know apart from Thee,
No sorrow in Thy presence see.
Come, Jesus, come!

Lord Jesus, come!
And take Thy people home;
That all Thy flock, so scattered here,
With Thee in glory may appear.
Lord Jesus, come!

THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S AT HIS COMING

What a scene of indescribable glory that will be, when the Lord Himself will descend to gather His redeemed to the home He has prepared for them!

What a moment of supreme delight, when at the shout the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, His sleeping saints raised, and living saints changed, "shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord!"

All the hosts of the redeemed will be marshalled there in bodies of glory, instinct with divine life; the saints of old, who on the faith of a promise were worshipers, pilgrims, strangers—those to whose faith dens and caves bore witness, "of whom the world was not worthy"; the elders and just men, who "died in faith, not having received the promise" will be there; "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"; "Noah, Daniel, and Job"; "Moses and Elias," will be there; Abel and the long line of martyrs; Aaron

and the Lord's priests; Samuel and the Lord's prophets; David and the men of faith who sat on his throne; all God's renowned ones, the perfected just, shall stand in that scene for which they in faith waited.

"The Church of the firstborn ones," as the Bride, prepared for her Lord, will then take her place with Him; all down to the last new-born soul who shall form the completion of the mystery. She, too; will recount her worthies—the many who have stood forth in other days, and in our own day, as the witnesses of God's truth and the heralds of God's salvation: all shall ascend together and swell the countless multitude of Christ's redeemed ones who shall take their place in their respective glories: "every man in his own order"—star differing from star in glory, and each reflecting the image of Jesus.

There will be seats in the Kingdom; thrones for rulership over the tribes of Israel; mansions in the Father's house; thrones around the throne of God; all shall be occupied by the redeemed, each invested with the insignia that sovereign love has assigned him.

All will know even as they are known, each known to each—all known to all. What a season of unutterable joy, of holy intercourse, of uninterrupted communion! But the rapturous thought of each one of this innumerable company will be that *they are Christ's*. "I am my beloved's, and His desire is towards me."

To be Christ's own will be a source of deep, unmixed pleasure then, and should it not be so now? The absorbing object of their heaven-inspired vision will be CHRIST; to be for ever with Him, to behold Him; to cast their crowns at His feet, paying the heart's deep homage to Him in one united utterance of "THOU ART WORTHY, FOR THOU WAST SLAIN, AND HAST REDEEMED US TO GOD BY THY BLOOD!"

The power of Christ's resurrection will be applied to the bodies of His saints; they will be raised, because He has been raised. By virtue of having His life, and being indwelt with His Spirit, they will be presented in the perfection of that life, in its full triumphs over death, and

over him who had the power of death. They are raised—not for judgment, that to them is passed, Christ bore it for them—but because they are Christ's.

Christ's resurrection was the first fruits and the pledge of that abundant ingathering. He was the first sheaf presented to the Lord, the sample and earnest of the harvest that shall then be gathered into the garner of God. The reunited dust shall be reanimated with divine life; weakness shall be transformed into power; corruption into incorruption; dishonor into glory; the natural body into a spiritual body; it will bear the impress of the heavenly even as it has borne the image of the earthy. Where is the sting of death? Gone! Where is the grave's victory? Gone! Victory, full, complete, eternal, is theirs, and Satan bruised under their feet for ever!

The saints will stand before the tribunal of Christ to receive the rewards of the Kingdom, but they will appear there as glorified saints; no stain of sin shall be there; the last trace of the curse shall have been removed; the reproach of Egypt for ever rolled away; the death of the slain Lamb will be learnt in the light of glory, and in the presence of God.

Earth may move on still in its course and projects, as it did when its light was set in the darkness of the cross; its religion may go on too, compatible with its godless pursuits, until judgment breaks the spell of its delusion and dissolves the dream, awakening men to the dread reality of "falling into the hands of the living God."

The light, God's light, shall have been removed to its own proper sphere, there to reflect in each one of the redeemed its peculiar brightness, shining as the brightness of the firmament, and as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father—with Him who is the Sun and Centre of that heavenly sphere, undimmed by any cloud of unbelief or doubt. There they will see the counsels of God unfolded before them, whether relating to the heavens above, or the earth beneath. In the presence of His glory, they shall be presented faultless, with exceeding joy; and when He

“takes His great power, and reigns” over a judged and renovated earth, they will be with Him there.

After the course of the Kingdom shall be complete, and He delivers up the Kingdom to the Father, He will be tabernacled in the dwelling-place of righteousness, in the new heavens and new earth, and they will still be with Him. They are Christ’s present and eternal portion, and their place is to be “for ever with the Lord.” Whether in the Kingdom, or in the new heavens and new earth, they will enjoy the rest of God in its perfection, and bear witness to His glory in the exalted sphere in which grace has set them, and for which grace has adapted them.

The hope for which we wait is not judgment, nor the Kingdom in power, nor Israel’s restoration or the deliverance of creation from its present bondage (which is all true in its place), but we wait for God’s Son from heaven! He is coming not only to fulfil *prophecy*, but to fulfil *promise*: “I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14:3). Judgment waits for this. The restoration of Israel and creation’s deliverance, all waits suspended until the rapture of the saints shall have taken place.

After the Lord Jesus has gathered His own to Himself in the heavens, He will make good the prophetic Word in its bearing towards the earth, and deliver creation, bringing it into the liberty of redemption.

Well may the affections and longings of our hearts be moved at the prospect! Well may the sound of that well-known scripture reverberate in the inner man, “Behold, I come quickly!” Yes, He is coming, to appropriate to Himself that which He has purchased at His own Personal cost, to whom He can say, “I have redeemed thee; thou art Mine!” He will surround Himself with the trophies of redeeming love!

The Father’s will shall be fully accomplished in the resurrection and glorification of those who are the objects of it; for this they were saved. Our necessities were not the first cause—God is glorified in the redemption He has

wrought, and the objects of His love are prepared for the glory that awaits them. They shall stand in the unclouded light of divine righteousness, and be *at home* there. The robe in which they are arrayed is divinely righteous, and meet for the occasion.

God, resting in the complacency of omnipotent love, will welcome them to Himself. His own immediate presence will be their rest; His unclouded glory, the sphere of their worship; God and the Lamb, their light and their temple: He will dwell in their midst—they are His people, and He their God.

What a prospect! Even the anticipation of such a hope lifts our spirits above the clouds and mists of earth; but we need purified hearts that the rays of that glory may reach within, and shed its light. The Holy Spirit will then lead us to look after the house, and rid it of its corruptions and intrusions.

Oh, that our constant position may be as those who are “turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God”—to wait for His Son from heaven with purified heart and a single eye, with staff and girdle, ready to welcome the shout in the air whenever it may be uttered; with nothing to leave behind that would retard our upward flight, nothing that may clash with that oft-expressed desire:

“Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

G. V. WIGRAM.

OUR HOPE

“I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:3)

Heart devotedness to Christ and obedience will only be thought of value in the past when we come to meet Him.

“I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.” This is the language of affection. He does not say, I will send for you. No, that would not satisfy the heart—“I will come.” He would not be content without having them where He is, and without coming to fetch them.

“The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” But if I see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, Ah! I say, now I am indeed at home, that is the sight that dazzles every other, and that is the sight which is for me.

The shape (the Lord’s coming) has taken in my mind is, how it connects itself with every thought and relationship of the Christian in scripture. I never treat of it now as a point of knowledge.

That way is upward still—
Where life and glory are;
My rest’s above:
In perfect love
The glory I shall share.

Is the thought of the Lord’s coming your daily delight? Does it influence you in the ten thousand details of your everyday life? Or are you so walking hand in hand with the world that the very thought of His coming fills you with shame?

He is gone to prepare a place for us. . . . We shall be there . . . ever with Him: no interruption, no decay of joy, but rather ever increasing delight, as there always is when the object is worthy of the heart, and here it is infinite.

John 14:23. The Father and the Son come and make their abode with us. How little we have this manifestation! The Lord’s heart is on them, they cannot be happy here; but they are to look for the blessedness of being with the Father, and “we will come and abide in you, till you can come and abide with us.”

He will take the place of a servant even in the glory. “He shall gird Himself . . . and will come forth and serve them.” His love is His glory; the nearer we are to Him, the more we shall adore Him.

There is nothing more practically important for everyday work and service than our waiting for God’s Son from heaven. . . . The moment I am waiting for God’s Son from heaven, my life is but the dealings of God with me with an object, and the object is that it should be to praise and

honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The saints were converted to wait for God's Son from heaven, and when they lost that, all the mischief came in. . . . If you were constantly waiting for Him, would it not change you? Would people be heaping up money or treasures when they know He is coming?

You cannot float down the stream of the world that is going to the ocean of judgment. You are to be looking for Him.

And can I call my home,
My Father's house on high?
The rest of God, my rest to come
My place of liberty?

Yes! in that light unstained,
My stainless soul shall live;
My heart's deep longings more
than gained,
When God His rest shall give!

J. N. DARBY.

The subject of the Second Coming to be continued next month. D. V.

JOHN'S MINISTRY—THE FAMILY

(A Bible Reading)

The 1st epistle of John, 3rd chapter, was read.

In our first reading the subject was the Kingdom—Peter's ministry. Now we will take up that of John—the Family. John's ministry has its special charms, and fills an important place in God's inspired book. The key word, we might say, to John's ministry is "life." He emphasizes divine life from the beginning, and there is a continued development of eternal life all through.

First. In his Gospel, the main thought is divine life manifested in Christ the Son, and this life also communicated to others, which is always associated, in John, with new birth. Natural life is associated with natural birth: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Spiritual life, that is life communicated by the Spirit, is connected with *new* birth: "That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit." Christ Himself is the source of this life: "In Him was life." These thoughts are of great importance today,

as many seek to *dissociate* eternal life from new birth. Terms such as "divine life," "spiritual life," "eternal life," mean the same. It is "divine," as coming from *God*. It is "spiritual life," in contrast with physical, or *natural*, life; and it is "eternal life," in contrast with that which *begins* and *ends* in time. They always mean life that God communicates to men through His Son, and by the Holy Spirit. We are recipients of that life at new birth. "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," and "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life." *Faith* is the principle upon which this life is received (John 20:31). Every soul born of God possesses this eternal life. The life will develop in God's children as they grow, but it is always eternal life—in the weakest child of God or in the most advanced.

In John's epistle, in which we have read this morning, we get this development of life. It is first seen in the "little children"—those newly born of God. Then we see it more fully developed in those called "young men." Afterwards, more matured in those called "fathers." But in each case—little children, young men, or fathers—it is spiritual life, eternal, and communicated at new birth.

In the book of Revelation we get a further stage. In chapter 21 we reach the New Jerusalem, in the heavens. That will include the whole heavenly Family. The Church, the Bride, will of course have a special place there. Hence the New Jerusalem is compared to a bride. It will be a bridal city. But we learn from the epistle to the Hebrews that the Old Testament saints looked for that city; therefore it will embrace the whole *heavenly* family, the redeemed, who are born of God. There we will find things perfect; and, as that city overshadows the earth, there shall be a full and perfect display of that divine life in God's children. This will be life in divine perfection, the display of which will burst out then. Thus, in the Gospel of John we see life in the Son; in John's epistle, that same divine life in the children of God; and in the book of Revelation, when we get our glorified bodies, and the New Jerusalem formed and completed, God will display

that life in its perfection. Thus John's ministry regarding life leads us on step by step. Here, while eternal life is communicated,—quickenened by the Spirit,—our body is not quickened yet. We await that change, which will take place at our Lord's second coming, when there will be nothing more to hinder the full display of eternal life in those born of God. (See Rom. 8:10, 11.)

Ques.—What connection have the second and third epistles of John with the first?

Ans.—Those two epistles are very important. They come in a practical way, guarding us against extremes, and should be carefully considered. The second epistle seeks to guard a woman given to hospitality from being governed by her sympathies and affections in receiving teachers into her home when their teaching was not in accord with the Person of the Lord. In it we learn also that the slightest degree of association with a false teacher rendered her a partaker of his evil deeds—a very important line of ministry for our day.

In the third epistle the Spirit seeks to guard against an opposite extreme—from those lording over God's people; men seeking pre-eminence in the little assemblies; in self-will ruling with a high hand, and excluding those that bring the doctrine of Christ. There are those in our day, as well as in the days of the apostles, working havoc among God's children. Let us all be warned by the teaching of these two epistles, and guard against these two extremes.

Let us notice now that in John's first epistle the great thought is God's family. John addresses the believers as God's "*children*," because it is family relationship that he dwells upon. Paul uses another word, especially in Galatians, chaps. 3 and 4, that of "*sons*," because he speaks of more than family relationship. He gives us Christian *position*. It is Paul that brings in the special marks of our dispensation; hence his term usually is "*sons*." In order to see this distinction, we will recommend all to study J. N. D.'s New Translation, side by side with our Authorized Version.

In this epistle which we are studying, to get John's special thought as to "children," we need to look at each verse where the expression occurs. There are nine verses in the epistle that need to be slightly changed. They are as follows:

Chap. 2:1, omit the word "little," reading, simply, "my children," because the passage embraces the whole family.

Chap. 2:12, omit, also, "little," and read, "I write unto you, children." This, too, is an address to the whole family.

Chap. 2:28, again drop the word "little." "And now, children, abide in Him." This also embraces all the members of the family.

Chap. 3:1, read here, instead of "sons of God," "*children* of God."

Verse 2, make the same correction: "Beloved, *now* are we the *children* of God."

Chap. 3:7, continue again simply "children."

Chap. 3:18, "my children."

Chap. 4:4, "ye are of God, children."

Chap. 5:21, omit the word "little" again, and read, "children, keep yourselves from idols."

In all these nine verses the address is given to the whole family, "children," without any reference to their individual stage of progress.

Now, if we read Chap. 2:13-27, we shall learn that the family—the children spoken of in those nine verses that we have gone over, are graded by the apostle into three classes: First, "fathers," that is, those fully advanced in the Christian life; second, "young men," that is, those strong and energetic, who have the Word of God abiding in them; third, "little children," that is, those of young and tender years. In this chapter he speaks of those three classes twice; it is here, and here only, we ought to use the word "little" children, vers. 13, 18. Here the word *little* is correctly given, and refers to those who are young in the faith, newly born of God.

In the Gospel of John, Chap. 1:12, the expression "sons of God" ought to read "*children of God*;" for John's constant thought, whether in the Gospel or in his epistles, is children, not sons. In this, his ministry differs from that of the apostle Paul, who continually gives the children the place of *sons*; because, as we have previously remarked, Paul gives us Christian *position* as well as relationship. In John's writings we get the word "son," or "sons," only twice. First in John 12:36, where it should read "*sons of light*," not "children," as in our version. But in this passage it is not used in a doctrinal sense; that is, it is not "*sons of God*," but "*sons of light*": this is one of the exceptions with John. Then, when we reach Rev. 21:7, we read, "I will be his God, and he shall be My *son*." This carries us on to the New Jerusalem, our final abode, when our highest and fullest position will be given us: hence at this point John's ministry unites with that of Paul, when we are all manifested as *sons of God*.

We might now turn to Paul's use of the term "sons."

First, let us note Gal. 3:24-25, "The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ." "Our" relates to the Jewish people before Christ came, and in these two verses the translation "schoolmaster" is scarcely correct. J. N. D.'s translation reads "tutor." The word is "pedagogos." A Greek lexicon gives the exact meaning of the word. In the apostle's day a "pedagogos" was not a schoolmaster, but rather a servant at home, one who had the care of the boys, to train and guard, as also to lead them to the public school; but he was not the schoolmaster. Thus we can readily see the apostle's application. The law thus served with the Jewish people as a "pedagogos," to guide, lead and guard God's children from mount Sinai throughout the past dispensation, until Christ came. But when we reach the four Gospels, we can see the Master's face, and, like Mary, can sit at His feet in the schoolroom. The "pedagogos" work is done; he can now be dismissed. In our dispensation, *grace* teaches us. We have Christ, not Moses. We are not under the law but under grace. See Titus 2:11-13.

In Gal. 3:26 the apostle changes from "our" to "ye." "For ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The word ought to be "sons" here, not "children"; for here we are following Paul's line, not John's. Is it not strange that the translators should put "sons" in John 1:2, where it should be "children," and here in Gal. 3, where the word should be "sons," they have put the word "children"? It is evident that they did not see the distinction between John's line of ministry and that of Paul. In Paul's ministry, the Gentiles who received the gospel never had been under law, never had the "pedagogos" to guide them; by faith in Christ they were born of God, in full position of *sons*—not simply children, as it is in John's epistle. But with the Jewish believers before Christ came it was different: they were under guardianship of the law.

In Gal. 4:1-3, "children" mean "minors"—under the guardianship of the law, and thus differed nothing from servants. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we" (Jewish believers) "might receive the adoption of sons." Thus Jewish believers have *now* full right to take the Christian position of "sons." Then, in verse 6 we have, "And because ye" (Gentile believers) "are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Thus both Jewish and Gentile believers now occupy the same ground, and have the same position in God's family—that of *sons*. This is the distinctive line of Paul's ministry in these chapters.

The understanding of these dispensational distinctions given here by the apostle, gives great light and help to the Christian. The distinctions between Jews and Gentiles vanish before the work of redemption, which applies to both alike, since both alike are sinners before God; and on the ground of redemption the Holy Spirit has come down and taken up His abode in those born of God. From the epistles we now learn that all those born of God (His "children"), whether from Jews or Gentiles, are now in the place of "sons."

Failing to see this, many fell into an error years ago, seeking to continue these distinctions in our present dispensation; teaching that some believers are only "children" as yet, and an advanced class were sons. This was misleading, and fostered spiritual pride. It is true that the teaching of "sonship" in Paul's epistle is advanced teaching; but only advanced in a dispensational sense. For now that we have reached the dispensation of the "fulness of the time," *all* the children, all born of God, are recognized as *sons* (Gal. 4:6-7).

And, akin to this, there was another mistake made, concerning the Holy Spirit. It was said that many in our dispensation, who are born of God ("children" therefore) had not yet received the Holy Spirit. This was a grave mistake. It is true that in the old dispensation those born of God did not possess the indwelling Spirit, because that blessing, as well as sonship, awaited the "fulness of the time" (the Christian dispensation), which has now come. Man's condition and need, and God's grace, are now fully revealed, and in the riches of His grace God now gives a position to His people which they could not occupy before the Cross. But now, as taught in Paul's epistles, no such distinctions are recognized; all God's children now are in the place of sons, and all have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them: "because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." There may be a great difference as to the *apprehension* of these things, but all that are born of God being now in the position of "sons," also have the Spirit dwelling in them. These blessings belong not only to those spiritually advanced, but to all. We will now look at three examples of this in the New Testament.

First. Take the case of the Corinthians. They were yet "carnal," and the apostle could not address them as spiritual, but as carnal, even as babes in Christ, that is, yet in infancy as to spiritual life (Chap. 3:1-3). Notwithstanding all this, he wrote to them, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" (6:19). This passage ought to be conclusive that the Holy

Spirit dwells in all those who are God's people, and not only in those who are "spiritual."

Second. Then, again, take the epistle to the Galatians, Chaps. 3 and 4, which we have been examining. The saints in Galatia had got far away from sound teaching; they lacked intelligence on the first principles of the gospel; they had put themselves under the law, and spiritually were nothing in advance of the Jewish people before the Cross. This was a grave departure from the true principles of the gospel and Christianity, and the apostle saw the *seriousness of it*. *Notwithstanding all this, pointedly he asks them, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"* Again: "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Again: "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Chap. 3:2, 5, 14; 4:6). These verses show us very clearly that all the Galatian Christians, notwithstanding their errors and lack of intelligence, had the Holy Spirit, and that from the first moment of faith, as well as the place of sonship. This is the present birthright of all those born of God.

Third. Another example of this we get in 1 John 2, where the apostle addresses the three classes in God's family, "fathers," "young men," and "little children." To the first two, the most advanced, he wrote not a word about the Holy Spirit. But to the babes, the "little children," he wrote, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One. . . . The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you." It is the *little children* that he assures of the indwelling Spirit to guide and guard them. In Corinthians we saw the Holy Spirit dwelt in those of God's people least advanced as to spiritual life. In Galatians we also saw the same Spirit dwelt in those who lacked divine intelligence concerning the gospel. Now, in the epistle of John we see that the Holy Spirit is given to and dwells in the weakest and youngest of God's children—the little children.

Ques.—But does not the Acts seem to teach that some believers have not yet the Holy Spirit?

Ans.—Yes. In the Acts we do learn, at various places, that God's children had not as yet received the Holy Ghost; but there is no clash between the teaching of the epistles which we have been considering and the history of the book of the Acts. We have considered the teaching concerning the saints before Christ came and accomplished the work of atonement, and we have seen, also, that our dispensation is much in advance of theirs. Now, in the Acts of the apostles we get a divine record of a short period of time—a transitory period—when this transition was taking place; God bringing His people out of Judaism into Christianity; bringing, also, Gentile believers out of their darkness into Christianity. The Acts gives us this history, but we do not go to the Acts to get the doctrine of it. The Holy Spirit gives us that in the epistles, where this distinction is seen.

In Acts, Chap. 1:14-15, we see 120 disciples, all true believers, in prayer, waiting for the Lord's promise of the Holy Spirit, which in the second chapter, on the day of Pentecost, they now receive. In this we see the distinction between their blessing, in Judaism, and that in Christianity.

Then, in Chap. 8, we learn of God's work among the Samaritans. Philip preached Christ unto them. Many gave heed to his preaching, and were converted to God; but they did not receive the Holy Spirit immediately. There was a special reason for this. There had been strong prejudice between the Jews and the Samaritans; but now, as God was working among them both, to guard against the old division, or independency, amongst His people, and to remove the prejudice that might yet remain, those new converts awaited the coming of Peter and John,—Jewish apostles.—“who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . . Then, laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” This was a blending together of those converted from amongst Samaritans and Jews—a uniting of the work; and God shows his approval by giving them the

Holy Spirit in this manner. This has no parallel in our day.

Another example is given us in Chap. 19. Paul went to Ephesus and found certain disciples there; but they knew nothing further than the teaching of John the Baptist. They said to Paul, "*We did not even hear if the Holy Spirit was come,*" ver. 2 (J. N. D.'s version). These disciples, we thus see, were on Jewish ground; and being far away from Jerusalem, had not enjoyed the benefits of later teaching which these 120 had, who were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. They evidently did not know the further teaching which the Lord had given after John had passed away; and they did not understand, or know, the truth concerning the sufferings of Christ on the cross. They had learned through John's ministry that when Christ would come He would baptize with the Holy Ghost; but they did not know that that period had already come. Paul now unfolds to them the further teaching. "When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus;" and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they get their full place now in our dispensation. This work at Ephesus, through the apostle Paul, ends the transitory period in the book of Acts. From these chapters we learn how God wrought with the different classes. First, among the Jews, in Acts 2. Second, among the Samaritans, in Chap. 8. Third, opening the door of faith to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, Acts 10. Fourth, bringing in the last of John's disciples at Ephesus. This closes the transitory period; that stage of the apostolic work has passed away. Now, to learn the truth concerning our position as sons, and the indwelling Spirit, we must study the Epistles.

We have had, thus, three stages of God's work. First, that of the Old Testament; but that is passed. Second, that of the book of the Acts, the short transition period which served as an introduction to Christianity; that also has passed. Third, we have that of the Epistles; and this is present teaching for us until the end. Here we get the doctrinal teaching concerning the Holy Spirit—in the three epistles we have referred to, 1 Corinthians, Gala-

tians, and 1 John, the teaching is conclusive that all born of God have now the Holy Spirit. We do not dwell now upon the practical life that ought to correspond with this—an important and needed teaching. If we were speaking on that line, we would see many stages among God's people; and whilst all are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, it may be true that many grieve Him, and hence no progress, and the fruit of the Spirit is little seen. In much of our life and service, how often the Holy Spirit is hindered! "Be filled with the Spirit" is a needed word for every one of us.

Ques.—Having gone over the difference between Old Testament saints and those in our dispensation, what will be the difference when the reward is given?

Ans.—It is well to remember that a servant may be very dutiful and noble in his life, while a son with a higher position may be very slothful. Many of the Old Testament saints have exceeded us in faithfulness, and on this account their rewards will be greater at the judgment-seat of Christ. We need to bear this well in mind, that our rewards will not be according to our position, but rather according to our *devotedness* and *faithfulness*. Take Abel, for instance. He was righteous before God, and he was faithful unto death. See, also, the exemplary life of Abraham, that noble man of faith, who is called "the Friend of God." Moses, also, was "faithful as a servant" (Heb. 3:5), and God spoke face to face with him, as a man would with his friend. See what a list is given us (a few among many) in Hebrews, Chap. 11. "Of whom the world was not worthy." They walked with God, and He brought them into nearness to Himself, regardless of the dispensation, and they will be rewarded accordingly.

(To be Continued)

SOME DAY

Some day our blessed Lord will come,
To take His ransomed home,
Eternity to spend with Him
And all the blood-washed throng.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, to exhort, to stimulate and encourage)

SAN FRANCISCO

A letter just received says, "We had an outing July 4th at the Golden Gate Park. Brethren from San Francisco, San Jose, San Mateo and Oakland were gathered. In the afternoon we had a reading with a good number present, and some stood on the outside of the circle and listened. How refreshing to turn away from our various activities to enjoy spiritual things."—J. F. P. We rejoice to learn that the features of former years still continue in some places so that when such holidays are set apart and at a time when the people of the world are having their outings in the parks and other resorts to have a good time, God's people who love the word and precious things of Christ gather together to edify themselves. Such seasons remind us of Mal. 3:16-18. Any information required concerning the Lord's interests in and around San Francisco may be addressed to

JAMES F. PAULSEN,
139 Wilson Ave.,
San Francisco, Calif.

OAKLAND

The new Assembly in Oakland who gather in another district from formerly and composed now of about 30 in number, for the present occupy a very nice building formerly occupied by a church. They are encouraged in this new effort both in Sunday School work and gospel testimony. Brethren come across the Bay from San Francisco to help them in their gospel work and readings. We rejoice to learn that there exists a very close and happy link between the four assemblies in the Bay District—San Jose, San Mateo, San Francisco and Oakland. A recent letter from Oakland states, "We are not sure about buying the church building yet, but we can see the Lord's hand in directing so far. We had such a lovely prayer meeting last night. Every brother prayed. (This is good news.—Ed.) I have a sewing class for the young women each Thursday afternoon, during which time we have a Bible lesson and then serve refreshments.—Mrs. J. L."

All inquiries needed concerning fellowship and otherwise in Oakland may be addressed,

MR. JOHN LUCY,
839 Hearst Avenue,
Berkeley, Calif.

AREMENIAN MISSION

Pasadena, Calif.

"Dear Brother in Christ:

I have been an Armenian minister for forty years, was first in Turkey thirty years and have been ten in the United States. I

have a Gospel Mission here for the Armenians in Pasadena. Sometimes I go out further and do evangelistic work. Have been through many massacres in Armenia and Turkey, in 1895-1922, and many times in danger of being killed by the Turks, but the Lord kept and delivered me many times and in most miraculous ways, praise Him. I am now 66 years old and in rather feeble health, but strong enough to work in His gospel by His strengthening power. Pray for me. What has led me to write you is, I believe in, and preach the Lord's second and imminent coming. There are very few Armenian ministers who do this. Many of them are modernists. I have tried to get a chart so as to illustrate the dispensations to my hearers here and elsewhere, but so far have not been able, as I am poor financially. Have no salary, and support seven souls by the free will offerings of some Armenian believers, who themselves scarcely can support their own families. Having seen advertised your chart on the Course of Time, it was suggested to my mind to ask if you could favor one to me for the Lord, with the key explaining. If you can, and if you please, God bless you dear brother.

Yours in Him,

A. Z. YEGHIOYAN."

It is a pleasure to get such letters time and again. This brother came from Armenia, close to Mt. Ararat where Noah's Ark rested after the Flood, and comes to the United States to labor among his fellow countrymen, and not only preach Christ and the Gospel to them, but open up the blessed Truth of the Lord's Second Coming, and unfold dispensational teachings, thus making the word more intelligible to them. This is far beyond what many Protestant ministers do in Canada and the United States. We send Missionaries to the field from which he came. The Lord sends him as a Missionary back to us.

Where he saw our chart advertised we do not know, and previously we have not known that there was an Armenian Mission in our home city in California. How dull we are! This made us search and we have found that there are two such missions here. The Lord be praised for men that come from the very ground, where He mercifully preserved Noah and the family from judgment, to preach the Word in the United States. We were pleased to soon dispatch a small chart and key with an assortment of tracts and pamphlets. "Lord revive our keen interest and enlarge the borders of our hearts." (Ed.)

OPEN DOORS NEAR HOME

The last few months, unexpected doors have opened for happy service.

(1) A sister opened the first door, we believe, under the Lord's direction, by visiting a sick man connected by marriage with her family, and seeing their spiritual darkness, spoke to them and to

make it more effectual, read to him from the Scriptures and to his wife, also present. After this she took the writer in her auto once a week for three successive weeks, to open up the Gospel subjects more clearly. Each time the dear man, like one possessed of great thirst, drank in the good news and eventually confessed the Lord. About the fifth week, on Sunday morning about the time the sun arose, he passed away, rejoicing in the Truth of Salvation and peace with God. The family, composed of a widow, and several sons and daughters, observing the great change in their devoted father, placed the funeral service in my hands and perhaps some 70 were gathered in to the funeral parlors, most of whom had never heard clear Gospel preaching before. Some were Roman Catholics, others Christian Scientists, etc. We were able to open the Word that day freely, and we believe hearts were opened, both in his family and among the neighbors. We rejoice in his decision for Christ and look for more in that day of coming Glory.

(2) A few weeks later, a family who once resided in Lowry, Minnesota, the father once the first salesman in Mr. McIver's general store (Mr. Holen, Norwegian by birth); his wife was called home and was a decided, devoted believer; had been helped in her early days through quiet talks with Mrs. John Allen Lowry. When she passed away, they phoned me, asking me to speak with their Lutheran pastor at the funeral, a large company were gathered. The pastor spoke first, but had very little light on the Gospel, and concerning death, resurrection and the second coming, had scarcely a word to say. Upon those points, I was enabled to speak with *certainty*, as to present salvation, Eternal Life, and the reality of the home-going for the believer at death. Those who heard us that day, were a people largely that knew little of Gospel truth. The response on the part of many was most refreshing. A few days after the funeral, a note came in the post from the bereaved husband and whole family, expressing their thanks and gratitude for the Word which had been given that day. Those special seasons when men and women's hearts are tender, serve as a golden opportunity to open the Word to those who are not privileged to hear a full Gospel.—(Ed.)

ILLUSTRATION

THE ROSE AGAIN

A Christian gentleman stood before an art store, looking at a picture of the crucifixion. A lad approached and gazed also at the picture. The gentleman turned to the street Arab and said, pointing to the picture, "Do you know who it is?"

"Yes," was the quick reply, "that's our Saviour." Then, with a mingled look of pity and surprise that the man did not know what the picture represented, and a desire to enlighten him further, he continued, "Them's the soldiers, the Roman soldiers, and," with a

deep sigh, "that woman crying is His mother."

He waited a moment for further questioning, then thrust his hands in his pockets and, with a reverent, subdued voice, added, "They killed Him, Mister. Yes, sir, they killed Him!"

The gentleman looked at the dirty, ragged little fellow and asked, "Where did you learn this?"

"At the Mission School."

The gentleman resumed his walk, leaving the lad looking at the picture. He had not gone a block when he heard, in childish treble, "Mister! say, Mister!"

He turned. The boy raised his little hand in a triumphant tone, shouted, "I wanted to tell you He rose again! Yes, Mister! He rose again." His message delivered, he smiled, waved his hand and went his way.

THE WORD OF GOD

The Word of God is living and active . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. Heb. 4. 12 (R.V.).

A Chinese teacher at Shanghai told the following experience:

"My father held a command in General Gordon's army. When Gordon bade my father good-bye, he presented him with a beautiful copy of the Chinese New Testament. My father never read it, but kept it among his treasures. When I was about fifteen I found the book and read it constantly, though not as a believer. Some years afterwards I met a colporteur, and saw that he was selling similar books. He talked to me and discovered that I knew already a great deal about the Gospel. From this we grew intimate, and eventually I became a Christian. The Testament which Gordon gave my father is still preserved in our family."

Bible Society Report, 1912.

General Gordon's own Bible which he studied every day, which he had marked so well, was secured after his death in the Sudan (upper Egypt) and was sent to his sister in England; she knowing that Queen Victoria held her brother in high esteem for his marvellous achievements in the British Army, sent the copy to the Queen as a gift. Queen Victoria had a silver mounted glass case made for it, and placed in the lobby of the palace, and when we went through the Windsor Palace some thirty years ago, it was our pleasure to gaze upon that well-worn and marked Bible by one of Britain's best and bravest generals, and by a man characterized by two outstanding graces. First, his love for prayer and second his love for his Bible.—(Ed.)

A REQUEST

If any of our subscribers change their address, be sure and inform the publisher, so that the magazine may reach you direct and save the P. O. officials extra work. We aim to send out the magazine the first week in each month.

THE BRIGHT MORNING STAR

(From Notes of Addresses)

In the minds of many there is a growing conviction that we are on the eve of great happenings, and the cry is in the heart, and sometimes on the lips. "What is coming next?" A spirit of distrust is everywhere evident, and they look in vain for the man that they feel is needed to grapple with the confusion in the world, and bring order out of social, political and religious chaos. It was this feeling that led a leading atheist to express his conviction somewhat in the form of an advertisement, "Wanted, a super-man!" They really think that the world can produce the man they look for, but their folly will be more and more completely exposed.

History can record what *has* happened. Speculation can suggest what *may* happen. Only God can tell us what *will* happen. *Someone is coming*, that is certain; and the Scripture of truth furnishes a conclusive answer as to whom the Someone is. There is no need to speculate. His name is JESUS.

It is true that He has been here once, but that is no argument against His coming again. Give it a thought! If He came once, why should He not twice? Seeing He rose from the dead, what is there to hinder Him? If His first coming ended abruptly; if violent hands were laid upon Him, and He died upon a Roman cross, many Scriptures being thus fulfilled; if, nevertheless, all this happened before many other prophecies concerning Him had had a fulfilment, do you think that His first coming is to be the last word? By no means. His enemies despised Him in His humiliation, but they will lick the dust when He returns in glory.

At the close of His life He made mention of His return. To His enemies He said, "Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv. 62). To His disciples

He spoke of it in very different terms, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 3). He left the world amid the insults of the heartless mob, yet their hoarse shouts had not long died away before angels, who heralded His first advent, announced that, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts i. 11). This message has almost the sound of a legal document. There is a fulness of expression, hedging about the words as if to save them from misinterpretation, and foil any attempt to mystify them.

Yet there are many to whom the second coming of Christ appears mystical, visionary and unreal. And this in spite of the fact that in the 260 chapters of the New Testament there are not less than 300 references to it; so that instead of being put into obscurity it was given great prominence. It was one of the main pillars of the faith. It was an important part of the apostolic testimony. The converts "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). It is all very real. It is not a merely spiritual coming. It is not death. It is not the end of the world. It is not merely an event. It is the arrival of a great Person.

I would like to lift your hearts above thinking of it as prophecy, above the mere fulfilment of predicted events, to think of it as the return of Christ Himself personally. The return of a troopship after the war with the remnant of a regiment on board was a heart-stirring event for the man in the street, who witnessed it, but it was something more to the wife, who stood amongst the crowds waiting to greet her long absent and mercifully preserved husband. She had neither eyes nor ears for the fluttering flags and martial music; she did not notice the officers and men sent to meet them. It was *her beloved* she was meeting, whereas many amongst the thousands around had lost nine-tenths of their interest because the one they loved could not return.

The coming of the Lord comprises two events, or two stages of one act. When He comes again it will be for the fulfilment of the two promises still waiting accomplishment: first, to the church, His bride; second, to Israel.

In the Old Testament we read a good deal about the coming and day of the Lord. But in every case the Old Testament refers to His coming in relation to Israel and the nations, and not to the church. But ever since Pentecost the world has been divided into three classes; the Jews, the Gentiles (or, nations), and the church of God. The truth of the church is entirely unrevealed in the Old Testament, and the church itself did not exist until Pentecost. There could not have been "the church, which is His body," until there was the Head, and until that Head by resurrection and ascension had taken His seat in glory. Then it was that God "gave Him to be the Head" (Eph. i. 20-23).

Before that time the Lord Jesus spoke of the church, but He spoke of it as something in the future. He said "I will build My church," not, "I am building," or, "I will continue to build My church." The secret concerning the church was not revealed until after Paul's conversion. He speaks of it as a mystery "kept secret since the world began," in Romans xvi. 25; and in Ephesians iii. 3-5, he gives us the same fact in a fuller way.

Now this being so, it is useless to look in the Old Testament for either the church or the hope of the church. At the end of the Old Testament we have what is really Israel's hope, the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in His wings. It is at the end of the New Testament that we have the church's hope, the bright Morning Star. And just as in nature the morning star is the harbinger of the day, so Christ's coming as the Morning Star is the harbinger of the day of the Lord and the rising of the Sun of Righteousness.

To make these two things distinct and clear, the Spirit of God has used two different words in 2 Thessalonians ii. 8, where we read of "the brightness of His coming."

One is *Parousia*, which means His presence, translated here, and elsewhere, *coming*. The other is, *Epiphaneia* translated, *brightness*, which means the outshining of His glory, or His manifestation. The term, the coming of the Lord, covers both these, and practically they are one event though in two stages. The church's hope is our gathering together "unto Him," at His *Parousia*, as it stated in 2 Thessalonians ii. 1. Israel's hope is His *Ephiphany*, when every foe will be overthrown.

By way of illustration suppose that the whole of London had risen in rebellion against the King and his government, and that they signalized it by murdering the Prince of Wales, whom he had sent to them. Suppose further that there remained in London a minority of loyal subjects, who are suffering a good deal at the hands of the insurgents by reason of their fealty to the King. Presently the news comes that the King with a mighty army is drawing near, but instead of marching right into London he calls the loyalists out to meet himself at Hatfield on the outskirts. He reviews them, rewards them, and afterwards puts them into places of trust about his person; and then all together they start forth to subjugate London and thus finish up the story of his coming.

We get frequent mention in the Scriptures of the day of the Lord. But before that day sets in the Morning Star has arisen. Before Israel gets all its hopes fulfilled the church will have been safely housed with Christ; hidden with Him for a little time, but to reappear with Him in the day of His manifestation. When He comes forth in His glory it will be as the King. When He comes for His church it will be as the Bridegroom coming for His bride.

It was to this He referred when He spoke the words recorded in John xiv. 3. He was ministering something to their sorrow-stricken hearts, which was intended to buoy them up during the time of His absence: just as a fond mother says to the weeping child she is to leave behind her, "Don't cry, dear, mother will soon be back." And accordingly the child listens for the click of the gate, or the footstep on the path, or the opening of the door,

as indicating the fulfilment of the mother's promise. It is her presence that the child desires. Even so we desire the *Parousia*, the presence of our Lord.

He is coming! Coming just as He went, just as His disciples saw Him go! How did He go? An important question, for that shall be the style of His coming.

He went away visibly. Not visibly to the world, for not one unconverted person ever set eyes upon Him after He was taken down from the cross, but perfectly visible to His disciples. Thus He will come.

He went away a real, living, risen Man, with whom they had just been personally conversing. He will come again just as real, just as living, and the happy intercourse will be resumed in heavenly glory.

He went away with hands uplifted in blessing upon His people. He will come again to usher in the crowning hour of their blessing, and for ever.

He went away privately, from the midst of His disciples suddenly carried into heaven, and only seen by them. So when He comes His first action will be to assemble all His saints to meet Him and to greet Him in the air.

What a hope is this! Has the Morning Star already arisen in our hearts?

ART CUTTING
(England)

OUR LORD'S RETURN

(2 Timothy 3:16)

Some people tell us when we take up prophecy, there is no use trying to understand it. But Paul says: "All scripture is . . . profitable for doctrine, etc." If God doesn't mean to have us study the prophecies, He wouldn't have put them into the Bible. Some *are* fulfilled, especially concerning the Lord's first coming, and the rest *shall* be fulfilled.

We are told how He shall come. When those disciples stood looking up into heaven at the time of His ascension, there appeared two angels, who said unto them (Acts 1:11), "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into

heaven? *This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.*"

Some have tried to tell the very day He would come. Perhaps that is one reason why people do not believe this doctrine. He is coming, we know that, but just when He is coming we do not know. Matthew 24:36 settles that. *Christ tells us to watch, "Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."*

Some people say that this means death; but the Word of God does not say it means death. John 21:23 seems to settle the matter.

There is another mistake, as you will find if you read your Bibles carefully. Some people think that at the coming of Christ everything is to be fulfilled in a few minutes; but I do not so understand it. The first thing He is to do is to take His church out of the world. He calls the church His bride, and He says He is going to prepare a place for her.

In the closing verses of the fourth chapter of I. Thessalonians, Paul says: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. . . . We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*" *That is the comfort of the church.* Dean Alford has written that he must insist that this coming of Christ to take His church to Himself in the clouds is not the same event as His coming to judge the world at a later period. The deliverance of the church is one thing, judgment is another. *The trump of God may be sounded, for anything we know, before I finish this discourse*—at any rate, we are told that He will

come as a thief in the night, and at an hour when many look not for Him.

In the first chapter of I. Thessalonians, Paul says: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, who He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." *To wait for His Son; that is the true attitude of every child of God.* Then over in the next chapter (I. Thess. 2:19) he says: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" And again, in the third chapter, at the thirteenth verse: "To the end that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." Still again, in the fifth chapter: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." He has something to say about this same thing in every chapter. Indeed, I have thought that this epistle to the Thessalonians might be called the Gospel of Christ's coming again.

There are three great facts foretold in the Word of God. First, that Christ should come; that has been fulfilled. Second, that the Holy Ghost should come; that was fulfilled at Pentecost. *Third, the return of our Lord from heaven—for this we are told to watch and wait till He come.*

Take the account of the words of Christ at the *communion table.* *It seems to me that the devil has covered up the most precious thing about it. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come."*

Some people say, "*I believe Christ will come on the other side of the millennium.*" *Where do you get it? I cannot find it. I do not find any place where the Lord says the world is to grow better and better. I find that the earth is to grow worse and worse, and at length there is going to be a separation. Two women grinding at a mill—one taken and the other left; two men in one bed—one taken and the other left.*" The church is to be translated out of

the world, and we have two examples already, in Christ's kingdom, of what is to be done for all true believers. Enoch is the representative of the first dispensation, Elijah of the second, and as a representative of the third dispensation, we have the Savior Himself, who became the first fruits of them that slept.

Now some of you think this a new and strange doctrine, and that they who preach it are speckled birds. But let me tell you that *most of the spiritual men in the pulpits of Great Britain are firm in this faith. I have heard Newman Hall say that he knew no reason why Christ might not come before he got through with his sermon. But in certain wealthy and fashionable churches, where they have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof—this doctrine is not preached or believed. We live in the day of shams in religion. The church is cold and formal; may God wake us up! And I know of no better way to do it than to get the church to looking for the return of our Lord. I have felt like working three times as hard ever since I came to understand that my Lord is coming again. I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. God has given me a lifeboat, and said to me, "Moody, save all you can." Our Lord will come in judgment and the world will be judged, but the children of God do not belong to this world; they are in it, but not of it. This world is getting darker and darker; its ruin is coming nearer and nearer. If you have any friends on this wreck unsaved, you had better lose no time in getting them off. But some one will say, Do you, then, make the grace of God a failure? No; grace is not a failure, but man is. Man has been a failure everywhere, when he has had his own way and been left to himself. Christ will save His church, but He will save them finally by taking them out of the world.*

"Behold, I come quickly," said Christ to John, and the last prayer in the Bible is, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Were the early Christians disappointed then? No; no man is disappointed who obeys God. The world waited for the first coming of the Lord, 4,000 years and then He came. He was here only thirty-three years and then He went away; but He left us a promise that He

would come again; and as the world watched and waited for His first coming and did not watch in vain, so now to *them WHO WAIT for His appearing shall He appear a second time unto salvation.*

D. L. MOODY

THE SECOND COMING OF THE LORD OUR HOPE

Our Lord's second coming is the bright morning star of the believer's life.

It is the *goal* which the racer ever keeps in view (Phil. iii. 14-21).

It is as the distant *shore* for the sea-tossed and weary mariner, becoming more and more distinct as he uses his glass and keeps a watch.

It is as the *going home* for the soldier in the distant country, as he emerges from the battle-field: the battles have been fought, the trials have been many; but peace has been proclaimed, and the music strikes the notes of "Home, sweet home."

It is as the *morning star* for the faithful watcher who has stood by his post during the various stages of the long, dark night, the harbinger of the day-dawn.

It is *rest*, the ideal rest for the afflicted and weary saint, who has, under the government of God, patiently waited the change, to see Him face to face.

It will be the great and grand *reunion* of the many saints that death had for long separated — fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, friends, companions, which death had parted; but at our Lord's coming all who have passed away, "died in faith," will join the living, who shall be changed, and be forever with the Lord" (I Thess. iv. 13-18). And what a joy this will be—first for Him, and next for the saints! It will be the day of His espousals and the gladness of His heart (Songs iii. II). Then the *Bride*, the Church, shall be presented without spot, coming up from the wilderness leaning upon the arm of her Beloved.

The *racer* will reach his goal; the *mariner* will step on the distant shore; the *soldier*, the *watcher*, each and all will have their long cherished hopes realized.

The full blessedness of the love of God each shall know. The grace and redemption by the blood of the Lamb each shall share with exultation; and worship and praise will rise from all the redeemed, to God and to Christ forever.

A. E. B.

THE COMING ONE

(Tune: Saved by Grace)

Some day the Lord Himself shall come:
I cannot tell how soon 'twill be;
But this I know,—in heav'n, my home,
He has a place prepared for me.

Refrain

And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story, saved by grace!

Before He comes if death befall,
How sweet to rest with Christ in light!
For unto Him, my all in all
My soul shall swiftly take its flight.

The silver cord may fail and break;
But Death O Death where is thy sting!
For O the joy, when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!

To sleep or wait for Christ is well;
I would not choose which it shall be,
Content to know that I shall dwell
for evermore, my Lord, with Thee!

A NOTE

We insert this month a sweet hymn by the saintly Miss Fannie Crosby. It was a select one for long not given to the public, but Mr. Sankey heard her sing it and secured it from her after which it was published. She having been blind from infancy, never having seen the light, carried with her all through her Christian life

the hope that one day she would see, and this gave her intense delight.

“And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story Saved by Gracc.”

The opening words of the original hymn, read:
“Some day the silver chord shall break,” etc.

In this, no doubt, she had death in view when it was penned. Mr. F. Allaban of New York City (now with the Lord) revised it as now inserted, so that believers might have the true and proper hope of the church more clearly before them—the second coming of the Lord Jesus, not death.

The sweet sentiment conveyed both in the original and also the revised touch a very tender chord in every heart that truly loves the Lord Jesus our Saviour.—Eh.

OUR LORD'S RETURN

(Uniform Testimonials)

The certainty of our Lord's return is repeatedly affirmed in Scripture, and to question that evidence involves a contradiction of the Holy Spirit by whom the truth has been certified and sealed . . . All hope for an otherwise despairing world is bound up with the investiture of the Son of God with all glory, majesty, might, and dominion. To that testimony the seal of God is put, and upon Christ's ultimate enthronement over the earth the beams of prophetic light have steadily and unwaveringly converged. No acrimonious controversy should be suffered to cloud the skies and obscure the Star that in undimmed splendor is yet to rise and usher in the glorious consummation.

That “blessed hope” with all its precious implications enables one to bear up under many a grievous burden . . . proclaimed not to engender strife, but to speak peace and comfort to the troubled heart. It is a chord that should be struck with a gentle hand; unsounded it leaves in silence one of the sweetest strains in heaven's music.

—FORD C. OTTMAN.

“You will be incomplete Christians if you do not look for the coming again of the Lord Jesus. If His Table has been sweet today, what will it be when Jesus comes again to receive us to Himself! If His love-letters and love-tokens, sent from a far country, be so sweet, what will the Bridegroom Himself be when He comes and takes us by the hand to present us to Himself, and acknowledge us before an assembled world!”

—R. M. McCHEYNE.

"Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.
Rev. 22. 20.

The conviction grows deeper and deeper in my soul that the Lord is coming quickly, and that the Father and God is separating a people down here to meet Him at His coming. Happy they who, alive and seeing Him, are able to say, "This is our God; we have waited for Him." And if I love any down here, no wish can be so good for them as that they may be ready in heart and in their circumstances to welcome Him, and have nothing about them practically inconsistent with the hope, unworldly, so that they can amalgamate with the scene then opened to them.

—G. V. WIGRAM.

"I will come again."—John xiv. 1-3.

"We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

—Philip iii. 20.

"I accept the prediction that 'there is a great improvement and development of human nature yet to take place.' I accept it with all my heart. But how and when shall it be brought about? Not by any system of education! Not by any legislation of politicians! Not by anything short of the appearing of the kingdom of Christ. Then, and then only, shall there be universal justice, universal knowledge, and universal peace.

"I accept the common phrase of many, 'There is a good time coming.' I accept it with all my heart. I do verily believe there shall one day be no more poverty—no more oppression—no more ignorance—no more grinding competition—no more covetousness. But when shall that good time come? Never! never till the return of Jesus Christ at His second advent.

"I accept the common phrase, 'There is a man coming who will set all right that is now wrong. We wait for the coming man.' I accept it with all my heart. I do look for One who shall unravel the tangled skein of this world's affairs, and put everything in its right place. But who is the great physician for an old, diseased, worn-out world? It is 'the Man Christ Jesus,' who is yet to return."

—BISHOP RYLE.

"Occupy till I come."—Luke xix. 13.

"It has been alleged that the hope of the Second Advent is a dreamy, mystical sentiment which disqualifies one for the active fulfilment of the duties of life. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those who cherish that anticipation, who awake in the morning, saying, 'Perhaps it will be today;' who go to their sleep whispering to their hearts, 'Perchance I shall be changed into His likeness in a moment as I sleep, and wake in my resurrection body'—these are among the most devoted, strenuous, and

successful workers of the church. They are not recognized in the daily or religious Press; but God knows and honours them.

'Oh, blessed Hope! with this elate,
Let not our hearts to be desolate;
But, strong in faith and patience, wait until He come.'

—F. B. MEYER.

DR. TORREY'S TESTIMONY

"To many, the doctrine of the second coming of Christ seems like an impractical doctrine. I once so regarded it. In my early ministry, one of my members came to me and asked if I would speak upon the second coming of Christ. I knew nothing about the doctrine, and put him off, thinking to myself, 'You will be a much older man than you are now before I speak upon a doctrine so impractical.' But the day came when I found it was not only one of the most *precious*, but also one of the most *practical* doctrines in the whole Bible. This truth transformed my whole idea of life. It broke the power of the world and its ambition over me and filled my life with the most radiant optimism even under the most discouraging circumstances."

JOHN'S MINISTRY—THE FAMILY

(A Bible Reading)

(Continued from September Issue)

Ques.—Is it not the man of communion that gets the secrets of the Lord today?

Ans.—Yes, certainly. Many illustrations we get of this in both the Old Testament and the New. "His secret is with the righteous" (Prov. 3:32). "He revealeth His secrets to His servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). It is to His "friends" the Lord opens up His secrets in John 15:15; and in our dispensation it is to the spiritual man that the Holy Spirit opens up the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:12-16). This principle was true in the Old Testament, and remains the same to this day.

Ques.—What does the expression mean in Gen. 6:2, the "sons of God"?

Ans.—I believe that the true explanation of this expression will be seen in Chap. 4:26. Seth was the appointed heir instead of Abel, "whom Cain slew;" "And to Seth, to

him also, there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord"; or, as in the margin, "to call themselves *by the name of the Lord.*" Cain's descendants had gone out from the presence of the Lord, and corruption and violence characterized them. Seth's descendants were the direct contrast to these; they followed in the line of good; preserved on earth the light of the knowledge of God, and took their place *as God's children.* Enoch, and also Noah, were in this line. On the opposite side Lamech was a continuation of Cain's line. For a time the demarcation between these two classes was maintained very distinctly; but the closing part of the dispensation gives us a great change. The line of demarcation was dropped, and "*the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*" This was an unequal yoke, and displeased the Lord greatly. These were the marks which characterized the closing periods of that first dispensation; the flood was God's judgment upon the whole scene, and brought that period of man's history to an end.

Adam is called "son of God" (Luke 3:38). The angels are called "sons of God" in Job 1:6, and the expression in Gen. 6 seems to refer to Seth's descendants; but in neither case, that of Adam, Seth's descendants, nor yet in that of the angels, is the meaning the same as in Galatians, Chaps. 3 and 4, where we see the true and full position of "sonship," which belongs to our dispensation. Even the word "sons" in Gen. 6:2 is not the same as that always used for sons. We must guard against a mere concordance study of Scripture or following certain *words merely*; every word must be looked at in its proper setting. When a difficult passage arises, study the verses before and after, and get the connection. The context always governs the thought that is meant in each passage. This is an important principle in Scripture; the sense and meaning of a particular phrase or text must be governed by its context.

We might also add that it is well for us to distinguish between the saints before the giving of the law, in patri-

archal days (as in the book of Genesis), and those coming after the giving of the law, which period begins in the book of Exodus. What we have been examining in Galatians, Chaps. 3-4, was the saints under the law, from Moses to Christ, in contrast to us who are under grace. There is a lovely simplicity about the lives of these patriarchs—a sweet freedom that charms us as we read the histories of Abel, Enoch, Abraham, and down to Joseph. We see Abraham, as he sat quietly at his tent door, he seems to know that the three angels are visitors from heaven, and what an honor was conferred upon him, and perceived also that one of them was the Lord Himself. With beautiful simplicity and reverence, he says, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Thy sight, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy *servant*.” Thus Abraham draws near, not as a child, much less as a son, but as Jehovah’s *servant*. True, Abraham was born of God, a child, “an heir,” but the full light and revelation concerning such a relationship awaited our dispensation to be unfolded. With the light of New Testament revelation, we can now look back and understand their relationship better than they did themselves. We believe all those distinctions need to be borne in mind.

Ques.—You say Paul’s line is the *Church*, and John’s is the *Family*: why does Paul write in Eph. 3:15 “the whole family in heaven and earth,” or, as in R. V., “every family”?

Ans.—While Paul’s special line is the Church, he also develops in various scriptures our place in the family. This passage, in Eph. 3, includes the various families in heaven and on earth; I suppose the angels are one of them: they are that by creation—not by new birth, as we are. The Old Testament saints are another, in the heavenlies now; they are there because born of God. The family on earth are those born of God here now. We might further add, that by and by, when God’s ancient people shall again be brought in, it shall be said unto them, “Ye are the sons of the living God” (Hos. 1:10). Then, also, there will be the multitudes of the nations. But in all this,

whether angels or from among men, it is simply "every family"—which is not Church relationship. We might add that, in this epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle enlarges still more: it is the *Church* he mentions in Chap. 1:22; it is the *Family* in Chap. 3:15; and Chap. 5:6 embraces also the *Kingdom*. When he speaks of our place as children, his ministry is similar to that of John; when he follows the Kingdom, he is on a similar line to that of Peter; but when he opens up the truth of the Church as the body of Christ, he is fulfilling the special ministry that was given to him.

These distinctions being made clear, we hope, let us turn now to what the epistle of John gives us. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God." In this we get not His love simply, but the *manner* of that love. We did not always stand in that relationship as children. What a fallacy is the expression heard everywhere today, "The Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man"! On the very contrary, we were "children of wrath" by nature; "children of disobedience" by practice. But God's sovereign grace has wrought in us; we are born of God—His own children, and we are bidden to contemplate the manner of the Fathers' love. How very sweet that we can take our place before Him as His children! This wakes up in us the divine affections, the love that characterizes the children. But it is the Father's love to the children that is first expressed; then our love to Him is also dwelt upon (Chap. 4:16-21), as well as our love to one another. It is love *in the truth*; deeper than human affection; nothing superficial in it. It is *divine* love, wrought out in us by the Spirit sent down from heaven.

After we see our place as children, we discern immediately the contrast between the world—those not born of God—and us: "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." God's beloved Son was here Himself, and was a Stranger in the world His hands had made. They saw Him, and heard His words from day to day; yet it is written, "The world knew Him not." Do we not

see at what a distance sin has placed the human race? He is not here now, He is in heaven; but we are left here, as God's children, to represent Him in the place of His rejection. How far does the world know us today? If we are walking in the happy enjoyment of fellowship with the Father and the Son, the world will not know us either. This is indeed a very practical truth, and associates us with His testimony today. When writing to the young men in the previous chapter, and warning them concerning the evils in the world, John says: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world; and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." What a terrible picture this is of the evil world in which we are living—through which we are passing, but of which we do not form a part, as the Lord Himself said in John 17:14-16, "I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because *they are not of the world*, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. *They are not of the world*, even as I am not of the world." In all these scriptures we see the place out of which God, in grace, has brought us; we belong to another sphere; we form part of the family of God now upon the earth. Deliverance from all these things, as lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, pride of life, give place to righteousness, obedience, benevolence, divine affections. These are the graces to be expressed in the children, as taught in our epistle: and what a contrast this is to the pride and selfishness so apparent in the world everywhere today!

It is well to remember that John looks at the family in its normal condition; it means that each is growing and developing. There is nothing wrong in being babes or little children in God's family—we were all that to begin with. But the wrong state of the assembly at Corinth was that they remained babes—they did not grow. Things were allowed in their midst that hindered the work of the

Spirit in them, and there was no development in Christian life; they were as stunted children (1 Cor. 3:1-4). This was also true among the Hebrew Christians (Heb. 5:12-14).

But there was a difference between those in Corinth and the Hebrews which will be readily seen by a careful reading. The Assembly at Corinth had never advanced beyond their infancy. (spiritually) "ye are yet babes, etc."

Whereas the Hebrews had advanced at the first, after their conversion but had allowed the difficulties and opposition from the enemy later to hinder their growth and advancement. Hence the Apostle, in writing to them states, "Ye have *become* such as have need of milk, and not strong meat." (See Heb. 5:13-14; 10:32-34).

Wherever God's people show no diligence in reaching out after the Spirit's ministry, there is no advance; they cease to grow. The divine life does not develop. This is a lamentable condition and seems to characterize so many in our day; we see it already in the days of the apostle. Is it not a fact before our eyes that there is not the same desire for reading good, solid Christian literature as there used to be in our first days? and the result is dwarfed Christians on every hand. We feel this in our worship meetings—a lack of spiritual worship. We also feel it in our Bible readings—a lack of interest and heart in Bible study; and, it may be, of the gospel ministry too. Where we fail to go on in God's things, it will be felt in every way in the Christian assembly.

In the parable which our Lord gave of the Kingdom we see three stages of fruit-bearing, corresponding with the three classes in John's epistle. The first bear fruit thirty-fold; that would be similar to what we would expect to see in the "little children." The next sixtyfold, would be a further development of fruit, as would be seen in the "young men." Third, a hundredfold would be what we would expect in those called "fathers." May the Lord help us to be as the clay in the hands of the potter—subject to the Spirit's guidance, so that there may be with us progress to the end. (Mark 4:20)

Let none of us be discouraged by failure around us, nor yet by failure in our past life. All the blessedness of what God's children enjoyed in John's day is for us individually to enjoy now. We are in the midst of general failure, yet all of God's truth and joy remain for the individual that earnestly and prayerfully seeks Him. If we are devoted to the Lord and His interests upon the earth, we shall abide in His fellowship, and develop and grow by feeding upon the truth.

In Ver. 2 we read, "Beloved, *now* are we the children of God." How emphatic this language! We who confess Christ and are born of God ought never to have a doubt as to our relationship with God. A Spanish missionary, converted from the darkness of papal Rome, while translating the New Testament came to this verse. He put down his pen and exclaimed, "It is too much, too much, that we who were steeped in darkness should be called 'the children of God': let me rather translate it, that we are just permitted to kiss His feet"! Such relationship appeared so wonderful that for the moment he was overwhelmed with the thought and exclaimed, "It is too much." He recovered himself, however, and took up his pen again and wrote it aright, "Beloved, now are we the children of God." Such a revelation, instead of fostering pride, should rather humble us in the dust, as we contemplate the love and grace that have brought us so near to God!

"So near, so very near to God,
Nearer we could not be;
For in the person of His Son
We are as near as He."

Oh that under a sense of such blessed truth every trace of hard-headedness, pride and dogmatic spirit may forever pass away; and the brightness and sweetness of the true Christian life be more fully seen upon us! Then we shall truly answer to God's thought concerning us, who are left here to represent the Lord until He come again.

"It doth not yet appear what we shall be." The Holy Spirit has opened up much to us through God's Holy

Word—especially to those who make it their patient, prayerful study. But there is much yet that we have not taken in. When we enter the heavenly glory and see Him face to face, no doubt we shall all say, “The half hath not been told.” “We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Ques.—Is this physical likeness to our Lord?

Ans.—I think, rather, physical likeness to our Lord is spoken of in Phil. 3:21. When our Lord comes again, our bodies, now subject to humiliation, will be changed like unto His body in glory: a body like His own, perfectly suited to the new place, and the new life, which we have now as born of God—fitted for the heavenly glory, and for eternal companionship with Christ up there. But here, in John 3, it is not physical likeness, but rather moral and spiritual. All our new powers, desires, joys and affections will all be like His, so that morally and spiritually we shall be like our Lord in heaven.

Further, “We shall see Him as He is.” How this ought to lift us up, and brighten our lives as we go through life! And *it will*, if kept before the heart: there is nothing like it in the world.

Ques.—What does Rom. 8:29 mean, “Conformed to the image of His Son”?

Ans.—The teaching in Rom. 8 embraces both thoughts which we have been considering, in Philippians, and in John. For, in Rom. 8, it is God’s purpose to have all His people, in the end, in the image of His Son: everything in accord with and suited to Him who is the First-born among many brethren. Christ Himself is there as the First-born; the First-fruits also, or sample Sheaf, now in the presence of God and the holy angels: He is leading the many sons to glory.

A few years ago, in a window of one of New York’s leading grocery stores, there was a basket of choice and beautiful grapes exhibited, arranged with great care, with this notice over the basket: “A whole carload like this sample basket is expected in a few days.” This might

well illustrate what is on view up there in heaven. Christ the first-fruits of a golden harvest, and the Father says, as it were, to the admiring spectators there, "There is a whole harvest like this sample coming up very soon (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Is it any wonder that angels desire to look into these things? And they are now learning, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:10).

We might read Verse 3 in our chapter a little more correctly, "Every man that hath this hope *set on Him* purifieth himself even as He (Christ) is pure." This gives us the truth of the verse more clearly; and as we keep this hope of our Lord's coming again before our hearts, we become purified by it—we become unworldly, and more like the perfect Object set before us. Likeness to Christ now is conformity to His thoughts, feelings, and ways; and the Spirit also is with us to make all this good to us continually. Let us now ask ourselves, as we dwell upon this great theme, "Are we truly waiting for Him? Is it really our *hope*? Do we not remember the power this had upon many of us twenty-five to fifty years ago, when the Lord's coming was burning like a flame in our souls?" But, with many, the freshness and power of this hope has given place to others things, and they have become less heavenly-minded, with more conformity to this life and the things of the world. There is nothing like this precious hope to sanctify us. We do not need a code of morals to guide and regulate our lives. God has set before us a *Person*, a living and glorified *Person*, now upon the throne above; and that blessed One is soon coming for us. This is the blessed truth that was meant to purify us, and hold us here as His witnesses, and fill us with joy from day to day. Again and again the Spirit whispers in our ears, "A little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Let us keep our eyes upon that blessed One who is soon coming again; and as we hear Him say, "Surely I come quickly," let every heart wake up with the warmth and fervor of the first days, and respond to Him, "Even so, *come*, Lord Jesus."

We are quite sure that the losing sight of this blessed hope is a main reason of so much worldliness in our lives, and of much trouble in many assemblies today. Things on every hand indicate that the fulfilment of our hope is very near, when we all shall hear His call, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."

In closing this reading, let us say that, as John addresses the family of God, so this hope is the hope of *all* the children. We know that the whole Church, the bride of Christ, will rise and enter the heavenly glory, and get the special place assigned to her; but that is not the line of truth in John's epistle: it is the hope of all *the children*, as such—fathers, young men, and even the *little children*. And as the family of God reaches back and embraces all those born of God, in the dispensations previous to the Cross, so, when the Lord comes back the second time, these Old Testament saints will be included. None of the children will be left behind. This disposes of the error among a certain class today, that only an advanced or select class of God's people shall be caught up at the rapture. It is a precious and a comforting truth to know that all who are in the relationship of children, all that are His, shall be gathered together at His coming.

In considering the subject of the Kingdom yesterday, we saw that from its beginning it kept in view the second coming of Christ; for the Kingdom never answers to the Divine Mind until our Lord comes again and takes it up. So, also, here in John, we see the children do not reach the fulness of blessing and the place marked out for them until the same event—the coming of our Lord. As children, we shall be perfected then. The Kingdom waits for this, and so does the family.

We might add, in conclusion, that in the epistles of Paul, the Church, as the body and bride of Christ, waits for the same blessed hope. No matter in what relationship God's people are found, it is this precious truth, the second coming of our Lord, that is kept constantly in view.

A.E.B.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Dunkirk Conference

The fourth annual Lake Erie Bible Truth Conference was held at the Evangelical Training School grounds near Dunkirk, N. Y., August 19-28. There was a good registration, larger than in former years, and representing widely scattered sections of the country, and including a splendid proportion of young people whose interests in the things of God was most gratifying.

Laborers in attendance were A. E. Booth, Wm. Dewar, J. F. Stebbins, Wm. G. Amies, Edgar W. Wallis, F. B. Tomkinson and the writer.

The conference opened on Saturday evening with a meeting for prayer, and thereafter were held at 7:30 and 9:00 each morning.

Bible Readings occupied the weekday morning hours from 10 to 12, an extra one being held on Thursday afternoon. The first three took us through Romans 8; those on Thursday, Romans 12:1-8; Friday, 1 Corinthians 14:1-25; and finally, Hebrews 1:1-4.

Romans 8 was looked at in its eight divisions (1) 1-4, summary of the teaching preceding, from 5:12 to 7:25, the believer's union with the new Head and consequent deliverance from sin and from law; (2) 5-9, the two races of men—after or according to the flesh and after or according to the Spirit—their characteristic features; (3) 10-13, the gift of the Spirit in relation to our bodies; (4) 14-17, New Birth relationship—children, the position of Sonship, as also co-heirs with Christ in association with our prospective heavenly possessions; (5) 18-25, sufferings and glory; (6) 26-27, *the Spirit's intercession* for us; (7) 28-30, the divine purpose; (h) 31-39, the triumphant challenge to the whole universe, in view of such a Gospel.

The Holy Spirit was found here in *seven* aspects; Spirit of *life*, 2; Spirit of *God*, 9; Spirit of *Christ*, 9; Spirit of *adoption*, 15; Spirit of *zealness*, 16; *firstfruits* of the Spirit, 23; Spirit of *intercession*, 26.

Romans 12 was viewed in its three-fold character: the new life God-ward, 1-2; assembly-ward, 3-13; world-ward, 14-21. Of first importance is the presenting of our bodies to God, our *intelligent* service. Then, there are others, we are in the assembly on earth. There unity is to be manifested.

The three chapters on gifts were noticed: Ephesians 4, where the ascended Head bestows them, 5 being listed. Of these, apostles and prophets, the foundation workers, are no longer with us in person, but their writings remain; while evangelists, pastors and teachers continue. In 1 Corinthians 12, the Spirit's gifts are listed, 13 in all, of which 7 are gone—apostles, prophets, working of miracles, gifts of healing, kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues, and discerning of spirits; while 6 remain—the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, teachers, helps and governments (elders). In Romans 12, where gifts are seen in exercise in the assembly, 7 are listed, all of which continue—prophecy

(not the foundation laying but the declaring of the mind of God), deacon ministry (having to do with the assembly's temporal interests and involving a plurality of deacons), teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling (elders, again not confined to one man), and shewing mercy.

1 Corinthians 12:31 leads on to, and so connects with chapter 13, while 13:13 in the same way introduces chapter 14. Chapter 12 gives us the one body, and the Spirit's gifts; chapter 13, the spirit in which to enjoy this relationship and employ these gifts; chapter 14, the actual exercise of the gifts in the assembly gathered. They were zealous of spirits (14:12); all things must be done unto edification (14:3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 26); for profit (v. 6). Hence emphasis is put upon "prophesying" (14:1, 3, 4, 5, 5, 6, 22, 24, 29, 31, 32, 32, 37, 39). And the importance of "understanding" (due intelligence) is stressed (verses 9, 11, 14, 15, 15, 16, 19, 20, 20). So that the "unlearned" (or simple Christian) and the unbeliever, who may be present will get help. The remembrance meeting is before us in verse 16.

In Hebrews 1:4, the glories of His Son were considered: At the end of days in which God had spoken variously by prophets, He spoke in His Son, whose glories include: His heirship of all things, creatorship, relationship glory, upholding of all things, redemption glory, and present exaltation to the place of pre-eminence.

Each evening the Gospel was preached, as follows: by the writer, 2 Kings 5; J. F. Stebbins, "The God Who Is Enough;" A. E. Booth, Genesis 24; The Call of the Bride; John N. Mackenzie, Luke 15; F. B. Tomkinson, "Cannot," Jno. 3:1-16; W. G. Amies, "There Was a Division Because of Him;" the writer, "Some Impossible Things for the Wicked," Luke 16:19-31; and J. F. Stebbins, "Sin, and Its Consequences."

Preceding the Gospel services each evening briefer meetings were held daily, usually on the bluff. Several open air meetings were conducted in Dunkirk.

Each Lord's Day afternoon Wm. Dewar spoke, using 2 Chronicles 28-30, and Genesis 37-45 respectively. At the same hour a children's meeting ministered to their needs.

Precious were the seasons spent in remembering the Lord.

Summarizing: the ministry of the conference emphasized Gospel for the unsaved, and for the saved provision for individual and assembly life and service together with a glorious outlook. The atmosphere was characterized by quiet, united enjoyment of the truth, sobriety and zeal for the Lord's interests.

Should the Lord leave us here another year, it is hoped to meet again at the same time. Better yet, that we might all meet Him meantime *in the air*. "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

LEE WILFRED AMES,

ASSEMBLY DISCIPLINE

The Object, Restoration

All true discipline, whether directly from the hand of the Lord upon the believer, or, under the Lord's authority, through His people, has one special object in view, namely, the correction of the wrong that necessitates the discipline. In every case where the wrong is judged and confessed, grace flows from the Lord immediately; there is forgiveness, and, as a result, restoration of heart to Him. There may be yet in the individual, while enjoying His forgiveness, a bitter sting left upon the heart and mind for long. This will, as the person grows in nearness to God, produce self-abasement and a careful, lowly spirit, while there is the enjoyment of forgiveness and restoration. The Lord, in all His dealings, thus is seen to be perfect in His HOLINESS as well as in His GRACE.

This principle of God's dealings with us, whether in holiness or grace, we need to remember and carefully consider. If not, we may fail in maintaining the holiness of His house as a people left here for His honor, or fail in the grace that He extends in restoration. In our limited knowledge of God or understanding of His ways, we are *very liable to run from one extreme to the other*; at times, under the plea of holiness, fail in the grace urged upon us; and at others, in extending grace, forget the sanctity of God's house and what is due to the Lord because of what He is.

In all cases, even when the extreme act of discipline is incumbent upon an assembly, there is the deepest need of a chastened and broken spirit in each one concerned. Would that such a spirit were always seen at such times in those who act; then might the same be the sooner expected in the offender.

A great help in possessing such a spirit is to keep before our heart and mind the object of discipline—the *restoration* of the person. Have we not failed again and again

in this—lacking the chastened spirit in the sight of God in such times?—not keeping in view what the discipline is intended to produce? “And ye have not mourned” was the apostle’s reproach to the Corinthian saints on a similar occasion, while he wrote to them “with many tears.” Have we not too often sought to get rid of the trouble by getting rid of the troublesome person, and thus get through with the matter? But this is not God’s end, for the person is a *brother*. When this has been the case, what exercises will be needed to return to the place where the true path with God has been missed, that His object may be fully attained! How good to deliver ourselves, at any cost, when we have done wrong to His name by the misuse of what He has ordained for blessing! How refreshing to watch every indication of recovery and restoration of heart! We need to challenge ourselves before the Lord about these things. It is a lamentable fact that in the many cases of putting away, so little effort is put forth for the recovery of the erring; and, accordingly, few are recovered. What voice has the Lord for us in this? Could it be again Ezekiel’s complaint against the shepherds of Israel: “The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them” (Ezek. 34:4-6).

If we have lost the sense of the sanctity of God’s house, we will do well to take up 1 Cor. 5 again, and go over every part of it with care, that we may recover it. Or, if we have lost the true object of discipline, we will do well to consider afresh, with the same earnest care (2 Cor. 2:6-11). In it we shall see the *grace* of the Lord in the apostle, two years after the man was put away, urging

not only forgiveness, but also to *comfort* such a one. If we fail in this grace, those yet dear to Christ notwithstanding past failure, are made to suffer by our indifference or hardness (see Prov. 24:11, 12). Our Lord sits upon a throne of *grace*; our dispensation is one of *grace*, and the gospel we announce tells of *grace* flowing out to the ends of the earth. We ourselves are daily the subjects of *grace*—oh, how much! Let us, then, beware lest we fail in that grace to others. A. E. B.

PERSONAL DISCIPLINE

Thoughts for the Sick Chamber

The more precious and valuable the fruit, the more constantly does the gardener care for the tree. He prunes with a more careful hand, and is desirous of removing everything that would prevent the development of the fruit he esteems.

The more precious and valuable the metal is, the more intently does the refiner watch the process of refining (Mal. 3:2, 3). He sits, he watches, until the fire separates all the dross and he can see his own likeness in the gold or silver. He then is satisfied, yea, delighted with his own work.

What a cheer this is; what a comfort to the child of God when upon a bed of languishing he can rest satisfied, remembering his Father knoweth—He LOVETH, He CARETH, and it is He that is “pruning.” It is He that sits as a refiner, and “whom the Lord loveth He CHASTENETH.” So to the tried, the weak, the afflicted, we would say, just remain passive in such a wise, tender, yet all powerful Hand. The knife, although sharp, will only remove the things the Husbandman knows would hinder the “fruit,” “the more fruit,” “the much fruit” He so much prizes and seeks after (John 15:2, 5). The fire, although hot and testing, is meant only to melt the precious metal, and purge away the dross; and then—what joy and pleasure—it reflects His image!

But at such a time and in such a place as the sick chamber, His promises are ever true. "The Lord will strengthen him upon a bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness" (Ps. xli. 3), and adds in the language of the New Testament—"My grace is sufficient for thee." The Father knows well, as He watches the child, when the lesson is learnt, He knows when to remove the book, and lay aside the rod. "He maketh sore and bindeth up, He woundeth, and His hands make whole" (Job v. 17, 18). Could we, then, at such a time, afford to be without the lessons? What prayer, what dependence, what true devotion, yea, what joy, what praise, characterize His people! Here, the Husbandman already sees the tender buds, the blossom, the fruit; the Refiner sees His likeness in the object of His toil. Here the Master sees the pupil making progress in his lessons; and here the Father sees the exercise of heart and mind in His child which will fit him for some future and important work.

A. E. B.

THE CHEERING VOICE

To the Christian the teaching of sorrow is teaching to know Christ. Others may learn what is called resignation—may apply to the benumbed sensation adages which amount to this, when weighed, that they must bear what they cannot help. His is a very different and far higher lesson.

A dismal road indeed is the path of worldly resignation under bereavement or anxiety—a path full of sad remembrances, ghastly with the decayed forms of vain philosophers, and sounding drearily with the confessions of past disappointment; whereas the Christian's path in sorrow is cheered by his Saviour's Voice and Presence, and animated by the glorious cloud of witnesses who have followed Him through suffering unto triumph.

Dean Alford.

CHASTISEMENT

(Heb. 12:5-11)

"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent." God chastises His children that they may be more and more conformed to His mind, or as the apostle expresses it, that they may "be partakers of His holiness."

There are three ways of treating chastisement mentioned in the word of God. One is to DESPISE it. "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." To say in effect that we did not need what has come upon us, is really to despise it, and the One who has sent it.

A second way of treating chastisement is to *faint* under it. "Neither faint when thou art rebuked of Him." The one who faints under chastening, does not see and own that it comes in love—that the Hand of Love has brought it for good—and so faints under it.

The third way is to be *exercised* by the chastisement. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are *exercised* thereby." The person who is brought to true exercise of soul under chastisement will not be indulging in nice sentimental thoughts, but will be saying the Master's touch *means something; and will be diligently enquiring* what that meaning is. Is there not something in my ways, the soul will ask, which is displeasing to Him? Have I not something between myself and Him? He is a jealous God, and will not give His glory to another. The exercised one who knows God, will also say in effect, He has sent this chastisement in love—He means it for blessing to me. He wants my whole heart and life. Oh, if this exercise goes down deep, the soul will see things as God sees them, that is, according to its own little finite measure, and thus will be finding "a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen," and which will shine with growing brightness until it enters the perfect and eternal day. In short, this

deep exercise is the way of real blessing. "AFTERWARD IT YIELDETH THE PEACEABLE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO THEM WHICH ARE EXERCISED THEREBY." No blessing in despising chastisement—no blessing in fainting under it; but simply in being truly exercised by it.

Oh, happy if through chastisement we are brought down from the deceptive clouds of our own vain thoughts, to the terra firma of God's solemn realities. Full blessing is had by fully and practically getting into the current of His thoughts. Full blessing is had by taking sides with God against much that He has seen in us and our ways, deeply offensive to Him. This is self-judgment. Fruit suited to God's taste will follow. R. H.

INDEPENDENCY

By F. W. Grant

Real independency is not of God, but always and everywhere against Him. It is to make the members of the same body say to each other, "We have no need of you." and to deny the unity of the Spirit which should pervade the body. The more we lament and refuse the sectarianism which exists, the more we are compelled, and shall rejoice, to own the body of Christ wherever possible. And this circle of fellowship, which is not "the body," furnishes us with the means of owning this in a truthful and holy way, so far as the state of ruin in which the Church exists permits it to be done. With love to all Christ's own—with an open door for the reception of all according to the conditions of truth and holiness—such a circle is not sectarian, but a protest against it, while the meeting that refuses connection with it *is* sectarian.

And this is what is meant by the "ground" of the one body. It is as different as possible from any claim to *be* the one body, and does not in the least imply any sectarian conditions of intelligence in order to communion. The maintenance of a common discipline is in no wise sectarian, but *part* (an essential part) *of that communion*

itself: absolutely, if the holiness of God be the same thing wherever it is found, and not a thing for the "two or three" anywhere to trifle with as they list.

Independency, in setting aside the practical unity of the Church of God, sets aside a main guard of holiness itself. It makes this no object of common care; it does not seek *common exercise about it*. It releases from the sense of responsibility as to the House of God: it is my own house, and I keep it clean after my own fashion! And this laxity as to the people of God at large (so consoling to the unexercised conscience, and with a great charm to multitudes today) naturally has the effect of lowering one's estimate of holiness, and so prevents my own house being kept really clean.

One's voice may be little heard in a day like this; but I would do what I can to press upon the people of the Lord, first of all, their Master's claim. I press that this independency—little as one may imagine it, little as one may care to entertain it even as a question—means ultimately shipwreck to the truth of Christ, because it means *independency of Him*. One may find in it plenty of associates, for it makes little demand on one, and gives the kind of liberty which is so coveted today. The authority of Christ is not in it. It may support itself by the help of names in repute as Christians, and be in honor. It cannot have the commendation which Philadelphia, spite of its "little power," finds from her gracious Lord: "*Thou has kept My Word, and has not denied My name.*"

(Words in season 1896.)

THE SECOND COMING EXPECTATION

"That blessed hope" is the language of Scripture when speaking of the coming again of our Lord (Titus 2:13), and what could be more blessed than to be living in the constant *expectation* of seeing the One "whom not having seen we love" face to face!

Soon the long dark night will be past and a glorious morning will dawn, when the Bridegroom of our hearts will claim His own, and rapture to Heaven His blood-

bought Bride. How glorious the prospect! His prayer to the Father, recorded in John 17:24, "Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory," will then be fully answered. There shall be nothing in that day to hinder our standing in the full blaze of that glory. All limitations forever gone; glorified with Him; yea, with bodies like His own, we shall possess God-given capacity to enjoy that unsullied glory (Phil. 3:21; it will be our glorious home forever.

Again and again, in the book of Revelation, the Lord has said, "I come quickly." Does this strike a responsive chord in our hearts? Are we able to say, "Come, Lord Jesus?" Is it our daily *expectation* to see His face and be with Him? He will not disappoint His waiting people. On the Father's throne He waits in patience for the moment, fixed in divine counsels, when He will arise and claim His own. Oh! glorious consummation of our hope—our "blessed hope."

"That bright and blessed morn is near,
When He—the Bridegroom—shall appear
And call His bride away.
Her blessing then, shall be complete,
As with her Lord she takes her seat,
In everlasting day."

What a wonderful destiny awaits the believer! How complete is our union with that blessed, glorified Man! When at last He takes His place as universal Lord, and fills the earth with the glory of God, His glorified Bride will be the sharer of His throne (Eph. 1:23). All the spoils of His glorious victory He will share then with His own in that day. All creation awaits it, and its groan will then be hushed: "For the anxious looking out of the creature (creation) *expects* the revelation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19). Will He find us "watching servants" when He returns? Are our lamps trimmed and lights burning brightly? A little lad was sauntering down the streets of a city some years ago, repeating a little

ditty of his own composing, "At three o'clock, at three o'clock, at three o'clock!" Someone at his side, hearing the words so often repeated, at last asked, "And what of three o'clock?" "Why, don't you know?" said the little fellow, "Mother's coming home!"

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If our hearts are filled with the blessed expectation of our Lord's soon coming, it must leave an impression upon our spirits. John says in his first epistle (3:3): "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

"The night is far spent and the day is at hand." Everything around us points to the closing up of all things earthly. In the world today there is a general feeling that some great cataclysm is at hand. Faith knows that the coming of the Lord draws near. How it behooves us to be "watching"—expecting, that the day may not take us unawares. "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, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12:37). What deep, devoted love! What infinite grace!

J. W. H. NICHOLS.

OUR LORD'S RETURN

(Uniform Testimonials)

The great fact that the Lord Jesus will come again to take His people to Himself is to be present to our hearts from the commencement to the close of our Christian lives. Our attitude towards this great event is to be one of watchfulness. We are to *live in the hope of His coming—expecting it, loving it, yet at the same time patiently waiting for the hour when all His purposes shall be completed.* Finally, the light of eternity, shining upon us through the anticipation of His coming glory, is to refine and purify our whole character, all our earthly relationships, and everything that belongs to our life of service as His redeemed bond-servants.

Besides, we will find that nothing so much conduces to holy living, joyful service, and separation from the world, as the desire to be approved before Christ at His coming. (Sel.)

THE BLESSED HOPE

I may speak a word as the result of my own experience, and I hold it out to all who are in the ministry if they will allow me to give them a word of exhortation—I give it not upon the standpoint of interpreting the Bible, but from the standpoint of having had much knowledge of the working people, from the best of them down to the lowest dregs of the population—I maintain that if you will go among the mass of the people in all their misery, and filth, and sin, and hold out to them the great doctrine of the Second Coming, and enforce it by all the eloquence that you can command, and all the spirit that may be given to you by the Holy Ghost, I have no doubt (I feel it from what I have seen and heard myself), that thousands of the people will receive the gracious and consolatory doctrine, and find in it the solace of their present misery, by living in the hope of an immediate and blessed hereafter. I saw it in the very depths of human misery. I saw it and I heard it in the lowest receptacles of human sorrow, in White-chapel, where were collected some three hundred of the most miserable of human beings. There they were addressed upon this very subject; and when I called upon them to sing the ever-stirring hymn with which we begin today, with the great chorus, in which they all joined:

"Hold the fort, *for I am coming,*
 Jesus signals still;
 Wave the answer back to Heaven:
 'By Thy grace we will!'"

those three hundred wretched human beings burst as one man into song for ten minutes, and then for ten minutes more did they repeat it, and many of them went back to their homes comforted and strengthened, because they heard for the first time that a Redeemer was at hand, and that any hour He might be expected to take them to Himself, regenerated and happy, there to dwell with Him for ever.

—LORD SHAFTSBURY.

*"The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout
 . . . We . . . shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air."*
 —1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

"It may be that the night will yet grow darker;
 It may be that the storm is not yet spent;
 It may be that the times will wax more evil;
 Earth braving heaven and scorning to repent.

Still let us hear the Master daily saying,
 'Behold, I come; awake, arise, prepare!'
 For, but a little, and there sounds the summons:—
 'Ascend, My saints, to meet Me in the air!'

—HORATIUS BONAR.

"I will come again" (John 14:3).

"Know that He is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33).

What great changes there will be when He comes again: *Great changes for His redeemed*, for all will receive the fullness of their redemption and enter into their eternal inheritance as the fellow heirs of the Lord Jesus Christ; *great changes in the earth*, for, when He comes, evil and the god of this age will be dethroned; *great changes for Israel*, for that nation will no longer be the homeless wanderers among the nations of all continents, but will be regathered and enjoy the covenant blessings promised so long ago, but then gloriously realized by the coming of the King; *great changes among the nations of the world*, for idolatry will cease, and all will worship and adore the Lord; *great changes in all creation*, for groaning creation will be delivered of its groans, and be brought into the liberty of the sons of God. All is waiting for His return.

—A. C. GAEBELEIN.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—Rev. xxii. 20.

"One of the glorious things about the Christian faith is that no matter what may happen in a future day of disaster or judgment, all is well with the believer who is in Christ Jesus. It is a wonderful thing to know that we are ready for His coming, with all that that means. It is no less wonderful that, by His grace, we are able to meet all the trials and tribulations of life which are sure to come to us in this age. In all these trials of faith we are buoyed up with the hope of His return, which will mean healing for all the ills of life, the righting of all the wrongs of earth, the bringing-in of a kingdom wherein righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

"'Even so, come, Lord Jesus!'"

—P. W. PHILPOTT.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly."
—Rev. xxii. 20.

"These were His last words to His waiting bride, spoken nineteen hundred years ago. They have been misunderstood, and men have said He did not come quickly because He did not come soon. But 'quickly' does not mean 'soon.' It means 'suddenly,' as it is written in Malachi iii. 1, 2. 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple . . . But who shall abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap.' Thus, in the last book of the Old Testament, as in the last book of the New Testament, we are warned of the suddenness of His return. In each case the reference is to His Second Coming to earth. And, if that is to be sudden and without warning, His coming *for* us will be even more so. Therefore, keep looking up. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

—WILLIAM L. PETTINGILL.

READ THE WORD

In these days of depression, when faith is tested to the limit, and men's hearts fail them for fear, it is refreshing to know that God is projecting His own Word—"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light." It will never cease to function, until time shall be no more; its Gospel shall be preached, men shall be convicted of sin and brought to Christ, when the British Empire and the American Republic have become historical facts.

This book is the book of the ages, it contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of Salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of Believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. CHRIST IS ITS GRAND SUBJECT, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the Judgment, and be remembered for ever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

PAUL'S MINISTRY—THE CHURCH

1 Corinthians, chapter 12, was read.

This morning our subject will be the apostle Paul's line of ministry; especially that part styled the "mystery," the Church as the body of Christ. Of all the lines of truth for the Christian there is none more important than this one, and none we ought to be better acquainted with. It is the characteristic theme of Paul's ministry, and has a very unique place in the New Testament. None of us can properly fill our place and responsibilities in a collective testimony unless we understand this line of truth, and the principles embodied in it. It is the *special* truth given us for this dispensation.

The subject of the Kingdom reaches back into the past dispensations, as we have seen, and through the present

and future ones, and into the eternal state itself. So also the family of God: it embraces all born of God from the beginning, and through every dispensation unto the end. But the Mystery, the Church, includes only the saints of our dispensation, and no other. Hence the importance of this subject for us. That we may get the subject clearly and in order, let us take it up step by step.

First. We do get the thought of the Church in the Old Testament, but only in types or pictures, as hints of what would later be revealed in the New Testament. It is typically foreshadowed in the Old Testament in two aspects, as the *bride*, and as the *house*.

In Gen. 2 it is beautifully pictured in Adam and Eve; so also in the call of Rebekah, Gen. 24; and in other instances it is beautifully set forth in type. In Aaron and his *house*, as the priestly family, we have Christ the High Priest and the Church as His *house*. Gen. 2 is confirmed as a type of Christ and His Church in Eph. 5; and Aaron's family illustrating the Church as the house of God is confirmed in the epistle to the Hebrews, "whose house are we" (chap. 3). But while these pictures are given us here and there in the Old Testament, they could not be understood in this typical form until the light and truth of the New Testament was given: then the veil was lifted, and the light of the New Testament thrown back upon these Old Testament pictures shows us the beautiful and precious truth contained in them. "All these things happened unto them for *types*" (1 Cor. 10:11, margin). We can see now that God had Christ and the Church before Him from the very beginning, as the types, which we can now read, are fullest proof to us—their unfolding being left for New Testament times.

Second. Coming to the New Testament, we find in the Gospels an advance on what we see in the Old Testament. In Matt. 16:18, the Church is announced, but only prophetically: the Lord said to Peter, "Upon this rock I *will* build My Church." Notice carefully, not "I am building;" much less, "I have been building." The truth

just announced did not refer to any past work, nor yet to any present work during our Lord's lifetime upon earth. It was yet future; and in Matt. 16, it must also be observed, it is the Church as *a house*, built upon the Rock: not the Church as the body of Christ, for neither in the Old Testament nor yet in the four Gospels do we get the Church as the body of Christ. The types illustrate the "bride" and the "house" character, but not "the body." This aspect of the Church was not revealed to prophets nor yet in Matt. 16, but to the apostle Paul.

Third. Coming to the book of the Acts, we see the historical record of the Church as first established, and for about the first thirty years of its history—the Church as formed by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and guided and growing by His power.

Fourth. But now coming to Paul's epistles, we get the full revelation of what the Church is, and the teaching concerning it. To the Epistle's alone must we turn for Church doctrine. This is very important to us in this time, when the teaching concerning the Church is so much confused.

Ques.—We have had the Church as the *Bride*, the *House* and the *Body* mentioned. Are there any other aspects?

Ans.—Yes; and as we have reached this point of our study, it might be well to look at the different aspects of it given in the New Testament; and in doing so, we shall see the oneness of God's people in a very beautiful way. In the Gospels it is not only *prophetically* announced, but the Lord gave parabolic teaching concerning it also. In the seven parables of Matt. 13, the Lord gave some things *new* and some *old* (ver. 52). The things old were the things already taught in the Old Testament, but the things new were those now given for the first time; things not revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Some have confused the teaching of the treasure and of the pearl—applying them both to the Church. This is a mistake. We believe the *treasure* refers to Israel; the

pearl to the Church, and then the net enclosing the fish applies to the conversion of the nations preparatory to the Millennium. The subject of the parable as to the treasure was nothing new (see Exod. 19:3-5). "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel . . . ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine." In this passage we get two things: first, the treasure—that is Israel; second, "all the earth is Mine," that is the field (compare Matt. 13:38, 44). The nation under law did not get the blessing ordained for them; but God's purpose must be fulfilled; Israel shall yet be His peculiar treasure—God will carry out His purposes of grace regardless of all their past failures; and on the basis of Christ's sacrificial work, that nation shall be regathered to their own land, and placed in the earth (the field) as His peculiar treasure. This is further confirmed when we read two of the millennial psalms,—135 and 136. Israel, when restored to the land, will sing, "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself and Israel for *His peculiar treasure* (Psa. 135:4). These passages, we believe, ought to establish clearly the teaching concerning the treasure in Matt. 13.

In the "pearl" we get what is *new*. "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." This is a theme not embodied in the Old Testament. The merchantman is Christ; the price was His atoning sacrifice; and the pearl procured, "one pearl of great price," speaks to us of the unique character of the Church. Israel today is set aside; the Holy Ghost has come down, and the pearl, brought up from the sea, illustrates the Church gathered out from the nations. It is well to observe that it is *one* pearl; the *oneness* of God's people is expressed by the pearl. From the very beginning of New Testament teaching to the end, the oneness of God's people is kept prominently before us. This parable of the pearl is the first intimation in the New Testament as to the Church, and opens a wonderful theme.

Ques.—Do we get in the seven parables a history of the Church?

Ans.—There are certain things in Matt. 13 that are parallel with Rev. chaps. 2 and 3, but in Matt. the subject is the Kingdom; in Revelation it is the Church. The first four parables give us the Kingdom in its present form, from its beginning to the end. In these first four parables we can trace the growth and the development of evil until the end. In the last three we get God's triumph over evil, in spite of all Satan's work today. God in the end will gather Israel: that is the treasure. He will have the Church in heaven also: that is the pearl. After the Church gets her place in heaven, and Israel hers upon the earth, a multitude from the nations will be converted and brought into the millennial blessing: that is the good fish of the seventh parable. The Church is not the Kingdom, as we have already seen; but the Church is *in* the Kingdom. As an illustration we might say, Queen Mary is not King George's kingdom, she is his bride-companion; nevertheless she is *in* his kingdom. She is his bride, his wife, that is her nearest relationship. In the last three parables we get Israel, the Church, and the Gentiles. Each have their place according to God's purpose. See 1 Cor. 10:32.

One Flock. Turning to John 10:16; we find the same truth presented under another figure—one flock. This also brings out the oneness of God's people. The Lord had just given sight to the blind man (chap 9), which provoked opposition on the part of the Jewish leaders, and their refusal of His ministry of love. In chap. 10 we see our Lord sets the Jewish system aside, and leads His own sheep *out* (ver. 3). Judaism was a fold; the Lord now leads His people out of that fold; and His *other sheep, who were among the Gentiles, He purposes now to bring and unite them, and make them one flock*: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one *flock*, (not "fold" as in the A. V.) and one shepherd." In this passage the Lord looks beyond

the cross to our dispensation, and speaks of the present work. The one pearl of Matt. 13 is now being formed, and the one flock of John 10 is being gathered. (See also Acts 20:28). The whole Jewish system, before Christ came, was an enclosure; but in our dispensation the enclosure is set aside, and we have but one flock with one Shepherd in their midst. What a contrast to the old fold!

Ques.—Would the words, “I send you forth as lambs among wolves” (Luke 10:3) be similar?

Ans.—In Luke 10 there is no thought of Church position, nor of Church oneness, but rather the disciples going forth as teachers and ministers of the Word; and thus going forth they were to be as lambs amongst wolves. This is service, and individual.

The Epistle of Christ (2 Cor. 3:3). Here it is the epistle of Christ—not the epistles, although that is the way the verse at times is quoted, as well as sometimes taught. The individual believer is not said to be an epistle of Christ. Someone has said, “No individual has got parchment enough on which the epistle of Christ could be written.” Yet every individual is some expression, or *part of this epistle*; the whole Church is the epistle. Our Lord Himself did not write any of the New Testament epistles. Paul wrote fourteen, James one, Peter, two, John three, and Jude one. The Church is *Christ’s living epistle* in this world, to be “read and known of all men.” What a calling—what place and responsibility! Every local assembly, as Corinth, is a representation of the Church at large; and it is only as each one of us in the various assemblies are filling our right place that that town or place have presented to them an expression of Christ—Christ’s epistle. Each assembly then is a *miniature picture of the whole*; and each child of God is like a page, a verse, or a word in that epistle.

The House. In Matt. 16, it is as the *house* the Church is presented. This subject is continued in the first epistle of Peter, chap. 2:4-6. There it is called “a spiritual house,” and made up of “living stones.” The Tabernacle

of old had passed away, so also Solomon's temple; and now there was but one house in which God could dwell—it is a spiritual house. In this house we see many stones, all built upon one foundation, but one house. It was one pearl, one flock, one epistle, and now one house. In each case it is the unity or oneness of God's people, that is expressed.

One Body. We may now enter more fully into 1 Cor. 12. In ver. 4, it is the one Spirit; ver. 5, one Lord; ver. 6, it is one God; and then in ver. 13 we have the "one body." The main thought in this chapter is the work of the Holy Spirit—the place He occupies, and the work He performs. In chap. 8, ver. 5, 6, the apostle had already emphasized the truth that there is but one God, the Father; and also but one Lord, Jesus Christ. Now in chap. 12, he gives prominence and emphasizes the work of the third Person, the Holy Spirit—"there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." How beautiful this is! The Holy Spirit is now upon the earth, has formed the Church, dwells there, and distributes the various gifts according to the need of the whole. No two gifts are alike, yet all are needed, even those that we might think of least importance. We are apt to drop into the carnality of the Corinthians, and say, Paul is my favorite, or I prefer Apollos, and another is partial to Cephas; but how foolish and unspiritual this, if we recognize Christ as the centre and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the assembly where every gift should have its place. See the variety of God's works in nature—not two faces alike, nor even two flowers or leaves exactly alike; then why not recognize this diversity as the work of the one Spirit? Failing to see and own this has led men to the appointment of the one-man ministry. It means a great loss for all concerned; and we who have greater light must guard from falling into the same snare—selecting our favorite or favorites. If a variety of supplies were laid up in store for your free use, why be so beggarly and poverty-stricken as to say, I will take just this one thing, and leave the rest, when it is *all* for your profit? This is also true with the

gifts the Spirit has given. Verse 5 reads, "there are different ministries, but the same Lord." He cherishes and nourishes the Church by His ministry of love through the various gifts He provides. On the other hand, let none harass God's people with ministry not to edification, for the assembly is the place where the *Spirit* is to guide, and there ought to be due waiting upon God for that ministry of the Spirit which will always be for the edification of the whole. The Lord knows our need best, and desires to richly supply, but our reception of what he has for us will also depend upon our spiritual state of soul.

One great fact that characterized our meetings in our early days was that saints were gathered to Christ as a living Centre. They were not gathered to "brethren," nor yet to certain forms of ministry. There were exceptions of course, but it was characteristic to wait upon God for ministry by the Spirit. We must be on our guard, not to drift from the simplicity and scripturalness of the first days.

There are diversities of operations but the same God (ver. 6). We must not limit the Holy one of Israel. He is sovereign, and works in different ways. This is true in the assembly as also in the gospel. Paul goes to the riverside in Philippi, and unfolds the truth to the women gathered there, and the Lord opened Lydia's heart. Afterwards a poor damsel is delivered from an evil spirit as they went to prayer. Then God works in the prison by an earthquake and His servant finds an open heart for the truth in the jailor that kept them. Each case differed, but it was the same God that wrought.

Is it not a remarkable fact that nearly all the evangelical teaching today, where they speak and write about the work of the Holy Spirit, they scarce ever go beyond that which concerns the individual? They dwell much upon the necessity of the Holy Spirit for service, but 1 Cor. 12 is scarcely ever alluded to; yet this is the chapter that gives us the Spirit's work in our dispensation, and the unique place that the Church occupies as the one body of Christ.

“For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body,” (this is the human body of course, the figure of the application that follows) “so also is Christ” (ver. 12). But the translators failed to grasp the meaning of the application and left out an important word here, “So also is *the* Christ.” This expression points out the fulness of the subject before us; it includes both the Head, now in heaven, and all the members of the one body, now on the earth. A human body is not complete without the head, nor yet the head complete without all the members. This is illustrated in an early chapter of Genesis. After God had built from one of Adam’s ribs the help-met for him, Adam called her “woman.” Then, in chap. 3, after the fall, Adam gave her a second name; he called her name “*Eve*,” that is “the mother of all living.” But in chap. 5:1, 2 we get the name that God placed upon them both. He blessed them, “and called *their* name Adam in the day that they were created.” In this we get God’s mind concerning the two; they were one before Him, and one name includes both Adam and Eve; “their name Adam.” The same is true now when a woman is united to her husband, she drops her own name and takes up that of her husband because they are now one. Thus the one name includes both. This is the figure; “so also is *the* Christ”—it embraces the Lord personally, and the Church, His body upon the earth.

This is what the apostle styles the mystery in both Ephesians and Colossians—hidden in the past ages, but now revealed to His saints. Paul received this revelation, and it need be for us no longer a mystery. *The Christ* takes in all the children of God of this dispensation, from the day of Pentecost when the Spirit descended, until the rapture when the Lord shall descend as we read in 1 Thess. 4:13-18. This term, “the Christ,” gives us the oneness of God’s people with Christ now glorified above, and with each other, in a very marked way. Before the glorification of Christ and the descent of the Spirit, God’s people were disciples, believers, brethren, etc.; but they

were not members of the one body; for that relationship did not exist. Now that redemption is completed and Christ is glorified, the Spirit is here to form this new and wonderful relationship, uniting the members here to Christ in heaven; and by the same Spirit we are associated with one another, "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free"—all class or national distinctions are done away in Christ.

We saw yesterday that by new birth the Spirit gave us our relationship in the family of God, and that that relationship extends back into former dispensations. But the truth we are considering—the one body—is an added, or nearer relationship, formed in the power of one Spirit; "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." The one hundred and twenty on the day of Pentecost were already children of God, but when they were baptized by the Holy Spirit, they were brought into this new relationship and unity. This relationship is no continuation of Old Testament teaching, but is entirely new.

Ques.—Does this relationship subsist while we are upon the earth only, or forever?

Ans.—The principle, written long ago, "Whatsoever God doeth it shall be forever," applies in this also. This is a divine relationship, formed by the Holy Spirit between Christ and His people, and will abide forever.

We might look now at the different ways in which this expression, "one body," is used in the New Testament; and how far this truth can be enjoyed by us, and its principles be maintained.

First, "For to make in Himself of twain one new man" (Eph. 2:14-16). In these verses we get the work of the Cross clearing away every obstruction, and laying the foundation for the work of this new dispensation. These verses connect closely with the chapter we have just been considering. A. E. B.

[Continued in December Issue]

ITEMS OF INTEREST

(To inform, exhort, stimulate and encourage)

GENERAL MEETINGS

Norfolk, Va.

Beginning (D. V.) Thanksgiving Day, November 30, and continuing over Lord's Day, December 3. Write Jas. A. Lawson, 764 N. 48th St., Norfolk, Va.

Detroit, Mich.

All day meeting Thanksgiving Day, in Detroit Assembly Hall, 6516 16th St. Take Grand Belt or 14th car, or bus on Grand Blvd.

Erie, Pa.

Bro. F. Tomkinson writes good words of encouragement, both concerning the past Dunkirk Conference and also activities in and around Erie.

First—"Miss H— who was converted at the Conference and who has returned to her home in Scotia, N. Y., just wrote me, 'Enclosed you will find a small donation to be placed in the fund for the purpose of distributing more magazines, pamphlets and gospel tracts. These, you know how much have helped me so that I want others to receive them also, and know the joy of being the Lord's'.

Second—"You will also be glad to know that several of the young men here have been going out into the country towns with the Gospel and have had nice hearings. Tonight we go to Northeast, 14 miles away."

Both of those items give us no little cheer. First, the fruit that has attended the Dunkirk Conference, and what also continues by her self denial and willingness to use her means to carry the good news to others. May such a bright example stimulate all our young and old to continue in the same grace.

Also the young men carrying the Gospel message to the towns around. Such evangelical activity should ever be encouraged. It reminds us of what followed the Apostle's labors at Thessalonica. "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad." (I. Thes. I: 6-8.)

Mr. Maurice Keim, Rochester, N. Y., denied himself the privilege of attending the Dunkirk Conference, in order that he might serve pressing need for ministry in other places. He visited Owosso, Grand Rapids, Milwaukee, Chicago and Woodland, St. Louis, and in each place the brethren report helpful ministry.

Mr. J. F. Stebbins, Tampa, Fla., has spent the whole summer in the North with Mrs. S. traveling by auto, and attending Conferences, both at Minneapolis and Dunkirk. Brethren in Minnesota report a few nice cases of conversion through his ministry, for which we give thanks.

Mr. E. E. Breeman, Rural 3, Sunbury, Pa., was not able to be at the Conference. For a time his health had been impaired. Let us remember those who have weak bodies, and that doors for service may be granted them nearer home. Sunbury is a field where we have spent happy and fruitful seasons in former years, especially in the days of such a devoted business man as the departed Bro. Wm. Gottshall.

Mr. Lee W. Ames came on to Dunkirk Conference from Norfolk, Va., with Mrs. Ames by auto. After the conference, they turned west visiting different places for meetings, enroute for Minnesota. He has located his wife and son for the next school term in Minneapolis. Report reaches us from different places of helpful ministry. He is now in a fine field for service—Minnesota. Many of our laborers, some now at home with the Lord, have found that state a fruitful field for service for more than fifty years. Two outstanding names abide with us as helpers in the work there in these early days, William Glenn, Cotter's Grove, and Mr. A. M. Dole, Minneapolis.

The Editor left California for a month's service in the East, first attending Dunkirk Conference, then Toronto and Kingston, Canada. He spent one very happy Lord's Day with the little meeting in Kingston; others attending from Montreal, Sydenham and Napanee. The whole day, morning, afternoon and evening, was occupied in feasting on heavenly things similar to the visit we had there last year. For any brethren calling at Kingston, the address of the meeting-room is "Sailor's Institute," corner of King and Garrach Sts. Any information will be cheerfully given by writing Mr. J. C. Bourne, 51 Balaclava St., Kingston, Ontario. In Toronto we were guests with our old time friends, Mr. and Mrs. Cowan, 385 Jane St. and in their home we met others, long loved and valued on account of past devotion to His interests. Was able to visit many old friends in that city.

Then upon return gave Chicago five days; very busy seasons. The guest of the Butler family, 126 Pleasant Ave., Oak Park. Time was occupied in having different readings in the evenings, and visiting during the day. Upon Lord's Day we went by auto to Milwaukee with Mr. Butler and two sons and spent a happy season, both morning and afternoon, with the little Assembly there; then back to Chicago where we found a house full waiting, and had our last meeting between 9 and 10 o'clock, after which we returned direct home to Pasadena.

We urge all our readers to remember each servant in the field at least once a week in prayer, for we live in dark and perilous times and prayer is a sacred and helpful exercise which keeps us in close touch with God.

INFORMATION

We have received information recently concerning conditions in the Bahama Islands. The recent hurricane that swept the Atlantic Coast struck the Bahamas again this year and some of those with us were made to suffer great loss, especially our Brother Robt. S. Stratton. We are glad to learn that his house escaped, but the crop which is depended upon largely as food for the winter was all destroyed.

We sincerely hope those more favored in U. S. and Canada will remember this need in the Bahamas at the present.

Mr. James S. Hall, The Bight, Cat Island, Bahamas, and Robt. S. Stratton, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas, both have served the Lord and his Gospel on the island for several years, and their past service there is sufficient commendation to brethren everywhere for continued prayer and fellowship in their work.

In addition to the above need, the few Brethren with us—about 26—in Spanish Wells, have in various ways been made to suffer and are now without a meeting-room, and for the present meet together in a small private house. It has been suggested to build a plain building, so that a Gospel testimony may be continued there, and any of our readers feel free to contribute any sum however small, will have a continued pleasure that they have invested part for Christ our Lord in such a building in Spanish Wells, Bahamas.

Further, our Brother J. S. Hall undertook to build such a meeting room on Cat Island a few years ago, which has served them well for a Sunday School and Gospel Testimony. He assumed, for the poor people in that community, the full responsibility. We learn as yet they are a few hundred dollars behind in the payment. Any brethren free to contribute to those needs may address all communications to Mr. J. Goodwin Roberts, Marsh Harbor, Abaco, Bahamas, and specify the purpose for which the sum should be used. Our Brother Roberts has been connected for many years with the testimony on the Islands, and being a school teacher, postmaster, etc., during many years, as well as using all the time possible in preaching in needy districts, was honored a few years ago by the British Government, and a letter of thanks from King George, for his valuable service rendered to the people on the Islands during the time of stress and need. We deem him most capable to be entrusted with such a distribution of any contributions sent to him. We understand New York checks or drafts are most easily cashed on the Islands, and a 5c postage on all letters from United States and Canada.

(Other items and papers are held over until next issue of this magazine for want of space.)

JEHOVAH IS MY SHEPHERD

(Ps. 23)

As we reach the closing months of another year, it may be well for us to take a glance backward and get a retrospective view of the months that have passed. Each of the twelve have run their course just as the sands run through the small glass, and the last sands of the year are about through as we read the present issue, and fourteen months since we began to send forth our magazine.

We would be most unwise were we not to reflect upon the mercies, goodness, and love of our Saviour God during the past month and most ungrateful were we not to be thankful.

The above Psalm has of recent months been our meat and drink. When we visited Scotland well nigh forty years ago an aged servant of Christ remarked, "When visiting homes in this land whether in health or sickness, amid wealth or poverty, if you ask people what Psalm you should read before you leave, they will invariably answer Psalm Twenty-three." They read and re-read this Psalm with profit and delight, yet never tire of this *valley Psalm* of six verses. Jehovah, the first person and the first word of the first verse, opens the door to the entire Psalm and He is referred to *twelve* different times.

The personal pronoun appears *seventeen* times, (take your fine pen and place a stroke under each place where they occur). This Psalm is highly personal and never throughout the entire Psalm do we read, "we," "our," "us," but always "my," "me," "mine," "I." It thus becomes an individual experience, and by faith we appropriate all the precious and sweet morsels which each verse affords.

We shall refer at present only to three of those remarkable statements. First, *Jehovah* is my Shepherd. Those are precious, precious words, and written one thousand

years before Jesus, the Saviour, came down from Heaven. He was the Good Shepherd born in Bethlehem. Those words were penned by a man of faith, and it contains the assurance of faith that ever goes with those who take God at His Word.

Jehovah was the joy and delight of the King who penned the Psalm, and he was a man after God's own heart. Jehovah was the same for every pious Jew and Israelite, ever since this sacred name was given to them as a revelation, and committed to them as a sacred trust. (Ex. 6:2-8). He was the "Rock of Ages," past, present and future, the only Saviour throughout every age of the world's history. Jehovah—the Eternal One, as the French translation gives the Hebrew, the self-existing Creator of the Universe, and Saviour of men since the fall in Gen. 3, the Saviour of every pious Israelite for fifteen hundred years since their emancipation from Egypt.

And as we open the New Testament pages, this same Name greets us in the Greek language at the very threshold of the Book. But with added lustre and beauty. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus." (Math. 1:21) which is not simply Jehovah, but has an addition that becomes New Testament revelation, Jesus—Jehovah, the Saviour—and when His life ministry began He declared Himself, "I am the Good Shepherd; and the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." (John 10:11). And those words were spoken one thousand years after the Psalmist in Psalm 23 had passed on to his rest.

Thus Jesus incarnate, Jesus in the perfection and the glory of His human life on earth, Jesus upon the cross, making and completing atonement for our sins, Jesus in resurrection, power and glory, revealed Himself as the *good* and *great* Shepherd of the sheep, and further with the full blaze of New Testament light and Truth, we learn that after He ascended up to Heaven, angels and authorities subjected themselves to Him. Upon the cross He was the good Shepherd. Now upon the throne in resurrection glory, He is the great Shepherd. (Heb. 13:20,

21). and finally when He comes again the second time He will appear as the *Chief Shepherd*. (1 Peter 5: 4.)

In the Old Testament, great men such as Abel, Joseph, Moses, David, each in their time and day typified Him the coming Good Shepherd, for each of them were shepherds of special note. He now *keeps, feeds, leads* His beautiful flock. These are three of the main features of shepherd service.

Second. The next feature that we will observe in this beautiful Psalm in the closing part is "Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life." In this we observe faith, and the full assurance of faith very strikingly expressed. There may be *the valley* to tread, there may be enemies to encounter. There may be testings and sorrows, and the shadows of death observed distinctly, and at times *many tears*. Yet, we are assured in this part that "Goodness and mercy" are ever in the rear—shall follow, as the two footmen behind in the royal carriage. And these watch with observant eyes, and protect us throughout life, and follow us all the journey through.

Third. Finally, as we anticipate the end of all things here on earth, and the beginning of that eternal day, we add as did the Psalmist, "I shall dwell in the House of the Lord *forever*," "And so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:17-18). We repeat again, on looking back now over twelve and fourteen months, His mercies and His goodness have been very great. They have followed us throughout the whole year, and shall follow us to the end. There is and may be, deep heart sorrow, but faith penetrates every shadow and every cloud in the valley, and sees the bright sun (Son) shining above upon the throne, "until the day break and the shadows flee away." (Songs 2:17.) And faith looks forward also in full association with *hope*, and we anticipate a "bright to-morrow," "for we, through the Spirit, wait for the *hope* of righteousness by faith." (Gal. 5:5.) "I shall dwell in the House of Jehovah forever." All those precious themes are placed in

the hands of faith, and they buoy up the fainting spirits, and quicken our step in His pathway, His testimony, and His service, so that with the poet we may say at the close of 1933,

A.E.B.

*"We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that is to come."*

LETTERS OF SYMPATHY

In last month's issue of our magazine, notice was given concerning the home call of the Editor's beloved partner in life. Since then, many precious messages of tender love and sympathy have been received from different parts of Canada and the United States. It will not be possible to answer all those communications at present, so we use this opportunity to express our grateful thanks to all who have written us, for every kind word written in the hour of our great heart sorrow.

We insert this month a few of the messages sent to us. We would like to insert more but space forbids. We do this so that the whole family circle of our readers may share in measure with us our sorrow, and also the great comfort that has been afforded "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:20-22.)

October 13, 1933.

Beloved Brother:

Our hearts (I am sure I can say all in one vicinity) are with you and your dear one at this time, and we shall be before the Lord in prayer, that all the needed grace and help may be given in this hour of need.

In speaking with Mrs. L., two days ago, she said that during her extreme weakness, in the Hospital, when unable to read and scarce to think, the Lord was very precious, and that in the trial she learned His sympathy and support in an entirely new way. Even now, she said, she sometimes longed for those hours in the little room in the Hospital! So dear brother, the Lord is able to comfort and sympathize in this time of testimony, when your beloved perhaps feels life slipping away, and you feel keenly the prospect of parting, for a little while.

May His precious love be your comfort, and your heart experience anew that child-like confidence, that quiets the spirit wherever may be the path we are called to tread.

If your beloved one is conscious, please convey our love and sympathy, and assure her we are praying for her, and give her please, as a present resting place, the first part of Deut: 33:27.

Warm love in which all here would join if they knew I was writing.

J.W.H.N.

October 21, 1933.

My dear brother:—

Shortly after coming here from Chicago and Milwaukee, Bro. H. read your letter to me so I know all. Although the Lord had been gently preparing you for the blow, yet when it fell it was none the less felt. Love, perfect love, is in it all. The One who by death dethroned death and assigned it a new place, even that of serving His own, has used it to take off the fetters which kept your beloved one from the One she loved. She rests, while you are left to toil on the bit of the road that remains. It may not be for long, and your comfort is in Himself. Grace has put a silver lining in the dark cloud, thank God.

I feel for you, beloved brother, more than can be expressed. Perhaps in a measure that few can, having passed through the deep waters just three years ago on the same date, October 14th; how imperfect is all human sympathy at such a time; how full and perfect the sympathy of the One who stood by the side of the weeping sisters and mingled His tears with theirs. I know that you are being sustained and comforted.

Now that you have her no longer, even to minister to in her need, you will be experiencing that feeling that surges through one, and grips one, and holds them fast, while the tears flow so freely. This is God's merciful provision for the heart that is full. As one weeps on the Father's bosom tears give a measure of relief. Then, the hope of reunion, recognition, communion, throughout that long eternal day comes in as a sweet solace to the soul. May the Lord abundantly comfort you.

The sweet years of fellowship have been interrupted but only for a little while. The pathway will be specially lonesome until our Lord comes. Your plans may not have developed as yet but will shortly. I can only commend you to God as to the future. He will direct, I know.

This is only a brief note written in haste, and you will at least know that I have you on my heart and in my prayers. I close with fervent love to you.

Ever affectionately in Christ,

Wm. D.

Santa Barbara, California

Dear Mr. B.:—

It was with real sorrow that I received the wire from Mr. William R. Meckfessel announcing the departure for the "celestial city" of your beloved wife. Your letter which came quite recently prepared me, as you spoke so feelingly of Mrs. Booth's failing health, and how you were already suffering in anticipation of her demise. Truly, my dear brother, it is *hard* for a man to have to give up his wife. Have I not been through the same harrowing experience? It was full 39 years ago, and yet it seems but yester-

day, that I hung over the dying bed of William T., Jr.'s sweet and beautiful mother. I recall how I suffered and watched as she went down into the shadow. I hardly slept, or changed my clothes, but agonized in prayer—then the answer came, "Be of cheer," her case is in MY hands, I will raise up, or call upon you to give her forever as a wife, but to take her up as a fellow saint in CHRIST—a deeper and nearer relationship." And so comforted, I rose from my knees, comforted. That comfort, Mr. Booth, has never left me. For truly, "one in CHRIST" must be the only abiding relationship possible, or even to be sought. I sent you a wire of sympathy through Mr. M., but found it impossible to be present at the obsequies. So cheer up, beloved brother, CHRIST abides, and I am sure HE has made HIMSELF more precious and real to you than ever before—such are HIS lovely ways. Faithfully in a risen, glorified and coming SAVIOUR.

W.T.B. (M.D.)

Dear Brother B.:—

October 24, 1933.

You were about due for a letter, when word comes that the Lord has taken to Himself your dear wife.

It was not my privilege to know her personally, as you know. Nor can one who has not been called upon to pass through bereavement know what it really is, or be of much help to the heart that mourns the loss.

Still, in a limited way we can comfort one another at such a time; and it is this which is in my mind in sending you this line.

Last Saturday afternoon, while driving here on my way from St. Louis, I memorized I Thess. 4:13-18 in the Greek. Upon arrival I read from Brethren H. and N. the news of your loss. Lord's Day morning, at the close of the morning meeting, I had this passage upon my heart and spoke of it in connection with Mrs. Booth's departure. May these verses, and many others, minister to you the "comfort" which He alone is able to give.

I learn that Mrs. Dewar died on the same date three years ago. This was doubtless keenly felt by Bro. Dewar.

I am sure that our gracious God will have a way of making even so great a sorrow contribute to the enrichment of your life, as you walk before Him; while you have occasion for thankfulness because of the years you had together in sweet fellowship. May He give you physical strength to bear all this, amid the heavy responsibilities for which you are so greatly needed among us.

No acknowledgement is expected—your time and strength are needed for more important matters.

Affectionately in Him,

Lee, W. A.

THE LAST INTERVIEW WITH A SERVANT OF CHRIST

J. N. Darby with J. G. Bellett

§³ Sadly altered was the poor worn-out body, pillowed in an easy chair, but his spirit was rejoicing in his much-loved Lord. He said, "Two months ago, when I felt this sickness was unto death, I asked Him to reveal Himself to me in increased loveliness and nearness.— *He did, He filled me with Himself*—I know the blood has done its blessed, blessed work for my soul; it is His love, His beauty, His perfection, that fill my heart and vision." He then spoke of feeling a little better that day; "but, ah! that is no pleasure to me." Then, clasping his dear, thin hands together, he said, while tears flowed down his face, "My precious Lord Jesus, Thou knowest how fully I can say with Paul, to depart and be with Thee is far better. Oh, how far better! I do long for it. They come and talk to me of a crown of glory—I bid them cease; of the glory of heaven—I bid them stop. I am not wanting crowns.—I have *Himself! Himself!* I am going to be with *Himself!* Ah! with the Man of Sychar; with Him who stayed to call Zaccheus; with the Man of the 8th of John; with the Man who hung upon the cross; with the Man who died. Oh! to be with Him before the glories, the crowns or the kingdom appear! It's wonderful! wonderful!—with the Man of Sychar alone; the Man of the gate of the city of Naim; and I am going to be with Him forever; exchange this sad, sad scene, which cast Him out, for His presence Oh, the Man of Sychar!"

THE ROCK

The men of the world have *the rocks* wherein they trust. One after the other they give way. Be it ours to show in a practical way how great is *our Rock*, by the implicit faith with which we rest our all upon Him. Thus shall we rightly recommend Him to others, and be able to say with triumph what Moses said ere his song was finished, "*Their Rock* is not as *Our Rock*, even our enemies themselves being judges."—(Deut. 32:31.)

Let us aim at building one another up in the knowledge of Himself.

THINE AND MINE

I closely held within my arms
A jewel rare;
Never had one so rich and pure
Engaged my care;
'Twas my own, my precious jewel,
God gave it me;
'Twas mine, who else could care for it,
so tenderly?

But the Master came one day
My gem to take;
I cannot let it go, I cried,
My heart would break:
Nay, but the Master comes for it,
To bear above
To deck His royal diadem,
He comes in love.

But, Master, it is my treasure,
My jewel rare,
I'll safely guard and keep it pure,
And very fair;
If Thou keep'st my gem, He said,
It may be lost;
The threshold of My home, no thief
Has ever crossed.

And where the heart's rich treasure is,
The heart will be;
Thy jewel will be safe above,
Gone before Thee.
The Master said these words and gazed
With pitying look,
While in the early hush of morn
My gem He took.

Close to my heart that morn I held,
Tears falling fast,
An empty casket—the bright gem
Was safe at last.
Yes, Master, Thou may'st keep my own,
For it is Thine;
Safe in the house not made with hands,
'Tis Thine and Mine.

Sel.

PAUL'S MINISTRY—THE CHURCH

1 Corinthians, chapter 12, was read.

(Continued from November Issue)

Ques.—I suppose the word “new” (ver. 15) signifies “not existing before”?

Ans.—Yes. The middle wall of partition existing before has now been removed, and the Spirit is here to make “one new man” in Christ—in a new creation, and under a new Head. This new work began on the day of Pentecost, and has continued ever since. In Eph. 4:13 we get the completion of this work—“unto a *perfect* man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of *the Christ*” (New Trans.). The Holy Spirit abides in the Church to the end, with gifts necessary to complete that work; and when the last one is brought in and the body completed, then “the Christ” will be called a “*perfect* man.” “*New* man” in chap. 2, because it never existed before; a “*perfect* man” in chap. 4, because no more will then be added to it; the body will be complete. This covers the work of the whole dispensation.

Second. There is a more limited application of the term “one body.” We believe the apostle’s application in Eph. 4:4 was to all living upon the earth at that time. He was neither looking back at those gone before, nor yet forward to those that might be brought in after; so that this application would be to all living in the apostle’s day, or at any given time during this dispensation.

Third. We return now to 1 Cor. 12:27—“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” This expression refers only to the local gathering at Corinth; that is, all God’s people in the place. This is even more limited than Eph. 4:4, because the local testimony was intended to be a miniature illustration, in that place, of what the Church is as a whole before the world. We have thus had three views of what the Church is as the body of Christ:

(1) All the members of the one body, covering the entire dispensation from beginning to end, the new man, the perfect man.

(2) All the members living upon the earth, as in the apostle's day, or at any given time during this dispensation.

(3) All the members living at any time in a local place, as at Corinth.

Ques.—Would you say that this means all who are now gathered to the Lord's name, or all Christians in the place?

Ans.—1 Cor. 12, of course, takes in all Christians at Corinth. One was to be put away in chap. 5, and for the time being was outside the testimony of the assembly as such; and, while he was yet in the body of Christ, he was not part of the local assembly while under discipline. But we must remember that we are now at the close of the dispensation—not at the beginning. 1 Corinthians describes *more the Church in the beginning*; while 2 Timothy gives us a description of things as we now find them at the close. There is confusion everywhere today; and in reading the last epistles, we should not look for it to be otherwise; “in the last days perilous times shall come.” The mass of Christians today do not understand these truths, and many do not want them when presented. Others, while seeing and understanding them in measure, have yet not faith for the path that Scripture marks out.

Fourth. “The foundation of God standeth sure” amid the confusion and independency of our day; and the truth given, with the principles embodied in it, is for us today even as in the apostle's. If, in any place, even two or three love the Word, are subject to it, and seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit, the whole truth still remains *for their guidance and their enjoyment*. Suppose some one invites all the people in a place to a feast of grapes, but only a half-dozen come to enjoy it; are the half-dozen to deny themselves the enjoyment of it because the others will not respond? Surely not—though they may, and

should, regret that the others have not also come. Cannot we say this is true now in this town? We have gathered together from various parts to enjoy the ministry of the Word, and are refreshed; but how much greater joy, and better, it might be, if all the Christians in this place were to enjoy the truth with us! Thus we lose greatly by the divisions, the independency and carnality, of Christians today.

This brings us to a chapter suggested and referred to before—2 Tim., chap. 2. This chapter points out God's way in a day of apostasy, and how far we can enjoy the precious truths which we have been considering together. Notice, first, that in chap. 1:15 the apostle says, "All they which are in Asia have turned away from me." This does not mean, of course, that they had given up the profession of Christianity, or had ceased to be Christians, but rather that those assemblies in Asia had drifted from apostolic teaching, in a self-chosen path, independently of the apostle. Paul had sought to hold them by the ministry of the Word as a united testimony for the Lord; but independent, self-pleasing men were working, and two names are given in this verse, who perhaps had been foremost in leading the assemblies astray in Asia. Have we not seen this repeated in our own times? What gave the apostle great strength and comfort of heart was the truth expressed in what he wrote in chap. 2—"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure." Men might fail, God remains faithful. Men might turn away from the truth, but the truth was in no wise affected by that. Truth always abides truth, and remains as a guide for devoted, faithful hearts to the end.

The Church, which began so well in the first days, shows serious marks of declension and decay in 2 Timothy. There were those turning away from the apostle to go in their own self-chosen way, like Phygellus and Hermogenes (chap 1:15); there were those "striving about words," and "subverting the hearers" (chap. 2:14); and, worse still, there were those who "overthrew the faith," like Hymenaeus and Philetus (vers. 17, 18); and

the Holy Spirit by the apostle takes occasion by this to give instruction for the guidance of godly souls unto the end of the dispensation. He adds, "Let every one that nameth the name of *the Lord* depart from iniquity" (New Trans).

The difference between this chapter and 1 Cor. 5 is that at Corinth one man was to be put away—the apostle counting upon the obedience of the assembly. In this epistle, the professing Church had got so far away from truth and divine principles that if individuals were to be true to the Lord and subject to scriptural principles, separation became imperative. And in doing this, godly people may have to separate from real children of God. Not because that is their desire, but the unexercised continuing in their association with what is dishonoring to the Lord. Those who, under exercise, desire to follow the teaching of the Word and preserve a good conscience, may be thus compelled to separate from those with whom otherwise it would be a joy to walk. This "departing from iniquity" is individual, and we long to see it *more* individual. Not the wife following the husband, nor the children the parents, merely. Such cases of ecclesiastical separation and gathering with us because others do so is always a source of weakness. And when serious cases of discipline arise, they cannot act for themselves, but are led by persons or personal influence. This is largely due to the fact that they have not been gathered through individual exercise about the Lord as their centre of gathering, and by the power of the truth acting in the conscience.

We had an exemplary case once, when a man had been put away by discipline for a wicked act in deceptive dealing. The case was fully proven, and the gathering had to put him away. His wife did not leave with her husband, but continued with the assembly. Some months after, when a few brethren thought he ought to be received back, his wife was the first to say, "Nay," because she saw he was not fully restored to the Lord. She was governed by the holiness of God's house, not by her

feelings or sympathies. Later, this man was visited again, to see how far he was then restored. They met his wife first. She stated now that she would be quite happy in his reception, for she believed he had fully repented of the wrong, and was now fully restored to the Lord. It was a beautiful case of individual exercise and decision, which it would be well for us all to follow.

Two cases in the Old Testament will illustrate this further: First, in Exodus, chap. 33. Israel had sinned in worshiping the golden calf. Moses took the tent and pitched it afar off outside the camp. Only Joshua was with him at first. But the Lord soon descended in the cloud and stood beside Moses also. This showed the Lord's approval of His servant's act. In answer to the question, "Who is on the Lord's side?" the sons of Levi respond, and also take their place with Moses outside the camp. This is similar to departing from iniquity in 2 Timothy. While Moses thus acted individually, and for God, he is honored by God's presence with him in that place of separation, and God soon gives him enlarged fellowship—the whole tribe of Levi. Let none of us think that we shall suffer loss spiritually if in these things we act for God. "For them that honor Me, I will honor; and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

Another example we have in Jer. 15:16, 17. It was in Israel's dark and confused state in the closing part of their history, under the kings. On every hand God's word had been given up; but the prophet said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Here we see a man under individual exercise, the word of God his food and his sustenance at the very time when men were treating it with indifference, if not refusing it altogether. But this word upon which Jeremiah fed led him into a path of separation also. "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone."

Should the whole testimony of "Brethren," so called, go to pieces, do we love the truth sufficiently to stand for

that—stand alone, perhaps? This is a serious test; for when people are gathered to a company of people simply, when they go to some other place to live and find no assembly gathering according to the Scripture manner, instead of being governed by principles of truth they look around for the “next best,” and the next best may be very far from what Scripture would warrant our following. Moses, Jeremiah and Paul are safe examples for us today. Where any of God’s people stand firm for God and for His truth, with a spirit of grace, He will not deny them Christian fellowship even now. God is yet working; many love His truth, and, according to their measure of light, are seeking to follow it. It is these we are to seek out: “Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*” (2 Tim. 2:22). This is the divine principle for our guidance today, when the professing Church has gone far astray.

While seeking to follow the truth, and fellowship with others, we must remember that love is not the first requisite here. Love is a term commonly used today in a far different sense from that taught in the Scriptures. We must be careful of “whitewashed” love. Our love must not be that, but rather “washed white” love. It must bear the test of truth—love in the truth: that is, love must be upon the basis of righteousness. Suppose a few are led out in the path of separation from what they know to be wrong; before they take their place in an assembly, it is important that they see to it that the principles of that assembly are right: that is, that that assembly is gathered according to the principles of righteousness. Many mistakes in the past have been made in this respect. We must have righteousness as the foundation of Christian fellowship. If this is rightly seen to, it will save much confusion and sorrow afterwards. If people desire fellowship, put before them what is right according to the Scriptures, then leave them a margin for their individual exercise. Do not press people beyond their light, nor yet beyond their faith. See if they have faith to

follow what is right, and gather around Christ as the Centre. Let people act in faith for themselves. If we allow the Spirit to work in heart and conscience, the result will be what we would long to see everywhere in the gatherings—*love* and *peace*. Love and peace!—what a sweet perfume to God that is! “Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” We have often suffered in the past by some among us pressing separation without due godly exercise. It is to be feared some have been more anxious to bring people out to *us* than to the Lord. Is it any wonder the results are disastrous? But if it is an exercised conscience as to what the Lord would have them do, and where the Lord would have them be, if days of trial come, they know how to turn to Him, and follow *Him* still.

I remember a lady in the West who was being led on in the truth, and saw our position to be right. But she was in society; her husband in public life, and not a Christian. For about two years she had not faith to act upon what she knew to be right. Brethren did not press her, neither snubbed her because she did not come with us: they showed patience, love, and wisdom. Another servant of Christ came along; she received more light, and soon came out to the Lord as the Centre, to Whom she gathered with us. Twenty years have passed, and she holds firm to that Centre still. Let us have patience, forbearance and abundance of grace in showing inquirers what is right and according to the Word, and leave them then to have their godly exercises. If, in cleaving to the truth, *our* hearts joy in the Lord, it will be an attraction to others. Only let us see to it that it is not to *us* they come, but to *the Lord*.

Ques.—Would you say that some come out to a better ministry?

Ans.—Yes; and when that ministry is taken away, they are not held by the Lord as their Centre; they become restless and fault-finding, because pleasing ministry has drawn them, not the person of Christ. Ministering Christ

is God's ordained way of helping souls; yet it must not be the teacher that gathers, but the teaching that gives Christ His right place in the midst. We may, and should be, Christ's servants to minister truth and light to others; but the servant cannot give faith for the path: that is God's work in the soul, not the servant's.

There is today, then, in the midst of all the confusion, a fellowship according to God, where all the principles of the truth can be put into effect and enjoyed, be that fellowship few or many. What a very gracious provision the Lord has given in this second epistle to Timothy for them that will be guided by Him! It is something like the epistle of Jude: after having described the apostasy in Christianity, he writes, "But, ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keeping yourselves in the love of God" (ver. 20, 21). The ruin is great; the confusion continues to increase, and simple, weak souls are often stumbled. If we are to help such, let us be unpretentious, and not assume too much; let us remember the ruin and our part in it; let us humbly cleave to the Lord. The truth abides: the Lord never changes, and the Spirit is here to guide His people; and, we may add, God is with His people in a very special way if they walk softly and prayerfully, desiring to follow His truth alone. The great thing today is the prayerful, unpretentious spirit, cleaving to what we know to be the truth. There will be in it a power to attract and draw godly people into the paths of righteousness which no amount of argument and assumption will do.

Having considered these lessons in 2 Timothy, let us return to 1 Cor. 12:14-26, to gather some practical lessons from the doctrine of that chapter.

The oneness of the body. If the truth that the body is one is truly believed, it will free us from independency of spirit and from gatherings acting in independency of one another. A lady said to me some time ago that she had been "very happy since she saw that the assemblies were not members one of another." I replied, No, not

members one of another, for in the apostle's day *they were one*, and that is even closer than being members one of another. In God's sight they are one; hence, discipline according to God, or reception in one gathering would be recognized by all. Suppose we had gone to a province of Asia Minor in those early days, and found there twenty-five gatherings; what would we have seen? Every one of them recognizing one Head—the Lord Jesus as their divine Centre; one Spirit active among them with Scripture and apostolic teaching to guide all the assemblies alike. Thus there was but one fellowship, a unity therefore. Distance alone lay between them; but distance does not affect the truth and spiritual unity. A person received into one gathering meant reception in all the gatherings. Put away in one gathering meant to be refused by all until restoration was granted where the discipline was imposed.

Letters of commendation. Everywhere through the epistles we see this oneness recognized (see 1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33), so that if any went from one place to another, letters of commendation were given (Acts 18:27; Rom. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 3:1 and 8:23, 24). Letters of commendation are according to Scripture, therefore, and needful, especially in our "perilous times," to give assurance as to those coming from distant parts, and to free minds from any suspicion. Some years ago a difficulty arose between two brethren in one gathering: (two meetings were in that city on account of distance). Godly counsel was of no avail, and one of them defiantly said he would leave the meeting where he attended and go to the other assembly. He was quietly told the two meetings were one; they were gathered to the same Lord, and their fellowship was one. Hence, if he left one, he left both. The brother's eyes, at length, were opened; he saw his error; he sought his brother; they were reconciled that night, and have continued happily together with a humbler mind. Dear, brethren, let us be careful not to surrender the truth and the principles taught us in Scripture.

"God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him" (ver. 18). By this we see

that each member has a God-appointed place. This thought should free us from many an evil, as envy, jealousy, dissatisfaction, etc. We have not all the same place, but each has his own; and it is a loss for the whole if we do not fill the place that God has put us in. As an illustration let us suppose that a bolt under the locomotive, dissatisfied with its hidden place, wants to get into prominence, like the bell or the head-light. But the bell must swing and sound clear and sharp, and needs not the bolt—it will only hinder it. And the head-light needs not the bolt; it must have no obstruction to cast the bright rays for which it was put there by the master workman. And not only that, but the bolt out of its place has weakened that part of the great locomotive, and makes for danger. In some form or other, how often is this simile acted out among saints! A God-given place is none the less needful and important because it is not in the public gaze. O, brethren and sisters, let us prize more a hidden life with God. Is there no attraction in the precious flower blooming in its retired place, giving out sweet perfume for Him that has made it? Perhaps the greatest and most serious lack among saints today is that of a hidden life with God. The special snare of our times is a love of display; things for show; a mere exterior, which usually means that the inward things, the hidden things of worth to the eye of God, are lacking—the ornament of “the hidden man of the heart” with which the holy women of old adorned themselves in God’s sight.

And whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it (ver. 26). How close the relationship into which we have been brought as God’s people—members one of another! Do we sincerely believe it? How it should open the heart, and express itself in tender love and sympathy one for another. All truth is practical, and a verse like this tests how far the truth of the one body, which we have so often upon our lips, governs our hearts and lives. Let us not be satisfied simply with a theory in our heads, but let this and all truth, have its place in the heart, and control the life. True love and sympathy one towards another is a powerful testimony to the world. “By this

shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

A surgical operation was once performed on a brother I knew; and the surgeon came daily to dress the wounded part. At first he handled the wounded member rather roughly, when, quickly, the sufferer's sound hand pushed the doctor aside, then slowly and with great care removed the bandages himself. How tenderly the sympathetic hand came to the relief of the wounded member! and, having removed the last bandage, soothed the wounded part. What care and sympathy of one member toward another is expressed in this! And how beautiful to see love, in sympathy, serving other members of the same body! The Holy Spirit, by the apostle, would thus deliver from the envy, the strife and division that had come in at Corinth—"that there should be no schism in the body" (1 Cor. 3:1-4; 12:25). If we sincerely believe the truth we have been considering this morning, shall there not be oneness of love and tender care for one another?

"Or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it" (ver. 26). Years ago I found a gold watch which some one had lost. I soon found the owner, and gave her the watch, and received thanks. Was my left hand jealous because my right hand had picked up the watch? Or was my ear displeased because it was the eye, and not the ear, that discovered it? The mind moved the hand to pick up the watch; the hand immediately obeyed, and the other members were in perfect sympathy with the service performed. Thus by the very members of our body the Holy Spirit would teach us the unity of "the Christ."

What practical lessons we have in all this, dear brethren! How precious this theme of the Church, the body of Christ! May we perseveringly and prayerfully seek nearness to our blessed Lord, so as to hold fast and maintain these truths, while at the same time let our love go out unhinderedly to all the members of His body. The end is near, we fully believe, and our opportunities will soon be past. May we be like men that wait for their Lord, "Blessed is that servant whom His Lord, when He cometh, shall find so doing" (Matt. 24:46). A. E. B.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Seattle (To inform, to exhort, to encourage and stimulate)

Our brother, A. V. Steeples, has been much alone on the North Pacific this past summer, giving his time between Hoquiam, Tacoma and Seattle. Mrs. S., who moves about with her husband (as he is blind), was quite ill and in the hospital for a time, but last reports inform us, now quite improved. They have taken rooms in Seattle for the present, and may continue there until next spring or summer. Address: 919 N. 36th Street, Seattle, Wash. This will find them, fall and winter. May the Lord encourage our dear brother in all his quiet and helpful service.

Darien, N. Y.

Our brother, Edgar Wallis, brought his wife and family to Dunkirk Conference; for quite a time he was held at home on account of sickness among the children. We pray that doors may open for him nearer at home, for all such that have little families dependent upon them, and needing parental instruction find it difficult to take long trips away; yet our brother has been able of more recent months to visit and minister the Word in Rochester, N. Y., and also reach as far as Detroit, Mich. These are two cities of great need, especially Detroit, where more than a million people now reside. We pray that the 16th Street meeting may be used of God to reach many souls for Christ—Saints and Sinners.

Milwaukee

The little Assembly in Milwaukee meet at 3700 North Fifth Street, and any information will be cheerfully given by addressing Mr. Fred Senn, 2844 North Second Street.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

For the present, the Assembly in Grand Rapids is held at 417 Benson Avenue, North East, and any information required concerning the work and testimony in that city will be furnished from Mr. R. Knop at above address.

Detroit, Mich.

Our brother, William G. Amics, formerly of Audubon, N. J., after attending Dunkirk Conference, returned home and packed up his goods and moved his wife and family to Detroit, and he is now located with his family at 6508 16th St. Detroit, Mich. He writes from there "The Lord has been very good to us, and our hearts are filled with praise to Him for His very rich mercies. All the saints here have been very kind to us—we are happy already in our new surroundings and we look forward to seasons of joy and blessing. Will greatly value special prayer for guidance in all. Will be making a special effort in the Gospel, as soon as we get settled."

Detroit has now developed into a large city and has great need for men of God, whether evangelists, pastors or teachers. We began to labor there as a young man fifty years ago, and at many

times found large open doors in the Gospel, and in opening up the Scriptures among Christians. We pray that our brother Amies may find it a fruitful field and that the Lord's people may hold him up by a very prayerful and united spirit.—(Ed.)

Bahama Islands

"We have had a hard time of late. Two storms have passed over us. One did a great deal of damage. It blew down some of our homes here and destroyed all the fruit trees and the crops. We can only leave with the Lord these things, for He has permitted such. Some day we will be in a sphere where there will be no storms to mar our happiness. We are going on as ever in our meetings. Things are very quiet now—a letter from brother J. S. Hall, who is now at Rock Sound, Eleun, and he writes of blessing there. Ten have confessed the Lord, and seven have been baptized. With much love from all the saints here—Osborne Pinder, Spanish Wells."

Pala Alto, Calif.

Things are going along quietly with us in San Jose at present, for which we are very thankful, as it is more apparent that real constructive work is only possible where peace rules. We have about twenty-two or so breaking bread now, two weeks ago we had some visitors from S. F. and O. and we had twenty-seven at the morning meeting, it seemed like old times again; we have from forty-five to sixty in the S. S. and a growing young people's meeting in which there is a good interest. The gospel is preached each Lord's day evening by one or the other of us, occasionally some of the brethren from nearby assemblies coming in.—J.E.K.

1500 Pine St. *Brainerd, Minn.*

Since the Minneapolis conference in June we have had much to occupy us. For a month we stayed at the home of our Bro. C. W. Sommars, north of Boyev, Minn. During that time I had the joy of helping Bro. Ames and Bro. Stebbins with meetings in Hibbing and Nashwauk on the Mesaba Iron Range, which were a blessing to those who attended.

An opportunity was also given me of visiting nine Civilian Conservation Camps in the northern part of the State, leaving and distributing tracts to the men. There were around two hundred men in each camp. Bro. Sommars and Bro. Stebbins shared in this happy service.

After leaving the north we came down to Glenwood, Minnesota, where we spent a month or more. Did house to house work among the Bohemian Catholics in the country north of Glenwood; also had a few meetings in Reno Gospel Hall. Near Holmes City (25 miles northwest of there) in a Finnish Lutheran community I did some house to house work, and had two meetings

in a school house with good interest. Have become somewhat acquainted with the people, and purpose (D.V.) returning to give them the gospel again, possibly next summer. Also had two meetings in the Mission Friends chapel near Farwell, west of Lowry.

The latter part of September we were at Elbow Lake, Minn., where we stayed with our Bro. Simpson. Worked in the country northeast of there about 15 miles. Two years ago I found an interest there, and wanted to return. The Lord opened up the way, so that we had five meetings in the school house in that neighborhood. The last evening, in response to an appeal, four people expressed their desire to be saved by trusting Christ. We could not but believe God's Spirit was working, and it was a joy to see these two men and two women respond to the gospel invitation. We are sure that there are others, too, who are exercised and desire to be saved. It is a Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran community.

At Elbow Lake a young man from the Evangelical Free Mission had been conducting meetings in a tent and has caused a stir among the people, some having been saved. Opportunity was given me twice in the preacher's absence to substitute for him. Once he had tire trouble and could not get to the meeting in time, and on the next occasion, being out of town and not able to return for that evening, had asked another preacher to take the meeting, but he did not show up. Had two or three meetings in Bro. Simpson's home also.

We are now located here for the coming winter and spring, and look to the Lord for guidance and blessing.—A. J. Adolfsen.

OPEN DOORS

When passing through Fitchburg, Mass., a young man in his auto following me through town was much taken with the text on my spare tire. After a little time, he decided to follow me up, overtaking me a mile and a half out of town, driving along side, he signalled me to stop, which I did, feeling sure that I was under arrest, and wondering what I had done. The young man asked me if I were in a particular hurry to reach my destination. I said, "No, please tell me what's the matter?" He said, "I have been lately converted from being a Catholic, and seeing your text, I thought that a man courageous enough to do that I would like to have a talk with. Would you come and have supper with me and stay over night?" First, I felt I should be careful, but he went on, saying, "I married a Christian girl. She seemed to get a great 'kick' out of the Bible, but I couldn't see anything in it, but now I am converted and we both attend the Baptist church." Hearing this, my way was clear, and I said, "Yes, I'll go home with you."

We found his wife a happy, young Christian, and she gave us a hearty welcome, her husband explaining the why of our presence. I chatted with the husband while supper was being prepared. After supper and the dishes washed, we chatted with the wife. In the meantime, he disappeared. On his return, he informed me that he had been to see his minister, and the minister and his wife would be here in a little while. Of course, I trembled, and engaged in silent prayer. Presently, the minister and wife appeared, a nice, young couple. Soon after introductions were over, I told the minister that we might have a good time over the Word of God. So I said, "Let us pray together." After prayer, I suggested that we read a part of the 10th of John. Mr. Brooks said, "Make it simple; the Bible is new to me." I said, "Yes, that's why I'm taking the 10th of John." I went on, linking the 9th chapter with the 10th, expounding it as simply as I could, feeling that the preacher was getting something, too, which he afterwards admitted, and I felt the Lord's help. Towards the end, the minister warmed up, asked a few questions, which I was able to answer to his satisfaction. He finally told us that he and his wife were from the Moody Institute. He had been through a former Seminary, but did not know the truth of salvation until he struck Moody's Institute, and now he is a very active man in the gospel. It soon came out that he knew of brethren, and soon detected where I stood. Before leaving, he said, "Would you have the time to call on a sick sister, who has been very helpful to me? She has given me a complete set of the Numerical Bible and C.H.M.'s Notes." I said, "I will surely call." We found the dear sick sister bedridden, but her face bright and beaming, the outward expression of her link with God. We had a happy time; although in bed, she is serving the Lord by giving away her books, as she cannot read them now, saving what sight she has left for reading the Bible. She is giving out tracts by mail, and wanted to help us, but we said, "No, you have helped us much already by the Christian example you have set before us." She said she was out of tracts, so we promised to send her a package, which is going forward with this mail. So we said "Goodbye" to her. I ought to say, however, that she is one of the last survivors of a one-time testimony. She said she knew Mr. Booth and the older brethren well. So we went on our way rejoicing, thanking the Lord for such openings and a little refreshment on our way. I am ordering to be sent to the minister a copy of Mr. Darby's translation. He was much interested in some quotations I made from it that evening. Do things happen by chance? No, I don't think so, for as the young man overtook us, we were considering shortly to turn in somewhere for the night, as it would have been too late to have reached Arlington that night. So the good Lord had another place for us.—J.N.M.

Our brother and wife are retired from business life (druggist) and having sufficient means for the present, have a good auto

with attached tent, etc., and spend most of their time touring the different states, distributing tracts, visiting *new and needy districts*, and in the various assemblies, spreading the Gospel and helping Christians as best they can, and do this service without any financial assistance. They left California in the early spring, toured through several states, attended both Minneapolis and Dunkirk conferences. This is service commendable, and all our brother asks from us is our continued, earnest prayers.—(Ed.)

OUR THANKS

At the close of 1933, we desire to sincerely thank each subscriber for their interest in our magazine for the past year, and especially different known brethren, and assemblies who have by their interest and liberality made it possible for us to send the magazine free to many in fields afar off, and also to a number who have been unable to subscribe on account of financial conditions generally.

The Editor renders special thanksgiving to the Lord for His grace which has enabled us to render our feeble and imperfect service during the past year. Our main object has been to encourage the Gospel spirit, for 'tis yet the day of grace and men everywhere need God's salvation. Second, we have sought to prepare suited ministry for believers everywhere—the whole Church, for every member of that one body are near and dear to Christ, the head of the Church in Heaven.

Third, we have sought also to enlighten and to encourage and stimulate the spirituality of all who are gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus, in a day of Apostasy and departure from the Truth. The whole world, the whole Church, and the number more limited in remnant and latter day witness for Christ our Lord.

* * *

To secure the first number of the magazine for the coming year (should the Lord not come before), we would urge all who intend to subscribe for 1934 to send a brief line with \$1.00 early in December to the publisher. This will secure an early delivery of January number, and will be a great convenience to the publisher.

* * *

A limited number of the whole fourteen months will be bound neatly and ready by the holiday season. Price is kept low, \$1.00 per volume. Send order early to publisher.

* * *

We count upon our many friends and brethren to join us in seeking an increased number of new subscribers for the coming year. Neither Publisher nor Editor have any profit by the magazine. Our whole service is for the Lord, His interests and gratis.

(Ed.)