

THE
BELIEVER'S TREASURY.

VOL. II.

W. SHAW, MAYBOLE, SCOTLAND.

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THE

Believer's Treasury.

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Vol. II.

JOHN THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.

MANY have wondered how it was that John enjoyed a place of such nearness to Christ, that he is spoken of as "lying on Jesus' breast" (Jno. xiii. 25). We have no record that he received any special call to that position. No line was drawn, keeping the other disciples at a certain distance: no special liberty was granted to John to come so near as to lean on the Master's breast. How, then, did he enjoy such a position? We are satisfied that the reason is simply this—*he took it*. It was no unholy familiarity that prompted John thus to draw near. Such familiarity is one thing; and the boldness of faith is quite another thing. Let us not confound the one with the other. The motive-power in John's case was the boldness and the simplicity of faith. He took the place of nearness—a place that any of the other disciples might have claimed as well as he. The Master did not count it presumption: faith is never presumptuous. He welcomed John to that place of sweet rest, doubtless rejoicing in spirit that one at least of the little band had found his highest joy to lean upon that breast!

Have we not often longed to be a John? We have said to ourselves, "If I were privileged to be so near to my Lord—to lean upon His breast, as John did—to hear His voice so close beside me, that I could not mistake His call—ever and always to know that He was so near!" But then we heave a sigh, as if such a place of nearness were not for us. We view it as some beautiful prospect far away in the dim distance, perhaps reserved until that happy morn when we "shall see Him as He is." But, beloved, it is not so. Unbelief may push such a blessed experience into the future, and say, "It's not for the like of me to be a John." But to faith all things are possible. Faith brings in many a bunch of grapes from some Eshcol of the promised land. While unbelief wanders in the wilderness, faith is sitting by the wells, and rejoicing under the palm-tree shade of Elim. In a word, the favoured place that John enjoyed, is a place *we may all enjoy*. No special charter has been granted to a select few of God's children, telling them that they alone are privileged to lean on Jesus' breast. The place of nearness and of rest is for you and me. Have we taken that place? We tell the unsaved that the Gospel

Feast is spread, and "yet there is room." But might the message not go forth to many who are the Lord's, saying, "Yet there is room"?—room on Jesus' breast for weary hearts—room in that blessed place which John *appropriated to himself*, and which we, too, may appropriate unto ourselves. It is no part of the business of faith to hang back in mock humility while God has given us boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Such is our true place. We rob no one in taking it: we rob ourselves if we fail to occupy it. There is room for us all. Our God would have us all to be *Johns*. It may be out of our power to be John the preacher—to have the gift and utterance of some of our brethren. But it is within our power—yea, it is our blood-bought privilege—to be a John that *leans on Jesus' breast*.

—♦—

THE DIVIDED HEART.—There is something seriously wrong with the inner life of a believer, if he is casting a longing eye upon the enjoyments of the world. If he allows himself to *think* upon its unhallowed pleasures, he is more than half-way to the rocks of open sin. We have to do with a God who looks on *the heart*, and who cannot be deceived. If carnal delights find a place in our heart, Christ is not reigning there. This reminds us of the beautiful answer of the little boy, when asked if he knew any place where Christ was not. "Yes," he replied, "*Christ is not in the divided heart.*" Let this search us. Our Lord will not share the kingdom with another.

NOT ENVIED OF HIS NEARNESS.

THE other disciples do not seem to have envied John of his position as the one that leaned on Jesus' breast. But he *was* envied of another position. When it was feared that he and James might secure the chief place in the kingdom (Mark x. 37), immediately the others were moved with indignation (Matt. xx. 24). And why were they moved? Because each one was coveting the chief place for himself. What may we learn from this? We learn that although ten may envy us of our position in the church, scarcely one will be found to envy us of our nearness to the person of Christ. Vital godliness does not provoke much envy. It would be well if it did. But, unfortunately, such a happy condition is coveted by few; and its possessors, like John, are allowed to remain in peaceful occupation of their place on the Master's breast. But let John be found in some high position in the church, and envy is immediately found at work. Strange that there should be such a race for power and position, and so little striving to secure John's place of nearness to Christ! We are prone to imagine that nothing can be done unless we get into a position of power. But let us learn this, that nothing can be done, so far as we are concerned, unless we get into a condition of weakness—a weakness that shall lead us to the Mighty One. *The place of nearness to Him is the place of true power in the church.*

BROUGHT, DELIVERED, GATHERED.

1 Pet. iii. 18; Gal. i. 4; Jno. xi. 51, 52.

(Thoughts picked up at Conference on 11th Dec., 1886.)

THERE is at least a three-fold purpose for which Christ died, (1) To bring us to God; (2) To deliver us from this present evil age; (3) To gather us together into one. We see from the Scriptures referred to, that the death of Christ is associated with all these things. He had first to *die*; and by His death He purchased the right to *bring* us, to *deliver* us, and to *gather* us.

"Hath once suffered for sins." He will not suffer again. The eternal efficacy of that blood is placed to our account. The sacrifice needs not to be repeated. By that one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. As to our standing in Christ, we are "clean every whit."

"The Just for the unjust." There's substitution — a truth that is being denied in the present day; yet, if that great truth is taken away, what have we left? Scripture says, "*the Just for the unjust.*" Let nothing rob us of that foundation doctrine. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. xi. 3).

"That He might *bring* us to God." Not *send* us, but *bring* us: He is with us all the way. Precious thought! And it is to bring us to *God*. No sooner were Israel sheltered by the blood, than they were taken out of

Egypt; and then we hear the words, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you *unto Myself*" (Ex. xix. 4). The blood of the Lamb had been shed that they might be brought to God: the blood of Christ has been shed that we might be brought to God. By the precious blood we have been brought nigh — separated unto Himself; and soon the words shall be fulfilled, "I will come again, and receive you *unto Myself*" (Jno. xiv. 3).

But we find in Gal. i. 4 that He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might *deliver* us from this present evil age." That is another purpose of the death of Christ. No sooner is Christ known as *Saviour* than He reveals Himself as *Deliverer*. Redemption by *blood* is at once followed by Redemption by *power*. It is blessed to know that we are delivered from wrath to come; but we know little of the saving power of Christ if we are not experiencing what it is to be delivered from this present evil age. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). You value a thing according to the price you paid for it. If you pay dear for any article, you take great care of it. So is it with all who are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). He paid a high price for us: hence the good care He takes of His own. Are we being

delivered from this evil age? Are we delivered from its ways, its maxims, its vanities? Do we pray, "Deliver us from evil," while we tread presumptuously within the precincts of its unhallowed joys? Let us not forget that a people brought to God, are a people delivered from this evil age.

But there is a third purpose for which Christ died. We find this in Jno. xi. 49-52, where Caiaphas "prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also He should *gather together in one* the children of God that were scattered abroad." Isolation is no part of God's purpose in redemption. Separation unto God does not involve isolation from each other. It is not meet that His people should dwell alone. It was one great purpose of the death of Christ that the people of God should be *gathered together in one*. "Gather my saints *together unto Me*," saith the Lord (Ps. l. 5). Do we say "Amen" to this? As Satan fights against separation from the world, so he resists with all his might the gathering of God's children into one. He breaks down the barriers that God hath raised between the saints and the world, while he sets up a thousand barriers to keep asunder those whom God would gather into one. There are two scandals which we may see in any town in this country to-day: (1) God's people calling themselves by different names, and going as many different ways to worship Him; although it is the purpose of God to gather them together into one. And (2)

You see the children of God and the children of the Devil sitting down in the same pew to worship the same God; and, if it happens to be Sacrament day, they partake of the same bread and the same cup! What does the Lord think of it? He laid down His precious life that you and I might not go in at that door with the world, but walk in lowly obedience to His word. He has purchased His title of Lord. He won it by His Cross. He is Lord both of dead and living. He has a right to our obedience. Do we give Him His title? In heart and life do we call Him Lord? Do we rejoice if we are counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name? If we knew more of the fellowship of His sufferings, we would know more of the power of His resurrection.

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JOY UNSPEAKABLE.— "I remember once, reading a commentary on 1 Pet. i. 8; and the commentary said that 'joy unspeakable and full of glory' evidently could not mean and did not mean that they had actually unspeakable and glorious joy then, but that they would get it by and by. You know, when a commentator says, 'evidently,' you must be on the look out: it generally means that the thing is not evident at all. It so happened that the next day I took up the Memoir of Hewitson, and in his diary I found this: 'I have rejoiced all day with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' I thought that was the right commentary."

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SATISFIED with Christ, you envy none.

NOVEL-READING.

THese are days when God's people do well to take heed what they read. Especially should it be the care of Christian parents to see that the literature that comes into the house is of a healthful sort. We need not spend time considering if the world's novels are food for the heaven-born soul. We may surely take it for granted that no true child of God can find any delight in novel-reading. We are aware that novels are defended in many quarters—even in professedly evangelical quarters. But, so far as that goes, you will find the religious world defending almost everything in the shape of worldly conformity.

We therefore do not stay to discuss the merits of the world's novels. We are thankful that, among at least a section of God's people, novel-reading is reckoned lighter than vanity—yea, pernicious in the last degree. But there is a kind of novel-reading that may be quite as deadly in its effect; and it is against this that we would warn the saints. We refer to *religious novels*. The Devil seems to be well aware that, in the case of not a few of God's people, vain is the attempt to allure them by a yellow-covered novel of the world. But the great deceiver hits upon a plan whereby the world's novel is introduced to the saints. How does he manage this? you ask. He manages it by giving the novel a *thin coating of religion*. Religious novels have become quite fashionable now; and they answer Satan's purpose

just as well as the avowed novel of the world. They contain all the sensational and intoxicating elements of popular fiction—plot and counter-plot, tragedy, comedy, &c. And simple-minded believers, deceived at first by the religious dress, are soon so absorbed in "the thread of the story" that it may be questioned if they care much whether the tale has a religious covering or not. What is the result of such reading? A dissipated mind—an unnatural excitement—the heart alienated from God—appetite for prayer departed—the Bible reckoned a dry book, and heavenly conversation a dry morsel. But who shall reckon up the dire catalogue of evils that follow in the train of novel-reading? Let us be on our guard. The tale of fiction often comes in good company. A gospel sermon by the great Mr. So-and-so first meets your eye: then comes the sensational romance. "But," says the simple-minded believer, "I got the paper to read the sermon." "Yes," we reply, "but your eye catches more than the sermon; or, perhaps, when you lay the paper down, some one of the household reads everything *except* the sermon. We do not need to be ignorant of Satan's devices. His seductions are many; and not the least of these is his "novel-reading for the saints." Dropping into a believer's house some time ago, we observed one of these so-called religious papers on the table. Our friend was loud in praise of such a fine sermon by Mr. So-and-so. But alongside the sermon we observed something of the

sensational order, and *so* sensational and pernicious that we would have trembled for any young person into whose hands the paper might fall. We pointed it out; and were surprised to find that our friend had read *every word of it* as well as the sermon, and was *highly delighted with them both!* What a master-piece of the Devil's scheming! I do not believe that a yellow-covered novel could have got an entrance into that house: it would have been rejected with scorn. But the "dish" is served up in a different way. A little religion is put in to give it a flavour, while "Sermon" heads the list. And who can object to a sermon by an eminent "divine"? This is how the leaven works. Therefore to all who desire to "keep the heart with all diligence," and have the affection ever set on things above, we would say, "*Take heed what ye read.*"

THE LOVE OF GOD.

SOME truths seem to keep us at a distance by their vastness. The more we ponder them, the greater they appear. Words fail to describe them. One of such truths is "The Love of God." He "commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). God loved us when there was no response on our part. His love is seen not only in the gift of His Son, but in His bearing with us—in His restoring grace—in His persistently loving us with an undiminished love. The clearer our views of holiness, the more stupendous His love

appears. The love begotten in us by the Holy Spirit is marked off by the apostle John as quite distinct from natural love. "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 Jno. iv. 7). The natural mind may ask, "How can love impart knowledge?—how can it give perception?" A mystery indeed; yet that truth is declared in Scripture. Love brings light. "Knoweth God"—confers the power of seeing the beauty of the Lord our God! Do we not see in this the harmonizing of the many attributes of our Father's character—the blending of those elements which, to the natural eye, seem opposed to each other?—just as the gorgeous hues of the rainbow, when all combined, give us light—pure light. "God is light." If, then, our love to God has been called into existence, and is being strengthened by His love to us, how imperative is its demand upon us to "keep" ourselves "in the love of God;" so that, our love increasing, there may be a corresponding increase in our knowledge of God. Thus, love and knowledge act and re-act upon each other. How divine wisdom shines out in thus enlightening our understanding, and drawing out our affections! There is no atmosphere like that of love, in which to learn the mind of God. "Beloved, let us love one another." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "God is love."

J. H.

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SPIRITUAL vigour carries on a victorious warfare against all that is of the flesh, and enables its possessor to *renounce* whatever is known to be contrary to the mind of God. To deny self, is one of the first lessons in Christianity.

REVIVAL INFECTIOUS.

THERE is nothing so infectious as "Revival." The mere reading about revival has often been the means of a great awakening. See how eagerly the Lord's people listen to an account of how souls are passing from death unto life. How absorbed they are while they read of meetings in which the power of God fell on the people. Reading such accounts begets a kindred spirit. If, in any particular place, you scatter among God's people a record of some wonderful work of grace a hundred miles off, you will find that the "good report maketh the bones fat" (Prov. xv. 30). A spirit of enquiry will be created. The desires of God's people will be enlarged: their faith will be strengthened. The thought that naturally suggests itself to their minds is this: "Why should there not be revival here?" The world and all its allurements seem insensibly to glide farther away than they were before. The realities of heaven are brought proportionately nearer. A holy boldness is engendered. A holier walk is cultivated. A more heavenly atmosphere is breathed. The manifested power of God is seen to be a reality. Almost unconsciously, the cry ascends to the throne above: "Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" (Ps. lxxxv. 6). But what is true of revival on a large scale is true of revival in the heart of an individual. If a single believer is walking in the realised presence of God, with the

joy of the Lord for his strength, that believer will be the means of revival wherever his lot is cast. Others are sure to "catch the infection." They may listen, unmoved, to the most vehement exhortations; they may sit unaffected by the most eloquent addresses. Yet, when they come into contact with a *living* epistle, they are affected, they cannot tell how. A believer separated in heart unto God is sure to kindle a fire in the hearts of his brethren, whether such be his aim or not. How vast, then, the importance of seeing that we are right with God. How great our responsibility, when we reflect that our life is affecting, for better or for worse, all with whom we come into contact. You cannot draw a line around yourself, and say, "I'll be neutral." You are a unit in that sum which represents the Lord's people. You cannot stand alone. Be as silent as you please, your manner of life is attracting to that which is of the earth earthy, or alluring to the path of fellowship with God.

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OUT OF EGYPT.—The *natural* seed (Israel) were called out of Egypt; the *Divine* Seed (Christ) was called out of Egypt (Matt. ii. 15); and the *chosen* seed (the saved of the Lord in this dispensation) are called out of Egypt. There must be no tampering—no compromise—with the Egypt world. "Not a hoof" must be left behind (Ex. x. 26). The words are on record: "Out of Egypt have I called my son." We are called out. Have we obeyed the call?

ONE THING I DO.

MEN who have risen to eminence in the world have all been remarkable for one thing at least, viz., *tenacity of purpose*. They had a purpose—they had an aim in life. They had set a mark before them. The object of their life seemed to be to reach that mark. And they reached it. They held tenaciously to their purpose. Every other consideration had to stand aside. Although it was only a corruptible crown for which they strove, yet their motto, like the great apostle's, seemed to be: "This *one thing I do*" (Phil. iii. 13). We may wonder at the success of some men of the world. But perhaps we would not wonder so much, if we knew the toil, the self-denial, the resolute determination, by which they mounted to a pinnacle of worldly greatness. They were men of *one aim*; and they kept it ever before them. Now, apply this principle to prosperity in the things of God; and you find that similar causes produce similar results. In the midst of dearth of heavenly blessing, and lack of spiritual power, we are prone to lay the blame upon God, or at least to take refuge in the reflection that "it seems to be the Lord's will that famine should prevail." But this is a mere excuse for our own indifference. *Why* does famine prevail? That is the point. Or, if it prevails around, *why* am *I* not enjoying spiritual prosperity, and rejoicing in the abundance of His great goodness? It is because *I*, as an individual, have not made the glory of God my greatest concern: I have not preferred *Him* above my chiefest joy: Christ has not been highest in my thoughts, and first in my plans. In plain language, the great aim of my life has not been *conformity to the image of Christ*.

Has this been so with the reader? Look at the man of the world there. See him rising early and sitting late, while he eats the bread of frugality, and buys up every passing opportunity. He succeeds. Prosperity smiles upon him. You say he has a right to expect it: he has toiled for it. He has sowed well: now he reaps abundantly. Shall we expect a different law to operate in God's Kingdom? It cannot be. If we have an easy mind as to the prosperity of our own soul, we need not expect that God will change the laws of His kingdom in order to clothe us with His power. We must have a purpose—a fixed, a resolute purpose, to be conformed to the will of God; to have prosperity in our own soul. Let there be this purpose, and there shall be prosperity. Where this purpose is wanting, the idle soul shall suffer hunger.

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"IN Gen. xxxii. 24-29, we see a conflict of God with Jacob. It was God who suddenly came upon him whilst he was there alone, in the most solemn crisis of his life. God came to bless him, but He could not bless him, because Jacob was too strong to be blessed. And when God saw that He prevailed not against him, though He wrestled with him till the break of day, He touched the hollow of his thigh. It was all over with Jacob then. He could fight no longer. A man who cannot stand cannot fight. He had nothing to do but to fall; but he did not fall; he did something better; he held on to that enemy of his who was his best friend. When he felt himself falling, he grasped and clasped the angel of the Lord that was fighting with him, and then Jacob gained the victory."

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As there is no rest without labour, so there is no victory without conflict.

LOOK ON THE FIELDS.

John iv. 35.



AWAKE, O ye ransomed, to duty arise,
 Leave slumber to those who are children
 of night ;

'Tis Jesus commands us to "lift up our eyes,
 And look on the fields" which to harvest
 are white.

O sleeper, "what meanest thou?" dost thou not care,
 If thou art but saved, though all others should die?
 Wilt thou leave them eternity's sorrows to share
 Whom now thou could'st urge to the Refuge to fly?

O why are Assemblies, once perfect in beauty,
 And striving together the Gospel to spread,
 Now spoiled of their graces, relaxed in their duty?
 Scant witness they bear 'mid the hosts of the dead!

While once earnest workers are daily dividing
 O'er trifles, and striving who greatest shall be,
 Like the crew of a lifeboat for mastery chiding
 In sight of the wreck on the threatening sea.

Let us wake and remember the zeal of our youth,
 When love in its infancy burned in our breast—
 What trust in the Saviour, what joy in the truth,
 And yearnings for sinners our bosoms possess'd!

Let us turn for a while from all human disaster
 (Like John when in Patmos) to heaven above,
 And learn there the grace and the power of our Master,
 Till our hearts shall again overflow with His love.

Then away to the uttermost parts of the earth,
 To the black and the white, to the bond and the free,
 Let us carry the news of His sorrows and worth,
 And plead with the nations to Jesus to flee.

O brethren, belov'd, let our hearts be enlarged ;
 Of the field but a corner too oft we survey ;
 "The field is the world:" to it all we are charged
 To go, and the message of mercy convey.

And yet in earth's dark and uncivilized places
 Are millions who never have heard Jesus' name!
 O that we could picture the many dark faces
 Who all on our service and love have a claim!

Each day there are thousands in ignorance dying,
 Believing in idols of wood and of stone,
 While even in Christendom many are sighing
 The love and salvation of God to be shown.

If they die in their sins, are we clear of their blood?
 In eternity's light O how solemn the thought!
 To rescue their souls have we done what we could?
 Have we prayed, have we sacrificed, suffered and
 wrought?

Say not, there is nothing thou findest to do,
 Complain not thy gift is so weak and so small ;
 For "the harvest is great, but the labourers few,"
 And only the slothful do nothing at all.

With the little thou hast to thy great Master go—
 He will bless it, and bid thee go deal it around,
 And then, as thou scatterest, still it shall grow,
 And thy service, though small, to His praise shall
 redound.

If we should not be called to the heathen to go,
 We to sinners at home may the Gospel impart,
 While with those who go forth we our oneness can show
 As we strengthen their hands and encourage their
 heart.

But let us be faithful ; or yet we may stand
 And see those departing to sorrow and woe,
 Whom we told not of Christ nor the danger at hand,
 Though we walked with and talked with them
 often below.

Now! now! is the moment: Eternity's near!
 And yawning and wide is the gulf of despair;
 Let us up and be doing ere Jesus appear,
 To shout us from earth to Himself in the air.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

W. B.

"LOVE is born of God, and cannot rest
 but in God. He that loveth, flieth, runneth,
 and rejoiceth; he is free, and not bound.
 He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; for
 he resteth in the Supreme One, from whom
 all good proceedeth. He respecteth not the
 gifts, but turneth himself above all goods
 unto the Giver."

MISQUOTED TEXTS.

17.

 HE words, "O Thou who art the Hearer and the Answerer of prayer," are often used as if they were a direct quotation from Scripture. But there is no such quotation. Indeed, we should be surprised if such a passage were to be found. One reason is simply this, that when the Lord *hears* prayer it is, in Scriptural language, equivalent to *answering* the prayer. The word to Cornelius was: "Thy prayer is heard" (Acts x. 31). That was enough. We find David saying, "The Lord hath heard my supplication" (Ps. vi. 9); "Thou hast heard the desire of the humble" (Ps. x. 17); "Verily God hath heard me" (Ps. lxxvi. 19). That was all that the Psalmist desired—to be heard. It may be said here, "But does not God hear *all* prayer." Yes; in our general interpretation of the word *hear*; but not in the Scriptural sense. "God heareth not sinners" (Jno. ix. 31). He would not hear backsliding Israel. We find Him saying to them, "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear" (Isa. i. 15). And the reason is immediately given, "Your hands are full of blood." But when the righteous cry, the Lord heareth (Ps. xxxiv. 17). Yea, "the prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. xv. 8). In short, it is clear from these, and many other passages which might be quoted, that *success* in prayer depends almost entirely on the *condition* of the person that prays. This element in prayer is very much lost sight of. In making any special request to the Lord, is it not often the case that we try to "work-up" the needful amount of "faith," persuading ourselves that if we only had *that*, we would be sure that the Lord would hear

us? But "worked-up" faith is not faith. Faith springs up very much of its own accord, provided you give it a righteous soil in which to grow. If, instead of trying to work-up faith, we were at the same pains to work-up "righteousness" and godly living, it would be the delight of our God to hear our cry.

FOUR KINDS OF LOVE.

 RITING on the subject of "Love, true and false," a brother says: "A deep impression was made on me some years ago through reading an article, the gist of which was as follows: 'There are four kinds of love—the love of *pity*; the love of *gratitude*; the love of *complacency*; and the love of *intimacy*. The love whose chief element is pity, regards its object as in a sense below it, and is full of tenderness. The love of gratitude regards its object as above it, and is full of humility. The love of complacency looks neither below nor above, but simply at its object, and is full of admiration. The love of intimacy is the deepest of all, and can find its exercise only where there is *kinship*. We are of kin to Christ. Hence in His love to us, and in whatever measure we return that love, there is the element of intimacy, which indulges itself to the full over its object. While the first three forms of love must, in a sense, act decorously and at a distance, the love of intimacy knows its right to be gratified, and becomes personal affection. When the *person* is the ground of our love, there is no reserve. Neither favours nor excellencies can become the object of our love, if our affection has been drawn out to handle and commune with the loved One.'

A TEN-STRINGED INSTRUMENT.

LET us not forget that we are all *on a level as worshippers*, when gathered together on the first day of the week to show forth the Lord's death. We are apt to forget this. A feeling creeps over many that it would be unbecoming in *them* to take any public part in the meeting. They do not give out any hymns; they do not lead in prayer; they do not read any Scriptures. Often these are excellent brethren in many respects; and often, too, their "word" would be quite as acceptable as that of others who take a prominent part. Yet these silent brethren maintain their silence. It may be due to a sense of unworthiness on their part. Perhaps they appear little in their own eyes: and, provided the order of God's house is carried out, they are content to remain in obscurity. When such is the cause of their silence, it certainly manifests a humility of spirit that might well be envied by many. But we may be humble, without closing our mouths entirely. True humility will keep us from rushing beyond the leading of God. But it will do more than this. It will keep us from hanging back when God would lead us to go forward. If a number of brethren, consistent in walk and behaviour, are habitually silent in the meeting, the church is deprived of whatever little ministry these brethren may have received of the Lord. If they are men of only one talent, then that one talent should be put out to usury. If

they are men of only five words, then the Lord intended that the church should have the benefit of these five words. To such dear brethren we would repeat the message sent by Paul to Archippus: "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" (Col. iv. 17). If we have good tidings, we do not well to hold our peace (2 Kings vii. 9).

But there is another bad result of the silence to which we have referred. It compels other brethren, perhaps two or three, to carry out the order of the Lord's house; and puts these few brethren into a position of prominence which they had very likely no desire to take. Thus it occasionally happens that two or three brethren find themselves with everything to do, while a considerable part of the "body" remains silent and inactive. It seems often to be an understood thing that these few brethren do *everything* of a public nature in the Assembly. And, as time goes on, perhaps the very men who, at first, shrank from taking such a prominent position, come to consider themselves exclusively entitled to that position. We do not seek to justify them in so doing; and we trust that such cases are rare. But the state of the matter seems to be simply this, that these brethren were thrust into a false position; and by and by they entrenched themselves in that position, and claimed it as their own. But they were not originally to blame. What is the remedy, or at least one great remedy, for this? It is for the saints to open their eyes to their

privileges as worshippers, and to give heed to the injunction to "quench not the Spirit" (1 Thes. v. 19). If the Lord leads brother So-and-so to give out a hymn, let him give it out, without pausing to consider who may think it presumption. If yon obscure brother feels called to lead in prayer, let him pray, without the fear of man. The truth is, if the excellent brethren who keep silent in the meeting just knew it, their taking part would be far more acceptable than they imagine. But, be that as it may, their taking part, in the leading of God, would impart an element of variety to our church life that would bring it vastly nearer to the divine ideal, if we may so speak; for our God delights in music on a ten-stringed instrument (Ps. xxxiii. 2). Often a few godly brethren find themselves pushed into a position for which they have as little desire as the silent brother sitting by. And it must be very painful for such few to find themselves looked upon as seeking an undue prominence. To speak of them as place-seekers is not the way to put the matter right. Brethren are often thus accused, who are dwelling in the presence of God, and seeking, in the integrity of their heart, to serve the Lord Christ. What is needed is, that the saints wake up to their privileges, and be delivered alike from false humility and unseemly boldness; while, in lowliness of mind, each is ready to open his mouth, or to sit silent, as the Spirit may lead.

—♦—
HE is truly great that is great in love.

NO APOLOGIES.

GHEERING tidings come from various quarters. Through the preached word many have been brought to the Lord. Of these it rejoices one to see how many have been baptized, and gathered unto the name of the Lord. The Gospel is still the power of God unto salvation; and the truth is still the power of God unto separation. Let us give a hearty "God-speed" to the Lord's messengers, whether they carry the truth to the saint, or the Gospel to the sinner. We do not need to make any apologies. You never hear any one apologizing for mentioning the Gospel. He does not treat it as something that should not be spoken about. On the contrary, he boldly proclaims God's message to the sinner. Then why should not God's message to the saint be as fully proclaimed? We are convinced that truth for the saints often fails of its due effect, simply because it is proclaimed in a half-hearted manner—as if the preacher were only half convinced of what he is saying. We are persuaded that such preaching will not even *half convince* those who may listen to it. If a preacher is not fully persuaded of the truth he proclaims, how can he expect his hearers to bow to the truth? If the truth is to continue to be the power of God unto separation, it must be proclaimed by men who are convinced that it is God's truth and God's message—men who have convictions, and who have the courage to make their convictions known.

LIGHT FROM EASTERN TRAVEL.

THE GATE OF THE CITY.

BUT here we are at the gate of the city. Well, what is there in a mere gate to attract attention? Very little perhaps; but a hundred Biblical incidents connect themselves in my mind with gates. Almost every city and town of ancient celebrity had them; and they were places of very great importance. I remember that righteous Lot, intent on deeds of hospitality, sat in the gate of Sodom toward the close of day, somewhat as these Arabs are now seated, I suppose; and thereby he obtained the privilege of entertaining unawares those angels who saved him from the destruction of that wicked city (Gen. xix. 2). It was at the gate of Kirjath-Arba (which is Hebron) that Abraham completed the contract for the cave of Machpelah, "in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city" (Gen. xxiii. 18). It was at the same place that Hamor and Shechem negotiated that fatal treaty with all that went in at the gate of the city, which gave opportunity to those fierce and treacherous brethren, Simeon and Levi, with instruments of cruelty to work out their revenge (Gen. xlix. 5-7). You observe that the gateway is vaulted, shady, and cool. This is one reason why people delight to assemble about it. Throughout sacred history, prophecy, and poetry, the gate is celebrated by numberless interesting incidents and allusions. It would require a little volume to notice and explain them all. But here we have the thing itself, with the void place about it (1 Kings xxii. 10), like that where Boaz made the elders of Bethlehem sit while he contracted for Ruth, the fair

Moabites (Ruth iv. 1, 2); where Eli sat trembling for the ark of God, and fell back and broke his neck when tidings of its capture came (1 Sam. iv. 18). And here are the two leaves of the gate, and the bars and the bolts, like those of Gaza, which Samson tore from their sockets, and on his shoulders carried up to the top of the hill that is before Hebron (Jud. xvi. 3). And over this gate is a chamber, like that to which David went and wept, saying, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom! my son, my son!" (2 Sam. xviii. 33).—*"The Land and the Book."*

CANNOT BEAR THEM NOW.—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (Jno. xvi. 12). These words may contain a wonderful message from God, if we had the eyes to see. The Lord has much to say to us, if we are ready to hear. He has much to communicate, if we are prepared to receive. But we are not prepared. We do not maintain that watchfulness, and cultivate that heavenly-mindedness, that will make us susceptible to heavenly impressions. Thus we lose many a blessed manifestation of the Master's presence, and put ourselves beyond the reach of many a message from the Throne. If we do not welcome His Word, and delight in whatsoever He hath spoken, how can we expect that He shall come on the wings of communion and show us of the Father?

It is often profitable for keeping us humble, that others should know our faults.

A VERY FINE BROTHER.

“**A** very fine brother—so aimiable and agreeable—just everything you could wish.” Yes; and doubtless true, in the main. But did you ever see him *tried*?—did you ever see him *crossed* and *thwarted*? Did you ever hear any one telling him about his *weak points*? You have evidently seen him at his *best*. The brother *may* be all you say; but appearances are deceitful. You never know what a ship really is, until you see how she behaves in a storm. She may look smart and sea-worthy, riding calmly in the harbour. But send her out on a voyage—let her face the dangers of the deep; and it is at once manifest what she really is. So is it with us. We appear to be excellent Christians, while all goes smoothly, and nothing occurs to thwart our purposes, or try our patience. But let the storm of trial come—let the blast of persecution burst over our heads—let words of sympathy be few, and words of scorn be multiplied; and we soon find out what our “stock of grace” amounts to. We never know what we are, until we are tried. If you know what a believer can *bear*, you know whereabouts he is in his Christian experience.

LET Christ have His true place—give Him *the throne*—and He will so satisfy the heart, that all else shall be counted as dross compared with the excellency of knowing Him.

SHORT PAPERS WANTED.

WE may say that we could take any number of short, pointed articles for these pages. We suppose it is one of the greatest difficulties an Editor has to contend with—to get his contributors to be short. It would seem that any quantity of long articles are to be had. But although short articles are in demand, they are hard to get. We are quite certain that among the saints there are scraps of truth—striking thoughts—floating about, which, if gathered together, would form a vast fund of precious teaching. We do not see why so much truth should lie tied up in a napkin. Kindly send it on to the “TREASURY,” so that our paper may be indeed a *treasury* of all the good things that can be got. Let any precious thought be jotted down and sent on to us, no matter how short it is. Although it takes only five lines of writing, do not let it be lost to the church.

Then, here is another thing: we could take any number of short, pithy *extracts*, for corner scraps. Some time ago we received a letter about great blessing received through a *three-line scrap* in a corner of the “Treasury”! We would therefore say, “Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost.”

For the help of any who would like to try short original articles for the “Treasury,” we may mention a few points which we endeavour to keep before ourselves. The first thing is, to *have something to say*—a striking thought—a fresh view of some truth—something that has *come home* to your own soul. The next thing is to tell it as well as you can—that is, to tell it in such a way that it will *go home* to the hearts of your readers. Use short sentences. Deal largely in full stops. Don't burden the reader's mind with having to *find out* what you mean. Make yourself so clear that people cannot help seeing what you mean. Many readers are “dull of seeing.” Write for the dullest; and all the rest will understand you without an effort. Write plain, and take plenty of room. Many a good article has been lost to the church, on account of careless and indistinct handwriting. We might say more. Indeed in our portfolio we have jottings intended as *helps* to all who have a desire to minister through the press. These jottings may appear in print some day. But meanwhile we may give this brief summary of their contents:

“Have some striking thing to say;
And say it in a striking way.”

CHANGES IN "THE TREASURY"

FOR 1887.

We repeat this notice for the information of new subscribers, and as a connecting link between the old series and the new.

WE purpose, during the incoming year, to *double* the size of the "Treasury," and issue it *monthly*, making the price *One Penny*. Our reasons for making the change are various. The primary one, however, is that it needs a large circulation to warrant the publication of a weekly paper, seeing that one's whole time must be devoted to the work—getting articles ready for the printer—sending out a formidable number of parcels every week—and attending to all letters that come in. Since our last report of progress, our circulation has been steadily rising; and, if we could afford to wait, we are sanguine enough to believe that even a large *weekly* circulation could be attained. But circumstances in the meantime compel us to begin a monthly issue with the New-Year. Letters are already reaching us expressing regret that our weekly "visit" is to be exchanged for a monthly; and one correspondent says he hopes we will increase the size of the paper. This desire has also been expressed by esteemed brethren interested in the "Treasury"; and, as it harmonizes with our own desire to have a sufficiently large outlet for the ministry of the word by the contributors to these columns, we have resolved to make the "Treasury" a sixteen page-paper.

We may say that we have been very happy in our work of ministering to the saints through these pages during the year now closing; and it is no small satisfaction for us to know that, however unworthy, we have been the channel of presenting to the Lord's people a Volume of four hundred pages, that may prove a "means of grace" unto His church down to the end of time! The Volume will not be without its imperfections, we know. Yet, having "done what we could" we send it forth, praying that the great Head of the Church may be pleased to make it a channel of blessing; and unto Him be glory, both now and ever, Amen.

We continue to send out the usual quantities of *Treasury* and *Sower*, unless we hear instructing otherwise.

Four Copies.—It will be observed that a parcel of 4 copies or more, will now be sent *post free*.

We observe that our Index to the Volume contains nearly 350 entries. This will give some idea of the variety of matter comprised in its 400 pages.

THE 15th OF THE MONTH TO BE
OUR DAY OF ISSUE.

OWING to so many periodicals being published on the first of the month, it seems that some of them are never read at all! As we have no wish that this should be the fate of the "TREASURY," we have resolved to make the 15th of the month our day of publication. This has been suggested by many esteemed brethren; and, since our intimation has been made, many others have expressed their approval. We believe it is important that this paper should reach the saints at a time when they are likely to be at leisure to peruse its pages. *This* number appears earlier, merely to have sample copies of New Series out in good time. But from February onwards, we purpose to post our parcels so as to reach subscribers about the middle of the month.

In view of this arrangement, all subscribers should order direct from Maybole, as the paper will not be published in time for enclosure with other monthlies.

The "SOWER" will, as usual, be sent out in good time for first of the month.

SPECIAL NOTICE AS TO "THE SOWER."

We have been asked to mention prices for "THE SOWER," with a special heading, such as "THE AYR GOSPEL HERALD," "THE TROON MESSENGER," &c., with a line below, intimating the Meetings. In order to meet our friends as far as possible in scattering "*The Sower*," we have resolved to supply the little paper with any special heading that may be desired, for the *usual price* of Tenpence per hundred copies, post free, for orders of 500 or upwards monthly. For instance, we will deliver

500 copies (with special heading) for FOUR SHILLINGS,

Or 1000 copies for SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

The following will be the rates for quantities under 500, with special heading:—100, 1/10; 200, 2/6; 300, 3/3.

We shall be glad to say price for any other quantity. Of course, the ordinary edition is Tenpence per 100; 500 for 4/; 1000 for 7/6, monthly. *All post free.*

We may here say that it is our aim to provide a purely Gospel Paper, containing original articles on the great foundation truths of Scripture concerning the sinner, and calculated to render the paper suitable for distribution in all quarters.

We trust that this effort to extend our sphere of usefulness, and bring "*The Sower*" within the reach of all interested in Gospel work, will commend itself.

FREE SAMPLE PARCELS.

We shall be glad to send a free sample parcel of "The Treasury" to any one desiring to bring it before the notice of the Lord's people. Say how many copies you would like for that purpose.

JUST PUBLISHED.

A SERIES OF NEW LEAFLETS FOR LETTERS.

6d per 100, post free.

Sample packet of a hundred, comprising ten different kinds (six poetry and four prose) sent post free for 6d, to any address in this country, the United States, or Canada.

NOW READY.
THE ANNUAL VOLUME
 OF
"THE TREASURY"
 FOR 1836.

It is published in two styles of binding. Instead of the usual paper covers for the cheaper edition, we resolved to bind it in stiff boards, with a strip of cloth up the back. This makes a much more durable book than one with a thin paper cover. The other edition will be bound in cloth boards, gilt letters. We will send the cheap edition, post free, to any place in the United Kingdom for 2/, or two Volumes to one address for 3/6. The cloth edition will be delivered, post free, at Half-a-Crown; or two Volumes will be sent to one address for 4/9.

We have made the prices as low as we can, in order to give every facility for a wide circulation of the Volume. It contains fully 400 pages of matter; and we trust that the great variety of subjects taken up, and the manner in which they have been treated, will commend the book as fitted to be a "help" to God's children in these dark days. It has been our endeavour to put out a *Treasury* of truth, so expressed in the simple language of every-day life, that the toiling artizan or mill-girl, on opening it at any page, may find something to instruct—to build up—to "help," in the ways which be in Christ. As to how far we have succeeded in this, we must leave others to judge.

Kindly let orders reach us early.

Prices of Annual Volumes—

Bound in stiff Boards, Two SHILLINGS;

or 2 Copies to one address, for THREE-AND-NINEPENCE.

Bound in cloth, gilt letters, Two SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

or 2 Copies to one address, for FOUR-AND-NINEPENCE.

Six Copies of the Cloth edition sent in one parcel to any address in Great Britain or Ireland for 13/6. Six Copies of the Cheap edition, 10/6.

The cheap edition will be sent to any address in Canada or the United States for 55 cents; cloth edition, 67 cents.

All Post Free.

OUR COMPLETE WRITINGS.

For the information of the readers of the "*Treasury*," we may mention that the "BELIEVER'S PATHWAY," during the first four years of its existence, was under our editorship. We have a stock of these Volumes, which we shall be glad to send at the following *reduced rates*:

The set of four Volumes, i. ii. iii. and iv., bound in cloth, for THREE SHILLINGS.

The same four Volumes in paper covers, for ONE SHILLING-AND-SIXPENCE.

All post free to any Address.

We may say that these four Volumes, amounting to fully 500 pages, form a compendium of truth that renders them, in our humble opinion, suitable in the highest degree for putting into the hands of young believers, or any who may need instruction in the ways that be in Christ.

To the readers of the "*Treasury*" who may wish to possess our "complete works," we would say that with the "*Treasury*" and these 4 Volumes of "*Pathway*" you will be as nearly in possession of our collected writings for believers as it is at present possible to be.

Remitting Money.—Penny postage stamps may be sent for all amounts below three shillings. For larger sums, please send Postal Orders or Post Office Order.

From the United States and Canada, kindly let remittances be made by Dollar Bill, or by Post Office Order.

Payment of Accounts.—These may be paid quarterly or half-yearly in advance; or, where more convenient, at end of every three or six months.

HOW TO INCREASE OUR CIRCULATION.

We believe our circulation could very soon be doubled if *one* brother in each Assembly were to take up "*The Treasury*," secure subscribers' names, and attend to the handing out of the paper monthly. This is already done by not a few; and we need not say how much we esteem this little service. But there are many places that the paper has not yet reached, while in others the circulation is limited. Now, what we need is *one brother in each local centre* to take an interest in the circulation of "*The Treasury*." With an increase in our staff of such "helpers," we are satisfied that the ministry through these pages would soon reach a very large body of believers. Who will be "helpers"?

Rates to Canada and the United States.

Our friends on the other side will observe that for one Dollar Bill we will send 4 *Treasury* monthly to one address for a year, *post free*. 8 copies, 2 Dollars; 12 copies, 3 Dollars; and so on. For One Dollar we will send One Volume of "*Treasury*," bound in cloth, and One "*Treasury*" monthly during 1837, to any address in Canada or the States.

There need be no difficulty whatever in getting the "*Treasury*" regularly every month. An order for One Copy will be as carefully attended to as an Order for a Hundred. The same remark also applies to the "*Sower*," 20 Copies of which will be sent as cheerfully as 1000.

Addresses.—In giving your address, please let it be plainly written, and *word for word* as you desire it.

The Believer's Treasury

IS PUBLISHED ABOUT 15th OF EVERY MONTH.

Sixteen pages, price ONE PENNY.

It is sent *post free* to any address in Great Britain or Ireland, the Continent of Europe, Canada, the United States, and all countries in the Postal Union, at the following rates:—

For One Year—

1 Copy Monthly... 1/6	5 Copies Monthly... 5/
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1 Copy..... 38 cents. 3 Copies..... 88 cents.

2 Copies..... 63 cents. 4 Copies..... 1 dollar.

And so on, 25 cents being added for each additional copy for a Year.

American or Canadian Dollar Bills may be used in remitting.

All Orders, Communications, and Remittances to be sent to
 WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole, Scotland.

THE Believer's Treasury.

No. 54.

FEBRUARY, 1887.

Vol. II.

CONVERSION'S EARLY DAY.



FOLLOWER of the Lord, in describing the early days of his conversion, thus wrote :

“Brighter suns around me wheel,
Brighter stars above me shine,
All around I only feel
I am His and He is mine.”

Another, in describing a similar experience, spoke of it as a time

“When meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light.”

So great was the inward spiritual change, that even nature itself seemed to rejoice, and wear a festive attire. Everything appeared to be changed. In the newborn joy of that happy time, we beheld God's hand everywhere. To us, every spot was hallowed ground. Many a spot was made memorable as a trysting-place at which we met the Beloved One, either alone or in company with a few kindred spirits, who likewise had come to seek Him whom our souls loved. Beneath the shelter of some hedge-row, or in the dark shade of some wood, where no intruder's step was likely to interrupt our devotions, many little meetings were held—meetings of which

the world knew nothing, and of which the many in Israel were ignorant—meetings without premeditation—the offspring of early love—conceived and carried out in one brief hour, yet bringing with them a fragrance that was felt for many days to come. Ah! these were happy days. No wonder the poet has delighted to dwell upon that sunny time. Some may affect to treat the poet's words as mere sentimentality, and to say that the joy of conversion's early day was never intended to abide. On the contrary, however, we are assured that such joy was never intended to *depart*. Yet it has departed! Many an aching heart, many an empty void, in the experience of God's people, tell but too plainly that the once-bright gold is dim. How few “stolen” meetings now with Christ!—how little retiring into a desert place to rest awhile! Once upon a time we sought Him—were ready to bow in His presence at any moment: now, it may be, He has to seek us; while the Eden question rings in our ear—“Where art thou?” What a change from that time when the joy of the Lord was our strength!—and when, in serving Him, we seemed to mount up as on eagle's wing! Who dares to say

that "mere sentimentality" conferred such power? Sentimentality may *dream*; but it takes love to *act*. And when we see a young convert active for the Lord—happy in Him, and speaking of Him, and rejoicing to meet with Him—we at once recognise the motive power to be the all-constraining love of Christ. We want this great motive power in the church to-day. We want the "dew of youth" back among the saints of God. We want the joy of conversion's early day restored. We have been robbed of one of our most precious privileges—the privilege of dwelling continually where we found ourselves in that day when we knew nothing, and wanted to know nothing, but the Christ of God. And the sad thing is that there are those who would fain make us contented thus to be robbed of our birthright. The Devil first robs us; and then some believer comes up and tells us we have not been robbed at all, and that our experience is the same as the experience of every Christian! But we hold to it, nevertheless, that we have been robbed, or rather, we have allowed ourselves to be deprived of our spiritual joy. Can it be that we have got so accustomed to our "reduced circumstances," that we are quite content to do without the joy of the Lord? Surely never. Is there in our heart a longing—even a sigh—for the freshness and joy and power of a bygone time? If so, let nothing hinder us. Let the one great desire possess our souls, that the fire of God may consume us again. The world may call us fools: professing

believers may call us fanatics. But, while they are standing looking on to see what this is all to come to, we will enter boldly into the exceeding good land which the Lord our God giveth us. Does some one ask, Is it *possible* to have the same enjoyment of nearness to God which we had at conversion? Yes, we answer, and *far more*. The Lord is ever keeping the good wine until now. In the millennial day, the sun is to shine with a sevenfold brightness. Let us have a spiritual millennium now—or, to be more personal, let there be a spiritual millennium in your experience and mine; and assuredly the sun of our life with sevenfold light shall shine.

WHAT IS FAITH?—It is not the intellect, or the mind, or the affections, that believe: it is the man, the whole man—the same man that formerly disbelieved. Very absurd and unphilosophical (not to say unscriptural) have been the questions raised as to the seat of faith, whether it is in the intellect, or the will, or the heart. Faith is *the man believing*, just as love is *the man loving*. In Rom. x. 9, the apostle is not contrasting the heart with the *mind*, but with the *mouth*; in other words, the inner with the outer man.—(*Extracted*).

My deeds are the result of my will. Therefore I must begin with my will. I must have it brought into subjection—yea, I must have it set aside, so that I may be able to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done"—"Not I, but Christ."

INVITED TO THE PIC-NIC.

BROTHER M—— got an invitation to one of the world's pic-nics. What was he to do? Once upon a time he would not even have got an invitation. Why? Because the world knew that he was out-and-out for God. When newly converted he testified boldly for Christ. Former companions were asked, "Are you saved?" and in his old circle of acquaintances he was considered a troubler, for this reason: he was "always speaking to people about their souls." In those days no pic-nic invitations reached him; for the world knows and loves its own; and the world knew him not (see I Jno. iii. 1). But times changed. The bright gold became dim. M—— was not "on fire" as he used to be; and the world saw it in a moment. Ah! but the men of the world are quick to discern when a believer steps off the path of communion. The moment the standard is lowered, the world is ready to say, "Come with us: we are ready to walk with you now." So was it in M——'s case. No sooner does he descend from "the mount," than the world has a pic-nic ready for him. When Jonah had made up his mind to flee from the presence of the Lord, he finds a ship all ready and waiting to sail for Tarshish. It would seem as if the great enemy has every convenience at hand to help us to flee from the presence of the Lord! But there was one who objected to M—— going with the party. The objector was a young woman, who de-

clared that he did "nothing but speak to you about your soul;" and this was held to be a sufficient reason for excluding him from the company. She at first threatened to stay at home; but was persuaded to go, seeing M——'s invitation could not well be withdrawn. It is clear that she, for one, had not a very clear understanding of our brother's spiritual condition; else she would not have been so afraid of being questioned as to her eternal interests. M—— accepted the invitation; and, when the day's so-called "pleasure" was done, the young woman who had objected to his company, now declared: "He is a very nice young man: *he never spoke to us about our souls the whole day!*" Such are Christians the world reckons "nice people"—Christians who will never deal with them about their eternal welfare—who will never ask the question: "Are *you* born again?" I heard the young woman's testimony with a heavy heart; for well I knew that, if our brother had been faithful to God, no such commendation would have been given. I went to M——, and told him that the world thought him a very nice young man. On hearing what the young woman had said, he was brought under remarkable conviction as to his departure from God; and there and then we both got down on our knees and had a time of such renewed consecration to the Lord, that M—— was clearly delivered from the snare of the fowler, and restored to the path of communion again. Let us learn from

this to keep the heart with all diligence, and jealously guard the dew of our youth. Let us also beware of the world's flattery. If we are walking godly in Christ Jesus, we shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. iii. 12)—we shall not be courted and flattered by the unconverted. If we are walking with Christ, the world will know us not, even as it knew Him not.—(*Related at Believers' Meeting*).

PROMPT CONFESSION.

MAKE your confession while your heart is tender. If it is some brother you have sinned against, and you feel the promptings of the Spirit telling you to go and make confession, do not put the matter off. If you delay the confession, very likely you will summon carnal reasonings to help you, and come to the conclusion that there is no use in humbling yourself overmuch, and that it is better not to compromise yourself in any way. Above all, don't go to take counsel of a carnal believer. Carnal believers don't believe in making confession, whatever else they may believe. If you consult with one of these, you are almost certain to be told that you are too soft by far, and much too particular about trifles. His worldly wisdom will be brought to bear on the case, and he will make it quite clear to you that there is no need for any confession in the world. Or your counsellor may act on a different principle. He may take the very convenient course of advising you to do what he

perceives you have made up your mind to do. He is prepared to sail with any wind. If you are evidently bent on confession, he says you would be better to go and confess, seeing the thing troubles you. But if he sees that you are determined not to confess, he at once changes his tack, and says, "I would not humble myself." Eternity alone shall declare how many awakened consciences have been thus sent to sleep again by carnal believers. Yet they are consulted by God's people. Physicians of no value; yet they seem to have an extensive "practice." How is this? It is simply for this reason, that believers who are in a bad state are almost sure to seek counsel from some brother of a *kindred spirit*. If I am wanting to justify myself, I seek counsel at the mouth of one who I feel certain will agree with me. But, if I am seeking to walk in the light, I shall not fear the verdict of heaven. I spread my case in the presence of God, and take counsel of Him; and if I do seek help from any brother, I make certain that he is one with whom is the secret of the Lord—a spiritually-minded brother, who may possibly have to tell me that I am away from God in the whole matter.

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NEVER stand in the way of others (when it is not the case of a duty to be fulfilled), and if they sometimes are an obstacle in your way, remove them gently. Yielding, submitting, retiring, giving up, this should be our conduct towards the members of our family, and those we call our friends.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

A GREAT number of believers, like Samson shorn of his locks, seem unable to cope with the Philistine host of temptations by which they are surrounded. Great things are aimed at; but very little is done. Great efforts are made in the way of the Lord's work. Yet the fruit, generally speaking, is meagre in the extreme. What is the cause, or at least one great cause? We believe it is to be found in this, that there has been a departure from our first love. We have been working away with any amount of faith in means and religious "machinery"; but with very little faith in God. We may be asked here, what connection has love with faith? Far more, we reply, than is generally supposed. *Trust* is one of the greatest elements in love; and we know that "trust" is just another name for "faith." A loving soul is a trusting soul. Wherever love burns bright, faith waxes strong. Love has a boldness of its own; yea, perfect love casteth out fear (1 Jno. iv. 18). What a power, then, must be that company of believers, among whom love to the person of Christ is reigning in all the joy and simplicity of that time when first they knew the Lord! Nothing can stand before them. Their presence in any community will be felt and acknowledged. Yea, many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. We may make the most desperate efforts to procure improved religious machinery,

and flatter ourselves that *it* is sure to have an effect on the people: we may send for the gifted Mr. So-and-so, and heave a sigh of relief, saying, that the work of the Lord is sure to go on prosperously now. But, while we are eagerly looking for means *outside* of ourselves, perhaps the Lord would point us to the state of things *inside* of ourselves. Is love burning on the altar? Are our hearts aglow with that strange, attractive power that breaks down the most deadly opposition, rebukes the sneer of the scoffer, and seems to reap a golden harvest from fields whereon it bestowed no labour? There is a great cry just now for new methods in the Lord's work. But new methods are not what is wanted. What we want is fresh power; and we know of no higher power than that which clothes the brother or sister

"Whose soul is all aflame
With the love of Jesus' name."

Let the simplest "machinery" in the Lord's work be oiled with such love, and "signs and wonders" must be the order of the day. But let such oil be wanting, and how terribly the machinery creaks and groans, and wears itself to pieces! Yet we have got accustomed to believe that the machinery *must* be made to go. But there is no such "must" in the matter. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord" (Lam. iii. 40). Let us be filled anew with that love which knows no fear, and fears no reproach; and the machinery (whatever the word may mean) will move of its own accord. "Restore unto

me the joy of Thy salvation . . . and sinners *shall be converted unto Thee*" (Ps. li. 12, 13).

HAD THE FIRE WITH THEM.

YES, that was a good time at the Believers' meeting at ———.

A few brethren had come who "had the fire with them," as one well put it; and we know that there is nothing like fire for kindling a fire. Indeed, wherever there is fire, it is bound to cause *more fire*, and to *consume* a great deal of combustible material. That seems just to have been the way of it at the meeting referred to. Fire kindled fire. We don't know that there was much eloquence in the addresses, according to the general meaning of the term "eloquence." But there was the eloquence of a heaven-born enthusiasm, the eloquence of a whole-hearted devotion, the eloquence of earnestness and reality. What was the result? A fire was kindled; and it goes on burning. Are we surprised? No. It is only what was to be expected. When the fire of God fills the soul, it will *burn its way out*, and kindle fires all around. "A few brethren had the fire with them." Strange expression! — a meaningless phrase to the carnal mind. Yet, what a tale it tells! The light of God, although contained in earthen vessels, found its way that night to many a heart. The fire of heaven burned its way in the meeting, till it became a breaking-down meeting. Many testified to the power of

Christ and the joy of God; and the meeting was drawn to a reluctant close, all declaring that they had seen strange things that night. Such are the meetings we want; and such meetings we shall have if we *have the fire with us*.

WHAT ARE OUR LINES?

IF the question be asked, "What lines of truth is this paper devoted to?" we reply, "*To Bible lines.*" From Genesis to Revelation gives the extent of our text-book. Our great aim is, that the Lord's people may be brought into living fellowship with Him—separated from an evil world—built up on their most holy faith. To this end we endeavour to bring up truth which, under the blessing of God, seems fitted to effect such a purpose. We do not belong to any particular "school of thought"—we desire to be found ever and only in *God's school*; and thither we would allure all who name the name of Christ. An article on a particular line of truth may kindle enthusiasm in some hearts; while another article on a different "line" will find a like response in other minds. But we see no jarring there. The *need* was different in both cases; and a different message was therefore needed. Such diverse testimony is an evidence to us that we are meeting the *varied* need of the saints. Hence the great variety of subjects taken up in these pages. To seek to please men, would be to fawn for favour; to try to displease any, would be to provoke to wrath. We therefore seek, in singleness of eye, to serve the Lord Christ, and to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, assured that, if the Lord give the word, the word abroad shall spread.

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LET us leave no time for coldness and indifference to grow upon us, else we shall find that, once established in the heart, they shall pave the way for evils we would shudder to think of now.

ABRAHAM IS TRIED.

THE trial we are passing through to-day would very likely have overwhelmed us, if it had come six months ago; and some trial yet in store for us, would be too heavy if it overtook us to-day. In God's school the lessons are all progressive. The trials of His children are all ordered by the hand of infinite wisdom. God does not look for impossibilities from His children; but He expects *fruit in its season*. The young convert of yesterday is not called to undergo the hardships of some son of the wilderness, who has had his back to the Egypt world for twenty years. We do not grudge the young convert the exuberance of his joy; nor do we affirm that he need lose that joy. But, as the child of nature must emerge from the summer-day of youth into the storms and trials of maturer years, so those who are rejoicing in their earliest love to Christ, must, sooner or later, enter into a deeper joy—the joy of suffering according to the will of God. But the vicissitudes through which we may be called to pass, are all arranged by infinite love, and designed to purge away our dross, and make us like unto that One who is altogether lovely.

“And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt (or try) Abraham” (Gen. xxii. 1). “After these things.” After what things? After many a trial—many a stumble—many an experience of the goodness of God. Abraham's had been a chequered career.

At one time reckoning the smile of his God greater riches than the well-watered plains that so captivated his nephew, Lot (Gen. xiii. 10, 11); at another time so fearful that God's provision might fail, that he goes down to Egypt for help (Gen. xii. 10). At one time boldly building his altar in the midst of an idolatrous people (Gen. xii. 7); and anon professing that his wife was his sister (ver. 13). Yet from strength to strength he goes. His faith is tried by the promise of a son; and that at a time when nature had long ceased to give the slightest encouragement to entertain such a hope. His faith stands the test. He believed God, and it was counted unto Him for righteousness (Rom. iv. 3). In due time Isaac is born; and, through the line of Isaac, all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. But Abraham's “trials of faith” are not yet ended. He had been tried without a son: now he is to be tried with a son. And the Lord said, “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. xxii. 2). Perhaps in the whole of Scripture we do not find a more severe trial of faith—certain it is, we do not anywhere find a more signal triumph of faith. When a disagreeable duty is to be performed, nature suggests that we should be in no hurry. “Put off the evil day,” says the flesh. We make haste to do what we have a delight in doing; but when the path of obedience leads us

into the path of self-denial, nature shrinks from the ordeal, and is in no hurry to rise and obey. But this was not so in Abraham's case. He conferred not with flesh and blood. He consulted not with the dictates of nature. He had proved God's faithfulness in the past. He had never trusted in vain. Abraham knew what it was to have personal dealings with God. He had met with Him in Mamre's grove; he had communed with Him as friend with friend; he had pled with Him for the cities of the plain. When Isaac was promised, he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief (Rom. iv. 20). He had trusted God before: he could do it again. The Lord had already revealed Himself as Abraham's Shield and exceeding great Reward; and the man of faith was satisfied that the call of God could lead to nothing but deeper blessing and still richer reward. Are we assured of this, when called to tread the path of trial? Do we think for a moment that our Father's hand will cause us a needless tear? In "the new creation" all things are of God. The path of trial may be dark and painful; but it leads to fields of "joy in God" which we could never have reached by any other path.

The Lord gave no reason for this draft upon Abraham's faith. To unbelief the command would seem unreasonable in the extreme; for it was "in Isaac" that the promised seed was to be called (Gen. xvii. 19; xxi. 12); and, if Isaac were offered up, how could blessing flow through him unto all nations? But

Abraham stayed not to reason. Faith reasons not, where God commands. Neither does faith delay, when the path of duty is clear. "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him" (Gen. xxii. 3). Here we behold the zeal as well as the simplicity of faith. Nature's most tender tie was about to be severed; the child of promise was to be offered up. Why, Abraham knew not; perhaps cared not to know. It was enough for him that the Lord had said, "Do this." He did not see the issue. All was dark. Yet Abraham was assured that God would keep His promise, even although, in order to do it, He should *raise Isaac from the dead!* (Heb. xi. 19). Abraham's faith rested in the God of resurrection. In the hour of trial, does our faith rest there?



OFTEN we lay out a certain order of things, which we feel certain we would carry out *if* we had sufficient grace. How we would hew in pieces if we were just nearer the Lord! So we think. But our thoughts are not His thoughts. When we do get into the condition of experimental nearness to the Lord, what a change takes place in our views! We had been looking at things in the dark; but now we see them in the light; and we find a far more excellent way than the plan we had mapped out in our own wisdom.

NOT ON A LEVEL AS SERVANTS.

NOT long ago we pointed out how every believer is a priest, and that all God's people are on a level as worshippers—an article which, by the way, an esteemed servant of Christ suggested should be printed in leaflet form, and “scattered like snow-flakes.” We keep the suggestion before us. But, meanwhile, we proceed to show wherein all God's people are *not* on a level. We feel that we must “rightly divide” the word of truth. One side of the truth, although correctly given, may have a very misleading effect, if the other side of the truth is kept back. What, then, is the other side of the truth, about which we purpose to speak? It is the side of the truth that has to do with our *service*; and “service” is just another word for ministry. As worshippers we are all alike: as servants, or ministering ones, there is no end of variety among God's people. During the revival of church-truth in these last days, many believers have been brought to see their place and equality as worshippers; and we praise God for it. But in many cases they failed to see that the Lord had *not* made all equal as servants. As a result of not seeing this, we find believers contending for their rights, and saying, “I have as good a right to preach as you; and I have as good a right to rule as you.” Now, what does the Lord say about this? Let us see. “And He gave *some*, apostles; and *some*, prophets; and *some*,

evangelists; and *some*, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints,” &c. (Eph. iv. 11, 12). That Scripture makes it perfectly clear that it is only *some* in the church that are fitted to preach or teach, and fitted to shepherd God's people. It does not say that He gave *all* to be pastors and teachers, &c. No. Only *some* were called to the various ministries referred to. This gives us at once a circle within a circle. First, we have the circle of the church; and then, inside that circle, we have a much smaller circle, comprising those whom God has called and fitted for preaching the Gospel, teaching the saints, and doing shepherd-work. For want of a due perception of that distinction, many a company of God's people have *limped* on their homeward journey, while they might have been walking, and leaping, and praising God. Others, in taking diligent heed to what Scripture reveals, have become shining lights. Yonder, for instance, is a company of believers. They gather together to the Feast of Remembrance, or it may be to the prayer meeting. They know their privileges as worshippers; and what is the result? The result is, that this brother here gives out a hymn; yon brother yonder leads in prayer; another reads a passage of Scripture; while another, according to the ability which God giveth, opens up some truth of the word. “What a fine meeting,” you say; and “such a feeling of liberty; yet no one seeming to presume on that liberty.” Yes, we reply; and the reason is simply

this, that these believers know their place and privileges as priests unto God, and act accordingly.

But follow that same company of believers to the teaching meeting; taking it for granted that they also know their place as "servants." Do we find *any* brother taking the meeting? If it be the Gospel meeting, do we find *any* brother doing the preaching? If it be a matter of church discipline, do we find *any* brother at liberty to visit and exhort an erring one? No. In a well-instructed assembly of saints, the very simple question is at once asked, "Whom has God called and fitted for this work?" *Any* one will not do to go and visit yon sister who has been at the world's vanity fair. Who is the person for such a work? Scripture at once points to some pastor, given by the ascended Lord—one with a gentle hand and a shepherd heart. *Anybody* will not do for such a work. It is only "ye which are spiritual" that are to restore such an one (Gal. vi. 1). Yet, in the face of this injunction, how often has restoration been hindered by some brother (with good enough intentions) rushing off to "deal" with the case, while God had never called or fitted him for such a work!

Then, the Lord gave *some* to be teachers. This effectually answers the argument that *all* are entitled to teach. The Lord says it is only *some* that He has thus gifted. Therefore, in a well-instructed assembly, the "some" open up the word to the saints, according to the ability God has given; and

the saints praise the Lord for such ministry.

And the Lord gave *some* to be evangelists. Though all are called to *live* the Gospel, all are not called to *preach* it, at least in a public way. As a dear, departed brother once said: "The Gospel is to be preached to every creature; but every creature is not commanded to preach the Gospel." If we purpose to have a Gospel meeting, it seems to us that the very simple and Scriptural course is to stand still and ask the question, "Whom has God called and fitted for this work?" Let such brethren proclaim the Gospel; and let the saints stand by and hold up the preachers' hands. But then "self" comes in, saying to himself, "I have as good a right to preach as brother So-and-so—he should not take so much upon himself." Now, whenever we hear one talking of his "rights" we know that very little attention will be given to the claims of the ascended Lord. If, dear brother, the Lord has made a difference between you and me—if He has manifestly fitted you as a Gospel preacher, while my "gift" lies in a more obscure path, it is for me to bid you God-speed and hold up your hands, instead of trying to be what the Lord has clearly not intended me to be. But if I claim my right to take part in the Gospel meeting, I will very likely quench the Spirit in those whom the Lord has specially called to that work. Others, too, will claim their rights, with the almost certain result that the work of the Lord in the Gospel will cease.

THE MAN OF FIVE WORDS.

IN dealing with the subject of ministry, the question may be asked, "But is there to be no room for the *man of five words* (1 Cor. xiv. 19)—that is, the brother who can say a short word in the Gospel, or to the building-up of the saints, although such brother is not, strictly speaking, a gifted man?" This is quite a proper question; and we hasten to answer it. By all means let there be room for the "man of five words." We have need for all that the Lord has given us; and the five words of yon brother who walks godly in Christ Jesus, may be of untold benefit to the church or the world. No one is more delighted than ourselves to hear the five-word man give his testimony. We are only sorry that their number seems to be so small; or, perhaps the reason is, that so few realise their call and privilege to deliver their message. At the same time, the man of five words must be careful to see that he acts *according to his measure*. What do we mean by that? We mean that if he has only *one* talent, he will make a great mistake if he tries to do as much business as the brother who has got *ten*. Sometimes a brother contends for liberty for his five words to be heard; but lo! we hear a thousand and five, and there is no sign of drawing to a close. We are convinced that this is a mistake. Indeed, brethren professing to be nothing more than five-word men, often get into the habit of speaking as long as a gifted

brother, and even longer. Now there is never any weariness or bad effect produced if a brother keeps within his measure, and ministers according to the ability which God giveth. But when he has his message delivered, and yet goes on speaking when it is clear that he has nothing more to say, the results cannot be happy. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. iv. 11). If this rule were attended to, the field of the Lord's work would soon present an altered appearance. If the Lord has raised up some among us fitted to minister His truth, let us thankfully receive what God has given, assured that men whom He has sent will not ignore the brother of five words, or any one fitted in some degree to be a help either in teaching or preaching. It has been said that "gift is subject to gift." That is, one gifted brother will be subject to another. We believe this is ever the case. It may also truly be said that "gift perceives gift." That is, one gifted brother will readily perceive the gift in another, although it may exist only in a humble degree. Therefore let us calmly wait on God to find out our appointed sphere, assured that "a man's gift maketh room for him" (Prov. xviii. 16). True gift never needs to make room for itself; and in a company of believers where there is really room for Christ as Lord, there is also room for all the gifts that He has given.

THE EFFECT OF THE LIGHT.

IT is only when light appears, that darkness is made visible. Thus it was with the true Light. When Christ appeared, His holy and spotless walk at once manifested the hollowness and hypocrisy with which He was surrounded. The contrast was great—the contrast between that pure and blameless life, and the “whited sepulchres” with whom He came in contact. What was the *effect* of the true Light shining forth? It could produce only one of two different effects. Either the people of Judea must repent, and acknowledge that the true Light was shining; or they must hate the Light, seeing it made manifest all that was unreal and hypocritical about themselves. This latter was the effect the Light had upon the people as a nation. They rejected the Light; and gross darkness settled down upon them—a darkness so deep that they crucified the Son of God, and desired a murderer to be delivered unto them. There were some at that time—only a feeble remnant—who “humbled themselves,” welcomed the Light, and rejoiced in the same. Thus the appearing of the Messiah was the signal for the thoughts of many hearts to be revealed. So shall it be in the life of a believer who shines for God. His quiet, godly walk shall reveal the surrounding darkness. The true Light shining in him shall attract others to that Light; or it shall arouse the enmity of those who care not to have any sharp contrast drawn between their life and

the life of one who walks in the light of God. Thus it has ever been with the true Light, whether shining in His person in Judea, or in His members since that day—the thoughts of many hearts are revealed. Thus, brother, let the Light shine—steady, calm, clear. And the Light shall do its work— attracting to the person of Christ, and manifesting what is not of God.

“YE DO SHOW FORTH.”

IN our issue of 29th May, 1886, we mentioned that a brother had called our attention to the frequent misquotation of 1 Cor. xi. 26—“Ye do show *forth*” instead of, “Ye do show.” Although the word “forth” does not occur in the Authorised Version, it is only right to say that *show forth* is a much more faithful expression of the original than the single-word *show*; and we have no doubt that many intelligent brethren put in the word “forth,” not as a careless addition, but as conveying a fuller expression of the Lord’s mind. The original word signifies to show—to tell—to announce, *with intensity*, and is expressible in good English by the words, “show forth.” Alford renders it “declare,” and in Young’s translation it is, “ye do announce;” while in the Revised Version the rendering is even more intense—“ye *proclaim* the Lord’s death till He come.”

HE that would be holy must bask in the sunshine that radiates from each page of revelation.

QUESTIONS.

3.

IS it right to belong to a church or sect?

A correspondent wishes the question answered in the "Treasury." Our answer is, that it is right to belong to a church, and wrong to belong to a sect.

We have only to look around on the various sects of Christendom, to see what a sect is. It is a fellowship founded on unscriptural principles. Indeed, the words *sect* and *heresy* are very closely related. Thus, in 1 Cor. xi. 19, "For there must be also heresies among you," the marginal reading for heresies is "sects." Heresies or sects (for both are the translation of the same Greek word) are spoken of as among the works of the flesh (Gal. v. 20). Therefore to belong to a sect is clearly opposed to the mind of God.

The word "church" has two significations. It may mean the church which is the body of Christ, or it may mean a local assembly of believers. "The church, which is His body" (see Eph. i. 22, 23), includes *every child of God*, no matter what the condition of that child may be, and no matter where he may be. The moment you were born again you became a member of the church which is His body; and in that membership no one can either make or meddle. But we find the church spoken of as a company of believers gathered together in some particular place. Thus Paul writes to the church at Corinth—that is, to the assembly of God's people in that city. We read of a member of that assembly being put out (1 Cor. v. 13). But put out of what? Not out of the church which is the body of Christ, but out of the local assembly at Corinth. You see the

distinction there at a glance. Is it right, then, to be in fellowship with a church, or local assembly? We answer, yes; and not only so, but it is the will of God that His people should be thus gathered together. It was never intended that, after being saved, we should continue isolated units. Therefore God hath ordained that His people be gathered together unto the One Name—the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And what you, dear brother, have to do is to find a church or local assembly of believers, who have been gathered according to Scripture, who give Christ His place of Lordship, and among whom there is room for the Holy Spirit to act *as He will*. Such an assembly may be small, comprising only a very few; but know this, that such is the church wherein the Lord would have you find your place.

4.

Is it right for a brother or sister at the Breaking-of-Bread Meeting to point out a hymn for some one to give out?

It is wrong to do such a thing. When the Lord gathers His people together, as a church of Christ, it is to act *as the Lord may guide*. The Spirit divides to each severally *as He will* (1 Cor. xii. 11). Therefore, if I suggest a hymn for another to give out, I am in a sense usurping the place of the Holy Spirit. At the same time we must be patient in dealing with such cases, as the thing may be done purely for want of instruction in the word. What is needed is to point out to such, in a gracious and godly way, that the Lord alone by His Spirit and word must guide how His gathered people should act.

—♦—

"If we would aim at a holy and useful life, let us learn to redeem time."

LIGHT FROM EASTERN TRAVELS. THE GATE OF THE CITY.

(Concluded from our last.)

T is not difficult to comprehend why public proclamations were made in the gates, and why prophets so often pronounced their messages there. We read of the "gates of righteousness," because justice and judgment were there decreed and executed (Deut. xxi. 19, and xxii. 24); and so, likewise, the prophets denounced the oppression of the poor in the gate, where corrupt judges sell justice to the highest bidder: "They afflict the just, they take a bribe, they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right;" and to this refers the exhortation to "hate the evil, love the good, and establish judgment in the gate" (Amos v. 12, 15).

Again, gates were fortified in the strongest possible manner. In them the people trusted for safety, and they naturally became synonyms for strength and power. "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise" (Isa. lx. 18). Hence the prophets delighted to personify them. In times of calamity they languish and lament, mourn and howl; they sing, shout, and rejoice in prosperity. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion; and David exclaims, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in" (Ps. xxiv. 7). Who has not felt the solemn admonition, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," and shuddered lest he should be swept along by the thoughtless crowd through the wide gate that leadeth to destruction? I have seen these strait gates and narrow ways, "with here and there a traveller." They are in re-

tired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock; and when the sun goes down, and the night comes on, they are shut and locked. It is then too late (Lu. xiii. 24, 25, and Matt. vii. 13).—(*The Land and the Book*).

THE BELIEVER'S POSITION TOWARDS THE WORLD.

NOT of the world.—Jno. xv. 19; xvii. 14, 16.
Chosen out of the world.—Jno. xv. 19; xvii. 6.
Sent into the world.—Jno. xvii. 18.
In the world.—Jno. xvii. 11, 15; xvi. 33.
Not known by the world.—1 Jno. iii. 1.
Hated by the world.—Jno. xv. 19; xvii. 14.
Not conformed to the world.—Rom. xii. 2.
Not a friend of the world.—Jas. iv. 4.
Loves not the world.—1 Jno. ii. 15.
Unspotted from the world.—Jas. i. 27.
Light of the world.—Matt. v. 14.
Overcometh the world.—1 Jno. v. 4.
Shall judge the world.—1 Cor. vi. 2.

C. C.

HE that would be like Christ must *study* Him. We cannot make ourselves holy by merely *trying* to be so, any more than we can make ourselves believe and love by simple energy of endeavour. No force can effect this. Men *try* to be holy, and they fail. They cannot by direct effort work themselves into holiness. They must gaze upon a holy object; and so be changed into its likeness "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. iii. 18). They must have a holy being for their bosom friend. Companionship with Jesus, like that of John, can alone make us to resemble either the disciple or the Master.—(*H. Bonar*).

"I KNOW that charity covereth a multitude of sins; but it does not call evil good, because a good man has done it."

LINES

on the departure of a loved one.

"Christ is all, and in all."—Col. iii. 11.
 "He will swallow up death in victory."—Isa. xxv. 8.

TIS in the night of sorrow,
 When around us all is drear,
 And no one heareth the long-drawn sigh
 Or noteth the falling tear,
 That we feel the touch of a gentle Hand—
 We list to a voice we know ;
 And the "Man of Sorrows" draweth near
 To share in our heart's deep woe.

'Tis in the night of suffering,
 When the body no ease can find,
 When the "earthly house" is well-nigh "dissolved,"
 And worn the enfeebled mind,
 That we see by faith a lov'd Form appear,
 And close at our bed-side stand,
 While He points us in love to the "no more pain"
 In that blessed and far-off land !

'Tis in the night of weeping,
 As we watch the parting breath ;
 When there falleth the solemn and silent hush,
 And a messenger speaks of DEATH ;
 That there whispers quickly a sweeter voice,
 The mourner's sad heart to cheer,
 And with brightening hope we hear Him say,
 "Seek not for thy lov'd one here ;—

Away, away to the glory
 His ransomed soul has flown ;
 'A little while' and I bring him again
 When I gather and claim My own."

So our thoughts are fixed on "THAT BLESSED
 HOPE,"
 And the Meeting in the skies ;
 Thus we wait till the Resurrection morn,
 When our loved one in Christ shall rise !

M. V. C.

"THE conversion of sinners, the prosperity of saints—these are precious things, but not the object of the soul: that should be to please God."

FELLOWSHIP must be preserved unbroken, that the transmission of the heavenly electricity, in all its sanctifying, quickening power, may go on uninterrupted. Nothing must come between; not the world, nor self, nor the flesh, nor vanity, nor idols, nor the love of ease and pleasure.

PROGRESS OF THE VOLUME.—It may not be out of place to mention that our first Annual Volume of "Treasury" has been well received. A decided preference is being given to the Cloth edition. Its neat appearance has been a surprise to not a few; and increased orders have been the result. We are glad to know that even in the matter of outward appearance the Volume has found acceptance. We have a good stock still on hand; and we trust that the book may have a large and increasing circulation.

Localised "Sower."—Orders for "Sower," with special heading, must reach us not later than the 18th of each month.

Four Copies.—It will be observed that a parcel of 4 copies or more, will now be sent *post free*.

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In view of this arrangement, all subscribers should order direct from Maybole, as the paper will not be published in time for enclosure with other monthlies.

The "Sower" is published, as usual, in good time for the first of the month.

One copy of the "Treasury" monthly through the post for One Year, costs only 1/6, whether it be to the neighbouring village or the backwoods of America. Therefore let no one have any difficulty in getting this paper regularly.

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OF

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We have made the prices as low as we can, in order to give every facility for a wide circulation of the Volume. It contains fully 400 pages of matter; and we trust that the great variety of subjects taken up, and the manner in which they have been treated, will commend the book as fitted to be a "help" to God's children in these dark days.

Our Gospel paper, "The Sower,"

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For the information of the readers of the "Treasury," we may mention that the "BELIEVER'S PATHWAY," during the first four years of its existence, was under our editorship. We have a stock of these Volumes, which we shall be glad to send at the following *reduced rates*:

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HOW TO INCREASE OUR CIRCULATION.

We believe our circulation could very soon be doubled if *one* brother in each Assembly were to take up "The Treasury," secure subscribers' names, and attend to the handing out of the paper monthly. This is already done by not a few; and we need not say how much we esteem this little service. But there are many places that the paper has not yet reached, while in others the circulation is limited. Now, what we need is *one brother in each local centre* to take an interest in the circulation of "The Treasury." With an increase in our staff of such "helpers," we are satisfied that the ministry through these pages would soon reach a very large body of believers. Who will be "helpers"?

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WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole, Scotland.

THE
Believer's Treasury.

No. 55.

MARCH, 1887.

Vol. II.

THE EVANGELIST.

IT has been said of poets, that they are "born—not made." That is to say, unless a man is endowed with the poetic spark, you will labour in vain to kindle in his soul the poetic fire. The same may be said of the heaven-endowed Evangelist. He is one specially equipped of God for the great work of soul-winning. No earthly hand kindled that fire that glows within his breast: no earthly university conferred that bold, untutored eloquence that sways the hearts of men as by a magic spell. From whence has he derived such power? Not from the schools and colleges of earth. Nor was it created by the determination to be an Evangelist, nor by the most diligent training to that end. These may have contributed to the developing of the gift already bestowed by heaven. But, apart from such divine endowment, an Evangelist he could never have been. Yet there he is, perhaps a stranger to the learning of the schools, with no classical acquirements, and with little or nothing of what goes by the name of culture. But, in spite of these seeming disadvantages, he is evidently a heaven-sent man. People

tremble under his testimony. They care not for the glance of his eye. Yet, by some strange, attractive force, they come again and yet again to hear these wonderful words of life! Such a man cannot be *made*. From whence, then, does he come? He is the gift of the ascended Lord. He received his degree in the University of Heaven. He was furnished by the great Master of Assemblies, and ordained of God to the great work of taking out of the Gentiles a people for the Name of the Lord. He was neither equipped by man nor sent by man: therefore he is not the servant of man. He is an ambassador of heaven; and to that supreme court he gives account of his trust.

The Evangelist (we speak of the true Evangelist) has a heart for the perishing. This is his chief endowment, and one that gives a tone to all the rest. 'Tis this that gives that indescribable pathos to his words—'tis this that gives eloquence even to rugged speech. Inspired by love for souls, he goes on with a freshness that scarce knows what it is to be weary. He has no lack of words or material. The very sight of the perishing stirs his deepest emotions. With scarce an effort he finds a wealth of

imagery and illustration ready to his hand. Passages of the word come pouring down the corridors of memory, each to be sent forth and fastened as a nail in a sure place. He grips the attention of the people, and he holds it—they are *compelled* to listen. And while they listen, their opinions change. They had been accustomed to think of this revival work as in a sense beneath them, and lacking in respectability. But the heaven-sent ambassador has shaken their ideas. They had come to the meeting in a patronising way. But they begin to see that the Gospel needs no patronage from them. The dignity of heaven shines out alike in message and messenger. There is a solemnity in the meeting that strikes these worldlings—an intense earnestness even in the very atmosphere, that brings them, in spite of themselves, to the very confines of eternity. Thus the meeting goes on. The orthodox half-hour-and-ten-minutes is reached. Yet the preacher is not weary—no one is weary. Prejudices are breaking down. Yonder scoffer is forgetting that his principles are opposed to these revival ideas. Yonder bold sinner is trembling under the word. Another wishes he were a Christian. Another is won for Christ! God's people are jubilant. They recognise the Master's voice; they hear His footfall; they feel His presence. Thus the work goes on, and spreads, and deepens. And what is the instrumentality in this great work? A heaven-sent man. We know that all things are of God, and unto

Him alone must all glory and power be ascribed. Yet the Lord works by means; and the heaven-endowed Evangelist is His great instrument in turning men from darkness to light. The ministry of such an ambassador is doubtless watered by many prayers; and many a "help" comes in, either to promote or carry on a revival time. Yet we cannot fail to see that the man sent of God seems in a sense to carry with him the fire of heaven. Then, shall we not pray, "Lord increase the number of those whom Thou hast sent—keep them in Thy presence—clothe them with Thy power"? May we His people be ready to welcome all such, and reckon it a high privilege indeed to succour and care for the man of God.



A BELIEVER is never in greater danger of falling than when he is saying to himself, "There's no fear of *me*." We never find that pride is one of the evidences of grace. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. xvi. 18). Self-confidence is just another name for pride; and we know that the Lord knoweth the proud afar off (Ps. cxxxviii. 6). Moreover, a proud Christian is a contradiction of terms; for the first great lesson—yea, the life-long lesson in the religion of Jesus Christ, is to learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart (Matt. xi. 29).



EVERY event in our life is a messenger from God. Each has a mission to fulfil. Therefore let us reverently enquire: "What message, O Lord, hast Thou in this for me?"

CAN THEY BE ANSWERED ?

HOW am I to worship the Lord?
—what church am I to join?"

These questions are coming up every now and again; indeed they are sure to come up wherever souls are being saved. Can questions such as these be answered? We are persuaded they can. There are clear directions given in Scripture as to how sinners are saved; and we hold that there are just as clear directions given for the guidance of the sinner after he *is* saved. In many quarters this is practically denied. An Evangelist comes to labour; and souls profess to be born again. The converts become concerned, perhaps for the first time, as to how they must worship God. Many of them had never been "members" of any "church." They feel now that they must join something. What are they to join? They ask for light on the subject; but no light is given. The Evangelist says, "My sphere is the Gospel: I never tell people where they are to go." The brethren in charge of the work explain that it is an "undenominational effort," and that they just allow converts to go where they please, or continue under their "minister," if they have any! That is to say, if, before your conversion, you were sitting under a rationalist clergyman, who sneers at the new birth and caricatures revival work, you are just to remain where you are! You are thus consigned to the tender mercies of an enemy of Christ, to be "built up" in dead theology, or,

rather, in all the rationalistic heresies that may be abroad. Now, this reveals a state of terrible helplessness in the case of those who seek to carry on "undenominational" work for God. But the brethren carrying on the work *must* act in that helpless and bewildering fashion. The Free-church brother daren't say to the young convert, "Come to the Free church by all means;" for the United Presbyterian brother would cry out against proselytising; while another brother would say, that if any church was to be recommended, it should be the Established. Thus by universal consent it has been decreed that no one is to say a single word as to where a young convert is to go after he is saved. He may ask for instruction. But the seal of absolute silence is on every lip. To many, this will doubtless seem a sad state of matters. But it is only the natural fruit of the so-called "undenominational" system of carrying on the Lord's work. We can expect nothing else, if we seek to form a unity that God has never formed—a unity, moreover, that can only be kept together by suppressing some of the most important truths of Scripture. The Lord's command was, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, &c., and "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 20). But how shall we carry out the Master's instructions if, when disciples are made, we refuse to baptize them and instruct them in the ways which be in Christ? God "will have all men to be

saved and to come unto *the knowledge of the truth*" (1 Tim. ii. 4). *Truth* is spoken lightly of by many. But let us not forget that it is the Lord's will that men should not only be saved, but come unto the knowledge of the truth. A certain Evangelist once said: "Get the people saved, and they'll manage to *waddle* their way to heaven." But this is virtually despising God-appointed means. The Gospel is the means whereby sinners are saved; and the proclamation of the truth is the means whereby saints are sanctified and instructed in the Lord's will—not that they may merely "waddle" their way to heaven, but that they may, like the Eunuch, go on their way rejoicing. Seeing, then, we have *the Gospel* for the sinner, and *the proclamation of the truth* for the saint, dare we draw our pen through either of these God-appointed means? No. And besides, what true mother would allow her child to "waddle" its way to manhood? Would she not diligently use every means at her command for the strengthening of her boy for the battle of life? And, if taught of God according to His own word, shall not we, in carrying on His work, seek every heaven-appointed means for the strengthening of that young convert? We heard him cry, "What must I do to be saved?" What did we do? Did we sit down and quote some great man's words? Did we tell him what the church believes, or what is popular in the religious world? No. We opened the Scriptures, and showed him what *God says* about how to be saved.

Our appeal was to that which is written. The entrance of God's word gave light. But what is he to do, now that he is saved? With whom is he to be associated as a saint of God? Where do we get our answer to these questions? Exactly where we got our answer to the question about how to be saved. We open the Scriptures again; and from the clearly revealed will of God we show the young convert his position in the world, and what the Lord requires of one who professes to love His name. We never think of appealing to what is believed in the religious world. Scripture is all-sufficient. What does the Lord say? *That* settles everything. All is plain and simple to the young convert. He goes by the Book. His path is clear; and it is a path which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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It is a true mark of grace to be working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12). This does not mean that the believer is to have any fear as to his own acceptance. That matter was settled, once and for ever, the moment he believed on Jesus. The young convert of yesterday already stands "*accepted in the Beloved*" (Eph. i. 6). The fear referred to is a filial, godly fear, lest God should not be honoured, and his word should not be obeyed. We seek to please those we love: we *fear* to offend them. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" (Job xxviii. 28). Happy is the man that thus "feareth alway" (Prov. xxviii. 14); for "in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and His children shall have a place of refuge" (Prov. xiv. 26).

NOT MY TURN.

“ SUPPOSE you will be addressing the meeting to-night?” “No,” was the answer, it is *not my turn.*”

The brother gave a little smile, from which I inferred that he had not much sympathy with these man-made methods of carrying on the Lord's work. In that company of believers I knew of no one more likely than himself to be the means of reaching the consciences of the unsaved. Yet he had to be silent, seeing it was not his “turn.” Now, what is this system of carrying on the Lord's work? For want of a better name, we may call it the “Turn-about system.” The addressing of the meetings is arranged by turn. It is an understood thing that any brother speaks who has a desire to speak; and, in order to please every one, and give offence to none, each takes his turn in the Gospel meeting. Whatever advantages this system may be supposed to possess, we do not believe that it is according to Scripture. We are aware that, among the Lord's people, there are great difficulties in the matter of how to conduct Gospel work. In many cases they are at their wit's end how to carry on a Gospel testimony that shall be according to Scripture, and yet reach the unsaved. A mistake, however, is often made at the very outset—the mistake of supposing that any one has a right to preach who wants to preach. You might as well say that any one has a right to be an overseer who wants to be an overseer. Or, to come nearer the

point, you may as well say that the foot has a right to be the hand, if it wants to be the hand. In plain words, we must open our eyes to this great truth, that the Lord hath set the members in the body *as it hath pleased Him* (1 Cor. xii. 18). Some have one talent, some have five, some have ten. One is gifted to shepherd the saints—to visit, to exhort, and to watch for their souls, while he may be utterly devoid of Gospel gift. Another is fitted to preach the Gospel, and is yet well aware that he is not adapted for oversight work. Another has evidently a special call to open up the word to the saints; and yet the Gospel is clearly not his sphere. Another is satisfied that his place is not the platform at all: a few children in the Sunday-School comprise a congregation suited to his gift; while another, in some similar path of lowly service, hears and responds to the call of God. This variety is acknowledged in a *general* way. Yet, strange to tell, an idea seems to prevail that in Gospel work *anybody* will do to preach. The result is that aspirants to the platform are many. There is no lack of testimony. Preachers are multiplied; but the same cannot be said of those that believe. This strong desire to preach has led to such an increase in the number of those who take part in the Gospel, that some means had to be devised for *regulating* the supply of preachers, so as to give equal liberty to all. Thus the turn-about system gradually *introduced itself*. As the Gospel meeting comes round, the

question therefore arises, "Whose turn is it to speak?" Now, we do not believe that this is the question that should be asked. The question ought simply to be this—"Whom has God fitted for this work? and whom has He called to speak on this occasion?" To our mind nothing could be more simple. We freely admit that by the turn-about system you will secure peace—that is, every one getting share-and-share-alike, no one will have room to complain. But such peace is an unscriptural peace, and bought at far too dear a price. The Lord does not require us to make room for anybody and everybody; but He does require that we make room for Himself. We know that brother So-and-so would be pleased if he were asked to speak. But there must be a much higher aim before us, viz., *what will please the Lord?* In the turn-about system, a Jeremiah may be preaching to-night, the fire of God burning in his bones, and sinners pricked to the heart. But next night, it is some other brother's turn—some one with but little heart for souls; and a dull, profitless meeting is the result. Next night the platform is taken by one clearly never intended for such work. But where are the Jeremiahs all this time? They are sitting in silence—waiting till their turn comes round! Yet, with this system in full operation, some of the Lord's people wonder how it is that the Gospel has so little effect! We must say, however, that we do not wonder. What is wanted is—room for the Lord to work through whomsoever He pleases

—room for the due exercise of whatever gift He has bestowed. It is vain for us to expect that the power of God must accompany any methods we may devise. In the way of His judgments we must wait for Him, while we contend, not for a place for ourselves, but that the Lord alone may be exalted in our service for Him. We must not be satisfied with the assurance that there is "room for us." This reminds us of the words of a dear brother who was told by a certain company of believers that there was room for *him* to preach. "You will get speaking," they said. "Ah! but," said he, "I don't want to know if there's room for me: *I want to know if there's room for God.*"

—o—

THE PLACE OF PREPARATION.—

John the Baptist's place of preparation for fruitful service for the Lord must, if *I* wish to be fruitful, be *my* place of preparation. John's place of growth must, if *I* desire to grow, be *my* place of growth. Only where John "grew and waxed strong in spirit," can I do the same—*in the desert with God* (Lu. i. 80).

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"An unhealthy activity makes us speak without thinking, interrupt rudely, reprove hastily, judge without consideration, speak loudly, dispute, murmur, and lose our temper. We also burden ourselves with numberless prayers, repeated carelessly, without attention, and with impatience to get to the end of them. Such activity interferes with our meditations, wearies the mind, dries up the soul, and hinders the work of the Holy Spirit."

REJOICE WITH TREMBLING.

ON stepping into the train one day, I found myself sitting beside a dear brother in the Lord—one whom I knew to be “laid on the altar.” “I have just been dwelling,” he said, “on that passage in Ps. ii. 11, ‘Rejoice with trembling.’” He then went on to tell me how, in seasons of holiest joy, the flesh is ready to be puffed up and to take glory to itself. In his ordinary reading, he had come across the passage in question; and he then learned, for the first time, that abiding joy can only be kept by the lowly heart. “Rejoice with trembling.” The words suggested trains of thought, besides explaining how it comes that seasons of deepest joy in God are often followed by times of most discouraging failure. It takes grace to make use of the grace we receive. After a season of special joy in the Lord, we are tempted to think that we can *walk ourselves* now—we feel so strong that we fancy we can go on for some time without a fresh supply of power. What is the result? Failure. Some mere trifle upsets us. We are caught off our guard; and we wonder how it is that we should be tripped up *so soon* after our late happy experiences. But we did not “rejoice with trembling.” There was a lurking feeling of pride in the thought that *we* should be thus privileged to rejoice with joy unspeakable (1 Pet. i. 8). In the strength of *our joy* we tried to walk, instead of making the joy of the Lord our strength.

CONSECRATION.

CONSECRATION just means to have the hands filled. In 1 Chron. xxix. 5 we find David asking the question, “Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?” When you look the marginal reading for “consecrate” you find it is “to fill his hand.” If your hand is full of anything, there is room for nothing else. If our hands are full in the Lord’s service, then there is no room left for the world. Sometimes a lawyer has so much work to do that he has to refuse new clients. “My hands are full,” he says; “I can’t give you any attention.” Now, apply the illustration to God’s people. How is it that the world comes knocking at the door, and so often gains admittance? The reason is simply this: we are not consecrated unto the Lord—our hands are not filled for Him. But let our hands be filled—let Christ have His place on the throne of the heart—let us be busy at work for Him; and what is the result? We turn round at once and tell the world that we are so busy in the affairs of eternity that we have neither time nor inclination to “strive with the potsherd” in any shape or form. But, indeed, the consecrated man is scarce ever troubled with the world asking him to come down off the wall. The worldlings very soon see when a man is out-and-out for the Lord; and, as such a man does not answer their purpose, they let him alone. The world *knows him not*.

NO SECRET AFFINITY.

WHEN you see the world running after a professing Christian, to secure his co-operation in its schemes or its joys, one thing is clear: that Christian has *lowered the standard*. He may profess to be as much "on fire" as ever he was; he may keep up an outward semblance of activity in the Lord's work; but, if the world courts his favour, he may be certain that, to an alarming degree, he is of a kindred spirit with the world. It is simply impossible to avoid such a conclusion. There are certain chemical substances that *mingle* with each other readily, because there is so much of a kindred element in them all. Others, again, positively refuse to mingle the one with the other, because there is no affinity whatever between them. Thus should it be with the believer and the world; and thus *shall* it be, if he breathes the air of a heavenly separation, and feeds upon the bread of a heavenly communion. In such a case it takes no effort to be separate from the world. Between such a one and the world there is no secret affinity: therefore there is no outward association. There is nothing *in common* between them: therefore there is no *communion* between them; for to have something "in common" is the root idea of "communion." If, therefore, I find myself walking in the counsel of the ungodly, if I find them courting my favour, and wishing me to join them in their enterprises, let me know assuredly

that I have *departed from God*, and, sooner or later, I must hear the message sent by the Lord to Jehoshaphat of old: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord?" (2 Chron. xix. 2).

CALVARY.

Suitable to be sung at the Feast of Remembrance.

ASSEMBLED in our Master's name,
The 'precious blood' our plea, our claim,
We would remember all the shame
And woe of Calvary.

Our Father, help us now to rise
Above the world, and fix our eyes
Upon the bleeding Sacrifice—
The Lamb of Calvary.

O may our hearts behold Him now
With wounded feet and hands and brow,
As He beneath our sins did bow
In death on Calvary.

O tender heart! To love us so;
Infinite grace! To stoop so low,
And in our stead to undergo
The wrath of Calvary.

As on the wondrous scene we gaze,
Our hearts adore, our voices praise,
The God who to Himself did raise
Our souls through Calvary.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

WHEN we are by ourselves we have to watch our thoughts; when in the family, our tempers; when in company, our tongues.

LOOK upon yourself as the servant of all; but without making any public proclamation that you are such.

HIS OBJECT.

IN Titus ii. 14 we are told that Jesus Christ "gave Himself for us, *that* He might redeem us from all iniquity, *and* purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." How sacred the object, since the *Gift* to secure it was so great! How personal the object! for it means each beloved child of God—you and me, whom He hath brought from darkness to light, from death to life, that He may have us all to Himself. Surely it behoves each of us to ask in His presence the question: "How far has that object been attained in *me*?"

Let us look at the object. It is three-fold:

- (1) Redemption *from* all iniquity.
- (2) Purified *unto* Himself.
- (3) A peculiar people, *zealous* of good works.

The iniquity from which He would redeem us is, iniquity in the sense of *lawlessness*. Most Christians are zealously careful to see that they are redeemed from iniquity in the sense of unrighteousness. Yet our redemption from lawlessness is as dear to our God as redemption from unrighteousness. Both, therefore, demand our attention. We are expected to be manifestly "not without law of God, but in law of Christ" (1 Cor. ix. 21).

Lawlessness is natural to us, although we be children of God. "Law" is simply the expressed mind or will of a master. Lawlessness is insubjection to

that revealed will; and may be shown in two ways, viz., by neglecting to learn what that will is; or, by refusing to obey, when that will has been made known to us. God hath made Jesus Lord to and of us. And why call we Him "Lord, Lord," if we do not those things which He bids us? yea, or persist in doing what He has not commanded us to do? (compare Lev. x. 1)—a most conscience-hardening practice; yet alas! how common!

Do you, fellow-saint, never say, as justifying your practices, "O, such-and-such is not forbidden"? Do you not hear from Lev. x. 1 how the Lord esteems the bringing to Him of what He has not commanded? Ah, beloved in Christ, that which He *has* commanded will tax your every energy, and occupy every hour of your brief life, without frittering away these precious hours in that which is not forbidden. To disregard what the Lord has commanded, while busy in what He has not forbidden, is lawlessness of a very grave character. God had not forbidden Nadab and Abihu to do what they did: yet how disastrous to them was their energetic service!

J. B.

THREE SECRETS.

Humility is the secret of fellowship,
 Pride is the secret of division,
 Reality is the secret of power.
 But salt that has lost its savour is good for nothing.

LOSE YOUR GOSPEL ZEAL.

ARGUMENTS without number are brought against the truth of Separation to the Name of the Lord. One of these is this, that if you leave the denominations and meet with those professedly gathered to the Name, you find yourself hampered in your efforts to win souls for Christ, and very soon lose your Gospel zeal entirely.

Now, we will not attempt to deny that this is true in some cases. But let us lay the blame in the right quarter. The fault does not lie with the truth of Separation, but with some of those who profess to obey it. Some try to put the matter right by saying, "I'll have nothing to do with separating to the name of the Lord; and then I'll not lose my zeal for souls." But that is not God's way of putting the matter right. There is nothing whatever in the truth of separation that is calculated to *lessen* our interest in the perishing. Some who profess to be separated may have only a languid interest in Gospel work. But that is *their* fault—not the fault of *the truth*. As a matter of fact you will find many gathered to the name of the Lord, whose zeal in the Gospel is unsurpassed. It is the will of God that we should be separated unto Himself; and it is His will that we should have a zeal for the perishing. Let *both* these aspects of truth have due attention. We dare not do away with either the one or the other. It is not less of separation truth that we need: it is more love for the perishing.

But love for the perishing can spring only from a right condition of heart—what we would call a *revival condition*. Therefore, "revival" is our great need. We must have the power of God among us. It will do little good to say, "We must have more Gospel effort." More work is a poor remedy where the head is sick and the heart faint. More *health* is what is needed. We must get into God's presence—we must have a searching time *there*—a revival of strength *there*—a renewed consecration *there*. And then—what then? Why, the spirit of the Gospel shall so overpower us, that we shall hail men and women, not like Saul (Acts viii. 3) to take them to prison, but to bring them to Christ. If the truth is being evil spoken of through lack of Gospel zeal, that reproach must be rolled away. But let us see that we do not attempt to roll it away in the wrong fashion. To put on an *appearance* of Gospel zeal will not mend matters. Nothing will avail to roll away the reproach except a tide of mighty revival power from the presence of the Lord. He is waiting to send it: are we ready to receive it?

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THE "BETTERS" OF HEBREWS.—The Son better than angels, i. 4. Christ better than Melchisedec, vii. 7. Better hope, vii. 19. Better testament, vii. 22. Better covenant, viii. 6. Better promises, viii. 6. Better sacrifice, ix. 23. Better substance, x. 34. Better country, xi. 16. Better resurrection, xi. 35. Better thing for us, xi. 40. The blood of Christ better than that of Abel, xii. 24.

SPLENDID ADDRESS.

“**S**PLENDID address—I don’t know that I ever heard a better word for believers.”

But stay, friend ; tell me this : What was the *effect* of the splendid address ? Was business done for eternity ? What sin—what worldly conformity—did the address lead you to renounce ? Did the address cause you to cry out to God on account of the un-Christ-like character of your own ways ? Did it send you home to do righteousness—that is, the right thing, in the family and in the workshop ? Did it reveal to you that you were weak through lack of secret prayer ? Did it show you yourself, and let you know what a searching thing it is to be in God’s presence ! These are some of the effects of an address that comes from the throne. We have heard “splendid” addresses—addresses that were extolled on every hand ; and yet backsliders could sit unmoved, and Christians grasping the world with both hands did not feel in the least disturbed. Yea, they were to be heard extolling the “splendid” address ! From all such splendid addresses let us pray to be delivered. If God’s people are to be brought into living contact with Himself, it will not be by these flowery orations sent forth over the heads of the people, as if the speaker were addressing an audience a thousand miles away. Close dealing is wanted—sharp, personal work. So long as speakers aim at giving a fine address, and seeing how well they can

occupy thirty minutes, nothing will be done for eternity. What speakers have to consider is this : “How shall this people be brought into the presence of God, and made a holy people unto Himself ? How shall they be delivered from sin, and conformed to the image of Christ ?” Let such be the aim of the speaker ; let him be one who comes forth, like Elijah, from the presence of the Lord ; and backsliders shall cry out, sleeping saints shall be aroused, and business for God shall be done. Then, instead of only splendid addresses, there would be splendid obedience—splendid self-denial—splendid devotion to Christ. It matters very little what the saints think of our addresses. Let it be our aim to bring them into living contact with the Holy One ; and the seal of God upon our labour shall be to us far higher praise than a thousand voices saying, “What a splendid address !”

—♦—

“YE are not your own ; ye are bought with a price (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). It is a very sweet thought that our bodies are bought with the precious blood of Christ. It is also very solemn, because they have been bought in order to be inhabited by the Holy Spirit, that thereby we may glorify God our Father. It is only as we let the Holy Spirit work in us, that we shall glorify God. A spiritual man is one thing : a spirited man is quite another. It is easy, so to speak, to be a spirited man. You only need to be active in the natural sense, without having any fellowship with God in the matter. But nothing short of dealing with God will make us spiritual.”

CONSCIENCE.

“**E**XERCISE myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man” (Acts xxiv. 16). Have we not here one of the chief elements of Paul’s mighty service for the Lord and His people in all ages? The condition of the conscience is the condition of the man himself. Consciences differ greatly. They differ by more or less knowledge of truth, and by the use made of that truth. “I exercise myself.” How did Paul exercise himself? By watchfulness; by never tampering with evil; by avoiding everything doubtful in its character; by sticking to the testimonies of the living God. The damage we incur by failing to exercise ourselves is incalculable. Pure enjoyment of the word is lost, through failing to preserve a good conscience. The more thoroughly our minds are saturated with the truth received in meekness, the more sensitive our consciences become. It is possible to deal with Scripture as a workman deals with his material—in an easy, matter-of-fact way. Truth handled in that manner may seem to accomplish much. Yet it yields no fruit unto God. Paul commended the Ephesian elders “to God, and to the word of His grace” (Acts xx. 32). Not the Word apart from God, and not God apart from the Word; but God *and* the Word. J. H.

—♦—
THIS is our business—to conquer self, and daily to advance in holiness.

BEEZEBUB.

“**A**MONG the many names applied to Satan, as recorded in Scripture, perhaps none is more significant than the title, “Beelzebub.” We as God’s children would do well to consider its import; for, in so doing, we might be able to form a more correct estimate of this ungodly world, and maintain with more faithfulness our Nazarite character. Satan’s title agrees with the nature of his dominions—Beelzebub, meaning *lord of the dunghill*.

Hannah of old knew something of this; for, when praying in the Spirit (1 Sam. ii. 8), she is made to say, “He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes.” And, beloved, this was precisely our condition in our unregenerate state. But God, who is rich in mercy, delivered us from the power of darkness—took us out of the dunghill—and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Paul, in writing to the saints at Philippi (chap. iii. 4-8), challenges the boasters in the flesh by his blamelessness as touching the law, and his notoriety as a zealous persecutor of the church. But he immediately adds, “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but *dung*, that I may win Christ.”

—♦—
HOLY living involves daily dying.

GOD'S UNITS.

MAN naturally likes great audiences. But God is often found dealing with units. In Luke xv. the whole story is about one—"one sinner that repenteth." Then, elsewhere we read, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto *one*" (Matt. xxv. 40). "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that *one* of these little ones should perish" (Matt. xviii. 14). In Matt. xxv. 45 we read of the neglected *one*. Our Lord is often seen dealing with *one*. Nicodemus (Jno. iii.); woman at the well (Jno. iv.); adulterous woman (Jno. viii.); blind man (Jno. ix.).

The three parables of Luke xv. are a group in which we see a vast amount of labour expended upon *one*. These three parables are our Lord's reply to the accusation: "This Man receiveth sinners." Sinners are precious in God's sight. Luke xv. gives us a glimpse of heaven; Luke xvi., of hell.

The three parables represent the sinner as (1) Far off (Sheep), (2) Dead (Money), (3) Rebellious (Prodigal). Thus, in bringing one sinner to Himself, God has to deal with wandering, death, rebellion.

What encouragement we have to go after the perishing! The threefold power of heaven is all at work. The Son has died, and now *seeks*: the Spirit *draws*: the Father *receives*. Consummation—Joy in the presence of the angels over *one*. D. R.

—♦—

"WE must be watching, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for an enemy then is more easily overcome. Do not suffer him to enter the door of the heart; but resist him without the gate at his first knock. An after-remedy comes too late."

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WHAT is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? (Matt. xii. 32).

This question has caused much speculation among God's people—some fearing lest, in an unguarded moment, they had committed the unpardonable sin. Now, we do not desire to say anything that would weaken any godly fear of sinning against God. He is a jealous God; and He will judge His people. At the same time, we may say that we have long been of opinion that the nature of the sin against the Holy Spirit is evident if we read the whole passage, say from verse 22. Our Lord was casting out demons. The Pharisees, in their mad hatred against Him, at once declared that it was *by Satanic power* He cast out demons. They accused Him of being in league with hell—that He whom God had anointed and sent into the world, was from beneath, and not from above. Such, we are persuaded, was the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Indeed such is plainly declared in Mark iii. 30, where in the same connection, we find the words: "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." For those who committed such a sin there was no forgiveness; seeing that, by their own hand, they shut the door of mercy against themselves. When we find any alarmed lest they have committed that particular sin, we see in that very alarm a token that they are clear of it. The Pharisees of our Lord's day had no such alarm.

SONG OF MY BELOVED.

 Christ we have a Shepherd dear, Ps 23 : 1.
 In paths of truth our souls to lead ; Ps. 23 : 3.
 In every danger He is near ; Isa. 43 : 2.
 He's suited unto all our need. 1 Cor. 1 : 30.

He died to set the guilty free, 1 Pet. 3 : 18.
He rose to justify His own, Rom. 4 : 25.
He lives their Advocate to be, 1 Jno. 2 : 1.
He comes to seat them on the throne. Rev. 3 : 21.

Law finds in Him a righteous end, Rom. 10 : 4.
Grace doth by Him unhindered shine, Rom. 5 : 21.
Justice and mercy in Him blend, Ps. 85 : 10.
Love owns Him as its source divine. 1 Jno. 4 : 7, 10.

He is our *Life*—we cannot die ; Col. 3 : 4.
 He is our *Peace*—it must endure ; Eph. 2 : 14.
 He is our *Strength*—to help us, nigh ; Ps. 37 : 39.
 He is our *Hope*—steadfast and sure. 1 Tim. 1 : 1 ;
 Heb. 6 : 19.

He fills with good the hungry soul, Lu. 1 : 53.
 He peace unto the troubled gives, Lu. 24 : 38.
 He makes the broken-hearted whole, Ps. 34 : 18.
 He with the contrite spirit lives. Isa. 57 : 15.

His flock He as a shepherd feeds,
 The lambs He in His bosom folds, Isa. 40 : 11.
 The feeble ones He gently leads,
 The weakest saint He firmly holds. Jno. 10 : 28.

He giveth power unto the faint,
 He strengthens those who have no might, Isa. 40 : 29.
 He satisfies the longing saint, Ps. 107 : 9.
 He giveth songs throughout the night. Job 35 : 10.

The erring one He fondly seeks, Matt. 18 : 12.
 The penitent He will restore, 1 Jno. 1 : 9.
 To weary ones He fitly speaks, Isa. 50 : 4.
 To grace received He addeth more. Jas. 4 : 6.

He maketh sore and bindeth up ; Jno. 4 : 18, 26.
 He woundeth and His hands make whole ;
 He shares with saints their bitter cup, Jno. 11 : 35.
 He suffers with th' afflicted soul. Isa. 63 : 9.

He gilds with joy the tear of grief ; 2 Cor. 6 : 10.
 He maketh death but sweet repose, Jno. 11 : 11.
 In which the spirit finds relief, Ecc. 12 : 7.
 The body rest from earthly woes. Rev. 14 : 13.

His heart o'erflows with love divine, Jno. 13 : 1.
His very name is sweet to hear, S. of S. 1 : 3.
His ways with grace and mercy shine, Neh. 9 : 17.
His presence chases every fear. Jno. 20 : 19.

The Chiefest my Beloved is ! S. of S. 5 : 10.
 The Fairest One among the fair ! Ps. 45 : 2.
 And He is mine, and I am His ! S. of S. 2 : 16.
 He my sweet portion, I His care. Ps. 16 : 5 ; 1 Pet.
 5 : 7.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

IN THE LIGHT.

HY is it that we often fail to see some simple but precious truth of Scripture? It is because we are *not walking in the light*. If you take a letter into the dark, you will labour in vain to read it. In like manner we will labour in vain to learn the mind of God, if darkness has blinded our eyes. What great pains are sometimes taken to instruct God's people in the truth ; and yet they say they "cannot see it," and "cannot help it." True ; but there is one thing they can help : they can help being in darkness. *That* is where their responsibility comes in. Let God's people come right into the light of His presence, and many a precious separating truth shall become clear in a moment.

CHRIST on the Cross for the sinner—
 Christ on the Throne for the saint. The sinner must first believe in God's love as displayed on the Cross. There is no winking at sin. Hence we read that God is light (1 Jno. i. 5) before we read that God is love (1 Jno. iv. 8). Grace reigns through righteousness (Rom. v. 12).

A LITTLE CHAT WITH OUR READERS.

WHAT we would like is, to bring the "TREASURY" before as many of the Lord's people as possible—just to let them see what it is like; and then they can judge whether they wish to have it regularly or not. In almost every place where the paper is known, it is steadily making a larger field for itself; and from letters we are receiving, it is clear to us that in many places it only requires to be *known* to find acceptance. Not a few have just fallen in with it for the first time. One writes saying, "I only saw your paper to-day for the first, and I wish to be a subscriber." Another subscribes, and says he has never *seen* the paper; he has only heard it described.

One objection is this—it is a *new* paper. True; but every paper was a new one at one time. Every periodical at present before the saints, has had its "infancy"; and, although the "TREASURY" may be said to be still in that stage, yet we believe it is rapidly emerging from the vicissitudes of that trying period.

Another objection is this—there are too many papers already in existence. Our reply to this is, that we have not a single one too many of the *right sort*. There is abundant room for every message from God. We do not believe that we are over-stocked with either preachers, teachers, or papers, of the right kind. Nor do we believe that when the "TREASURY" appeared, every want was then supplied. No. "Yet there is room." And the new paper of to-morrow shall be hailed by us with delight, provided it has the ring of true gold. At this point, some may think that we seem to entertain a good opinion of the "TREASURY" ourselves. Well, as to this, we can only say that we believe every editor thinks his own paper a good one. If not, the sooner he has reason to think so the better. We do not see how an editor can go on with vigour and enthusiasm if he is not convinced that he is doing a work for eternity.

It is one of our principles that whatever we take in hand we try to *do it well*; and we seek to carry this out in conducting this paper.

We therefore desire the "TREASURY" to be *seen* by the saints; and, after it is seen, let it stand or fall on its own merits. If you consider the paper fitted to be a help to God's people, and worthy of being received into the homes of the saints, we shall be glad of your kind assistance. But how can you help? By bringing the paper under the notice of other believers; and by writing for specimen copies, which we shall gladly send free of charge. Or, if you give us the addresses of brethren in local centres in your neighbourhood, we shall have pleasure in sending them specimen copies direct.

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In view of this arrangement, all subscribers should order direct from Maybole, as the paper will not be published in time for enclosure with other monthlies.

The "Sower" is published, as usual, in good time for the first of the month.

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We believe our circulation could very soon be doubled if *one* brother in each Assembly were to take up "The Treasury," secure subscribers' names, and attend to the handing out of the paper monthly. This is already done by not a few; and we need not say how much we esteem this little service. But there are many places that the paper has not yet reached, while in others the circulation is limited. Now, what we need is *one brother in each local centre* to take an interest in the circulation of "The Treasury." With an increase in our staff of such "helpers," we are satisfied that the ministry through these pages would soon reach a very large body of believers. Who will be "helpers"?

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Vol. II.

REVIVAL IN HEZEKIAH'S TIME.

THERE was a great revival in the days of Hezekiah (see 2 Chron. xxix. to xxxi.). It was such a remarkable time that the inspired historian says: "Since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem" (xxx. 26). Hezekiah was a young man; but he was determined that God would be honoured. It cannot be said that he had the advantage of a good parental example; for Ahaz his father "did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord," "and made also molten images for Baalim" (xxviii. 1, 2). The land was filled with the grossest idolatry; and "the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel" (xxviii. 19). Such was the condition of things when Hezekiah at twenty-five years of age ascended the throne. He had to grapple with gigantic evils. Humanly speaking, the task was hopeless. But, whatever the cost and whatever the consequences, he was purposed in heart to be *for God*. Such a man was sure to have an effect upon the surrounding mass of idolatry. Let a believer be clear out on God's side—let him be a set-apart, a sanctified one—

and his presence shall make itself felt, wherever his lot may be cast. You may as well try to separate a man from his own shadow, as to sever him from the effect he has, for good or ill, on the people by whom he is surrounded. Hezekiah was *for God*; and the effect of his life was *for good*: it could not have been otherwise.

Hezekiah began the work of the Lord at once—"in the first year of his reign" and "in the first month," he boldly opened the doors of the Lord's house and repaired them. Revival began there and then. The order of God's house was restored. The hearts of God's people were opened. Offerings poured into the house of the Lord. The priests were found too few for the work; and the Levites had to be called in to their help. It was a time of great joy. "And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly." So ends chapter xxix. But the revival is only beginning. Chapter xxx. tells us how it spread over all Israel; while chapter xxxi. 1 shows us how in the strength of their revival joy "all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut

down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh; until they had utterly destroyed them all."

Now, what we want is a "Hezekiah revival." It will do no good to shut our eyes to the dearth of spiritual power that prevails in so many quarters. It will do no good to flatter ourselves that we are rich and increased with goods; or to excuse ourselves on the ground that the people are "Gospel-hardened." Let us be melted under God's power; and certain it is that many whom we now consider Gospel-hardened shall be melted under the power of the Gospel. In some places you will scarcely get an "Amen" if you cry to God for a mighty revival! You are looked upon as sensational and visionary. Very well; be it so. But let us cry out none the less; but all the more. Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence! Hezekiahs are wanted in the church. "What!" you say; "are there none in the church already?" Yes, we reply; but they are terribly few. Let our prayer be, "Lord, increase their number; Lord, visit Thy heritage; Lord, come with a flood-tide of Thy power!"

Why is worldliness sapping the life of many a once bright testimony? Why is ease in Zion the order of the day? Why is it that many, even on their own confession, are lukewarm in the things of God? It is because the stream of spiritual joy is almost dry; and the believer *must be drinking at something.*

If the joy of the Lord is not his strength, he is strengthening the Adam nature in drinking at forbidden streams. Solemn thought! But how shall the stream of joy be caused to rise, yea, and to overflow its banks? *By turning again to the Lord.* Brother, sister, you and I cannot afford to be away from God! Eternal issues hang upon our spiritual condition. Let the Lord have His true place in the heart—let Him come in revival there; and the heaven-begotten flame shall *burn its way out.* Who knows but *you*, humanly speaking, may provide the spark that shall kindle a blaze of revival in the church, such as Hezekiah never saw!

AFFLICTION.

"CEASELESS sunshine makes the desert"—
 Constant heat the burning sand;
 Winter's snow makes healthy climate—
 Summer's showers the fertile land.

So do not our light afflictions,
 Like the raincloud and the snow,
 Keep our souls from being deserts
 Where no heavenly fruit can grow?

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY.—There may be difficulties in the way of revival in our midst, and perhaps we have been asking the question: "Who shall roll us away the stone?" But faith looks not hopelessly at difficulties: faith finds its rest in God; well assured that the stone shall be removed by the same almighty hand that rolled it away on the resurrection morning. Therefore, let us arise and lay hold upon God. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

BEGAN IN HIGH QUARTERS.

MANY lessons may be learned from the record of the revival in Hezekiah's time. One thing may be specially noted: the revival *began in high quarters*. It commenced with the king himself. Then it extended to the Priests and Levites—those who, so to speak, stood before the people in the Lord. No sooner had the revival taken a firm hold there, than it spread throughout the whole congregation. In short, king and priest being right before God, it was sure to be a good time in Israel. Apply this to the church of the present day, and what conclusion are we compelled to draw? This is the conclusion: Let there be revival among the rulers of God's house, and very soon you will find God's power reigning among the saints. We believe it is one of the great secrets of dearth of revival, that many who profess to rule in the church are not in living communion with the Father. In the great majority of cases you will find that the condition of the church is the condition of its leaders. If those who stand forth as "pattern men" are not in a revival condition, how can we expect the saints to be rejoicing in the Lord? We need not try to "thrash" God's people into a revival condition. We cannot thrash them a single inch above *our own level*. They must be *led*. We who profess to care for them must *go before them*. Revival must begin with the "heads" of the thousands of Israel. Hezekiah must be right with God; the Priest and Levite

must be right with God; and then we shall find it an easy matter to get Israel right with God. Whatever may be the shortcomings of God's people at large, there is one thing that we have long observed, and it is this: the saints are ready to follow in the path of communion—ready to tread the highway of holiness, *provided a few are found to lead the way and show the example*. If God's people are shown the real thing, we believe they are ready to respond to the call of God, and go forth into the desert place to meet with Him. But they must have the real thing. A mere affectation of power will fail to charm them. One living man will have more effect upon them than a hundred formal addresses. Then, why should living examples be wanting? We believe they are wanting for this reason, that this great subject has not received the attention it deserves. Many seem to think we are getting on well enough as we are—that there is no danger, and no special need for any special flood-tide of almighty power. Now, we are no alarmists. On the contrary, we believe that among the saints at the present time, there is a considerable desire after God. Ones and twos, if not greater numbers, are longing for a closer walk with God. A want is being felt—the want of a deepened spirituality—an abiding communion—a heaven-born joy, that shall cause every unhallowed pleasure to hide its face. But, seeing such longings are abroad, is *that* to be the signal for us to fold our arms and say, "All is well"?

Never. It is rather the call to arise and be ready for that time of revival of which we see evident tokens that the Lord is preparing for His people? Then, to each one who professes to care for the flock of God, we would say, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esth. iv. 14). But what shall we do? We must do what Esther did. We must get *into the presence of the King*—we must touch the golden sceptre. God's people must be delivered; there must be joy in Israel. Yea, there shall be joy; for, if we fail to arise and go forth into the presence of the King, it may truly be said in the words of Mordecai, "Then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise . . . from another place." In other words, the Lord will carry on the work without us, and find other vessels to bear to His weary people the treasures of His grace.

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JUSTIFYING OURSELVES.—Nothing is more natural than to excuse ourselves and blame others, if we have done what is wrong. Adam said "The woman . . . gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Eve said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Gen. iii. 12, 13). So it was at the beginning; and so has it continued. A bad conscience is ever on the search for a cloak. That explains how a man who is in the wrong takes so much pains to tell everybody that he is in the right. If you have a good conscience, you can possess your soul in patience, and commit your case to God.

HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS.

HOLINESS must come before happiness—righteousness before rejoicing. This is ever the order in Scripture. Many would be happy without being holy: many long for joy who do not long for righteousness. But happiness and holiness are connected with each other in the same relation as cause and effect. Happiness is simply the result of holiness: joy is the fruit of righteousness. Why, then, long to be happy? Let us long to be holy—to be really the set-apart ones that God has made us in Christ Jesus; and happy we must be—happy in God—happy in the blessed consciousness that we are Christ's, and that He is all to us. Is our joy at a low ebb?—Are we wondering where it has gone? We shall find it in the path of righteousness. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but *righteousness, and peace, and joy* in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. xiv. 17). Christian joy is never found alone. It is too precious to be at the beck and call of any one who may pray, "O Lord, fill me with joy." It is linked—inseparably linked—with righteousness. If we care not to follow righteousness—to do the right thing, the thing that God enjoins—we shall seek in vain for scriptural joy. We may find something that is called joy; but it will not be the joy of the righteous; it will not be the joy of God. It is the righteous, and only the righteous, that are called to rejoice. We find this in Psalm lxxxiii. 1, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous." And again (Ps. xxxii. 11), "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." "Let the righteous be glad: let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice" (Ps. lxxviii. 3).

PRIESTLY COMMUNION.

NE passage of Scripture may teach many lessons: the sword of the Spirit cuts many ways. We may view Moses as a type of Christ; or we may view him as a leader of God's people, teaching many lessons to those who rule in the church. Or we may view him as a pattern of the individual saint—as one whose faith and meekness the humblest believer might well imitate. As with Moses and many others, so is it with Hezekiah and the priesthood, to whom we have been referring. We may view the reign of Hezekiah as typical of the rule of Christ among His people. No sooner did Hezekiah ascend the throne, than the priesthood was purged and set upon a proper footing. Now, we know that it was the function and privilege of the priest to enter into the holy place and there meet with Jehovah. In the priesthood, therefore, we clearly see the church forshadowed in the character of *communion*. To speak plainly, no sooner does Christ ascend the throne of the heart, than the purging of the temple begins, and priestly communion is established. We may see many lessons in the reign of Hezekiah; we may learn much from the purging of the priesthood. But it will all be to little purpose, if we are not led to ask the question: "Does Christ truly reign in *my* heart?—is priestly communion established there?"

When the word is being expounded, there are always a number who rejoice

to see the truth applied to everybody except themselves. If the tide of spiritual life is low in the church, they are eager to lay the blame upon others—perhaps upon those who, in the fear of God, are seeking to shepherd the flock, and watch for souls as those that must give account. You hear the words: "I am not in a good state, I admit; but what chance has one to live for God here?" Now, as we have elsewhere pointed out, we are convinced that the spiritual prosperity of an assembly is closely connected with the character of the rule that is administered in that assembly. Yet there is another side to this truth; and it is this: The spiritual prosperity of an assembly is closely connected with the spiritual condition of *each believer* in that assembly. This is the other side of the truth brought before us in the Hezekiah revival. Hezekiah ascended the throne, and purged the priesthood; and blessing flowed all around. Has *Christ* been accorded His place as Lord in *my* heart?—have I been purged from my idols?—am I treading the path of communion? If such be the case, then blessing shall flow—if not to the whole land of Israel, at least to many in my immediate circle. Therefore, let me take the sword of Scripture and lay it without mercy to my own ways. While I read of the good times in Hezekiah's reign, let me ask the question: "O Lord, in how far am *I* responsible for the dearth of heavenly power?" A few righteous would have saved Sodom; and we are convinced

that in many a church, a few saints cleansed from their idols and having power with God, would prove a channel through which mighty revival times could come in. The Devil will allow us to sit in judgment on all around us, provided the Agags in our own heart are allowed to walk at large. But it must not be. The sword of self-judgment must be wielded with a determined hand. Hezekiah's Lord must reign; and Hezekiah times shall be seen again.

THINE EVERLASTING LIGHT.

Isa. lx. 20.

My God, I know that Thou wilt be
An "Everlasting Light" to me—
In heaven's bright home Thy glorious rays
Shall shine undimmed through endless days.

No cloud of grief shall dim that sky,
No tear-drop glisten in the eye,
No pain shall agonize my breast,
No fear shall break my perfect rest.

No sin—O joy!—shall mar my peace,
Or cause my Lord to hide His face;
No unkind words shall bring me care,
For love shall reign unhindered there.

No night is there—'tis always day;
No need to watch, no need to pray;
My soul, dost thou not long to be
With Him who purchased this for thee?

Come, then, my soul, arise and sing
To Him who shields thee with His wing;
The God who gave his Son for thee
Thine Everlasting Light shall be.

Kidsdale.

WITH great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ, since many suffer far greater things for the world.

THE GREAT GIFT.

WE hear a great deal about *gift*; and we have no wish to look lightly on anything that has come down from the great Head of the church. But we must confess that the man that has most weight with us is the one who has manifestly the gift of the Holy Spirit in a high degree—the man in whom the life of the Master throbs, and the Spirit of the Master breathes. He may be a stranger to eloquence, and but ill fitted to "open up" a subject, or stand for half-an-hour on a platform. But his words, few though they be, distil as the dew. He is one of the lowly, with whom is wisdom. The secret of the Lord is with him: he has an unction from the Holy One. Like some favoured servant who abides in his master's presence, he is acquainted with many a "secret of the court," while high officials know but little of the Master's plans. If *gift* and *grace* be found together—if a man is as remarkable for his holiness of life as for his aptness to teach—let him be honoured and esteemed. But if he be not the man of God he would fain have others to be, a thousand times rather give us the simple brother who in spirit roams the heavenly fields; and we shall sit at his feet, as at the feet of a master in Israel.

"As iron put into the fire loseth its rust, and becometh all bright like fire; so is it with the believer that wholly turneth himself unto God."

“SAINT JOHN.”

S it right to speak of John the apostle, as “*Saint* John;” and Matthew, as “*Saint* Matthew”?

There is no Scripture warrant whatever for such a practice. To speak of “*Saint* John,” “*Saint* Peter” &c., implies that these belong to a special order in the church, remarkable for their holiness. In fact it would appear that man has been determined in one way or another to rend the seamless robe of Christ—to divide what God has not divided. God has made all His people *saints*. But man steps in and says, “We must draw a distinction: we will make only a very select few saints.” Thus man has divided the church into classes—one class being *saints*, and the other class being *ordinary believers*! To make the distinction all the plainer, man has headed the first four books of the Testament with the words, “The Gospel according to *Saint* Matthew,” &c.; while the Revelation is even headed “The Revelation of *Saint* John the *divine*.” Now, when the New Testament came to be revised, the American Revisers saw clearly that the use of such terms was both unscriptural and misleading; and they accordingly proposed that both the words “*Saint*” and “The *divine*” should be struck out of all the headings referred to. And the American Revisers were unquestionably right. But their suggestions were set aside—we presume, in order to keep the traditions of men; for no doubt some of the revisers were sagacious enough to see that if people were told plainly that there were no such distinctions as *saints* and *ordinary believers*, the next thing they would find out would be that Scripture recognised no such distinctions as *clergy* and *laity*. From whatever cause, the

great wall of partition was rigidly maintained between the few so-called saints and the great body of God's people. Yet Scripture declares that *every* believer is a saint. We find Paul writing to “*all the saints* which are at Philippi” (Phil. i. 1). Clearly he was writing to *all the believers* there. Then we read of the church at Corinth, “*called saints*” (1 Cor. i. 2). The believers at Corinth were all saints—every one of them. It was the same at Ephesus (Eph. i. 1), and at at Colosse (Col. i. 2), and at Rome (Rom. i. 7); and everywhere. We are told to distribute to the necessity of saints. What does that mean? According to modern theology it means that I am to minister to the select few who are alone entitled to the term “saint”—men who are dead long ago! But according to Scripture, it means that I am to seek out needy believers—needy saints, saint Betty and saint Sandy—and put my hand in my pocket and minister to their need. Thomas the railway-surfaceman, if he is a child of God, is as much entitled to be called Saint Thomas as Matthew was to be called Saint Matthew. Yet you find writers who ought to know better, speaking of Saint Luke and Saint John. When we turn to Scripture we find no encouragement for such a practice. When Paul speaks of Peter it is simply as Peter—“I went to see Peter,” he says (Gal. i. 18). And when Peter refers to Paul, he does not say Saint Paul; but “our beloved brother Paul” (2 Pet. iii. 15). Then let it be our brother Thomas and our sister Jane; but as for the title “saint” as applied to a select few, we say with the American Revisers, “Let the pen be drawn through the title.”

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LOVE alone maketh every burden light, and “beareth all things.”

ASSUMED HUMILITY.

THERE is nothing more detestable than an assumed humility—a “humble” appearance put on to make an outward show of sanctity. Of such humility it may truly be said that it deceives no one—perhaps not even the one who assumes it. To adopt a gentle tone of voice—to make great public profession of our unworthiness—and to say “Amen” to everything that is done in the name of the Lord: such is not humility. We may make our obeisance to man, and be of such an agreeable turn that we will please everybody; and yet be strangers to heaven-born humility. True humility is *a right condition of soul towards God*—a humbling of ourselves under *His* mighty hand (1 Pet. v. 6). We must not confound such humility with what often goes by the name of humility. In some quarters you are reckoned a very humble brother if you just float with the tide, and find fault with nothing and nobody. Yea, things that are positively unscriptural and God-dishonouring are sometimes spoken of in a patronising way, as if they were not very evil at all. The brother who thus speaks soft words may get credit for a wonderful amount of charity and humility. But we make bold to say that such colourless Christianity is never commended in Scripture. The mighty men of the sacred page were not of this stamp. Had Samuel been a man of that character, Agag would never have been hewn in pieces before the Lord in

Gilgal (1 Sam. xv. 33). The arm of assumed humility trembles to take the sword. “I would not like to judge,” it says: “we must be cautious in coming to a conclusion that a thing is not of God”! In plain language, those who cultivate false humility must be cautious lest they *give offence* to any one; for then they would lose their reputation for humility; and that would never do. Indeed, false humility is inordinately vain. It must have praise, else it cannot get on at all. It never takes the field as a bold witness for God. It aims at an impossibility. It seeks to please everybody. Yet, in the day of trial, no voice has less weight than the voice of false humility. Like hypocrisy, it seems to be out of favour both in heaven and earth. God’s men abhor it; and as for carnal men, they tolerate it only in so far as it suits their purpose. But with the man who is learning humility in God’s presence, it is far different. Like Abraham, he walks not before men (Gen. xvii. 1). He courts not their favour: he fears not their wrath. He is not careful as to his own reputation for humility or sanctity. That never costs him a thought. It is his care to honour God; and we know that *He* will look after the reputation of those that honour Him. God’s men are never flatterers; for flattery is simply a bid for flattery in return. Those who are taught of God have a nobler aim: they aim at receiving *the Master’s* “well-done.” They are getting their work *ready for the Judgment-seat*: they live not upon the breath of man.

TOOK THE WRONG TURN.

IN your experience you will sometimes find yourself at a point where the "road" strikes off in two directions. You are compelled to come to a stand and make your choice. One path is the path of self-interest. You see how you can get on in the world. By stifling a few conscientious scruples, the thing can be done. You will not need to give up your profession—not at all. You will still profess to be on the Lord's side. But you are well aware that such a path will not admit of your being a spiritually-minded believer. Yet you choose it. What is the result? You become hardened and worldly. You "took the wrong turning," and every step leads you farther from God. You silenced conscience in order that self might have a hearing. But conscience cries out again—only, however, to be silenced again, until its voice is scarcely heard at all. The path becomes darker and darker. What is to be done? You would fain regain the favour of heaven, and yet keep in your self-chosen path. It cannot be done. There must be a return to the point *where the two roads branched off*. This may be humbling; and "painful the humbling may be." But there is no other way back to the path of communion.

We remember being told by a brother that he believed he knew the exact point in his Christian experience at which he "made his choice." He did not refer to his conversion. This "trial of faith"

happened many years after he had passed from death unto life. The world and Christ seemed to be bidding for his heart. He saw the way to wealth clear before him. But he also saw that if he was to follow that path, Christ must *take a second place*. He rejected the golden offers of the Tempter. He determined that he would have the smile of Christ, no matter at what cost. He is a poorer man to-day than he might have been, so far as silver and gold are concerned. But he has the Master's approval, and a heavenly peace that all the gold of earth could not purchase. We have no doubt that he would be reckoned a fool by the worldly-wise believer. But they that walk by sight "cannot see afar off"—they cannot see past the gold of earth—they cannot endure as seeing Him who is invisible. What a foolish man Abraham appeared when he allowed Lot to take his choice of the land! Why did the patriarch not "claim his rights," and at least propose share-and-share-alike? Because he *walked by faith*. He left the choosing of his portion with the "Possessor of heaven and earth." Yet, even from a worldly point of view, he waxed exceeding rich; while Lot was bereft of his earthly all. Truly they that grasp all, lose all; while they that commit their all to God shall find that *what is good* the Lord will give.

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WHEN thou shalt come to this, that tribulation shall be sweet unto thee for Christ, then think it well with thee; for thou hast found a paradise on earth.

LETTER.

DEAR Brother ———, You say you are in perplexity in reference to the all-important question of pointing out the way of life to a lost sinner. You ask, "How can a soul deal with God except by prayer?" and, in support of this, you quote Acts ii. 21, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Now, that passage from the Acts (also quoted in Rom. x. 13) is a stronghold of those who believe in *praying to be saved*. "Call upon the name of the Lord," they say, "and thou shalt be saved." But they seem entirely to forget the passage that says, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" (Rom. x. 14). That is to say, they cannot call on the Lord except they have believed. The passage in question, therefore, gives no warrant to tell a sinner to pray to be saved.

You ask, How can a soul deal with God except by prayer? I answer that an unregenerate sinner can deal with God only in one way, and that is by *believing*. That is the only avenue through which business can be done. God never commands us to tell the sinner to pray to be saved. What we have to do is to tell the sinner what God *has done* (see short article on the same subject in this month's *Sower*). Prayer comes in; but it is God's ambassador *praying the sinner* to be reconciled to God. "As though God did beseech you by us;" says Paul, "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20).

But why should we ask the sinner to pray? What is he to pray for? You say he is to pray that God will save him. But that means that God is not willing to save him; and it

implies that prayer will make Him willing! But God is already willing that all should be saved; and no amount of praying on the sinner's part can make Him more willing to save. If we set sinners to pray for salvation, we thereby cause them to look inward to the efficacy of their own prayers, instead of outward to what has been already done for them on the Cross. But why should we set sinners to pray in unbelief, when God says that without faith it is impossible to please Him? (Heb. xi. 6). What we have to do is to *preach Jesus*, so that the sinner will be pleased with *Him* and accept *Him*. Then God will be pleased with the sinner. Some preachers have such confused ideas of the Gospel that they are quite helpless in dealing with an awakened soul; and, to relieve themselves of responsibility, they tell the anxious soul to pray. But Paul did not tell the Jailor to pray (Acts xvi. 31); nor was the Ethiopian Eunuch told to pray (Acts viii. 37). We do not read that it is through prayer we are saved, but through faith (Eph. ii. 8). All that *believe* are justified (Acts xiii. 39). It is through *believing* that we have life in His name (Jno. xx. 31). "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing" (Rom. xv. 13)—not in praying to be saved. You need not be in any perplexity. Declare the good news. Tell the sinner what God has done, and beseech him to be reconciled. Many would like well if you set them to *do* something, even although it were only to pray; for then they might find some satisfaction in their frames and feelings. But God would have them find satisfaction nowhere but in Christ. "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (Jno. vi. 29).

Yours, &c.

FALSE DOCTRINES.

IF you have occasion to go any distance from home, you will not travel far until you fall in with divers strange doctrines abroad among the saints. Perhaps the doctrines have gained a footing, or it may be that they are only being brought before the saints for the first time. But, in either case, the thoughts of many are distracted; and Satan thus succeeds in occupying the mind with some new and fanciful interpretation of Scripture, while practical godliness is left very much a neglected subject. This is one great evil we see in the attempts that are so often made to foist strange doctrines upon the saints. Generally speaking, it is not difficult to show from Scripture where the *weak point* of a false doctrine lies; and perhaps to show its utterly unscriptural character. The great evil is this, that when some brother comes in with unsound views and expounds them to the saints, many are so distracted that they do not know what to think. Argument ensues, followed by strife and debate. The result is, that practical holiness is lost sight of, the *inner* work of the Lord ceases, and Satan has a victory, no matter whether the heresy is received or not. When new and unscriptural theories are propounded, it is therefore clear that a great point is gained if they are nipped in the bud; that is, if they are at once tested and shown to be worthless by "Thus saith the Lord."

Believers may take up with new

theories, while they have the best of intentions to be helpers of the saints. Nevertheless, new theories must be tested by the word, not only for the confounding of those that *preach* them, but for the instruction of those that *hear* them. It is being taught that "the blood of Christ went to corruption, just like any other blood." Now, what does any one seek to gain by such a statement? It has evidently *originated* with some sceptic who was wanting to show that there was nothing "precious" whatever in the blood of Christ. But what saith the Scripture? In Ps. xvi. 10 we find these words, "Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." This surely is sufficient to prevent any one from indulging in irreverent speculations as to the blood of Christ. But we are told that "the blood" is not mentioned in that passage we have quoted from the Psalms. Very well. Turn now to another Scripture, and you find the blood brought into direct *contrast* with "corruptible things." In 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, we have these words, "Ye were not redeemed with *corruptible* things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ." Yet, in the face of such a Scripture, men can talk of the blood of Christ as a corruptible thing! It is surely well for God's people not to seek to be wise above what is written. These are times when the enemy of false doctrine seems to be coming in like a flood; and it becomes us to be on our watchtower, lest we be led away from the simplicity that is in Christ. We are no

advocates of hair-splitting distinctions over doctrinal points. But when we see the very foundations of our most holy faith being assailed, we must speak.

Another idea abroad is this, that when we are told to present our bodies a living sacrifice (Rom. xii. 1), it does not mean *these* bodies, but a body that is inside of these bodies! It is wonderful to us how such speculations can find a hearing; and, if it was not that they are being inflicted upon the saints, we would not refer to them here. The thought of an inner and an outer body is evidently another way of propounding the heresy that the resurrection is past already (2 Tim. ii. 18). Those who hold this delusion maintain that they have now the resurrection body, and that the outer body is simply the shell in which the resurrection body is encased! Now, a single passage of Scripture would be sufficient to *disprove* any such assertion. "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. vi. 19). In other words, that body with which you once served sin is now to be yielded up to the service of God. The *same* body, mark you: not an *inner* body.

We could say more—much more; but we must content ourselves with the following reflections:

(1) Many of the smaller and out-of-the-way assemblies are but little visited by brethren able to minister the word. There is great need that they should be

visited, both to see how they are progressing in the divine life, and to help them in matters of difficulty, and in questions of new and pernicious doctrines, about which they may be exercised. Let God's servants take a note of this.

(2) Whether God's servants visit us often or not, let us hold fast by what is recorded in Scripture. Prove all things. While we avoid a captious and meddling spirit, let us be prepared, if need be, to contend for the faith.

(3) Let *practical godliness* be the great aim in the assembly. The power of God in our midst is a mighty safeguard against the inroads of evil doctrine. We have observed that where the heart is taken up with Christ, there is little inclination to take up with anything but the "healthful teaching." A healthy body has a natural tendency to *repel* disease. So is it with a body of believers who are right with God.

THREE MANIFESTATIONS.

1 Jno. iv. 9. Jno. xiv. 21. 1 Jno. iii. 2.

1. Christ manifested on the Cross.
2. Christ manifested to the Believer.
3. Christ manifested in coming Glory.

It is only those who know Him as manifested on the cross, that can know Him in His manifestations to the faithful heart. If we tread the path of obedience, we shall secure to ourselves a continued manifestation of His presence, begetting in us that "longing for home" which shall be satisfied only when He comes to take us to Himself.

ROOM FOR THE GIFT.

A BROTHER sends us a few supplementary thoughts on the passage referred to at foot of page 27 in February number: "a man's gift maketh room for him" (Prov. xviii. 16). Our correspondent admits that the passage may be applied to spiritual gift. Yet, as he points out, a man may be truly gifted of God, while there is no room for the gift. In the denominations a man's gift does *not* make room for him. Human arrangement effectually prevents the exercise of God's gift in the Spirit. This may be the case even where there is professedly room for Christ as Lord. If man's rule prevails in what professes to be a properly constituted assembly of believers, it will effectually interfere with the liberty of the Spirit, and so prevent development *there* of real gift from God. I judge that real gift will fail to assert itself, and suffer in silence, although it may take years for God's developments. I believe real gift is sensitive in a high degree; and that its exercise depends an immense deal upon the helping or hindering influences at work.

We may say that we are thoroughly at one with our brother. While we made reference to the passage in Prov. xviii. 16, that "a man's gift maketh room for him," we were careful to say that "in a company of believers where there is really room for Christ as Lord, there is also room for all the gifts that He has given." There can be no doubt that a

great amount of gift is lost to the church through, the Spirit being quenched by those who take a place for which the Lord has not fitted them. Some may wonder why the man of gift and unction does not *force* his way to the front, seeing that his gift entitles him to that place. But the reason is found in this, that true gift is a "sensitive plant," and shrinks from the touch of fleshly contention, preferring, as our brother points out, rather to suffer in silence than force the way where there is not an open door. True gift has no false humility that would hinder it from taking its proper place in the church. Yet it never makes a rush for the platform, or for any position of power and influence. If the people are determined to have Saul, and if Saul is determined to reign, David the Lord's anointed can bide his time. Saul stands before us as a type of fleshly rule; and at that time in Israel if you wanted to find the Lord's anointed, you need not look for him on the throne. But had you bent your steps towards the wilderness of Ziph, or the cave of Adullam, you would have found the anointed of the Lord, surrounded by a faithful few; for it was only the few to whom it was given to recognize the true king of Israel. But although conscious of his divine call and anointing, we never read of him forcing a single step in his path to the throne. Saul might hunt him like a partridge in the mountains; and one cut of David's sword (1 Sam. xxiv. 4)—one thrust of Abishai's spear (1 Sam. xxvi. 8), and the path to the

throne would have been open. Yet David waits. By no act of his, will he hasten the hour when Israel shall own his rule from Dan to Beersheba. As it was with the Lord's anointed then, so is it with the Lord's anointed now. May we have the spiritual discernment to recognise every true David, and to make room for whatever gift the Lord has given.

OH WHAT KINDNESS!

WHEN to Thee I was a stranger ;
 When I trod the path I chose ;
 When with Satan covenanted,
 Him to serve, and Thee oppose ;
 Oh what kindness,
 In my blindness,
 Thy love shows !

When a trembling sinner fearing,
 In my guilt and in my shame ;
 When Thy word itself condemned me,
 I sought shelter from the flame,
 With what mercy
 Thou received me
 In that Name !

When I now press onward, homeward,
 Thou dost cheer me with Thy smile ;
 When the way seems dark and gloomy,
 Thou dost light the "little while,"
 For me caring,
 Heavenward bearing
 Thine own child.

When with Thy dear, blood-bought children,
 Knowing Thee as I am known,
 When this mortal shall be changéd—
 When I stand before Thy throne,
 Oh what rapture,
 Without measure,
 Shall be shown !

W. T.

OFFENDER FOR A WORD.

THERE is such a thing as making a man an offender for a word (Isa. xxix. 21). Perhaps a brother, well-known to be sound in the faith, stands up to minister. But his searching message—his exhortations to a holy walk—are all unheeded ; and some unscriptural expression is singled out and dwelt upon, and talked over, as if the brother was a heretic of the most advanced type. Now, we are no advocates of carelessness in observing the form of sound words. At the same time we must say we have no sympathy with that fault-finding spirit that seems to be ever on the watch for a brother to put in a wrong word, and ready to make a "case" out of a slip of the tongue. Why so eagerly on the watch for a brother's halting? We very much question if you will ever find a truly godly and gracious brother given to this eager investigation of any slip one may make in the course of an address. If our spiritual life is at a low ebb, nothing is more natural than to divert attention from our own nakedness by pointing out some flaw in a brother's address. We thus appear as champions of God's truth and honour, while heart-backsliding is doing its deadly work in our own souls. Mistakes in an address may require to be spoken about, and evil doctrine must be dealt with. But the lowly walker with God will handle the matter wisely, and take the "more excellent" way of setting it right.

COLD-HEARTED SERVICE.

our work as servants of the Lord is to be acknowledged by Him at the judgment-seat, we must keep up a heart-acquaintance with Himself. A cold-hearted saint is of but little use in the vineyard. He may preach—yea, preach the word; but his preaching shall lack the arrestive power of the man who is filled with the Spirit, and who is speaking in the power of God. It is said, that in Siberia, owing to the intense frost, the milkmen deliver the milk in a frozen condition. And in ministering the word—the “sincere milk”—may we not do it in such a cold-hearted way that it needs to be thawed before it can be digested by saint or sinner? We must be in touch with the living Word, if we are to preach in living and melting power. But some may say, “This exhortation is not for me; for I never preach at all, let alone do it in a half-hearted way. I have so little gift, that I think it better to give place to more gifted brethren.” This, however, is right and proper, only so long as we do not forsake the place which the Lord has given *us* in the body. Gideon was nothing in his own sight; yet, at the call of God, he went forth and wrought a great victory in Israel, simply because God was with him. He made sure that he was *sent*. Are we sure *we* are “sent,” whatever our sphere of service may be? Is the fire burning in our hearts? Then, if so, our testimony shall be confirmed by signs following.

R. S.

SECOND EDITION

OF

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NOW READY.

WE wish to call special attention to this Edition. We have added *nine* new Leaflets to our Poetry list, making a variety of *fifteen* in the packet—all Poetry.

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We believe our circulation could very soon be doubled if *one* brother in each Assembly were to take up "The Treasury," secure subscribers' names, and attend to the handing out of the paper monthly. This is already done by not a few; and we need not say how much we esteem this little service. But there are many places that the paper has not yet reached, while in others the circulation is limited. Now, what we need is *one brother in each local centre* to take an interest in the circulation of "The Treasury." With an increase in our staff of such "helpers," we are satisfied that the ministry through these pages would soon reach a very large body of believers. Who will be "helpers"?

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THE Believer's Treasury.

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Vol. II.

PRACTICAL GODLINESS.

IF any one thing is clearer than another it is this—if God is to be honoured, if sinners are to be converted, if the truth is to be preserved, then the great subject of practical godliness among the saints must be proclaimed with no uncertain sound. It is written in the unchanging word: “Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord”(Ps. xciii. 5). That One to whom we profess to be separated is the *Holy One*. Are *we* holy ones? There is no use in trying to shelve the question. How much attention does this great subject get in our assemblies, and in our private intercourse with each other? There are certain commandments of the Lord which we insist must be obeyed. Do we with the same eagerness contend that there must be holiness of life? The Devil is quite willing that we strive earnestly for outward uniformity. He will allow us to waste our energies in discussion as to matters of detail. But it bodes ill for the success of his schemes when he sees believers *determined to live a holy life*, and drink daily of the *Spirit of Christ*. What is all our boasted obedience to the word of the Lord, if the world is not constrained

to say, “Yes, these people are going to heaven; their whole manner of life declares it”? We are thankful for the grace that is upon many of the children of God. Nevertheless, we are convinced that there was a time when holiness of life was far more truly the rule of life than it is to-day. We once had a brother pointed to us, and described as a separated believer, and “so fond of his Bible that he keeps it on his desk.” We were charmed. But years have passed away; and no Bible is to be seen on his desk now. Once upon a time brother So-and-so recoiled from the bare thought of worldly conformity. One aim and one Name seemed to rule in his heart. But the bright gold is dim now; and even the world's song and the world's company can be *enjoyed!* Things that were once condemned as unscriptural, are now indulged in as lawful; and many, getting bold through the general dearth of spiritual power, are to be found openly defending fleshly indulgence and worldly alliances. What is the result? It is this, that simple ones are being led away by the wiles of the Devil; worldliness is on the increase; God is not honoured in separation from evil; and the heavens in great measure are

shut up. Practical holiness of life, and devotion to the person of Christ, are subjects kept at the bottom of the list. Yet there is a seeming zeal for the truth. Outward appearances are rigorously kept up. The Bible is duly carried under the arm; the Lord is called "blessed" in the prayer meeting, and "the whole realm of nature" is declared too small for an offering (see Hymn Book). What next? Follow us up through the quiet walks of private life—follow us into the kitchen and the factory; listen to our conversation; mark our manner of life; and lo! perhaps it turns out that it was only a religious performance we went through in the prayer meeting; and "the whole realm of nature" was simply a fine poetic expression! What is wanted to overturn all this? A great revival of "*Holiness to the Lord.*" We must have done with dissimulation. We may deceive men, but we cannot deceive God. But why should we seek even to deceive men? Why not be real? If we are determined to be followers of the world—if we are determined to be ruled by its maxims, and charmed by its music, and captivated by its allurements, then surely the honest and straightforward way would be to pull down the signboard of our profession, and thus bring our *preaching* into agreement with our *practice*. "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings xviii. 21). If Christ is worth anything, He is worth everything. If it is a holy people He wants, then let us

answer: "Lord, by Thy grace, a holy people shall be Thine."

The Heads of thousands in Israel, in other words, leading brethren, are sometimes brought great distances to help in some church difficulty—generally in matters of doctrine. We have no fault to find with this. We believe it is right and proper; and, time after time, we have seen such meetings yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. But what a rare thing it is for leading brethren to be sent for to help in the discovery of the "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen"! (Job xxviii. 7). How rare it is for leading brethren to be called in to give light on the great question of how to live the overcoming life—how to walk with God, and keep the body under! We can pick up from letters and through other sources, that there is many a lonely believer left to wage an unequal conflict with the flesh and the Devil, while those who profess to care for his soul seem not even to have discovered his disease! The lines of truth most run upon are not fitted to grapple with the deadly evils to which we refer. Have we not been aiming too high? Is it not time that we were having at least one determined effort to raise the standard of personal holiness and purity of life to the standard of Scripture?

—♦—

A SUNBEAM has no power to shine if it be severed from the sun. Neither have we if parted from Christ.

JESTING AMONG SAINTS.

T is high time that a note of warning was sounded as to what seems to be a growing evil: we refer to *jesting among saints*. An aged brother once said: "We want more of the solemnity of eternity in our Gospel testimony." To this we give a cordial "Amen." But, if we are to go to the root of the matter, we would say: "We want more of the solemnity of eternity *in our private life*." It is simply lamentable to see believers who can be as solemn as eternity at the prayer meeting—perhaps taking part in it with seeming acceptance; and within one short hour they are indulging in jokes and witticisms. You are amazed. You have to look again, to make sure that it is the same brother who seemed *so* solemn in the prayer meeting! It is sad to think that some who can preach, apparently with great earnestness, are accomplished *mimics*; and no sooner are they clear of the atmosphere of the meeting than they seem to be *turned into other men*, and vie with the veriest worldling in jocularities and nonsense. There is a terrible unreality in such a state of things. Indeed it is no breach of charity to call it hypocrisy. Scripture plainly forbids jesting and foolish talking. They are declared to be not convenient, but rather the giving of thanks (Eph. v. 4). Scripture is as clear upon that subject as it is on the question of having fellowship with the unconverted. What right have we to contend for obedience to the

one command, while we deliberately transgress the other? We may seem to be great saints at the prayer meeting. But that does not tell what we really are. It is our behaviour *in private life* that tells what we are. Then, if our conversation *there* is not becoming the Gospel, is it not clear that our seeming solemnity at certain times is only a solemnity "put on" for the occasion? Let this practice of lightness and jocularities be taken into the presence of God and hewn in pieces—let the "solemnity of eternity" pervade our private life; and we believe that the Lord would soon come in, and work signs and wonders. But how can we expect the Lord to come in if we allow such abominations in His temple as jesting and foolish talking? How can we expect the Holy Spirit of God to work through a *jocular* Christian? The world has its "fools"—professional jokers—for the purpose of keeping the world in amusement. In the name of the Lord let us leave all that work to them. With the realities of heaven and hell and death and judgment before us, how dare we act the part of jesting saints? What a contradiction of terms!—for a saint is a "holy one." Then, as saith the Scripture, "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Pet. i. 15).

But not only does jesting waste our own spiritual energies: it robs us of our power in serving the Lord, and has such an effect upon others that they will not believe our testimony. Some can preach like an angel; but no sooner are they

down from the platform than they can joke like a worldling. What is the result? The result is that the preacher has no weight whatever. Even saints who laugh at his jokes are to be found saying: "He's far too light—he would be a fine brother if it was not for his lightness." But, then, nobody tells him this to his face; and thus he goes on under the delusion that his preaching is as acceptable as his jesting. But the saints are not blind. They can detect unreality, even although they themselves are in the same condemnation. Even worldlings measure a professing Christian very much by his sobriety of behaviour; and time after time we have heard it said of a professor—"He'll not do—he's far too light in his conversation." But surely we do not need to go to the worldling to be told how to walk, seeing we are so clearly exhorted in Scripture to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear (1 Pet. i. 17), and to let *no* corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth, but that which is *good* to the use of edifying, that it may *minister grace* unto the hearers (Eph. iv. 29). In Ecc. x. 1 we read that "dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour." We may have a reputation for godliness—we may be esteemed as "ministering brethren" in a humble way. But we may rest assured that lightness in private life will be such a dead fly in the apothecary's ointment, that it will spoil everything. We need

not excuse ourselves by saying: "This humorous vein is just *my way*, and I can't help it." It may be true that it is *my way*. But we want the *Lord's way* to take the place of *our way*. "Not I, but Christ," must be the motto. And surely if "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20), my speech shall be "alway with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. iv. 6), while I study to be sober, and watch unto prayer (1 Pet. iv. 7).

As to mixing up jocularities with the Lord's work, and using lightness in handling holy things, we are convinced that the consequences of such a practice can only be disastrous in the extreme. In some religious quarters it has become fashionable now to have "entertaining services" — boisterous and "happy" meetings—all which profess to be the outcome of joy in the Lord. Well, we believe in joy in the Lord: and we believe in happy meetings. But when there is manifest lightness in the handling of Scripture—when the world's weapons and the world's attractions are dragged in to make up an *entertainment* for the unconverted—when we find the flesh rejoicing in such an atmosphere, and saying it is a better entertainment than the music hall, we have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the Lord is not in that earthquake. He will not give His glory unto another. He reserves His honour for those who honour Him; and we know that He has said that we are to serve Him "acceptably, with *reverence* and *godly fear*" (Heb. xii. 28).

WHAT ARE THINGS COMING TO ?

DEVOTED brethren in the denominations are beginning to see that it is a hopeless task to attempt to "reform the church" as it is called. Worldliness is the order of the day. The world's sports are patronised; the world's theatre is declared to be good; and professed servants of Christ are even to be found playing their part in "church theatricals," in order to gratify the Adam nature, and keep a few worldlings laughing while they sit on the brink of a lost eternity. "I am going to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified," says one. Very good, as a profession. Yet, in a few days, you find him on the world's stage acting "in character." "Brink of a lost eternity!" says another professed minister of Christ: "there's no hell: that's all a myth." Yet that same clergyman is the "pastor" of a flourishing denomination; and professing saints sit under his ministry as if he were the oracle of God! Then the concert and the jovial company are patronised on Monday; and the same man is found preaching on Sunday, with a solemnity that would almost tempt you to think that he is not the same person!

The devoted remnant of God's people in the denominations hold up their hands in amazement, and ask where all this is to end. They cannot understand it. They know not what to do. But we think it is not difficult to understand it; neither is it hard to know what to do.

We are not surprised at these "glaring inconsistencies" in the denominations. We look for nothing else. We are not warranted to expect anything else. When will God's people in the denominations awake up to see that such is no place for them? They sigh and they cry for the desolations of the professing church; but they seem not to hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Unto them the words of the Lord to Samuel may well be applied: "How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?" (1 Sam. xvi. 1). Every new invention by the religious world for feeding the flesh, seems to us to be another call of God, to all whom it may concern, to leave the world and its Christless religion, and gather to the one great centre, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Some express their astonishment at the abounding worldliness of the religious world, and the infidelity of its religious teachers. But what surprises us is, that any child of God is found to give such things his patronage. The world will have its songs, and its concerts, and its theatricals, *and* its little bit of religious performance on Sunday to soothe its conscience. But what have God's people to do with such unhallowed combinations? Does not the Lord say, "Let My saints be gathered together unto Me"? Praise His name, some, at least, are responding to the call. The truth is having its effect. The New-Testament order of church life is being sought after. The traditions of men are having less

weight than ever, at least with souls who have learned to tremble at the word. Ones and twos are arising here and there to gather with Christ, instead of gathering with the enemies of the cross. Let us hail with joy every token of a return to the simplicity of New-Testament Christianity. Let us give thanks for even the slightest fulfilment of that wonderful prayer of our Lord in Jno. xvii. 21—"that they all may be one."

NEW LIFE.

SHORTLY after the great storm that swept over these parts a few years ago, I was travelling on foot down the vale of Girvan. It was early spring, and there was not a breath of wind. Yet I could hear the sound of falling leaves. Commonplace things often teach great truths; and I soon saw a great truth brought before me, as one after another of these withered leaves fell to the ground. The great storm had uprooted many a giant of the forest, and yet had failed to make these old leaves relinquish their hold. But I saw a new power at work—a power that was quietly and effectually doing what all the storms of winter could not do. The budding of *new life*—a power from *within*—was throwing off the withered leaves of the old year. The buds of spring were making room for themselves; and the old leaves were dropping off without an effort. Even so shall the more abundant life of John x. 10 make

room for itself in the believer's heart. If this abundant life is yours, the withered leaves of the old creation shall drop off themselves. You may hammer believers with truth—you may shake them as with the east wind; but it will have only a meagre effect if the abundant life of the Son of God be not reigning in the soul. The grave-clothes of the world will refuse to fall—worldliness will not be forsaken—self will not be denied. But the very thing that could not be done by power from *without* shall be accomplished by power from *within*—calmly, quietly, effectively. Before the advancing power of new and abundant life, the relics of the old creation shall be found falling off on every side.—(*Jotting from Address to Believers*).

WHATSOEVER.

IF I sing, I must sing with grace in my heart to the Lord (Col. iii. 16). If I speak, I must let my speech be "always with grace" (Col. iv. 6). In my walk I must "walk in wisdom toward them that are without" (Col. iv. 5). In fact, the Lord takes in my every action by the word, "*Whatsoever* ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him" (Col. iii. 17).

W. T.

If you are not warming the world, the world is chilling you.

BAPTISM GAINING GROUND.

HE subject of Believers' Baptism is coming up in various quarters. Many of God's people are being exercised about this ordinance; and not a few have been immersed. As was to be expected, some uneasiness has been caused in quarters where infant sprinkling is practised. Numbers of the clergy are getting alarmed. We are not surprised at this. The simple truth is, that every believer's baptism is virtually another blow to infant sprinkling. Every believer who obeys the word of the Lord in being baptized, virtually pours contempt upon the ceremony of sprinkling an infant. The clergy see this; and they also see that if this doctrine is going to gain ground, they are almost certain to lose some of the best members of their congregations. What is to be done? Various measures are being adopted. In some cases the doctrine of Believers' Baptism is being opposed; and to be immersed is considered so serious an offence as to require excommunication from the "eldership." In other cases, the clergy are offering to immerse believers or sprinkle infants, according as may be desired! This, to some, may seem very accommodating; yet to us it betrays a lamentable lack of principle. We can understand those who boldly advocate infant sprinkling, and refuse to recognise believers' immersion. But we cannot understand the man who is ready to sprinkle an infant to-day and immerse a believer to-morrow. Scripture never

warrants such pandering to the popular taste. Moreover we believe that such looseness will defeat its own end; for believers who have followed the Lord in baptism can hardly be expected to remain where the unscriptural ceremony of infant sprinkling is being continually enacted before their eyes. Besides all this, *one truth obeyed* paves the way for obedience to another truth. And thus it is that obedience to baptism so often leads to a *coming out unto the Lord*, and a separation from all that is not of Him.

But Baptism should do more than "lead the way." We hold that the ordinance is perhaps *the most striking picture we can get of separation unto God!* It tells of death to sin and the world. It proclaims burial and resurrection. No provision is left for the flesh. When you pass through the waters of baptism, do you not thereby say, in language more forcible than words: "I have died with Christ—I am buried with Christ—I am raised with Christ"? What do these symbolic waters mean? They mean that God has for ever separated you from the Egypt world. The waters of baptism are between you and the world. Your rising up out of these waters was a virtual profession that you are on resurrection ground—separated unto God! Such, we are convinced, are the main features in Believers' Baptism. Is such the separation with which our baptism has been associated? Believers' Baptism and separation unto God are bound up together; and it becomes us to see that its separating character is duly set forth.

We were recently handed a pamphlet advocating Believers' baptism; but, although agreeing with it in the main, we were constrained to say, "Save us from our friends." The writer says: "You may be baptized and remain beneath any church government you please"! Now, Scripture never gives any license for such a thing. What about a so-called church in which the friends and enemies of Christ are mixed up together at the Communion Table? What does God say to you concerning such a church? He says to you, baptized or not baptized, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." And if you go and get baptized, no one can give you liberty to go back to that system of religion which is opposed to the revealed Scriptures of truth. You may go back—that is, it is in your power to go back. But you will thereby deny that separation of which in your baptism you made such a solemn profession!

A TEST OF GRACE.

A BROTHER once gave us a very good test of grace. "If," said he, "you have occasion to tell a man about his faults, and find that there is no 'dryness' the next time you meet him, you may be sure he is growing in grace. I had a plain talk with brother — not long ago, and showed him where he was wrong. The next time I met him, he was as cordial as ever I found him. It was a strong evidence to me that he was growing in grace."

NOT ABIDING.

WHEN overcome by some dart of the wicked One, we often say to ourselves: "Not watching—that is the explanation of the failure." This may be true in a measure. But is not the real explanation more often this: "I was not *abiding*"? It is the hardest task in the world to watch against temptation if we are not abiding in the Lord. When out of communion with Him, is it not the case that we are tripped up at every turn, and lose our balance over trifles? We lay the blame on others. "Circumstances were against us," we say: "flesh and blood could not stand it;" and so on. Yet, when the storm is over, and we retire into the presence of the Lord, we find out the true explanation of our failure—we had been following Him afar off. More watchfulness may be needed. But there is a higher need—the need of something without which it will be impossible to watch. There is the need for dwelling in the presence of the Lord—so occupied with Him, so satisfied with Him, that to old temptations we shall be able to say, "What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard *Him*, and observed *Him*" (Hos. xiv. 8).

—♦—♦—♦—
YE ARE THE LIGHT.—If the light of heaven be not in some way manifest in the life, it is not uncharitable to say that it has no existence in that professor.

—♦—♦—♦—
GREAT PRAISE.—The greatest praise you can bestow on the religion of Jesus Christ, is to practise it.

THE BETTER PART.

LUKE X. 39.

 NOW would sing of that which makes
My life with bliss replete :
'Tis this—" My spirit often takes
Its place at Jesus' feet."

His tender voice my spirit thrills,
His grace my need doth meet,
My cup He to o'erflowing fills,
When sitting at His feet.

His love so great I freely know,
His praise my lips repeat ;
O it is heaven here below
To sit at Jesus' feet.

To hear His word—to learn His will
And do it, is my meat ;
His yoke is light and easy still,
When sitting at His feet.

When cares and trials press me sore,
And storms against me beat,
O may they drive me more and more
To my Redeemer's feet.

Martha at Bethany served the Lord—
Lazarus did with Him eat,
But *she* the ointment on Him pour'd,
Whose place was at His feet.

My *body* serves Him thus each day,
My *soul* with Him doth eat,
In measure only as I stay
In *spirit* at His feet.

My "box of ointment" there I break—
To Him a perfume sweet ;
My earthly glory all I take
To wipe my Master's feet.

The little lark which mounts so high
To warble forth so sweet
Its worship-anthem in the sky,
Builds low among our feet.

So, high above the world they soar
And, at the mercy-seat,
In holy rapture God adore,
Who dwell at Jesus' feet.

When burdened with my load of sin
I did to Him retreat,
He raised me up, and took me in,
When *weeping* at His feet.

And all along my homeward way,
Though many foes I meet,
My sweetest joy from day to day
Is *sitting* at His feet.

And when His lovely face I see
'Mid heaven's bliss complete,
My everlasting joy shall be
To *worship* at His feet.

And thus my portion here shall be
In heaven my portion sweet ;
For there to all eternity
I'll be at Jesus' feet.

O that I may each fleeting day
Still prize this blissful seat,
Till He shall come, and I can stray
No longer from His feet !

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

WHY WE GATHERED TOGETHER.

 E had been some years converted,
when we discovered that God's
people should be *together*. We
were scattered among what is called
"the denominations." One brother went
one way, another went another way, and
a third a third way. Now, it was clear to
us that if we were all instructed by the
same Book and taught by the same
Spirit, we would all be taught the same
thing. Even the heaven-born instinct in
our souls told us we should be together ;

for what more natural than for members of *one family* to be at *the same table*? On Lord's-day morning we *came together* for prayer at a certain hour; and, two hours afterwards, we *scattered* for worship. "Something very strange here," we said to ourselves. "If it is right for us to be together for prayer, why should we not be together for worship?" Yet, by general consent, we turned our backs on each other the moment certain bells began to ring! How strange it looked! The Lord brought us *together* to prayer: we were all clear on that point. Then, did the Lord teach us to turn our backs on each other when the hour of worship came? Never! His word revealed something altogether different. We searched; and we found. And what did we find? We found that all that believed were *together* (Acts ii. 44). That was a discovery. But why should any one be surprised that the members of one family should be found together? Then, again, it is written, "Gather My saints *together* unto Me" (Ps. l. 5); and, again, it is in the midst of the *gathered* two or three that the Lord has promised to be (Matt. xviii. 20). We found that the Lord's approving presence was always in connection with *gathering* together—never with *scattering* from each other. But what did we do when we made this discovery? We simply *acted out* what we found written in the Scriptures. Seeing that, in accordance with the word, we found it so blessed to be together for prayer, we just *remained together*. We were convinced that *the*

Lord did not scatter us—indeed we saw that this was utterly opposed to the teaching of the revealed word. Therefore we *gathered* together, simply in the *one great Name* of our Lord Jesus Christ. The result was that every man-devised name was disowned at once; for you know that Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Heb. xi. 24). In like manner we refused all names but the names by which God hath called us. Were we Established-church-men? No. Were we Free-church-men? Independents? Wesleyans? Baptists? No. For the simple reason that the Lord had never called us by such names. We had no authority from Scripture to take the name of any man or denomination. We had no more authority to take any such name than a woman has to take a different name from what her husband has given her. We are called after one, truly; but that One is *Christ*. We are Christ's ones—*Christians*. That is the *body* we belong to. We own no other body. We want no other name to which to gather than the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. How simple and beautiful we found the *gathering* to be! Others—undoubted children of God—may fail to respond to the call to gather unto Christ. Yet the great truth remains, that "*Unto Him* shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. xlix. 10). And they who thus gather shall find His promise fulfilled, and be able to say:

"Simply as disciples gathered
In His name, the Lord is here."

APOSTLES RESTORED.

CONCERNING strange doctrines it may truly be said: "Still they come." It may seem strange how they find their way among the saints. But we believe we are safe in saying that they always appear in good company. That is to say, the man who comes with some false doctrine is almost certain to give you a fair proportion of doctrine that you are sure to agree with. Yonder is a poster up on the wall, saying that an address is to be delivered in such a place on "The Coming of the Lord." "Fine subject," says the young convert; "I must hear it." And off he goes, without staying to ask the question: "What men are these that are to give this address?" He goes; he hears; and he comes away highly pleased; for really there was nothing brought forward that the most orthodox could have called in question. The Coming of the Lord was shown from Scripture; His glorious reign was depicted; and the exhortation was given to be ready for His return. The young convert is quite "carried away" with such "fine truth." He is invited back. He goes. This time he is taken some little way into the mysteries of the new faith. He is asked to believe that "apostles have been restored," and that their voice is law. He enquires into the foundations of this new faith; and he finds that it rests upon the great Papal heresy that the moment an infant is sprinkled, that moment it is born again! The young convert's suspicions

are aroused. This new faith requires him to pour contempt on his own conversion; for all that the "apostles" want to be assured of is the fact that you were sprinkled as an infant. The young convert demands Scripture for the claims that are put forth. But no Scripture is forthcoming; and, with "that lesson" learned, he finds his way back to his own company, determined to be more wary in future how he runs at the beck and call of any who choose to call themselves the ambassadors of heaven. We are giving no fancy picture: we are drawing from the life. The vendors of strange doctrine know well that they can make no headway unless they preach a sufficient quantity of sound doctrine to draw the people. Thus heresies are often scattered broadcast by being sent forth in company with the most precious truths. Therefore, let us give due weight to the exhortation: "Take heed what ye hear" (Mark iv. 24).

We lately fell in with a member of the "faith" to which we have been referring. He was endeavouring to propound the theory that apostles have been restored, and asked the question, "Has not God given us apostles?" "Yes," we answered, "we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph. ii. 20). But where is the foundation of a house? It is below the ground; it is out of sight: *and so are the apostles.*" Our friend did not care for this appeal to Scripture. Indeed there is nothing more distasteful to the advocates of unscriptural systems than an appeal to what is written.

Certainly the theory that "apostles have been restored" has not a single particle of Scripture to support it. On the contrary, we find the church of Ephesus commended by the Lord in these words: "And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. ii. 2).

The disciples of the new faith have two great foundation doctrines on which their whole fabric is built. Yet, strange to say, neither of these foundation doctrines is to be found in the Scriptures. One of them is the doctrine, "Apostles have been restored," which we have just seen to be utterly unsupported by Scripture. Indeed any company of men could set themselves forth as "apostles" with as much Scripture warrant as the apostolic leaders. That is to say, neither the one nor the other have the slightest Scripture to support their claim.

The other foundation doctrine is the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, which teaches that an unconscious infant is born again the moment a few drops of water are sprinkled on its face! Again, we ask, where is the Scripture for such a doctrine? There is none. There is not a single instance in God's word of an infant being baptized. Yet the apostolic teachers make infant sprinkling a foundation doctrine! This makes the whole matter very simple. A believer who trembles at the Word will try the spirits whether they are of God (1 Jno. iv. 1). If he is asked to believe in new apostles, he will say, "I must have Scripture for

their assumptions." If he is told that infant sprinkling is the means of the new birth, he will demand Scripture proof—a proof which cannot be found, seeing God has said already that we are born again by the *word of God* (1 Pet. i. 23)—not by the water of infant sprinkling.

CONSIDER HIM.

HEB. XII. 3.

ONSIDER Him, His lowly birth—
The Mighty God to stoop so low!
He who created heaven and earth—
His holy head in death to bow!

Consider Him, the Patient One,
Who trod earth's weary, rugged road,
And murmured not—Jehovah's Son—
To bear away sin's awful load!

Consider Him, who left the Throne—
Its dignity and majesty,
Then see Him agonize and groan,
Prostrated in Gethsemane!

Consider Him, who bowed so low,
On Calvary's Cross to hang for me—
To bear my load of guilt and woe,
That I from death might ransomed be.

Consider Him, the Risen One,
The Conqueror over Death and Hell,
Redemption's mighty work is done:
With thee, my soul, 'tis ever well.

Consider Him, who soon shall come
To bear His blood-bought Bride away,
To share the glories of His Throne
Throughout a never-ending day!

JARROW.

THE TRUTH OPPOSED.

WHEN you leave one denomination and go to another, the religious world does not seem to be displeased at all. But if you leave a denomination and come "outside the camp" to the Name of the rejected Lord Jesus Christ, immediately there is a storm of opposition. The religious world is up in arms in a moment—at least in many quarters. Even ordinary toleration is not accorded to those who take Scripture as their only standard in the matter of how God should be worshipped. Every sect is allowed to live; but if you disown every name except the name of Christ, and refuse to worship in company with the dead, the religious world looks down upon you at once. You may leave one denomination and join another, to sit under an unconverted preacher—that is, a servant of the Devil; and the religious world finds no fault whatever. You are patted on the back, and considered "respectable." But if, instead of going to sit under an unconverted clergyman, you gather with God's saints according to the teaching of Scripture, you are at once looked upon as one who has seriously departed from the faith; and strenuous efforts are made to dissuade you from — from what? From obeying the Lord, and carrying out those things that are most clearly revealed in His word! But this is not to be wondered at; for the world loves its own; and the more clearly a thing is according to Scripture, the more deter-

minedly will the religious world oppose it. Therefore, let no enquiring soul be discouraged by persecution even at the hands of those who profess to be converted to God. If they come to us *with an open Bible*, and point out from the Scriptures of truth where we are wrong and where they are right, we are quite willing to get light on the subject. But if they can appeal only to the traditions of men and the customs of the religious world, then we must obey God rather than men.

"REVIVE ME."



ALACK of power in the assembly will often draw forth the cry from God's saints: "Revive us again." Perhaps it is repeated Lord's-day after Lord's-day, and meeting after meeting. Yet we see no answer to our cry. How is it? Because it is always *us* we want the revival to come down upon, and not upon *me*. Before there can be "an assembly revival" there must be "an individual revival." If we really wish to see a revival in our midst, let us search our hearts individually, and let the cry to God be, "Revive *me* again;" and we have no fear but that "an assembly revival" will soon follow.

W. T.

COVET not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have that which may deprive thee of inward liberty, and gender to a spirit of bondage that shall undermine thy joy.

EVERY MAN HIS PRICE.

WE have heard it said that "every man has his price." That is to say, every man can be bought, if you pay a sufficient price to secure his favour. This may be true of *the world*; but what can we say of the professing *Christian* who is ready to be knocked down to the highest bidder? We question his Christianity. He may make as loud a profession as he pleases; but if he is a man who can be bought up by gold or flattery, all we can say is, that it is a pity he professes. But such men are of very little weight in the kingdom. Men who can be bought are not worth buying; and men who are worth buying cannot be bought. These faithful ones are proof against all the seductions of flattery. A great man's patronage has no weight with them. They do not know what it is to have men's persons in admiration, because of advantage (Jude 16). Through bowing down to Haman, they might draw more money over the counter. But they will rather sit at the king's gate with the despised Mordecai, than be arrayed in purple through making obeisance to the Agagite (Esth. iii. 5). We pity the man who "came out" to the Name of the Lord because he saw that it would help him in his business. We do not know whether he attained his end or not. If so, verily he had his reward. But we know that the brother who shut up his shop at an early hour on Saturday night, and preached the Gospel on his own

pavement, was no loser, even in earthly things. "Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Sam. ii. 30).

A LITTLE HONOUR.

SOME men can be "bought up" with money. To others, money is no temptation; and if they are to be bought, it must be with something else. A little *honour* has bought up tens of thousands. There are some men who only require to be fawned upon, and made a deal of; and they are ready to second you in any scheme you take in hand. Absalom was a master-hand at flattery; and, as a result of his flattery, we find Israel running after him like a lot of silly sheep. Absalom and his followers have their representatives to-day. Let us see that we are neither found doing his work, nor caught in his snare. In the battle in which Absalom fell, we read that "the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured" (2 Sam. xviii. 8). In like manner we may say that far more saints have been devoured by the wiles of the flatterer than by the open attacks of the Devil. Let us habitually dwell in the presence of the heart-searching One; and then it shall be true of us, "In vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird" (Prov. i. 17).

—♦—
 WHAT is more quiet than a single eye? and who more free than he that desireth nothing upon earth?

HIDDEN TREASURE.

IF God's people were only half as earnest in seeking for heavenly treasure, as the world is in seeking for earthly treasure, what a wealthy people we would be! If the natural man is in earnest in *his* search, should we be any less earnest in *ours*? Yea, should we not be even *more* diligent in digging deep for these precious jewels—"The fear of the Lord," and "The knowledge of God"! In such a search, success is certain. It is not so with the worldling. He may spend a fortune in digging for treasure in the bowels of the earth; and yet spend his strength for nought, and lose every penny. But it is not so in spiritual mining; for God Himself declares that the diligent seeker shall be rewarded. All that is needed is to fulfil the conditions, and the treasure is ours! But what are the conditions? Prov. ii. 3, 4 gives the answer: "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures." "*Then,*" says verse 5, "shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and *find* the knowledge of God." Paul esteemed the costliest things of earth as mere "dross" and "dung" compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord (Phil. iii. 8). *Every treasure* of wisdom and knowledge for the believer is hidden in Christ (Col. ii. 3). But no treasure is so deeply hidden that the Spirit of God cannot search it out; "for the Spirit

searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor. ii 10); and He alone is the mighty Revealer of that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard (ver. 9); for as no man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God (verse 11). "He shall receive of Mine and show it unto you" (Jno. xvi. 14).

J. E. M.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER

From one of the Lord's Labourers.

I WAS reading Jeremiah xv. this morning; and I noticed how he allowed his sufferings for the Truth's sake to get him out of the Lord's presence, and to murmur and complain (ver. 15-18). I doubt not that you have felt the same tendency, for "the same afflictions" are accomplished in all, more or less. But, praise His name, the same grace that He showed to Jeremiah is still shown to all that eat His word and suffer for His sake. There can be no real eating apart from reproach. Joy there will be; for His word is "sweeter than honey," and all who eat it rejoice in it "as one that findeth great spoil." But the reproach must follow; for all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Yet there is no need to murmur. We ought rather to rejoice the more, as the disciples did in early days—"rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name" (Acts v. 41). I fear there is not much of this joy in these days.

J. C.

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LOVE OF MONEY.

T is a somewhat remarkable thing that covetousness, or love of money, seems never to have been a besetting sin of any of the eminent saints of Scripture. The mighty men of God's book had their faults. Some of them fell grievously. But it is significant that none of them fell through love of money. God seems to have branded that particular sin with an abhorrence that may well make us pause and ask the question: Do we brand it with a like abhorrence? —In the assemblies of the saints, is covetousness held up to the loathing and contempt with which it is ever viewed in Scripture? Drunkenness and certain glaring sins are hunted down as utterly inconsistent with the Christian character. And we say, "Amen: let them be hunted down." But why should covetousness be granted a reprieve? Why should grasping, money-loving Christianity be allowed to walk at large, and profess, and preach, and pray, as if it were the most beautiful thing on the face of the earth? We must wake up to this, that God abhors covetous Christianity; and we must abhor it too. Scripture plainly declares that the love

of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim. vi. 10, R.V.). Scripture also plainly declares that covetousness is idolatry (Col. iii. 5). In other words, it dethrones Christ, and is as really a worshipping of the golden calf as was the idolatry of Israel of old (Ex. xxxii. 4). We know that our Lord uttered a special warning against covetousness (Lu. xii. 15). It is never satisfied. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver" (Ecc. v. 10). He must needs have gold; and, even then, his eye is not satisfied with riches" (Ecc. iv. 8). Covetousness so engrosses the heart, and warps the judgment, that wherever it is nourished, a judicial blindness seems to fall on its unhappy victim. He fancies he is the last man on earth to whom the charge of covetousness can be laid. He looks at a sixpence through a magnifying glass; and while the brother in poor circumstances next door can hand out half-a-crown as an offering to the Lord, covetousness can see only the length of a three-penny-piece, and reckons it a very large sum indeed! Yet a flourishing profession is kept up, and outward sins are denounced as heinous. But there is an inward sin no less heinous; and that sin is *covetousness*.

But let us turn to the sacred History, and see what hints we can gather as to covetousness. God's faithful ones seem to have been as far above it as the heavens are above the earth. However deep they might fall, none of them fell into that pit. We know where Abraham departed from the Lord; but covetousness had no connection with his failures. On the contrary, while the covetous eye of Lot is measuring the well-watered plain of Jordan, the man of faith lets him have his choice, and retires to the quiet seclusion of Mamre's grove. Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips; but we never read that he coveted any man's silver or gold. David fell, but not through love of money. We never read of money-love in connection with Joseph, or Samuel, or Joshua, or Gideon. In short, you search in vain throughout the sacred page for any association between God's mighty men and covetousness.

Here, again, is another remarkable thing about covetousness: While we find God's saints recovered out of various snares of the Devil, we do not at the moment recollect a single instance of a lover of money being delivered from that terrible snare. We know that nothing is too hard for the Lord. But what we say is this, that, so far as Bible history is concerned, we find, in the case of every decided lover of money, that his sun goes down in obscurity! Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, perishes among the enemies of the Lord (Josh. xiii. 22). Gehazi covets Naaman's gold, and inherits Naaman's leprosy

(2 Kings v. 27). Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard, and in due time reaps his reward (1 Kings xxi. 2, 19). We never read of the restoration of Demas (2 Tim. iv. 10); and as for the young man of Matt. xix. 22, Scripture leaves him as it finds him. But, towering above all these, is the case of him whom Scripture calls "the traitor" (Lu. vi. 16), and who, for thirty pieces of silver, betrayed the Son of God! Trace up covetousness, wherever you see it in the sacred page, and you find it will end in darkness and gloom. No ray of heavenly light seems to have fallen on the dark, benighted souls of those whom the sacred history marks out as lovers of money! Their sun sets cheerless—hopeless. What a beacon of warning to us who have taken heaven and earth to witness that our treasure is up yonder with the absent One! In the face of such revelations from the page of Scripture, it surely becomes us to search ourselves in the presence of God, and ask the question: "O Lord, is there any love of money about *me*?" Let us drag the accursed thing to the light. Let it have no quarter. Hew it in pieces. Stamp it out. Why should "idolatry" reign in God's temple? It is impossible to over-estimate the withering influences of this sin. And we must remember that it may exist and flourish, although we have very little earthly substance. You may be a lover of money, and yet have very little of it. And you may be a man of means, and yet free from covetousness. But whether we possess much

or little, the question is simply this: Do I hold my money as the Lord's steward, and at His call? We may flatter ourselves that *we*, at any rate, are no lovers of money. But apply the test. Is it a painful experience when we are called upon to part with any of our money? We see a case of need—some brother or sister, or perhaps one of the Lord's servants. What an opportunity to minister to Christ in the person of one of His members! Yet, with a reluctant hand we deal out a miserable fraction of what we could give, with ease! And we grumble at these "incessant calls" on our purse. Yet we think it simply ridiculous for any one to call *us* lovers of money! May the Lord visit us with a revival that will dry up even the secret springs of covetousness. We read (1 Kings x. 21), that silver was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon (type of the millennial reign). And we are convinced that something better than *copper* will be going; yea, *silver* shall be nothing accounted of, if Solomon's Lord is reigning in millennial power in the churches.

MEN WITH CONVICTIONS.

WHEN an assembly of believers is in any special difficulty, the brother must have a wise and a firm hand who would attempt to pilot the saints into the waters of peace and prosperity. He must have clear convictions as to what the mind of the

Lord is; and he must have the firmness and courage to act out these convictions. When a ship is on a dangerous coast, what good can a man at the helm do, if he is not sure in what direction to steer? He must know what he is doing; and he must have the nerve to do it. So is it in the history of many a church of Christ. Difficulties arise; and some brother rushes to the helm, professedly to save the ship. But the saints do not know in what direction he is steering, for the simple reason that he does not seem to know that himself. He has no convictions; and therefore he convinces nobody. He appears to have but little confidence in his own remedies; and it need not be surprising if the saints have as little. A trembling hand is of no use at the helm, when the ship is in dangerous waters. Half measures have never been a blessing to the church. If we are to be helped in trying times, it can only be by men of God, who have convictions and dare to make them known. Some are very bold when boldness is not needed. But these brethren disappear whenever the cry is heard, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Others evidently make up their minds to be on the side of whatever happens to be *successful*. Therefore they don't declare their convictions till they see in what direction the popular tide is going to set in. But it is altogether different with those who have but *one purpose*—viz., *to please the Lord*. It matters but little to them how the popular tide ebbs and flows.

SEARCHING FOR TREASURE.

THE world is straining every nerve, and leaving no stone unturned, in the search for treasure. The snort of that engine—the glare of yonder smelting furnace on the midnight sky, tell us that man is eagerly seeking wealth. Ah, beloved, what a rebuke this is to us! Have we realised the Master's words, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"? (Luke xvi. 8). *Christ* is our world. In Him are *hid* all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. ii. 3). Elsewhere we read that He of God is "made unto us *wisdom*" (1 Cor. i. 30). But it is hidden wisdom (1 Cor. ii. 7); and that which is hid must be searched for. Do we search the Scriptures diligently, that we may learn *Christ*? Paul did this; and that is how he was able to say, "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. vi. 10). In order to possess, we must search. Many read, but few *search* the Scriptures. In grace, as in nature, "he becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. x. 4). "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter" (Prov. xxv. 2). This honour had the Bereans, for it is written that they were more noble than those in Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily (Acts xvii. 11). What sorrow and trouble would we escape, if our delight were in the green pastures of the Word! Thus we should dwell in the sanctuary, and behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in His temple. Thus dwelling, surely the two sad ones of Luke xxiv. would have hailed the Saviour gladly as the Lamb

led to the slaughter of Isaiah liii. But it was otherwise; for they had to suffer that searching rebuke, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" Beloved, let us give ear to the words of the wise: "My son, if thou wilt receive My words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. ii. 1-5).

T. A.

THE FEAST OF REMEMBRANCE.

BY Thy mercy, Oh our Saviour,
And the fulness of Thy grace,
We, once wand'ers from Thy presence,
At this Table have a place.

By Thyself we are invited
To this sweet Memorial Feast,
Boldness in Thy presence claiming
Through Thyself, our great High Priest.

To Thy precious name be glory;
All our sins were laid on Thee:
Thou, the sinners' Friend and Saviour—
Thou didst die, and we are free.

Free, O Lord, from condemnation,
For Thy word is ever sure,
On the Rock—the sure Foundation—
We are resting now secure.

Lord, may we be found confiding
Ever in Thyself alone—
Ever in Thy love abiding,
Till Thou come to take us home.

A. H. D.

GOD'S ORDER OF WORSHIP.

IN certain quarters the service of the sanctuary must go on without a pause—"the machinery must be kept in motion," as the phrase goes. Such a thing as a period of silence, to see how the Spirit might lead, would be out of the question. Many of us profess to have been delivered from these things; but we must take care that we are not still possessed by the old idea that everything must be kept in motion. If the meeting on Lord's-day, or the Prayer meeting, is not going on "briskly," some are apt to think that everything is wrong. They fancy that the meeting should go on with the regularity of a machine—prayer and hymn, prayer and hymn, and so on. Anything like an extra-long pause makes them uncomfortable. Now, it is quite true that silence in a meeting may be the silence of barrenness; but it may be the silence of the Lord's manifested presence—the silence of true communion. And, besides this, our enjoyment of these silent moments depends very much on the condition of our own soul. If our meditation of Him is sweet, we will not be made uncomfortable by a period of silence—a little time in which no voice is heard save the voice of God. In connection with this subject, we must remember that *the flesh* can never wait upon God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be (Rom. viii. 7). This is why the unconverted do not care for meetings where

there is any waiting upon God. What is suited to their taste is a religious service that goes on without a pause. But take them into a meeting where God is worshipped according to truth, and where there is room for the Spirit to act as He pleases; and you need not wonder if you hear the world saying, "We can't stand this silence." And what is true of the unconverted in this respect, is also true of the child of God who is not walking in the Spirit. A carnal believer cares not for a prolonged pause in the presence of the Lord, although the believer sitting next him may find it one of those "sweet moments rich in blessing," of which we sometimes sing.

If there *is* evidently a scarcity of living water—if the chariot drags its way heavily along—don't let us think we will put things right by taking a pattern from the religious world, and introducing a systematic way of keeping things going. The Lord has already given us a pattern; and there is nothing wrong with His pattern. Indeed, there is this vast difference between God's system of worship and the world's systems of worship: In the world's systems of religion, the whole service can be carried out with the greatest of ease by the *unconverted*. Yea, although from the clergyman downwards there is not a single born-again soul in the congregation, yet the whole "worship" can be performed *successfully!* Now, take God's system of worship. Turn to the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles to

the Corinthians, and go into that congregation and say: "Let God be worshipped according to His own pattern." What is the result? The result is, that the whole thing turns out a complete failure. Introduce the Scriptural form of worship into the world's sanctuary, and the new wine would burst the old bottles at once. The world would turn round and say, "We won't have this order of things;" and either the world would not be there, or God's order of worship would not be there. The Philistines need not try to keep possession of God's ark: it will only be to their own confusion if they do (1 Sam. v.). And the ark of His truth can only be kept by those who are *alive from the dead, and in priestly communion with Himself*. We do not wonder that some have "given up" the Scriptural order of worship, and gone back to the beggarly elements. Man's order of worship can be carried out, no matter what condition of soul you are in. But this is not the case with God's order. Holiness becomes His house. If we fancy that we can live as we please, and do as we please, and yet carry out the order of His house, we shall find ourselves the most helpless people in the world. Why is this? Simply because God will not be mocked. He must have reality. Let the divine order be carried out in divine power; and it will be true of us as of Israel of old, "Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" (Deut. xxxiii. 29). But if we attempt to carry out the divine order in fleshly power, or with unjudged

consciences, our God will make manifest the nakedness of the land. We may shout as loud as we please (1 Sam. iv. 5); but the Lord will not be in the shout.

SOME EXTRACTS FROM PRESIDENT EDWARDS' RESOLUTIONS.

RESOLVED, never to do, be, or suffer anything, in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God.

Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

Resolved, never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

Resolved, to be endeavouring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

Resolved, never to do anything out of revenge.

Resolved, to maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.

Resolved, never to do anything which, if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.

Resolved, whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back till I come to the original cause; and then, both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the origin of it.

Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly, and frequently, as that I may find and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

Resolved, in narrations, never to speak anything but the pure and simple verity.

THE PLOT DEEPLY LAID.

HAVE you ever considered the Lord Jesus as He stood before the Scribes and Pharisees, with the woman taken in adultery? (Jno. viii. 3-11). The plot was deeply laid. "Moses in the law commanded us that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou?" (ver. 5). If He had answered, "Let her be stoned," they would at once have accused Him to the Roman governor, as one who set aside the authority of Cæsar; for the power of life and death had long passed out of Jewish hands. If, on the other hand, He had said she was not to be stoned, the Scribes and Pharisees would immediately have accused Him of breaking Moses' law and setting aside the oracles of God. Let Him answer how He would, He was sure to play into their hands—at least, so they thought. Their morbid curiosity was roused to its highest pitch; and thus they waited His answer. But soon they discovered that a greater than Solomon was there. He stoops down and writes on the ground as though He hears them not. They demand an answer. It is judgment they have asked; and it is judgment they shall have. "So, when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." With the froward He shows Himself froward (Ps. xviii. 26). He maketh foolish the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. i. 20). They were caught in their own trap. Conscience was

working in His accusers; and, as our Lord continued to write on the ground, they went out one by one, beginning at the eldest even unto the last. Our Lord's victory was complete, reminding us of the prophet's words: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one" (Isa. xxx. 17). But while they have gone away to devise new plans for ensnaring the Righteous One, He proceeds to carry out His purpose of grace with her for whom there seemed to be no mercy at the hands of Scribe or Pharisee. "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." What gracious words! What a contrast to that thirst for blood with which the woman had been dragged into the Master's presence! Yet our Lord does not bestow His grace that sin may abound. He puts no premium upon iniquity. On the contrary, there is the solemn warning, "Go, and sin no more"—doubtless with special reference to the particular sin in which she had been caught. In another case (Jno. v. 14), we find Him adding the words, "lest a worse thing come unto thee." In such warnings there is a solemnity that tells us to rejoice with trembling (Ps. ii. 11). If we are tasting the sweets of forgiveness for any particular sin, let us beware how we tamper with that sin in time to come. Our Lord's warning shines out as clearly as His forgiveness. Be not high-minded, but fear.

THE SHADOW DARKEST.

WHERE the light is brightest the shadow is darkest. And where the light of heaven is shining upon a company of believers, the dark shadows of sin are seen at a glance. In other words, when God is truly reigning in an assembly, iniquity is compelled to hide itself. God's light makes manifest the hidden things of darkness. In that assembly you do not find worldliness or evil-speaking holding high carnival. A holy and separated walk, a fear of sin, a tender conscience—such is the rule of the day. And why? Because God is there. The light is bright; the shadows are dark: therefore sin is hated, and the law of the Lord is loved. But yonder is another assembly, where the light is dim. What is the result? The shadows can scarcely be seen. Worldly conformity creeps in and secures a footing. It is tolerated. But it is not content with mere toleration. By-and-bye it rises up to defend itself as a right and proper thing. And the sad feature is, that there does not seem to be sufficient light to reveal its hideous deformity! Thus the one company of believers go from one phase of worldliness to another, while the other go "from strength to strength"—from holiness to holiness; aptly illustrating the Scripture that says: "Who-soever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath" (Matt. xiii. 12). What conclusion, then, do we

draw from these things? We draw this conclusion, that we must have the light of God reigning in the assemblies, and "no part dark" (Lu. xi. 36). "The Lord shall be Thine everlasting Light" (Isa. lx. 20); and it ought to be true, in a spiritual sense of an assembly even now, that there is "no night there." When night, or even a dim twilight, settles down upon a church of Christ, it is wonderful how the owls of evil sally forth to take a prey. When low life prevails in an assembly, it is wonderful how worldly some of the believers become. This brother here and yon brother yonder do things that they would never have dared to do, had the power of God been reigning. But, taking advantage of the darkness, they do as they please. The tide of life has fallen so low, that no man dare say to them, "What doest thou?" The carnal believer does not care for the reign of light. The darkness suits him best. He does not care to have his evil deeds testified against. But let the light of God be shining, and the whole scene is changed. And what is true of an assembly, is true of an individual. That is to say, if a brother is walking in the light, he will see sin to be exceeding sinful. What a dark shadow even an evil thought will cast across the bright path of his experience! But if he is content to walk in the darkness, evil will be tolerated; and you will find him going back to "old things" which he had once condemned as evil—building again the things he had destroyed!

LET MY PEOPLE GO.

IF I am in a church that is constituted according to Scripture, I am in a church where there is liberty for the exercise of the gifts in the Body. That does not mean that there is liberty for every one to do as he pleases. There is no such thing as unbridled license in a properly-constituted assembly of saints. Liberty for the exercise of the gifts in the body, means *room for God to act through whomsoever He pleases*. Now, where *one man* is appointed to do *everything*, there can be no room for the exercise of the various gifts bestowed upon the church by the ascended Lord. The saints go up to "public worship"; but although they are *on a level as worshippers*, silence reigns; and no one dare break it, save the one man recognised as "the minister." It is understood that he opens the meeting, conducts it, gives out the hymns of praise, leads the devotions, and officiates in the ordinances. All this time God's people sit in silence, seemingly pleased to have it so. But is the Lord pleased? Is it according to Scripture? Let God's people know that the most obscure brother in the church, who is walking godly in Christ Jesus, is as much entitled to lead the praises or devotions of the saints, as the brother who is called "the minister." Does the Lord lead brother So-and-so to pray? Then, why should he not pray? Why should the Spirit be quenched in order to keep up a man-appointed order of things? Is

brother So-and-so led of God to give out a hymn? Then, we say again, why should the Spirit be quenched? The "minister" may be a converted man: he may be a good man. But why should he be exalted to such a pinnacle above his brethren, that no one, save himself, dare take part in leading the praise or prayer of the meeting? There may be brethren present who are more godly men than "the minister," and more gifted, too. Yet they must be silent. The church is thus deprived of *their* ministry, while the man chosen of the people must pray and preach, whether called of God or not! Such is a faint picture of what clerisy has done for God's people. It has assumed that the gifts of the ascended Lord *must* reach the church through the lips of humanly-ordained men! It seems to have been decided by the people that God *must* speak through the man chosen by them, and through no other! This seems a terrible statement. But it is virtually what clerisy comes to. It is as if you bound up all the members of your body, except the organs of speech and of hearing, and yet expected your body to be in health. "Impossible!" you say. And in like manner we say, "Impossible! Loose these ligaments that keep that right arm shrivelled up; set free these feet. The body was never intended to be divided into two members, the one all mouth, and the other all hearing." Perhaps these shrivelled-up members have been so long in that condition that they would rather remain as they are.

As a captive, long inured to bondage, will sometimes hug the very chains that bind him, so these members may prefer to continue bound hand-and-foot with grave-clothes. But that must not hinder us from proclaiming liberty to the captives, and sounding forth the joyful tidings that every saint has been made a priest to God. They may refuse to believe God's proclamation. They may choose to remain under a man-appointed order of things. Yet, whether they hear, or whether they forbear, let the proclamation go forth. Let the saints of God know this, that we, His people, are never called upon to acknowledge the position which the religious world has given to the clergyman. We are not called upon to sell our birth-right, and sit amid the silence of the tomb while a humanly-ordained man arrogates to himself every function that pertains to the heavenly priesthood. Let us rise to the true dignity of our calling. Let us refuse to bow down to what God has never commanded us to bow. Let us refuse to quench His Spirit at the bidding of the religious world. Let the ligaments of bondage be severed once and for ever by the great knife of Truth; and let every member of the body be set free to be under the direct control of the Spirit of God; for assuredly His word is going forth now as in the days of old, "*Let My people go, that they may serve Me.*"

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FIRST keep thyself in peace, and then mayest thou pacify others.

RIGHTEOUSNESS FIRST.

THE kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. xiv. 17). Yet often we will not have God's order. We want to have peace before we have righteousness; and we would fain have joy apart from both peace and righteousness. But it cannot be. Righteousness, or *doing the right thing*, must come first. There can be no true peace, if we are not doing the right thing before God. A false peace there may be; but a heaven-born peace there cannot be. Peace is not a mysterious something that pays its visits and departs, without any seeming connection with some law of the kingdom. *Righteousness* is the root from which the tree of *peace* springs up; and *joy* may be called the flowers that adorn its branches. We have not got to hunt for peace and joy, as if these treasures were the reward only of diligent search and earnest prayer. They cannot be had for the asking, no matter how earnestly they be sought. They spring up of their own accord whenever we provide them with the soil of *righteousness*. Has the Lord shown us light? Are we walking according to that light? Are we doing what the Lord has shown us is the *right thing*? If so, then peace and joy will be the natural fruit. They will come unbidden and unsought. But if we refuse *to do the right thing*, we shall search in vain for peace and joy. These are found only in the path of righteousness.

GREAT APPEARANCES.

YOU may have observed that there is often a great appearance of sanctity where it is well known that there is a dead fly in the apothecary's ointment. In plain words, a professed believer who is away from God in heart will often assume such airs of holiness and devotion to the Lord, as almost to deceive the very elect. What terms of endearment he applies to the Saviour! He can talk of Christian experience to any extent. He is profuse in his vows of allegiance to the Master, and seems to be on the best of terms with heaven. "One that can speak like *that* MUST be right with God"—at least, so the many imagine. But there are some who are not so easily deceived. They are not to be imposed upon by these honied words. These beautiful expressions of devotion are merely a desperate device to make others, and perhaps himself, believe that he is in full communion with the Father!

You may have seen an apple outwardly fair and beautiful, and seeming to be absolutely perfect, while it turned out to be rotten at the core! Its beauty was only the beauty of death—the fair, outward covering of inner corruption. So is it with a certain class of professors of the religion of Jesus Christ. What class do we refer to? We refer to those who can talk glibly on heavenly subjects, and boast of their place in the Risen Christ, and proclaim that He is dearer to them than all the world; and yet no one sees

anything spiritual about them. On the contrary, there may be very glaring inconsistencies. Yet the greater the departure from God, the louder the profession becomes! To many it will appear strange how such a flourishing appearance can be kept up. "Surely," you say, "conscience would cry out against wearing such a mask." Yes, we reply; and no doubt conscience *did* cry out. But conscience has been *silenced*. It is very uncomfortable for thieves to carry on their work while the watch-dog is barking. Their first care is to silence him; then they can commit their evil deeds in quietness. That is just what many professors do with their conscience—they throttle it. Thus they become case-hardened against the attacks of the inward monitor. Forbidden paths are trod, fleshly things are done; yet the same professor holds his head as high as ever! One hour serving the flesh, and next hour praying or singing that his all is on the altar, and he is just waiting for the fire! Some saints cannot understand it. But we believe we understand it perfectly. It is simply a case of a *stifled conscience*. And all these endearing expressions of adoration are simply an invention of the Devil to make that man believe that he is on the mount of Communion! We have no objections whatever to professions of adoration and love for the Master, provided such professions are found in the lips of the truly godly. But, when we find such language of endearment proceeding from those who are anything but remarkable

for their spirituality, we can come to no other conclusion than this, that conscience has been silenced, and that the deadly disease of self-deception has reached a very advanced stage.

O CARRY ME BACK.

 CARRY me back on the wings of the morning
To the time when the fire of God, ever burning,
Did shed through this heart a sweet noontide
of gladness,
And nought but Thy sorrow cast shadow of sadness.

O bring me that time when the beams from the glory
For ever were gilding the page of life's story.
How gently they glided, these days swiftly fleeting—
This heart all for Christ, and for Him only beating !
'Twas sin to look back—'twas rebellion to falter,
For the fire of Heaven ever burned on the altar.
My joy, it was full ; and my peace like a river ;
No lack did I know ; for my God was the Giver.

But how has it come that the glory has faded ?
What enemy fell hath my Eden invaded ?
My God, Thou dost know—O how can I tell Thee
Of how I departed, and all that befell me ?
For nought I did barter the joy of salvation—
My God, I have sinned—can there be restoration !

Yes, Thou wilt restore—yea, Thou art restoring ;
The oil of Thy gladness e'en now Thou art pouring.
My God, Thou hast found me, all hope fast declining ;
But the darkness is past, and the True Light is shining.
I tread once again on the land ever flowing
With joys all untold, where Thy love passeth knowing.

The sun of my life may be nearing its setting ;
My time may be short ; yet, the past all forgetting,
In the few fleeting hours that Thou mayest be giving
I would walk before Thee in the light of the living.

Vain world, allure not, for I may not tarry ;
It may be, e'en yet, that some message I'll carry
For Him who 'mid darkness and sin did watch o'er me,
And out of His free, boundless grace did restore me.

And now I am Thine, Lord ; each cord Thou hast
broken ;

I wait for the sign, Lord ; O give but a token
To tell how this life shall be made a sweet savour
Of Him who hath granted the smile of His favour.
Where'er Thou wilt send me, Thy praises still
sounding,
O may I be kept by Thy grace all abounding,
Though chequered my lot, and though lonely my pillow,
Though rock'd by the storms, yet Thy voice o'er the
billow
Shall hush these rude waters, and, fear all dispelling,
In the calm of Thy presence shall still be my dwelling,
Till the hour of Thy triumph, when Time's latest sorrow
Shall sink in the gleam of that glorious morrow !

SPIRITUAL BUILDING.

 IG, you that are going to build,
Since builder you must be ;
Thro' shifting sand and treacherous clay,
Dig till the Rock you see.

Dig, dig, with a resolute mind ;
Never say, " That'll do now,"
Nor stop, tho' hand and back get sore,
And sweat stand on the brow.

Let life-force, spent in search of things
That perish or give pain,
Be given to have the " found " secure—
The building firm remain.

A house loose built on clay or sand,
Of wood, stubble, or hay,
When rains and floods and storms prevail,
Must needs be swept away.

Build on the Rock with precious stones,
Set in silver and gold :
Follow the plan ; the Architect shall
Himself the plan unfold.

When rains and floods and storms have wash'd
Remaining dross away,
Brighter your house will then appear,
And stedfast stand for aye.

A. N. A.

He enjoyeth great peace of mind, that careth neither
for the praise nor the dispraise of men.

OFFICIALISM IN THE CHURCH.

OUR value in the church is not to be measured by the position we occupy, but by the service we render. Mere position has a wonderful attraction for the carnal eye; and many aim at position who have neither the qualification nor the heart for the work they are supposed to do. In the world's affairs there are such things as "president," and "honorary president." That means, that the president does all the work, and the honorary president gets all the honour. The president may be selected because of his fitness for the post; but the honorary president is selected simply because he has a big purse and some title to his name. Apart from his purse and his title, the world would never have had anything to do with him. So much for the world's ornamental positions. But is the spirit of the world not to be found among the people of God? We fear it is. The golden calf may be worshipped in more ways than one. It is wonderful what obeisance is made to believers who have big purses. But don't misunderstand us here. We have no sympathy with that spirit that would level all social distinctions, and look lightly on a godly and gifted brother, simply because he is in a good social position. If a brother is manifestly gifted of God as a minister of Christ, let us receive him heartily, no matter how "well-to-do" he may be in the world. If we say that such a brother owes his influence to his purse, we may

be sure that envy has given birth to the thought. What we wish to point out is this, that if a brother is not called and fitted of God for a certain position in the church, his money should not qualify him for that position. Yet, in the religious world, it is evident that money is the first qualification; and men occupy positions in the professed work of the Lord which they would never have occupied, had it not been for their social position. Yea, men with large purses are thrust into office and acknowledged, who are utterly devoid of the slightest qualification for the work they profess to do. Take away their gold, and they would not be acknowledged for a single hour. We smile at the religious world, which tolerates such abuses. But let us see that the thin edge of the golden wedge is not seeking an entrance among those of us who profess to know better. A great preacher speaks of this partiality to the man with the gold ring (Jas. ii. 2), as God's people "doing reverence to mere money-bags." In the church of God there is no such thing as an honorary office: there is no such thing as *honour* apart from *work*. The man who is *fitted of God* to do the work, and who *does* the work, is the man we are to honour. Yea, some are to be accounted worthy of *double* honour (1 Tim. v. 17). We are to know them that are over us in the Lord, and to esteem them very highly in love, not for their purse's sake, but for their work's sake (1 Thess. v. 13). Surely this makes the whole matter very plain. Scripture knows nothing what-

ever of the *ornamental* overseer—the brother who takes the office, but does not do the work. We need scarcely say that the Lord never requires His people to acknowledge such. But the Lord does require us to acknowledge those who *do the work*. Scripture never calls upon us to make a blind obeisance to a man's official position. A man may say he is an overseer, in the same way as he may say he has faith (Jas. ii. 14). But in either case, his works must justify or condemn him. Thus, in Scripture, when we are called to acknowledge certain, the reasons are given why we should acknowledge them. We are to know them who *labour among us*, who *admonish us* (1 Thess. v. 12), who have *spoken unto us the word of God*—who *watch for our souls* (Heb. xiii. 7, 17). Officialism, you see, gets no countenance in Scripture: *reality* shines out in every page.

A GREAT deal of time is often wasted in looking at our difficulties, and considering how deliverance is likely to arise. If, instead of this, we were to roll the burden on the Lord, and allow Him to deliver in His own way, we would find it a far shorter way to the land of quietness. "Delight thyself in the Lord." That is the first step. Then comes the granting of our desires. When our chiefest aim is to delight in Him, it then becomes the delight of our God to come on the wings of the wind to our help. He knows how to deliver the godly out of their trials.

HAD HIS FAULTS.



AM afraid that many of the Lord's people look on the apostle John as if he were not a man of like passions with ourselves. But John had his faults as well as Peter, whose failures are so much dwelt upon. John was one of the two who wanted the place of honour in the coming kingdom (Mark x. 35); thus manifesting a very different spirit from that which the Lord enjoins (See Luke xiv. 7-11). It was James and *John* who, forgetful of the spirit of the Gospel dispensation, wished to command fire from heaven to consume the Samaritan village (Luke ix. 54); and doubtless John had his part in the strife of Luke xxii. 24. Again, he was one of those included in the Lord's words: "All ye shall be offended because of Me this night" (Matt. xxvi. 31). Although the Master had said unto them, "Tarry ye here and watch with Me," they were found sleeping. Yea, they slept even after the rebuke of verse 40, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" And John slept as well as the others. Truly he was one of like passions with ourselves. Yet some of us entertain the idea that it is impossible for *us* to get into the wonderful position that John occupied—that of leaning on Jesus' breast, because we look upon John as altogether different from any of us. Let us away with such a delusion. In spite of his failures, John found his way to the place of communion. Let us do likewise.

W. P. W.

“CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL.”

Col. iii. 11.

Part Second.



N everything be this our song,
 Christ is all.
 Let every hour the note prolong,
 Christ is all.
 It does not matter what the case—
 How deep the need, or where the place—
 “In all” the wondrous words we trace,
 Christ is all.
 To every one who loves His name,
 Christ is all.
 Through all our changes still the same,
 Christ is all.
 His grace our constant need can meet,
 His wisdom guides our wayward feet,
 His presence makes our bitter sweet,
 Christ is all.
 In all our peace and all our bliss,
 Christ is all.
 In all our joys and happiness,
 Christ is all.
 The spring of truest joy is He,
 The source of heavenly unity ;
 Our happy song through life shall be,
 Christ is all.
 In every trial here below,
 Christ is all.
 He perfect sympathy doth show,
 Christ is all.
 If we His “Peace, be still” but hear
 Amidst our turmoil and our fear,
 The storm is calmed—our sky is clear ;
 Christ is all.
 When pain and sickness fierce assail,
 Christ is all.
 And e’en when heart and flesh shall fail,
 Christ is all.
 He with us every sorrow shares—
 For all our wants minutely cares—
 Through death’s dark wave He safely bears ;
 Christ is all.

Amid the ransomed throng on high,
 Christ is all.
 Ask, What makes heaven? Its hosts reply,
 Christ is all.
 There raptured saints adore His name—
 Angelic hosts His worth proclaim—
 All join to celebrate His fame—
 Christ is all.
 They truly happy are to whom
 Christ is all ;
 In life or death, in light or gloom,
 Christ is all.
 Self they will daily lay aside,
 Themselves—their all—to Him confide,
 And humbly at His feet abide,
 Christ is all.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

“Part First” of these verses, having special reference to the unsaved, appears in the *Sower* for July.

MAKING “THE TREASURY” KNOWN.

WE may mention that, up to this date, we have attended to all letters requesting us to send specimen copies of our Publications. We find that in many places “THE TREASURY” is being seen only for the first time. We shall, therefore, be glad if those to whom the paper commends itself would kindly introduce it to their friends, or send us the needful addresses, and we will gladly send specimen copies.

OUR CIRCULATION.

IT will interest our friends to know that our circulation is steadily rising, and that we are finding no end of encouragement in the work of ministering to the saints through these pages.

LETTERS.

In our “Letters Received” we find a number of communications of a private nature—asking light on certain questions, either through “THE TREASURY” or by letter. We do our best to attend to these ; but our friends will pardon us if we cannot do more. Sometimes pressure on our time will delay an answer ; or want of light on the subject may prevent us saying anything. But every letter receives our careful consideration.

Second Edition of Poetry Leaflets—We have added *nine* new Leaflets to our Poetry list, making a variety of *fifteen* in the packet—all Poetry. These have been selected with care, and we humbly think that the packet will be found acceptable. The Edition has been printed on fine paper, in manifold tints, and free from imperfections that we observed in the first Edition. Each packet contains 100 Leaflets (15 different kinds).

SIXPENCE PER HUNDRED, POST FREE.

Specimen parcels of any of our publications will be sent free on hearing from you by post card or otherwise.

The "Treasury" for 1887.—As fully explained in previous numbers, the "Treasury" is now a 16-page paper, price One Penny, and published monthly.

Four Copies.—It will be observed that a monthly parcel of "The Treasury" containing 4 copies or more, is sent *post free*.

One copy of the "Treasury" monthly through the post for One Year, costs only 1/6, whether it be to the neighbouring village or the backwoods of America. Therefore let no one have any difficulty in getting this paper regularly.

OUR COMPLETE WRITINGS.

For the information of the readers of the "Treasury," we may mention that we were privileged to edit the "BELIEVER'S PATHWAY" during the first four years of its existence. We have a stock of these Volumes, which we shall be glad to send at the following *reduced rates*:

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Our Gospel paper, "The Sower,"

is a little 4-page monthly, containing articles, incidents, and appeals, intended to render it suitable for broadcast distribution among the saved.

Price Tenpence per Hundred, post free.

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The "Sower" is supplied with any special heading, such as the "The Broxburn Herald," &c., and with a line or two below, intimating the meetings. In such cases we make no extra charge for 500 or upwards monthly. That is, we deliver 500 copies (with special heading) for FOUR SHILLINGS,

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Localised "Sower."—Orders for "Sower," with special heading, must reach us not later than *first* of previous month.

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Remitting Money.—Penny postage stamps may be sent for all amounts below three shillings. For larger sums, please send Postal Orders or Post Office Order.

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All Orders, Communications, and Remittances to be sent to
WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole, Scotland.

THE

Believer's Treasury.

No. 59.

JULY, 1887.

Vol. II.

"LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU."

WE may preach, and pray, and testify; and our name may be known far and wide as great workers for God. But, after due consideration, we have come to this conclusion, that if the mind that was in Christ Jesus is not found in us, we are nothing!—absolutely nothing—yea, worse than nothing; for we are thereby carrying on the business of heaven under false pretences. The truth is simply this: Our great business down here is to *manifest Christ*. He represents us before the throne above: we are to represent Him before an ungodly world below. It is important that Christ be preached with the lip: it is more important that He be manifested in the life. Indeed it is only as Christ is manifested in the life of the preacher, that there can be any weight with the words of the preacher. In these days of so much preaching and teaching, it may well be asked, When are we going to awake up to this great truth, that the most powerful preaching—the most fruitful testimony—is a *Christ-like life*?

"Let this mind be in you." No hard command is given here—hard for the flesh, no doubt—hard for these proud

hearts and these stubborn wills. But it is no hard command to those whose great desire is to please God. No "great thing" is required of us here. We are not commanded to perform some great exploit, or make some unheard-of sacrifice. We are simply to "stand still," if we may so speak—to cease these painful efforts to become something; and just to *let* this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. *We* would fain be *active*—doing great things to secure the Master's approval. *He* desires us to be *passive*—to "let" His mind be in us. We would be busy and moving: He would have us calmly to sit down at His feet, and to "let" His mind possess us. And what is the result of His mind being found in us? The result is this, that although no trumpet is blown proclaiming our wonderful attainments in the divine life, the mind of Christ shines through us, without an effort. Christ cannot be hid (Mark vii. 24). His presence will be felt. The whole house will be filled with the odour of the ointment (Jno. xii. 3). When a brother is taken knowledge of, that he has been with Jesus (Acts iv. 13), you may safely mark him down as a Christian "of influence." His word is with

power. He may say little ; but it goes a long way. Others may be taken knowledge of for their fluency of speech, or their great reasoning powers. But the brother with the Christ-like spirit wields an influence that the mere orator can never wield. In some sections of the church, oratory (that is, "able" speaking) is idolized ; and the brother who can secure the attention of the saints for three-quarters-of-an-hour is reckoned a mighty man of God ; yet, if you take his oratory from him, perhaps there is nothing left ! Apart from his ability to speak, no one would take him for a man of God. Alas ! that mere fluency of tongue should pass current with many for spirituality. Yet so it is. It seems to be now as it was in the days of old. The man head and shoulders above the people is chosen, and the Lord's Anointed is rejected (see history of Saul, 1 Sam.). At the same time, if we find "apt teachers," in whose private life the mind of Christ shines clearly out, let us give them due honour. But let us not fall into the mistake of supposing that oratory is spirituality ; for we may be profuse in our exhortations from the platform, while we might well be sitting at the feet of some humble believer down in the meeting yonder, to find out what "Philippians two and five" may mean. We are satisfied that it means a great deal more than is generally supposed. And doubtless one reason why it is so little dwelt upon is this, that it means a *coming down*. Spiritual promotion is not attained by getting up, but by coming down. "He that *descended*

is the same also that *ascended*" (Eph. iv. 10). Though spoken of Christ, this applies in a very significant sense to the believer. And this "coming down" is very clearly brought before us in Phil. ii. ; for no sooner are we exhorted to let the Christ-like mind be found in us, than we are told that He "made Himself of no reputation . . . and being found in fashion as a man, He *humbled Himself*," &c. "Wherefore God also hath highly *exalted* Him." Behold how deep His humiliation ! Behold how high His exaltation ! The measure of the one is the exact measure of the other. So is it with us. The path of spiritual promotion leads *down* through the valley. They must needs *stoop* who would have the mind of Christ. In God's kingdom, it is only as we are content to be nothing that we come to be anything. The truly great in God's sight are those in whom the mind of Christ is found.

ABEL—ENOCH—NOAH.

From Notes of "Lectures on Prophecy."

 HERE are three Old-Testament characters—men of the patriarchal age—to which I wish to call your attention. You will find them mentioned in Heb. xi. Their names are, *Abel* (ver. 4), *Enoch* (ver. 5), *Noah* (ver. 7). And it is only as the lives of these three men are, so to speak, reproduced in your life and mine, that we shall be a power for God wherever our lot may be cast.

Let us look at each of them in their order.

ABEL.

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh.” The first thing we see here is *death*. A victim is laid upon the altar; and that victim *dies*. The sacrifice is accepted. God is well-pleased. But there is more than one death. Abel dies too. Both victim and offerer share a similar fate. True, Abel dies by the hand of violence. So sweet unto God was the savour of his offering, that it roused a brother's envy; and earth was stained by the blood of the accepted offerer. Yet what great truths do we see suggested, if not foreshadowed, by that death of Abel! In that victim on the altar we see the spotless Lamb of God dying for our sins. But there is another death—the offerer himself dies. What have we here? We have this great truth, that *Jesus died for me, and I have died in Him*. Many have not got this length. They see death passing on the Victim; but they do not see death passing on themselves. They can say, “Jesus died for me”; but they do not see that they, too, have died. They joy, and rightly too, in the death of Christ; but they do not see, or do not care to see, that they *are crucified* with Him (Gal. ii. 20). What a new world of truth opens up before us, when this great truth is carried home in power to our hearts—*death with Christ!* The death of Christ

is no reprieve to the flesh in the believer: it is rather the sentence that the flesh must die. Yea, it is the declaration that the sentence has been executed; for “our old man was *crucified* with Him” (Rom. vi. 6). What provision, then, is left for the flesh? None. How shall we who have died to sin live any longer therein? (Rom. vi. 2). What is the measure of our separation from all that is not of God? It is the measure of that single word *Death*. What has a dead man got to do with the world's vanity-fair? Nothing. What response will a dead man give to the world's allurements? None. Indeed a thousand and one questions are all answered in these few words—“I have died with Christ.” What a separating truth! What a searching truth! What an emancipating truth! for it is only as, by experience, we know what it is to have died with Christ, that we can know what it is to walk with God; and this walk we have brought before us in the history of

ENOCH,

of whom it is written that he *walked with God* three hundred years. His age is recorded as three hundred and sixty-five years; but it is the three hundred years that really represent his life; for, during the whole of these three hundred years, he *walked with God!* Some of us are perhaps twenty years converted—some even longer on our heavenward journey. But how much of that time have we walked with God? If the days of our true pilgrimage were summed together—if the time of our

walking with God were reckoned up, how short some of our lives would be! Yet such is the mode of reckoning adopted by the great Recorder of our life below. How old art thou, brother, sister? What may be the sum-total of the days in which we have walked with God? Enoch walked with God three hundred years; and he had this testimony, that he *pleased God*. The present consciousness of pleasing God is no small reward. The Master could say, "I do always those things that please Him" (Jno. viii. 29). Let this be our chiefest aim—to be well-pleasing unto Him. And enjoying an Enoch communion, as the result of an Abel death, we shall then, but not till then, be ready for *service*, which we shall find the great outstanding feature in the history of

NOAH.

We read of him that he built an ark. He comes prominently before us as a builder; and thus supplies us with a fitting type of the believer in the character of a *worker for God*. But mark the order: death first; communion next; then work for the Lord as hard as you please. This order must never be reversed. You will play a perilous game if you attempt to put service in the place of communion. Nothing can take the place of communion. God can get any number of saints to do your work; but He can get no one to *do your communion!* I may pay off a servant, and get fifty others to do the work as well, or even better; but if one of my children does not give me his love, I cannot replace

that child as I would replace a servant. All the children in the town cannot give me back my child's love. Therefore, let service have its true place—let it never be found apart from communion. God wants *us*; and, when He gets *us*, He gets *ours*. When He has our heart, He has our service. When communion fails, a very common device is, to *make up for it* by increased zeal in service. This may deceive others. But God is not mocked. There may be a great appearance of work for God, and yet very little communion with God. In the present day we see service, in great measure, made everything of, and communion made very little of. Service is the outward thing that man can see: communion is the inward thing that only God can see. Hence service is popular—so popular, that in many cases it takes a far higher place than communion. In the religious world it seems to be service first, and communion last. Service has to do duty for communion. Yet it can never perform that duty. It is only service flowing from communion that can find acceptance with God. Then, in our service for Him, let us see that it is a *Noah service*—the fruit of an *Enoch communion*, as the result of an *Abel death*.

—♦—♦—♦—

THE "perfect man" is he who has a deliberate purpose to do the will of God in all things, under all circumstances, and at all times; never resting in this or that measure of obedience, but still running the race, his eye fixed on the goal.

OBEDIENCE AND FAITHFULNESS.

OBEDIENCE is one thing; and faithfulness is quite another thing. Obedience is much: faithfulness is more. The obedient brother is one who does what is commanded, and stops there. He does not find fault with any one, or rebuke any one, or exhort any one. He cannot be said to be "valiant for the truth." He seemingly does not admit that he is his brother's keeper. He follows the truth himself; and this is so far good. But he seems not very particular as to whether others follow it or not. Faithfulness, on the other hand, goes a long way farther. The faithful brother not only obeys the truth himself, but he is prepared to testify, and does testify. If you are not doing what is right, the faithful brother will tell you that your deeds are evil. Go into yonder company. Hear that professed believer "cracking his jokes." Hear these other professors laughing at him. They all profess obedience to the truth. Yet there does not seem to be a faithful man among them. Why? Because, if there was a faithful man there, he would turn round and say to the joker: "Now, brother, your jocularities are not of God: *He* has warned us against jesting (Eph. v. 4): *You* seem to delight in it." We are in great need of a few of these plain, blunt, faithful men. And, indeed, if there was more real obedience, there would be more real faithfulness. We have been speaking of what goes by the name of obedience. But true,

Scriptural obedience is far more than submission to a certain set of truths. It is really conformity to anything and everything that God has revealed in His word. And wherever this obedience exists, there will be faithfulness according to our measure.

PERFECT PEACE.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" (margin, "the Rock of Ages").—Isaiah xxvi. 3, 4.

IN perfect peace Thou wilt keep his soul
Whose mind is stay'd on Thee;
Though waves of turmoil around him roll,
He'll trust, nor fearful be.

When troubles o'erwhelm, he knows that the helm
Of his bark Thy hand doth steer;
And he fears no harm in the midst of alarm,
For he knows that Thou art near.

Yes, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace
Whose mind is stay'd on Thee,
Till the troubles and storms of life shall cease,
And he stands on the glassy sea—
Till he join in the psalm 'mid the endless calm
Of Heaven's tranquillity,
Where, without alloy, he shall fully enjoy
"Perfect peace" through eternity.

Then trust Him for ever, O trembling saint,
For "the Rock of Ages" He is;
Though discouraged thou art, and ready to faint,
Everlasting strength is His.
Though thy faith He may try, still upon Him rely,
For thou yet shalt understand
How His wisdom divine is better than thine,
And shalt bless His guiding hand.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

THE spring of instability of purpose is some hankering within us after praise of man.

A PERVERSION OF THE GOSPEL.

WE once heard a preacher tell a company of unsaved people to pray for the Holy Spirit to enable them to believe and be born again. A greater perversion of the Gospel we never heard. It had no connection whatever with the "good tidings of great joy" which *the* Gospel is. We thought a pity of the poor people who were sent away to do such a round of works. They were not even told how long they would require to pray. Now, it may seem very like honouring the Spirit to be constantly preaching the work of the Spirit, under the guise of proclaiming the Gospel. But let every one be clear as to this, that God never sets people to pray in order to be saved. We read of the Spirit Himself that He will take of the things of Christ and show them unto us (Jno. xvi. 15). The Spirit, you see, is ever exalting Christ; and if we are preaching with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, we will do the same—we will exalt Christ. We are not commanded to preach the work of the Spirit to every creature. It is *the Gospel* that is to be preached to every creature. Therefore, when we find ourselves addressing the unsaved, let us exalt Christ—let us proclaim the good news of what *has been done* for the sinner, and then command the sinner to believe. "Ah, but," some one says, "the sinner is dead; and a dead man can't believe." True, we reply, but neither can a dead man

pray. Yet you set him to pray as if he were alive! Then, you say, "Why ask a dead man to *believe*?" Our answer is simply this, that God tells us to do it. We are always safe to keep by what is written. Our part is to proclaim the glad tidings and command men to believe; and then it remains with the Lord to carry home His own word and fulfil the Scripture which says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the *dead* shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (Jno. v. 25). In Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii.), it must seem to the carnal mind a very unreasonable thing to address a valley of dry bones, and say, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord" (ver. 4). Yet Ezekiel did what he was told; and the Lord breathed on that valley of dry bones, and they became an exceeding great army (ver. 10). Let us abide by what is commanded. The Gospel that Paul preached is still the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and we have no liberty whatever to supplant it with a gospel devised out of our own fleshly wisdom.

—♦—

"THE Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. ii. 3). Because God tries the *heart*, therefore, in instances innumerable, God's judgment condemns where man may approve and praise.

—♦—

SATAN gets no more advantage over us than we allow him.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.



CERTAIN Evangelist was holding meetings in a certain town. Several professed conversion. The question then came up, "Where are these converts to go?—What church are they to be associated with?" How did the Evangelist answer that question? He answered it by handing over the young converts to the tender mercies of a ritualistic clergyman! This was done on the plea of "working in unison with the clergy." The Evangelist admitted that he had no power in the matter. In other words, he was bound hand and foot by the religious world, and must do nothing that would offend that world! Now, look at the picture before us. These young converts were seeking light. They turned to the man who had been used of God in their conversion, and asked where they should go. And lo! they were placed under the "care" of an unconverted ritualistic clergyman! That is to say, the lambs were handed over to the wolf; and then the Evangelist considered that his work was done! Yet, in the face of such things, we are told that it is not "wise" to tell young converts where to go! On the contrary, however, we are persuaded that there is a crying need for the truth of God to be proclaimed concerning the great question, "Where am I to worship?"

Now, we want to be simple. We are writing for simple people—believers who belong to the "humble" walks of life; and we wish to make ourselves under-

stood by them. If we succeed in *that*, our "learned" readers will not fail to understand us.

Where, then, shall we turn for light on this subject? To the great Fountain of light, assuredly; that is, to God Himself. But where shall we find His mind revealed? In His written word—the Scriptures of truth, which are able to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim. iii. 15). "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word" (Ps. cxix. 9). God has given us His word as a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path (Ps. cxix. 105). The Master said concerning His disciples, "I have given them Thy word" (Jno. xvii. 14); and His word is enough. He did not say, "I have given them Thy word, and the Confession of Faith," or, "Thy word, and certain traditions of men." No. It is simply "the word" that He has given us. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jno. xii. 48). Mark that. It is not according to man's words, or man's creeds, that we will be judged, but by the words the Lord hath spoken. God appeals to His own word, and clearly shows that all teaching that is from heaven will be in agreement with the Scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony;" He says, "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). It is therefore clear that it is to the written word we must go, if we would find what *the Lord* would have us to do,

now that we are saved. It is not hard to find out what *man* would have us to do. But as our aim is to please *the Lord*, and as we must all stand at *His* judgment-seat, our care must be to find out what is *His* mind concerning us. And *His mind* will be found revealed in *His word*. So, this is the first step clear. It is simply a question of *what does God say?* Some one may tell us that we should go to the So-and-so church. Very well; we have no objections. *But*, first of all, we must *see it in the word*. The church in question may be duly entered in the directory of the town; but do we find it in *the Scriptures?* That is the point. When Paul preached to the Bereans, they searched the Scriptures daily, to see if these things were so; and they were commended for so doing (Acts xvii. 11). Let us do likewise. When a servant gets a letter from his master, saying that such-and-such things are to be done in the house, that servant (if a faithful servant) will simply carry out the instructions contained in the letter. Neighbours may drop in and suggest that certain *other* things should be done, and that the letter should not be paid much attention to. What would the faithful servant say to this? He would turn round and say, "It is *not in the letter*—I must keep exactly to what *the master says*." This is just our position as children of God. The "Master is away." But He has sent us a "letter." That letter is the Scriptures of Truth. We have the most complete instructions in that letter as to how we are to behave

during His absence. The whole plan of salvation is laid down clear for the sinner; and, as soon as the sinner believes and becomes a saint, he finds the fullest directions as to how he is to walk—with whom he is to keep company—with whom he is *not* to keep company. The "letter" will give him all needed light on the subject of church-fellowship, and how to behave in the house of God. The religious world around us will be ready with advice as to where we should go, and what we should do. But we simply turn round and say, "We must see it in the letter." "Whatsoever *He* saith unto you, do it" (Jno. ii. 5). We thus see that *the Truth, and nothing but the Truth*, must be our first and last authority in deciding what is to be our church-fellowship. In our next number we purpose to look at some of the things which Scripture clearly reveals on the subject.

WE have heard the believer compared to a pen, in words to the following effect: "I pick up a pen to write; but I find that the pen has got a will of its own—that, in some mysterious way, it does not make the outlines I wish it to make. When I want it to move in one direction, it moves in another. What do you think I do? I simply lay down that pen, and take up one that will be *passive* in my hand, and not commence writing on its own account. Now, the Lord is seeking pens—that is, believers who will be passive in His hand, who, like a ship under the power of the helm, will turn whithersoever the Master listeth. Such are the believers the Lord delights to use."

MAKE HIM AN ELDER.

THE truth, like Him who gave it, will ever be for a sign that shall be spoken against. Obedience to the truth is sure to be attended with opposition of some kind. Yonder, for instance, are a number of believers, belonging to different denominations, seriously entertaining the thought of *coming together* to put into practice what they find written in Scripture. They see that it is unscriptural to be *scattered*—that it paralyses their efforts in the Lord's work; for *He* has said, "I pray that they all may be *one* . . . that the world may believe" (Jno. xvii. 21). These brethren, therefore, seek to find themselves at the one "Table." But this, by the religious world, is considered a very serious departure from the truth! It is accordingly resolved to take steps to counteract—what? To counteract God's people carrying out what is written in His word! He says, "Let My saints be gathered together unto Me." But the religious denominations say, "Let the saints be scattered widely apart among *us*." No sooner do a few of the Lord's people, thus widely apart, seek to draw together (as one family ought to be) than the most strenuous efforts are made to prevent them carrying out their purpose. Nor are we surprised, with the book of Ezra before us, that "friendly approaches" should be first resorted to (Ezra iv. 2). Yonder is a brother who has learned that his denomination will not stand the light of Scripture. He longs to be one with

his brethren, and to gather together according to the word. He is at once suspected of designs to "leave the church," as the saying goes. The members of his denomination get alarmed. They are afraid that they will lose him; and he is a "good member"—a "useful man." What is to be done? Something *must* be done. There must be some bold stroke of policy that will scatter the brother's "separation" ideas, and fasten him to "the church" by a stronger cord than ever. What is the stroke of policy? It is expressed in very few words, and these are: "*Make him an Elder.*" No sooner is this conclusion arrived at than the congregation seem to have their eyes suddenly opened to the brother's excellencies: and at once give him a post in "the church." They make him a deacon, or perhaps an elder; and confidently reckon that this "judicious compliment" will effectually relieve him of any intention to "come out." Now, it must be admitted that these tactics of flattery have been wonderfully successful in many cases. But we must also say this: If a man can be so easily "bought up," by being made an office-bearer, it may gravely be questioned if "love of the truth" exercised his heart about separation. If a brother has learned from Scripture what separation really is, and if he is truly longing to carry out the mind of God, he will not be so easily blinded to what God has taught him. We remember being told that, on one occasion, a number of believers in a certain denomination were suspected of

designs to "separate from the church." Immediately several were nominated as deacons and elders. We are satisfied, however, that not one of them was truly exercised before God about separation. Why? For the simple reason that every one of them *accepted office*.

When a Christian in the denominations is beginning to see the truth of separation, the most common device of the religious world is to *give him an office*. But, in plain language, this simply means, "Buy him up;" and, as we lately pointed out in these pages, "Men who can be bought are not worth buying; and men who are worth buying cannot be bought."

Are you, my reader, exercised before God as to your church-connection? Are you finding out that it will not stand the light of truth? Then see that you do not allow your light to be quenched. You have not much to fear from a *frowning* world. Your great danger lies in a *smiling, caressing* world. Jehoshaphat resisted the *wicked* Ahab, but fell an easy prey to the *flattering* Ahab. These things were written for our learning.

REFUSING AND CHOOSING.

THE great Supper of Luke xiv. was slighted because of *ground, oxen, and wives*. What foolishness we have here! Truly "the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth" (Prov. xvii. 24). You have man *refusing* in the fourteenth chapter; in the field *grumbling* in the fifteenth chapter; and in *Hell* in the sixteenth chapter. Thus our Lord follows man from 'Time (with

its vast privileges rejected) into Eternity with its awful woe. But look at the blessed contrast to all this. "The *poor*, and the *maimed*, and the *halt*, and the *blind*," accept the gracious invitation. They have neither hand nor foot to prove oxen; neither have they an eye for viewing ground, or looking upon the beauty of a wife. The hand and foot have been cut off; the eye has been plucked out, that they might enter into life (Mark ix. 47-49). We find that same company clothed and shod and ringed, and brought in to feast with music and merry-making, in the fifteenth chapter; and in "Abraham's bosom" in the sixteenth, eternally blessed. Thus we have in these three chapters: Refusing, and choosing—grumbling, and merry-making—torment, and perfect bliss!

J. A.

WHAT LIES BEFORE THEE?

CHILD of God, what lies before thee?—
Rapture which no tongue can tell.
Soon, enthroned in heavenly glory,
Thou shalt with the Saviour dwell.
Sound His praises:
He has plucked thy soul from hell.
Praise the Father, who so loved thee,
As His only Son to give;
Praise the Saviour, He who won thee—
Died Himself that thou might'st live.
He has bought thee;
Thou art His—for Him to live.
Blesséd Master, soon Thou'rt coming;
O what joy Thy face to see!
Cloud nor shadow intervening,
In that bright eternity!
O what rapture—
Evermore to dwell with Thee!

J. E. M.

“AND GAVE THANKS.”

PROBABLY there are no words more familiar to the believer than those describing the action of the Lord Jesus at the institution of the Feast of Remembrance; and yet we fear that many of the Lord's people who professedly give thanks for the bread and for the cup, come short of the simple reality of giving thanks. It is not to find fault with brethren that we notice this coming short: it is with a desire that the mind of the Lord should be fulfilled in us. If a brother rises and says: “Let us give thanks,” he should remember what the words mean. It surely is not giving thanks if he makes a long prayer for “all sorts and conditions of men.” Neither is it thanksgiving to supplicate the Lord for His blessing on the partaking of the symbols. We can understand such being done by those who look upon the receiving of the “mysterious elements” as a “means of grace.” But we who profess to be worshippers (givers) should be found in readiness to offer at least “the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.” Such words as, “Bless this cup to us,” and “Bless us to one another,” do not partake of the character of thanksgiving. Our hearts, by previous intercourse with the Lord, should be free to pour our gifts at His feet, and to give Him, “the glory due to His name” when we assemble to worship. We do not mean that there is anything contrary to a true spirit of worship in real confession of our own

nothingness and dependence on His faithfulness. What we seek to impress on those who lead in thanksgiving before breaking the bread is, that they should themselves be so occupied with the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that their words would be “as ointment poured forth.” It is also most essential that the time chosen in our meetings for giving thanks should not be unduly prolonged. Neither should it be before it is apparent that the Lord has attracted the assembled saints to Himself by His loveliness as well as by His love. Brethren, let us see that our hands are full when we come to offer to the Lord. In this connection it is highly instructive to notice the offerers under the law. And have we less to give than the Israelite?—we who are “blessed with *all* spiritual blessings.” It is a serious thing to profess to be giving thanks to the Lord, and all the while to present nothing to Him but our own barrenness. May He so win the hearts of His saints to Himself, that we who are “a kind of first-fruits of His creatures” (Jas. i. 18), shall in measure be enabled to enter into the adoring spirit of that company who shall by and bye exclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

W. H.

THEY are never disappointed who have learned to expect nothing from man, and to look for great things from God.

WHAT DO I EAT?

WHAT you eat becomes part of you. This takes place in accordance with a law of nature, and by a process called "assimilation." And what you *read* becomes part of you, just in the same way. People have been poisoned through eating what was impure. But far more *minds* are poisoned through reading what is impure. A single impure book—yea, a single chapter of it—has been known to defile a mind for years; so true is it that what we read becomes part of ourselves. Now, very likely we are pretty well agreed about impure books. But what about worthless reading?—rubbish, let us call it. Am I building up the tissues of my mind with rubbish? What sort of believer can I expect to be if I am building myself up with whole chapters of trashy reading? When the doctor is called in, the question is very often asked, "What do you eat?" For great issues hang upon that question. Well, to pass from the earthly to the heavenly, let us ask ourselves the question, "What do I eat?—What do I read?—Upon what do I meditate?" You, my brother, are building yourself up: I am building myself up. We are all builders. With what material are we building? Is it with the precious truth of God, and the things that pertain to His kingdom? Or is it with that mere rubbish of literature which can never lead us into the presence of the Beloved, nor cause us to long for the courts of our God?

SHRINKING FROM STRIFE.

IF I am walking in God's presence, I shall have a holy shrinking from strife. "The servant of the Lord must not strive" (2 Tim. ii. 24). "Where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (Jas. iii. 16). It was written of the perfect Servant, "He shall not strive" (Matt. xii. 19). If I am following Him, I am drinking in of His Spirit. Therefore, in the words of one of the faithful, I am found saying: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee" (Gen. xiii. 8). Strife is a work of the flesh (Gal. v. 20), and an undoubted evidence of a carnal spirit (1 Cor. iii. 3). The spiritual man is not a man of strife. If strife is needful in order to justify himself, he will refuse to strive. Strife and spiritual joy cannot dwell in the same heart. One of them must go. Which shall it be? The spiritual believer says, "Strife must go." The calm, deep waters of his spiritual joy must not be rudely disturbed by the angry winds of fleshly contention. Communion must be maintained at any cost—even at the risk of our being reckoned "strange" and uncommunicative. Nothing that can be gained by strife will compensate us for lost communion. Let no one lay the flattering unction to his soul that he can engage in fleshly strife and yet maintain spiritual communion. It is impossible. The two things are as far removed from each other as the east is from the west. The same fountain cannot send forth these two streams.

TWO CLASSES OF RICH.



BROTHER somewhat quaintly remarked to us the other day, that "the Devil used to try to cripple God's people by making them poor; but he did not succeed very well in this—take the case of Job, for instance; and now he seeks to gain his purpose by making them rich; and he is succeeding marvellously."

We think it will be readily admitted that there is more than a grain of truth in our brother's remark. Certain it is, that not a few who gave a bright testimony when they were poor men, seem to have lost their spirituality in the whirlpool of worldly success. Some are candid enough to admit that they are not what they once were. And concerning such there is perhaps some slight hope. If they have not repented, they at least remember from whence they have fallen; and this is one step in the right direction (see Rev. ii. 5).

The deceitfulness of riches appears to be but little understood. The general opinion seems to be: "No fear of money making a slave of me—I'll never bow down to the golden calf." Yet the very point in which we think ourselves strongest, may turn out to be our weakest point.

Not long ago, we heard a brother say he did not want riches, as he very much questioned whether he had grace to use them for God. "I fear to be rich," he said; "for perhaps I don't know how weak I am." Another (a well-to-do brother) confessed that, once upon a time, he would have handed out far larger sums of money for God than he would do now, although he is a far richer man to-day. "What a humiliating confession!" you say. True; but would it not

be more humiliating to be joined to his money-bags and not to know it?

We cannot conceive of a more deplorable sight than a believer keeping up a high profession of devotion to the Lord, while he is so joined to money that it seems impossible for the two to be parted.

Speaking on this subject lately, a brother remarked, that if *the Lord* sends us riches, He gives grace to use them; but if we are *determined* to be rich, we may get the riches, but it will be riches *joined with leanness of soul!* These two classes of the rich are brought before us in Scripture—(1) those whom the Lord makes rich, and (2) those who make themselves rich. They that *will* be rich—who are determined to make themselves rich—"fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. vi. 9). Then, in the seventeenth verse, we have these words: "Charge them that *are rich*"—presumably those whom the Lord has made rich—"that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." To which class do we belong?—to those who covet the rich man's gold?—or to those who are pleased to take what our God in His wisdom sees fit to bestow? What *is good* He will give. If we have not the blessing of God with our money, it is only a dead weight round the neck of our testimony.

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AFFLICTION coming upon God's people is no proof that they are displeasing Him. Is God with them or not? That is the test. Jeremiah was cast into the dungeon, and sank in the mire; but God was with him (Jer. xxxviii.). So was it with Joseph (Gen. xxxix. 21).

WHERE DID THEY GET THE MONEY ?

YOU sometimes hear it said that the world has come into the church. But that is not the way to express it. The truth is, that the church, or, more correctly speaking, many of God's people have gone into the world; and the world rules everything connected with the religious bodies known as the denominations. Take this small town, for instance. Let all God's people in it be gathered together, say on the public green—every born-again person, no more and no less. What kind of company would you have? A very *small* company, compared with the great mass of religionists that turn out on Lord's-day to "worship" God. You would see a mere handful of saints; and poor people you would find them to be; for you know well that not many mighty, not many noble, are called (1 Cor. i. 26). You then ask the question, "Where did that poor little company get all the money to build these great places of worship, to erect these fine manses, and pay such large salaries to these clergymen?—where did these few saints get all the money?" *They* didn't get it. *The world* got it. It is almost entirely the world's money that keeps the whole thing moving. If it was not for the world's money, these vast religious systems would be bound to declare themselves bankrupt on a very early day! Yet many saints fail to see that these systems are not of God!—
(*Jotting from Lectures on Prophecy*).

THE SOURCE OF JOY.

"We joy in God."—Rom. v. 11.

WE joy in God"! Saved by His grace,
Kept by His mighty power,
And conscious of His love's embrace,
We may rejoice each hour.

Though all around be troubled sea,
We can afford to sing,
For changeless as Himself must be
Joy which from God doth spring.

"We joy in God"! Though all below
As broken reeds have prov'd,
It is our constant bliss to know
That He is still unmov'd.

Earth's sorrow soon its joys destroy,
Such joys must ebb and flow;
But they who find in God their joy
Have Heaven's bliss below.

"We joy in God"! O what a joy!—
How deep, how pure, how sweet!—
Which death itself cannot destroy—
Unspeakable, complete!

Such joy can make the roughest way
With heavenly radiance shine,
And *now* the feeblest Christian may
Possess this joy divine.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

THERE are two ways of learning what the flesh is. We may learn its evil nature in the path of carnal indulgence; or we may learn the same lesson in the path of communion with the Father. It is to our shame and sorrow if we learn what the flesh is by yielding to its promptings; while it is to our everlasting profit if we are brought to see its hideous deformity in the light of the Master's presence.

SOME temptations are best withstood by fleeing from them.

WHAT KIND OF COMPANY?

HE that walketh with wise men shall be wise" (Prov. xiii. 20).

In other words, you become like those whom you make your companions. What great issues hang upon that simple question—"What company do you keep?" You say, "O, but they are believers." Possibly they are; but what kind of believers? Are they spiritual believers, or carnal believers? What do they talk about? You will easily know a man by what he talks about. Your soul-prosperity depends in a great measure on the company you keep. Many a believer has been "wasted" completely by keeping company with carnal professors. Who are your companions? Are they those who backbite and devour brother So-and-So behind his back? Are they those who manifest a revengeful and unforgiving spirit? Then, as these your companions are, so will you soon be, if you are not already of a kindred spirit. The kind of company you keep is one of the most powerful elements in forming your character for better or worse. Yet many seem to think that they can keep any company they please, and yet maintain communion with God! Be not deceived. If we are keeping company with an evil speaker, we are not sitting at the Master's feet. But if you are often coming into contact with a spiritual mind, you will assuredly feel the genial influence of spiritual company. Yonder, for instance, is a believer who breathes a heavenly

atmosphere, and seeks to lose himself amid the quiet walks of a heavenly experience. If such be the kind of company you keep, you will soon breathe the same atmosphere. The law of cause and effect operates with full force in this matter of companionship. Two cannot walk together except they are agreed.

CLOSER TO THEE.

AS day by day Thou graciously dost spare
Thy child, unworthy of Thy tender care,
O Master, let it be my earnest prayer,
Closer to live to Thee!

Temptations, sad and sore, beset my way,
But Thou canst give the needed strength each day;
Do I not hear, e'en now, Thy loved voice say—
"My child, keep close to Me"?

Sometimes a deep affliction Thou dost send
Unto Thy children for some gracious end,
O that I *then* may in submission bend,
And get more close to Thee!

We dare not wish to choose our earthly lot;
Let us contented rest, and feel that what
Thou dost ordain can surely harm us not,
If we are close to Thee!

Our race will soon be run—then heavenward bound
And "watching unto prayer" may we be found;
For when we hear the trumpet's joyful sound
We shall be close to Thee!

M. V. C.

MAKING "THE TREASURY" KNOWN.

WE may mention that, up to this date, we have attended to all letters requesting us to send specimen copies of our Publications. We find that in many places "THE TREASURY" is being seen only for the first time. We shall, therefore, be glad if those to whom the paper commends itself would kindly introduce it to their friends, or send us the needful addresses, and we will gladly send specimen copies.

Second Edition of Poetry Leaflets—We have added *nine* new Leaflets to our Poetry list, making a variety of *fifteen* in the packet—all Poetry. These have been selected with care, and we humbly think that the packet will be found acceptable. The Edition has been printed on fine paper, in manifold tints, and free from imperfections that we observed in the first Edition. Each packet contains 100 Leaflets (15 different kinds).

SIXPENCE PER HUNDRED, POST FREE.

Specimen parcels of any of our publications will be sent free on hearing from you by post card or otherwise.

The "Treasury" for 1887.—As fully explained in previous numbers, the "Treasury" is now a 16-page paper, price One Penny, and published monthly.

Four Copies.—It will be observed that a monthly parcel of "The Treasury" containing 4 copies or more, is sent *post free*.

One copy of the "Treasury" monthly through the post for One Year, costs only 1/6, whether it be to the neighbouring village or the backwoods of America. Therefore let no one have any difficulty in getting this paper regularly.

OUR COMPLETE WRITINGS.

For the information of the readers of the "Treasury," we may mention that we were privileged to edit the "BELIEVER'S PATHWAY" during the first four years of its existence. We have a stock of these Volumes, which we shall be glad to send at the following *reduced rates*:

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EXPERIENCES.



CONVERSION to God is undoubtedly the great turning-point in a lifetime. Yet, *after* we have passed from death unto life, there may be many special "revival times" in our spiritual experience. That is to say, a believer who is five years on his heavenward journey, may be visited with such a time of revival in his own soul that he will enter upon a new experience, and find himself treading a path of heavenly joy and calm that he never trod before. And, perhaps after years again have passed, that believer may have such dealings with his God as shall open up new and unexplored fields of heavenly felicity. The glory and loveliness of Christ may so fill his sight—so enrapture his soul—as to mark the beginning of a new era in his experience.

Some may object—indeed, some have objected—to such experiences; alleging that there is no need whatever for special times of blessing in the life of the believer, seeing that the Lord is willing to bless us continually, if we are willing to walk with Him. Well, it must be admitted that this latter statement is true—the Lord *is* willing to bless us

continually. Yet, *while blessing continually*, is it not the case that there are times of *special* refreshing from His presence? Indeed, it is chiefly among those who seek to walk with Him that you will find the experiences to which we have referred.

These special seasons of revival in the soul of the believer serve a great purpose. They strengthen him for special trial; they arm him against special temptation; they flood his soul with a new-born joy; and we know that joy is strength (Neh. viii. 10). These times of individual refreshing have the same effect on the believer that a general revival has upon God's people at large. We know that the condition of the saints as a whole would soon be deplorable, were it not for special periods of revival from time to time. It is to these revival seasons that the churches in great measure owe their present vitality. And as it is with the churches, so is it with the individual believer. Many a saint of God can look back to some point, or points, in his experience, when as much business for eternity was done in a single night as in many months before. Many can tell of fierce wrestling with some special form of temptation—wrestling from which

they emerged, Jacob-like, calling that place Bethel; for there they met with the Angel of the Lord, and passed on their way "more than conquerors." Others, again, with no special conflict with any particular sin, have experienced wonderful manifestations of the Lord's presence from time to time; and, so blessed were such manifestations found to be, that we have heard them compared to Elijah's food, in the strength of which the believer has walked for many days (1 Kings xix. 8).

The telling of our experiences does not seem to be "popular" among the saints. Is the reason to be found in this, that there is so little to tell?—so little that would redound to the glory of Christ. Have we got so "advanced" now, that we have got *beyond* experience? We understand that there was far more "telling of experiences" in bygone days. But, as an esteemed contributor pointed out in these pages some time ago, we seem now to have got a Christianity *without an experience!* We believe, with that brother, that experience is a neglected subject. It is right and proper that we should be pointed outward to the written word, and to Him who appears in the presence of God for us. But it is no less right and proper that the torch of truth should be turned in upon our own hearts, and that the question should be asked, "Brother, sister, how fares the work of the Lord *in your soul?* Is Christ reigning there? or is the world and the flesh holding high carnival where He should sit as Lord?"

We shall consider it a happy sign of coming prosperity, when saints of God, without being asked the question, will come forward to tell their experience of the goodness of the Lord. We are convinced that this is a testimony that is largely neglected in the present day; and, just in proportion as it is neglected, we must suffer loss. It is easy to stand up and say, "O taste and see that the Lord is good." But it is not so easy to stand up and say, "I *have tasted* and I *have seen.*" What power there is with the testimony of one who can stand up and honestly say: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul!" (Ps. lxxvi. 16). If any should demand a warrant for telling our experience, there it is. Alas! that a warrant should be demanded. If we have got into a rut in this matter, it is high time we were getting out of it. It is quite possible for us to become the slaves of our own preconceived ideas. Because "experiences" have gone out of fashion, we seem determined to keep them out of fashion. Yet that will not hinder the living water from finding an outlet. Let our prayer be, that its tide may rise and roll onward with irresistible force; and that the saints of God shall be borne upon its bosom into such heaven-born experiences, that like Jeremiah of old they will not be able to contain themselves (Jer. xx. 9). The fire will burn its way out. Then shall one great "Hosannah" go up from the hearts and lips of a happy and rejoicing people.

A RECENT EXPERIENCE.

 BROTHER writes us, under date June 9, as follows:—

“I have great pleasure in telling you how I have been blessed by the Lord through reading ———. It is about ten months since I was saved. Last week I had a slight illness; and, while I was confined to the house, I saw that Christ must be everything, and I must be nothing. I resolved to give myself wholly to God, firmly determined to mortify my members which are upon the earth, and again sought Him with my whole heart, weeping bitterly. That was on Lord's-day night. I remember before I fell asleep a heavenly peace possessed my mind. It seemed as if I was carried away, and whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell; but my Saviour and my Father were revealed to me. It is impossible for me to describe it. I took Mary's place at His feet, weeping with joy, and embracing Him who died for me. My whole soul was filled with joy; and I wept, for His hands and feet wore the nail-prints. Since then, the love of God has so filled me, that almost at the thought of what Jesus suffered I burst into tears. We have a prayer meeting here on Wednesday nights. Last night I was so filled with love that I wept the whole time the meeting was in, having broken down while praying.”

That Letter was not intended for publication. But we give it a place in these pages, as we believe that such testimony is sure to have a “stirring-up” effect. We seem to have come upon an evil day—a day in which “telling experiences” is a thing of the past; reminding us of the days of Eli the priest,

concerning which it is written, “The word of the Lord was precious in those days: there was no open vision” (1 Sam. iii. 1).

We are aware that in this matter-of-fact age many of God's people will be opposed to the telling of experiences. But why there should be any opposition, we are at a loss to conceive. It is quite true that “relating experiences” has been abused; and that people have told most remarkable experiences, who turned out to be most hollow professors. But that proves nothing, except this, that any and every “means of grace” may be abused. Why should we lose the benefit of each other's experiences, because some, in telling their experiences, have acted the hypocrite? Conversion to God is a great reality, notwithstanding its countless false professors. The Feast of remembrance is a great reality, although the world has an imitation that professes to be of God. And in the same way “Christian experience” is a great reality, notwithstanding all the Devil's attempts to bring it into ridicule. Some oppose everything of an emotional nature in the Lord's work; and tears are looked upon as childish. But if you take the *emotional* away from the religion of Christ, we don't know what you would have left. What is love—love to Christ—but the highest emotion of the heart? If you take the emotional out of Christianity, it will be like taking the heart out of a man—you will leave nothing behind but a dead body! And has this not been the case where the emotional has been driven from the

domain of the Lord's work? Death seems to reign. High teaching may prevail; but it is hard, dry, and cold. Certain forms are kept up; certain rules are carried out; but no tears are seen to fall—no hearts are touched. There is no lack of exhortation; yet how rare it is to hear one stand up and say, "The Lord has caused me to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory—Come, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul!"

The Lord grant that the new wine of His joyful presence may burst the old bottles of our own traditions—that many may see, and hear, and trust in the Lord!

NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH.

THERE is such a thing as seeking for happy experiences apart from Christ. This is virtually making an idol of our experiences. If we find rest in pleasant frames and feelings, we are simply worshippers of *self*. We must rest where God rests, and that is in Christ. Let that blessed One have His true place in the heart; and our joy will not be found—as too often, alas, it is found—like the early cloud and the morning dew. When *self* is set aside—when we are found saying, "All my springs are in Thee," then it is that our joy is full, and our peace like a river. But if our springs are in anything short of Christ, the waters are sure to fail. If there is to be abiding joy, there must be "no confidence in the flesh."

WHAT IS THE MOTIVE?

WE may do a kind action from various motives. We may do a kindness to some poor man, simply because we "cannot get past" doing it. Our Christian profession *demands* that we should do something. Others will *expect* us to do something. Thus a "kindness" (so-called) is often done very unwillingly—the great aim being, to do only *as much* as will keep our profession from being questioned. It must be admitted that this is a very low standard of "showing kindness." What is the remedy? It is this: To so sit at the Master's feet, and drink in of His Spirit, that it will be "quite natural" for us to do a kind action the moment an opportunity occurs. If the mind of Christ be found in us, we will not be found sitting down to consider what may be our "best policy." Love knows nothing about what the world calls "policy"; and, where the love of Christ fills the heart, there is none of that cold calculation that seeks to keep up a high Christian profession at the smallest cost. Love does not pursue a path that has been hedged in by circumstances and paved with carnal policy. She is free, unfettered; and devises kind and beautiful things, because it is her nature so to do.

In the striving as to who shall be "greatest," it seems to be overlooked that he that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city (Prov. xvi. 32). All who thus rule are truly great.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

(*Second Paper.*)

F there is anything more clearly revealed in Scripture than another, it is this, that God's people can have no fellowship with the unconverted. This is the first great lesson we learn on turning to God's book to find out what *He* says on this subject. Next to creation, *separation* is the first thing we find in the Bible. You have it in Genesis i. 4—"And God divided the light from the darkness." That was His principle in the beginning; and it has been His principle ever since. And no sooner were you born again—created anew in Christ Jesus—than you became *light* in the Lord (Eph. v. 8). God pronounced you a separated one: for the New Testament takes up the strain of the Old, and asks the great separation question: "What communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. vi. 14). Through all Scripture we see that God's great purpose is, to have a separated people unto Himself. On the other hand, the work of Satan has ever been to thwart God's purpose, and to *mix up together* things that God has *separated*.

Passing on from Genesis to Exodus, we find that God separates Israel unto Himself. On the night of Egypt's doom, Israel were safe behind their blood-sprinkled lintels—beautiful type of the believer on the day he first trusted Christ. You, my saved reader, were sheltered by the blood the moment you accepted

Jesus as your Saviour. You were safe—just as Israel were safe under the blood. But was God's purpose fulfilled when Israel were under the blood-sprinkled doors? No. God's purpose was to *take them out of Egypt*. And no sooner had the blood-sprinkling taken place than we find God leading His people out unto Himself (Ex. xix. 4). *Separation* came close behind the *sprinkling of blood*. There was no interval between. This is ever the divine order. No sooner do you believe, and become a member of God's family, than these words apply to you—"Out of Egypt have I called my son." Have you obeyed the call?

You could scarcely conceive of the children of Israel remaining in Egypt after being under the blood. "No," you say, "there was nothing for them then but the wilderness and the promised land." Yet what do you find in the religious world to-day? You find professedly born-again people sitting at the same communion table with the Egyptians—the unconverted. And these professed believers say they can worship the Lord acceptably, and keep this ordinance without *coming out* at all! Although the blood has been sprinkled, they yet remain in Egypt; and seem to be on the best of terms with the Egyptians, the determined enemies of the people of God! Yet God asks the question, "What communion hath light with darkness?" You say, "None: there is nothing in common between the two. They are opposed to each other." That is just how it stands with you,

fellow-believer, and the unconverted. You are alive from the dead—quickened with Christ. They (the unconverted) are dead in sins. How, then, can you, a living man, have fellowship with a dead man? What would you think of a feast, if two guests out of every three were dead men? You shudder at the thought. Yet that is what goes on in Christendom to-day. The world's church-fellowship is composed of the dead and the living. Around the world's communion table, the great mass of the "worshippers" are simply spiritual corpses!—men and women who are "dead in trespasses and in sins" (Eph. ii. 1). We are making no extraordinary statement while we thus speak. We are simply saying what is *well known* to God's people who are taught of Him. Even in the denominations, the small remnant of *converted* members know that what we are saying is the *simple truth*. Then, how long are the living going to remain among the dead?

Turn to the New Testament, and follow the church from Pentecost day; and you cannot fail to see that God's great purpose is to have a separated people unto Himself. "All that believed were together" (Acts ii. 44). They were not mixed up with the ungodly. No. They "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and the prayers" (Acts ii. 42, R. V.). Where were the unconverted? They were outside. "Of the rest durst no man join himself to them" (Acts v. 13). "Being let go, they went to their

own company" (Acts iv. 23). We find no such thing as the early disciples sitting down with Caiaphas the high priest and his company, to confer about God's work. How could John and Peter have sat down with the enemies of Christ, and treated them as if they were His friends? "Impossible!" you say. But what was impossible *then* seems to be quite possible *now!* for you find undoubted children of God sitting at "the sacrament" with undoubted enemies of Christ—men who can laugh at conversion and the new birth, and with whom spiritual conversation is an impossibility! Does Scripture ever warrant us to hand the bread and cup of the holy communion to the enemies of God? Never. The world seems determined to have its "religion" and its "sacrament." Very well; let it have them. But what is your place, O child of heaven? It is *outside* the whole thing. God *has* separated you from the world. He has put the Cross of Christ between you and the world. He never placed you in a fellowship composed of the living and the dead—the friends and the enemies of Christ. To all in such fellowships the word of the Lord is: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

—♦—

NOTHING can justify hasty and fleshly action. Circumstances may be trying; but "sufficient" grace is promised. We do not well to be angry. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

AGAG IS SPARED.

SAUL spared Agag (1 Sam. xv. 9). The Lord had commanded that the king of the Amalekites should be slain. Yet Saul spared him. Some may affect to see but little in this sparing of Agag. To them it may look as if a certain gentleness of character shines out in Saul, in this hesitation to take the sword. There is compassion, certainly; but it is a mere fleshly compassion—the compassion that the flesh ever has for the flesh. Agag was devoted to destruction; and Saul was commanded to carry out the divine purpose. But he failed—signally failed; and immediately the prophet delivers the startling message: “Thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel” (1 Sam. xv. 26). It could be no light offence that led to such dire consequences; although, to the careless observer, it may seem as if no great offence had been committed. Yet he must be a very careless reader of the word who fails to see that Saul deliberately rejected the commandment of the Lord. He was told to take his sword and destroy, and “spare not.” Nevertheless, he “spared” no less a person than Agag the king of the Amalekites. Saul’s arm seemed to tremble to take the sword against Agag. And why did it tremble? Because the fleshly arm cannot wield the sword of the Lord. There was too much of a kindred nature between the two men, to permit Saul to take the sword and

hew Agag in pieces. If we are walking in the flesh ourselves, we shall be very little inclined to hew the flesh in pieces. In this respect, Saul’s successors are legion. They sit upon the throne of judgment, professedly to carry out the word of the Lord. But their arm trembles to take the sword. Evil remains unjudged. Spiritual Agags walk at large. If we are not laying the sword of the Lord to our own ways, how can we lay it to the ways of others? Paralysed by the consciousness that we are not in God’s presence, we may well tremble to take His sword, and hew the evils that abound among the saints. If we are not walking in the light of His searching presence, we shall be devoid of the power, and perhaps even of the will, to wield His sword.

But see the strange contrast here. Saul refused to slay the enemies of Israel at the Lord’s command. Yet he is the very man who, with no command from the Lord, could mercilessly massacre fourscore and five of the Lord’s priests in one day! (1 Sam. xxii. 18). Where is his compassion now? He is appearing in his true colours; and his tender mercies are cruel. His own servants refused to do the deed of blood. But Doeg, the Edomite herdman (true descendant of Esau), carried out the awful work. Saul seems entirely unmoved during the great tragedy. Yet that is the very man whose fleshly compassion spared the head of that people whom Scripture ever shows to be the determined enemies of the people of God.

They who refuse to take the sword to carry out the Lord's mind, will be found wielding it to carry out their own purpose. If we refuse to judge that which the Lord calls us to judge, we will sooner or later be found condemning that which God approves. A compassion that is not of God will soon manifest itself. Agag may be spared to-day; but the priests of the Lord will be slain to-morrow. Many in these days profess to be so charitable that they "must not judge" that which is evil. Yet they do not hesitate to judge and oppose that which is according to God! Let us see that we do not read Saul's history in vain. Let us apply the sword of the word to our own hearts and ways. Then, with a firm hand, we will judge that which is not of God. A true heaven-born compassion will ever seek to carry out what God has commanded, and will never be found hewing in pieces that which God approves.

DENYING SELF.

WE are either denying *self*, or we are denying *Christ*. Look at the case of Peter (Matt. xxvi. 74). We find him saying, "I know not the man." He denied that he knew *Christ*; whereas, he should have denied that he knew *Peter*. Suppose one comes to you and says hard things about some person in America, whom you know nothing about, you would be calm and unmoved. Why? Simply because you do *not know* that person in America. You would not

feel "cut," neither would you lose your temper over the matter. You would quietly reply: "I know not the man." But suppose some one says these hard things about *you*, what a difference *that* would make! What would your answer be then? You *ought* certainly to say, "I know not the man"—that is, "I know not self." Thus you could afford to be calm and unmoved. You once knew self; but, now that you have died in Christ, you know self no more. You therefore positively deny that you know the man (self); and seeing you do not know the man, you cannot take offence at anything said about the man. This is what Peter should have done. But, instead of denying Peter, he denied Christ.

VERSES LEFT AT THE HOUSE OF WILLIAM ———, TROON, N.B.

WHEN to Troon on the work of the Lord
I did roam,
Where few I did know in the flesh,
A father and daughter shared with me their home,
And my spirit did much refresh.
They gave me a bed where to pillow my head,
And my wants they did all supply,
Though my Master had in His wanderings sad
On a mountain side to lie.

Lord, bless the father, and spare him long,
That a *Gaius* he may be,
And bless the daughter, and make her strong
In the grace that is in Thee.
May their dwelling be like Bethany,
A place of calm retreat,
Where Christ as Lord, served and ador'd,
Shall rest in blessing sweet.

W. B.

SOME OLD REMINISCENCES.

“**F**IFTY people at the meeting; and nobody to speak to them.” Such was the message I received one Tuesday night, some fourteen years ago, as I stepped off the last train for the day. There had been a work of the Lord in the town. A good number had professed to be saved; and it was believed that the usual Tuesday night’s “kitchen” meeting would not hold the people. At least old brother F—thought so. So he had taken the school “on his own account,” as no one’s faith, save his own, seemed to be bigger than the “kitchen.” When I reached the school, sure enough the fifty people were there (and fifty was considered a large number in those days). Old brother F—was expounding the *fifty-first* Psalm. I reckoned him a “host” in himself. Yet, when he saw me opening the door, he drew his remarks to a close, and said that his “young friend” would now address the meeting. I had scarcely reckoned on this. But seeing I was thus publicly intimated, and that my help was evidently wanted, I stepped up to the platform, gave out a hymn, and then delivered my “address.” In those days the preaching could not be called able or clever. Indeed, it has been a wonder to not a few how such wonderful results followed on such “ordinary” preaching. But the secret of it all was simply this: Our hearts were on fire for Christ. We were in earnest for souls. We believed men were perishing, and that Christ was ready to save them with a free and eternal salvation. We were firmly convinced of the realities of heaven and hell. We believed; therefore we spoke. The preaching in those days had very little of what is popularly

known as “eloquence.” But, if the preaching lacked the eloquence of smooth-flowing sentences, there was no lack of the eloquence of earnestness and reality. *That* seemed to be the eloquence that had power with God and prevailed. “You must be born again” —“You must come *to Jesus*; you must come *as you are*; and you must come *now*.” These and such-like proclamations formed the burden of the preacher’s address. It seems wonderful how the people sat so patiently—yea, so eagerly—and listened. Yet they listened; and they came back. A strange power seemed to draw them to that spot. What was it that drew them? I believe it was the power of God. Those who were carrying on the work were *all for Christ*. There was a remarkable consecration among us in those days. When I say “us,” I refer to all then known as “the Lord’s people;” for the rest of the believers had at once found their way to the Tuesday-night meeting. They saw that God was with the effort; and I think it was the second night that found us all together. There was neither time nor inclination for worldly conformity in any shape. Things freely indulged in by believers now, would not have found a footing at that time. Intense earnestness was the great feature in the things of God. The world saw it: they could not fail to see it. Nothing has so much effect on the world as reality; and there is nothing the world so utterly rejects as an empty profession of zeal for God. At the period to which we refer, the believers were so *steeped* in the glorious realities of God’s kingdom, that *conversion* and *the Lord’s work* were the ordinary topics of conversation. The world saw that there was something in it. What was the result? The result was, that we had *more* than fifty

the next Tuesday night, when brother F— gave the address. The meeting increased every week, until, even on a long summer night, you might have seen the school filled to the door with an eager and attentive audience. Many were saved. Conversions were constantly looked for; nor did we look in vain. The word was with power. In the very atmosphere of the meetings there seemed to be a melting tenderness; while, in our intercourse with each other, “the kindness and the courtesy of love” prevailed to such a degree, that it was nothing less than “heaven upon earth” to be gathered together in the Lord’s presence. The meeting in the kitchen was now a thing of the past. Even the school itself was sometimes found too small for the numbers that flocked to hear the word. The Lord’s people were no longer a mere handful. The time soon came when a Believers’ Tea-Meeting completely filled the school. Truly we might say, “What hath God wrought!” It is not a very remarkable thing to have a large meeting on Lord’s-day nights. But, when we see a well-filled Gospel meeting on a *week night*, from one end of the year to the other, we may surely conclude that God is there.

We rejoice to hear of places where the scenes of fourteen years ago are being enacted to-day. But what shall be said of those places where the light has faded, and the fire almost gone out? Shall we not get down on our faces before God, and cry that we may see His power and glory, as we have seen Him in the sanctuary in times now gone? (Ps. lxxiii. 2). Nothing is too hard for the Lord. But let us remember that there must be a consecration of heart before there can be a testimony of power, such as we have seen in bygone days.

“LIKE TO.”

Lines suggested by our Lord’s words in Matt. xiii. 31, &c.

Like the mighty ocean,

Is Thy wond’rous love to sinful me,
Unfathomable, infinite, and free :
O, teach me of its fulness, that I may
Reflect it in life’s journey, day by day.

Like a constellation,

Shining ’mid the darkness of the night :
Thus may I shine, and thus diffuse the light
Of God the Sun, in this dark world of sin,
Till Jesus come, and heaven I enter in.

Like a helpless infant,

I would come, my Lord, to Thee to-day :
Strength have I none ; O then, be Thou my stay
Till life be past, and I no longer roam
In this vale funereal, so far from home.

Like a weary Pilgrim,

In a stranger’s land, weak and forlorn,
Yet pressing onward, for he knows the morn
Of glory bright shall end his days of care.
The pilgrim-journey ended—ended there,
Sweet goal of all my hopes, I sigh for thee
Amidst the storm ; O how I long to be
Within those gates of pearl, there to sing
The endless praises of my Lord the King !
O ye blest realms of everlasting day,
Where pilgrim garbs are laid aside for aye,
Where sorrow, sighing, tears, can never come,
And weary ones enjoy the rest of *home*—
Where Jesus is—my heart is also there ;
And, blessed hope ! I know I soon shall share
With Him this joy, this ecstasy untold—
Joy which Eternity can ne’er unfold.
This hope sustains me in my labour here ;
Then who can be against me?—shall I fear
What man can do to me ? Nay, but His name
I will confess, who bore the guilt and shame
Due unto me, till I with earth have done ;
And *then*, the contest o’er, the battle won,
My crown I’ll cast before the Saviour’s feet,
Ascribe to Him all glory, for ’tis meet
That He who suffered in my stead should be
My theme of praise throughout eternity.

R. P. A.

I DON'T CARE WHAT PEOPLE THINK.

YOU may have heard a believer say: "I don't care what people think about me."

Now, everything depends on the sense in which such words are used. They may be used by a worldly believer; or they may be used by a spiritual believer. But in each case the words mean a very different thing. For example, a worldly believer is admonished as to his conformity to the world, and shown how his conduct will cause others to stumble. He does not care to be interfered with. So he puts on an air of boldness and declares that *he* doesn't care what people think about him. But he ought to care; for Scripture warns us against worldly conformity. And he ought to care, because many may follow his example. Moreover, he professes to be separated to the Lord; and his practice contradicts his profession. Therefore his declaration that he does not care what people think, is simply a declaration of his own callousness.

But yonder is a believer who has consecrated himself to the Lord. He is determined to walk in the narrow path of separation to God. Opposition is aroused. Carnal believers call him "righteous overmuch." They would rather he would pat them on the back in their worldliness. But he does no such thing. His separated walk condemns them. They "come down" on him for being so "strait-laced." But in a sense he does not care what they think of him.

In other words, he has God's approval; therefore he cares not for man's censure.

You thus see that the expression, "I don't care what people think," may mean two very different things. If we are doing the things that please God, we may well be regardless of the opinion of others. But if we are conforming to the world, or walking in the flesh, it is high time we were aroused up to consider, not only what man may think of us, but what God thinks of us.

DISCERNETH ALL THINGS.

HE that is spiritual discerneth all things (1 Cor. ii. 15). The spiritual man is a man of discernment. He is not easily "imposed upon" in the things of God. He sees through the mere outward tinsel of what professes to be from heaven, and comes rapidly to a conclusion as to whether any of the real gold of heaven is there. While others are "carried away" by something that professes to be of God, the spiritual man weighs the whole matter in the scales of the sanctuary, and refuses to be carried away by the popular current. He is called uncharitable, peculiar, narrow-minded. Nevertheless, he keeps on his way. The popular current is evidently against him. But he cares not, if God be with him. He is condemned at man's judgment-seat. But he ever appeals to a higher court—the Judgment-seat of Christ, and calmly waits the issue.

DEAR-BOUGHT EXPERIENCE.

THERE is such a thing as men "reading their sin in their punishment." That is to say, men will often go on in an evil course, without thinking it evil at all, until punishment overtakes them. Then, in suffering the "due reward" of their deeds, they see the heinous nature of their offence. Thus the worldling often finds out that the way of transgressors is hard. But even the believer may find out in the same way that it is an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord (Jer. ii. 19). Many a saint continues in departure from the Lord, until he begins to reap the fruit of that departure. One thing after another goes against him. Everything seems to go wrong. What does it all mean? He can bear it no longer. He is fairly compelled to go into the Lord's presence, and see what it all means. And lo! he discovers that he has been completely away in heart from the Lord. No sooner does he attempt truly to speak with God than he finds that he has been away from God. He sees at once that there must be humiliation, and confession, and turning again to the Lord. He "reads his sin in his punishment"; and even that is something to be thankful for. But it is far better to find out a wrong path *before we tread it* than *after we have got to the end of it*. Our God is willing to lead us in the right way. Are we willing to be led? If we are determined to have *our* way, we need not be surprised if we find it hedged up with

thorns and briars. Are we willing to be taught of God? Great is their peace who are thus taught (Isa. liv. 13).

MINT, AND ANISE, AND CUMMIN.

ENDEAVOUR by God's grace to bring even the little details of your walk into keeping with God's Word. You will find something there to guide you in many matters of "minor importance," if you take the pains to *search*. When you thus bring the Word to bear on your walk in outward things, very likely some will call it the tithing of mint, and anise, and cummin (Matt. xxiii. 23). But the Lord Jesus did not *condemn* the tithing of the mint, and anise, and cummin, as some seem to think. He said that these were not to be left *undone*, while the weightier matters of the law ought to be *done*. Therefore the passage in question gives no countenance to carelessness in little details. We profess to be a heavenly people, and to be only pilgrims and strangers here. Why, then, should not our whole manner of life proclaim that we are not of this world? It will help us to order our conversation aright if we seek to remember that we are a people whom God hath separated unto Himself as His peculiar treasure, and that we are to walk in wisdom toward them that are without.

"Oh, child of God, keep no company with any one with whom you cannot kneel at the throne of grace, and speak freely about your blessed Master."

TWO MARKS.

IN the words which the angel addressed to Zacharias, as recorded in Luke i. 19, there are two things which must be true, in measure, of all who seek to deliver God's message. In answer to the aged priest, the angel said, "I am Gabriel that *stand in the presence of God*; and *am sent*." These two great marks will ever characterise a heaven-bestowed ministry. The true minister of Jesus Christ is one who stands in the presence of God. He may be able to point back to a clear conversion, and to certain wonderful things which the Lord has wrought through him in the past. But he does not rest in these things. Past unction does not confer present power. He *stands* in the presence of God. He does not seek the Lord's presence merely at special times—living carelessly for days, and then making desperate efforts to get into God's presence as the time approaches when he has to address a meeting. No. He stands in the presence of God. That is his habitual dwelling-place. So is it with the Lord's true messengers, be they heavenly or earthly.

But there is a second mark—"And *am sent*." God's ministers are all *sent*. An earthly ambassador is a very powerless individual, except he be *sent*. Indeed, he is no ambassador at all, unless he has been sent by the king or government for whom he professes to act. Earthly ambassadors are all *sent*. And so are the ambassadors of heaven.

So clear is Scripture on this point that the question is asked, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15). "There was a man *sent* from God, whose name was John" (Jno. i. 6). John was "sent"—therefore his word was with power. He did not run in vain. Moses was sent (Ex. iii. 14); Jeremiah was sent (Jer. i. 7); Paul was sent (Acts xxii. 21). But, indeed, all the Lord's ambassadors have been sent—from the Sent One of God, down to the humblest servant that bears a message from the throne.

You may educate a man—you may give him all the learning of a university, and then put your hands on his head, and go through the form of declaring him an ambassador of heaven. But *that* will not make him an ambassador of heaven. Some speak as if Greek and Latin and Logic could purchase the Holy Spirit of God, and as if the sovereign Lord of heaven is *bound* to "send" a man simply because he has passed through a college! But God will not be dictated to in this manner; and while men are sending forth religious ambassadors as fast as the colleges can turn them out, the Lord is equipping and sending forth those whom *He* hath chosen to deliver His message. Yet, while the religious world has taken the "sending" into its own hand, let us see that we do not attempt to take the sending out of God's hand. We must put no premium on ignorance. We must not fancy, because we are unlearned men, that *therefore* the Lord is obligated to

make us His ambassadors. The Lord will send *those whom He chooses* to send; and, while He will be dictated to by none, yet His sent ones are all taken from a "select circle," and that is the circle of those who *stand in the presence of God*. Outside that circle, men may have "Rev." to their names, and a great many capital letters. Yet they run unsent; and to all such the word of the Lord is, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran" (Jer. xxiii. 21). You may be ignorant of what is called "heathen mythology" (myths and legends of ancient history); but if you are sent of God—however humble your sphere of service—you will not be ignorant of God's mind, nor of God's presence. Thus, then, we have endeavoured to point out the two great characteristics of a minister of Christ—he *stands in God's presence*, and is *sent*.

CLEAN VESSELS.

O engage in the work of the Lord with a guilty conscience, will assuredly lead to the possession of a hardened conscience. We may say to ourselves that "the work *must* be done." We may soothe ourselves by the reflection that it is better to be done by us than not to be done at all. Yet, if we have a guilty conscience, there is no "must" in the question, so far as we are concerned, except it be that the work *must not* be done by us. God hath said, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of

the Lord" (Isa. lii. 11). We need not try to explain away such a plain declaration of the divine mind on this all-important subject. It may be that certain work for God *must* be done. But, if it is done according to God, it will be done by one in communion with Himself. A guilty conscience ill befits the service of the Holy One.

LINES WRITTEN ON A £1 NOTE.

A PIECE of paper now you hold,
'Tis nothing more as you perceive;
But, "on demand" by it you're told
That "twenty shillings you'll receive."
To claim the silver you are bold,
Because you trust to what you're told.
So God this promise gives to thee,
That, "If on Christ you will believe,
From all your sins you shall be free,
And everlasting life receive."
To make it yours, why not be bold?
And simply rest on what you're told.

Also the following:

This piece of paper in your hand
Declares to you that "on demand
You twenty shillings shall receive."
This simple promise you believe:
It puts your mind as much at rest
As if the silver you possess'd.
So Christ, who died, but now doth live,
Doth unto you this promise give,
That, "If you in His name believe
You shall eternal life receive."
Upon the first you calmly rest:
Which is the surest and the best?
The bank may fail; Heaven never can;
'Tis safer trusting God than man.

W. B.

IMMERSION ADMITTED.

HERE can be no doubt that the doctrine of Believers' Baptism is causing some thought in many quarters at the present time. A college professor, in a public lecture, recently declared that "*no doubt baptism means immersion, and is immersion.*" This is strong language for a professor; but it is not a bit stronger than Scripture warrants. In fact, not a few of the most learned men in the denominations are finding out that infant sprinkling has not an inch of ground to stand upon. Some find out this, and keep it a profound secret from their congregations; going on sprinkling the unconscious infants as if they had chapter and verse for the whole ceremony. Others find it out; and boldly declare that "baptism means immersion, and is immersion." Some now will very likely be beginning to think that Believers' Baptism is right after all, seeing a college professor says it. But *God's word* says it, and has said it all along; and that is surely enough for the believer.

But why is Believers' Baptism so determinedly resisted by the religious world? Simply because that ordinance would do away with infant sprinkling; and what is more popular than infant sprinkling? If you take infant sprinkling away from the religious world, it may well be asked, What would they have left? Almost nothing; for you would thereby close up the "door" by which the child is supposed to enter the church,

or the Saviour's presence (if death should intervene). But we know that there is no such door—that there is no entrance whatever by the baptismal font, and that there are no privileges whatever conferred through the symbolic water.

In some quarters we are told that Baptism should never be mentioned. Yet in a periodical from one of these quarters we see Baptism mentioned; and not only mentioned, but infant sprinkling is defended, and Believers' Baptism resisted as unscriptural! So, while we are counselled *never to mind* Baptism, the opponents of believer's immersion are quietly putting their views into print, and teaching that infant sprinkling is of God! No one need therefore wonder that we should refer to the subject here. Young believers (yes, and not a few old ones) are wanting light as to Baptism; and many more are *needing* light. In defending infant sprinkling the religious world is evidently feeling that it has a weak case; seeing even its own prophets are found on the opposite side, and declaring that Baptism means immersion and is immersion.

"ONE ANOTHER."

- LOVE one another (John xiii. 34).
 Wash one another's feet (John xiii. 14).
 Bear ye one another's burdens (Gal. vi. 2).
 Forbearing one another in love (Eph. iv. 2; Col. iii. 13).
 Exhort one another daily (Heb. iii. 13).
 Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works (Heb. x. 24).

R. S. M.

Second Edition of Poetry Leaflets—We have added *nine* new Leaflets to our Poetry list, making a variety of *fifteen* in the packet—all Poetry. These have been selected with care, and we humbly think that the packet will be found acceptable. The Edition has been printed on fine paper, in manifold tints, and free from imperfections that we observed in the first Edition. Each packet contains 100 Leaflets (15 different kinds).

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THE

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Vol. II.

TWO KINDS OF EXPERIENCE.

THE highest Christian experience must ever find its centre in "attachment to the person of Christ." We find two kinds of experience in the home at Bethany (Jno. xi.). In Martha we have a type of those who are wholly absorbed in *work for Christ*; while in Mary we have a representative of those whose leading feature is *attachment to the person of Christ*. To be engaged in work for Christ is a blessed privilege; and, indeed, we believe there is something seriously wrong with the believer who can find nothing whatever to do for the Lord. At the same time, we must mark the difference between *servicing*, and being *cumbered with much servicing*. Martha was "cumbered with much servicing." It was quite right that she should serve. The work required to be done. They had a distinguished Guest beneath their roof; and it was only fitting that a table should be spread for "The Master"—a title which we find in use at Bethany (ver. 28), and a title by which it is believed He was generally known among the inner circle of His own.

"The Master," then, was there; and we need not wonder if Martha (reputed

to be the mistress of the house) should have tried to "excel herself" in preparing for that One whom they all loved. Perhaps she might have been allowed to pursue her work without interruption, had she not claimed the Master's help to compel her sister to take a share of the household duties. Truly Martha was "cumbered"; for cumbered service is murmuring service. If our service is not the service of communion, we are sure to fret under it, and to be found grumbling that we are left to do so much, while others seem to do so little. On the other hand, the service of communion finds everything as light as a feather—is ever treading fields of freedom and delight—rejoicing in the heaviest of burdens, and never found saying, "Why is brother So-and-so doing so little, while I am doing so much?"

When service grows "cumbersome," we may be sure that we are giving service, and not Christ, the highest place. "One thing is needful"—needful above all others; and that is, to *sit* at the Master's feet. Are we so busy that we have no time to *sit*? If so, verily we are busier far than the Lord would have us to be. We may go through a great amount of work, while we know very

little about being taken up with the Master Himself. Work of that kind may be of great bulk—"wood, hay, stubble." It may impose upon men; but it will not impose upon the Lord. He wants *us*: then all we are, and all we have, shall be His. If we put *service* first, then Christ will be in the wrong place—a second place. But if we give Christ His true place—if we take our place at His feet, we will not be found standing idle in the vineyard. We believe it is simply an impossibility to be taken up with the person of Christ, and yet to be doing nothing *for* Christ. Love is inventive; and where it cannot find a way it will *make* one (2 Sam. xxiii. 16). Where there seems to be nothing to do, love will *find* work, and needs no command to bring the box of precious ointment (Jno. xii. 3).

Mary *sat* at His feet. There let us sit. Service, and everything else, must just "stand still" for a time. *One* thing is needful. That "good part" must be our deliberate choice. Then our service, little and obscure though it may be, shall be instinct with new life, and all aglow with new fire. Although we may say only a few words for the Master, yet these few words will go a long way. Like the few loaves and fishes that passed through the Master's hand, they shall feed many. No longer "cumbered," no longer casting a reproachful eye at fellow-servants, we shall tread the path of our little service, finding in the Master's smile our highest reward, and in His presence our chiefest joy.

FAITH'S MESSAGE.

WHAT wonderful faith we see in the wording of the message: "He whom Thou lovest is sick"! (Jno. xi. 3). There is no eager request to come without delay. The sisters of Bethany knew our Lord so well, that they could *trust Him*; for "they that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee" (Ps. ix. 10). Hence the simple message, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." That was enough. They need not dictate to the Master what He ought to do. True intimacy with Christ will never lead to presumption. A false intimacy will give a seeming boldness to prayer, reminding us of the saying that when some people are praying they *tell* the Lord what to do, instead of humbly beseeching Him for His help. A true intimacy with Christ will teach us our true place in relation to Christ. Love reigned at Bethany; and we know that love "doth not behave itself unseemly" (1 Cor. xiii. 5). It was enough to spread the matter before the Master, and leave it there. Nor did they leave it there in vain. True, their faith was called to pass through a severe trial; yet in due time they saw that they had not trusted the Lord in vain. There is surely a hint for us in the simple message, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." How often do we take some difficulty to the Lord, and explain to Him what He is to do to take us out of it; instead of spreading the matter before the Lord and leaving it there!

JOAB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST.

SOME men rise to a position of eminence, because they are good men. Their own excellencies bear them upward, in spite of themselves. Others come into prominence, merely by what is called "a lucky combination of circumstances." Men of a low cast of mind, they yet watch their chance, and by some bold stroke at the right moment they gain a position which their own virtues could never have secured. Such an one was Joab the mighty general, at whose name nations were wont to tremble. A mere glance at his history in the sacred page would almost leave the impression that he was a mighty man for the God of Israel. But, to the careful reader, Joab stands revealed as the bold, bad man, who does not stop short even of murder itself, in order to gain his own ends and maintain his own position in Israel. But how did he gain his position as captain of the host? One verse gives us the whole history of his sudden accession to power. "And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruah went first up, and was chief" (1 Chron. xi. 6). This was just the very chance that a man like Joab would be waiting for. He saw before him a short way, if not an easy one, to the highest position he could hope to reach in Israel. Another opportunity might not occur in a lifetime. The prize was a tempting one—"Shall be chief and captain." For whom should this honour be reserved,

but for himself? Doubtless thus he spoke in his heart, like Haman of a later day (Esth. vi. 6), but with far more assurance of success than that descendant of Agag. *He* sought to reach the pinnacle of greatness by plotting and scheming; but, although Joab was a master in these arts, yet it was by valour alone that the stronghold of Zion was to be taken, and the captain's crown secured. It is certain that Joab possessed high qualities as a leader of the host. Yet, with these high qualities of *head*, there was a depravity of *heart*, that completely unfitted him for commanding the army of Jehovah's chosen people. For once, the path was open to that coveted position. By striking one determined blow, the position might be reached. Joab staked all—and won. The Jebusites were smitten, and Joab was captain of the host.

To all appearances the new general had honestly won his laurels. Yet, a single glance behind the scenes reveals envy, ambition, and revenge, doing their deadly work. Joab was a man that could not bear a rival. Other men were good enough, provided they took a place *second* to him. But if any one, by force of his own excellencies, should appear to eclipse Joab, that was a thing that could never be tolerated. Joab was determined to be the leader of the army; and he was prepared to use *any* means to gain this end. One man stood in his way—Abner the son of Ner, "a prince and a great man in Israel" (2 Sam. iii. 38). Doubtless that was the very reason why

Joab hated him. Had Abner been an obscure Israelite, he would have aroused no envy. But to be "a great man in Israel" was an unpardonable offence; for Joab's ambition was to be the greatest, even next to the king. Therefore, Abner must be put out of the way. Joab first represents him to the king as a deceiver (2 Sam. iii. 25); then, under the guise of pretended friendship, gives the fatal stab; and Abner is no more. An excuse was easily found—revenge for the death of Asahel (2 Sam. iii. 27). But such an excuse could be nothing more than a cloak to hide the real motive—jealousy of Abner's position in Israel; for, had Abner lived, he might have been captain of the host!

Thus it was that Joab climbed into power. And thus it is that many in this present day climb into power in the church. There are men who are determined to have a prominent place among the saints, and who, like Joab, cannot bear a rival. If one arises, upon whom the Spirit of God so manifestly rests that the saints hang upon his words, men of the Joab type are alarmed. They cannot bear to hear brother So-and-so extolled as a powerful preacher, or a wonderful man of God. They feel that their sun must go down as his sun rises. He must increase, while they decrease. They will not stand it. Means must be taken to resist Abner. He is at once represented as a deceiver. Stabs are given—though not with steel; and over the tarnished reputation of righteous Abner, Joab's many climb into power in

the church, or into a position of influence in the Lord's work. But it is all for the glory of God, we are told, and for the sake of the truth, and for the good of Israel. So we are told. But our God needs not the carnal weapons of plotting and scheming and evil-speaking, to carry out His counsels. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Joab may flatter himself that Israel could not get on very well without him. Yet, how does he stand with David himself. Truly the king of Israel had no pleasure in him. "These men," he said, "the sons of Zeruah be too hard for me" (2 Sam. iii. 39). Yet Joab was captain of the host! It surely becomes us to search ourselves and see that we are not manifesting the Joab character. Let us not fancy that his successors are found only in high positions. Wherever envy is allowed to set up its throne, there you will find a successor of Joab. Do we rejoice in the prosperity of our brethren? Are we glad to hear that brother So-and-so has come into a little fortune? Or is there a dull feeling of disappointment at the heart, that it did not fall to us? Do we rejoice that yon other brother is being owned of God in the conversion of souls, and that the scene of sister So-and-so's humble labours has the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed? Such simple tests as these will tell us in how far we are followers of Joab. Christ says, "Rejoice with Me." But envy cannot rejoice with Him. Joab's successors rejoice only in their own exaltation.

GROANING UNDER THE YOKE.

WE have very little concern with what is called the religious world. Indeed, we would have no concern whatever, were it not for the undoubted children of God who are scattered among its various denominations. We feel that we are bound to them by the ties of a common brotherhood. Wherever there is a manifestation of the life of Christ, we cannot fail to recognise the family likeness, and to rejoice in the family relationship, whether the brother be a Presbyterian, or a Baptist, or called by any other name. Among the various sects there are not a few believers who are endeared unto us by many a tender tie. But the dearer they are to us, the more do we desire to see them delivered from sectarian bondage—throwing off every man-devised name, and rejoicing in that one great Name which Scripture declares to be sufficient to gather together in one all the scattered children of God. We have no desire to give any of our dear brethren a “cut,” merely because we happen to differ from them. Far be the thought. We long to see them delivered from the traditions of men; and carrying out in simplicity what they find written in the Word. This longing is all the more reasonable, seeing that not a few of our brethren in the sects are literally *groaning* under the worldly conformity by which they are surrounded on every side. We look upon this as a healthy and promising sign. It is

clear that the unequal yoke is being felt; and we rejoice to know that it is being testified against. In a “trip” by the “church workers” of a certain denomination, no sooner had they set out than it was proposed to have a song—a song of the world, of course. But a young brother was there, happy in Jesus’ love, and grieved to see professed Christian workers going down to Egypt for joy. He immediately protested, declaring that if the world’s songs were to be there, he would not be there. This rather astonished the company. Indeed it “spoiled the fun” for that day. Why? Because the great mass of these so-called “*Christian workers*” were *unconverted!* On the broad way that leads to destruction, they yet professed to teach others the way to heaven, and lead the praises of the Lord! What a picture we have here of the religious world—singing the world’s song on Saturday and the Lord’s song on Sunday! But such things are getting quite common. Sometimes fiddles and dancing are added, to make a more attractive entertainment; and, if a child of God protests, he is reckoned “a narrow-minded individual.” We do not wonder that on the occasion of one of these “trips” a believer shook the dust off his feet, as a testimony against them, and left the company. This is so far good; and we would like to see far more dust being shaken off. But if the dust is to be shaken off on Saturday, why not shake it off on Sunday? Our brethren are groaning under the dead weight of

worldliness that surrounds them in the denominations. But are such scenes as we have referred to, not sufficient to show that the whole thing is *of the world*, and that Sunday's worship is simply a little performance of religion to soothe the world's conscience and square accounts for another week? It is strange that this is not seen at a glance. Why sit on Sunday in the act of "worship" with those whose ungodliness we condemn on Saturday? The same truth that separates us on one day separates us on every day. We trust that the increasing worldliness of the religious world will have its proper effect on God's people that are there—that every new abomination will be another voice crying in their ear: "Arise, and flee: what fellowship hath light with darkness?"

STEALING THE PROMISES.

THERE is such a thing as "stealing the promises"—that is, taking some precious "text" of Scripture and coolly putting it in our pocket, while the passage in question does not apply to us at all. Thus, you will hear believers say, "You know the Lord has promised that the peace of God will keep our hearts and minds by Christ Jesus." Very true; but *only upon certain conditions*. Let the passage be quoted in full, and we find that a *precept* is joined to the promise. The precept runs thus: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanks-

giving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. iv. 6). Then follows the promise: "*And the peace of God . . . shall keep,*" &c. It is therefore clear that such a promise is not the property of *all* God's people. It is *only* to those who are careful for nothing, and who by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make their requests known unto God. Many claim the promise of the Lord's *manifested* presence, and ground their claim upon the words, "I will manifest myself to him" (Jno. xiv. 21). But the promise here is not for *all* God's people. It is only for those who *have His commandments and keep them*. If we are not keeping His commandments, the Lord's manifested presence will not be ours. In such circumstances we may claim the promise; but it will be a mere empty claim. The promises are being stolen on the right hand and on the left. But it is one thing to *steal* the promises through presumption; and it is quite another thing to *obtain* them by faith and obedience. Stolen promises, like stolen goods, are dangerous merchandise. Nothing can have a more withering effect upon the soul than the practice of seizing the most precious promises of Scripture and compelling them to minister to our "comfort," while we are deliberately despising the precepts that can alone make these promises ours.

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IMPATIENCE under God's corrections only shows our need of the discipline He is pleased to visit us with. We can least bear correction when we most need it.

OBEYING THE TRUTH.

A BROTHER writes us that he and others are mourning over the low state of spiritual life among the saints in his locality. "And," he says, "I am convinced that one cause of it, if not the main one, is the general disregard of some of the plainest truths the Lord has given us, viz., 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth'—'Love your enemies'—'Speak not evil one of another.' Conscience needs to be aroused on these sadly neglected truths."

We have no doubt that not a few will give a hearty "Amen" to our brother's remarks. It is really lamentable to see how certain truths are idolized, while other truths are treated with the most profound indifference; yet we take our stand upon "unswerving obedience" to Scripture. We preach to others that to obey is better than sacrifice, and that there can be no blessing apart from obedience. This is quite true. But obedience to what? To a *select few* of the commandments of our Lord? Nay, verily. The word "obedience" reaches a far wider field than some are apt to think. We have no right to take our pencil and mark off certain passages of Scripture, and say, "*Obedience to these constitutes obedience to the truth.*" We do not seek to justify any neglect of any precept of Scripture. We have no sympathy with those who hold that obedience is not an important matter, and who feel at liberty to break the fifth commandment simply because some

other person breaks the tenth. Other people's inconsistencies can never justify us if we are inconsistent. Other people's disobedience can never give us a license to neglect any command of Christ. What we do mean is this, that if we take our stand upon "unswerving obedience" to Scripture, let us be consistent, and esteem all His precepts concerning *all* things to be right (Ps. cxix. 128). Separation unto God means separation from everything forbidden in His word. We do not say that we have heard too much about certain truths; but it does seem as if we have heard too little about certain other truths. In some quarters, if you give your assent to certain doctrines, and outwardly conform to a certain order of things, you are reckoned an obedient and orderly believer, although you are in the last stage of spiritual consumption, and a very slave of worldliness! You will hear preachers hewing certain forms of doctrinal evil in pieces, while moral evil and popular sins escape without a scratch! What is the result of such preaching? Only evil, and that continually. The result is simply this, that professed believers are puffed up with the idea that they are the people and wisdom shall die with them (Job xii. 2). They are so flattered by the preacher's address that they make themselves believe they are living in the third heaven of privilege, while the truth is, that if a John the Baptist were to come in and deliver God's message, he would be rejected without ceremony! What is the remedy for all this? We reply, Let the

word of truth be *rightly divided*. Let the *whole truth* of God be proclaimed. Let Bible Separation be sounded out in all its length and breadth. Many will be disturbed: that is to be expected. But the proclamation of the whole Truth will disturb only those who are walking in disobedience to its precepts.

BEHOLD WHAT LOVE!

MANY waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned" (S. of S. viii. 7). Such is the character of the love of Christ. His love stands out in clear contrast with mere natural love, which is but selfish at the best. The deep waters of Ps. lxxix. 2 could not quench this love. It could not be drowned by the floods of His enemies, although He reckoned these as more than the hairs of His head (ver. 4). Satan offered "all the substance of his house;" yet it was utterly contemned. The great enemy showed our Lord all the kingdoms of this world in a moment of time, and said, "If Thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be Thine" (Luke iv. 5-7). Never such substance had been offered to mortal before. But it was utterly contemned by the Lover of our souls. Well may we sing:

"'Twas love that sought Gethsemane,
Or Judas ne'er had found Him."

T. A.

THAT CONSIDERETH THE POOR.

SOME may not have observed the special deliverance mentioned at the beginning of the forty-first Psalm: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor (margin, the *weak* or *sick*): the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." All this wonderful blessedness is the portion of him that *considers* the weak, the sick, or the needy. Yet how often we plead with the Lord for deliverance in time of trouble, although we have not been "considering" the poor of the flock, in *their* time of trouble! Are there not needy ones, sick ones, to cherish? How often do we sit down to "consider" the case of yon poor brother who seems to have everything against him? Then, yonder is a sister lying on a bed of affliction, perhaps not needing our money, yet longing for some one to carry a cup of cold water in the Master's name. A word of comfort would be so welcome—a kindly enquiry—an expression of sympathy. Do we "consider" such lonely ones? If it is our custom—if we make it our business—to "consider" them in *their* time of trouble, our God hath said that we are blessed; and in *our* time of trouble He will come upon the wings of the wind to our help.

SUFFERING AND GLORY.

"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—
Rom. viii. 18.

THE Cross is present, but the Crown to come ;
The loss a trifle, but the gain a sum
Which the eternal balances shall mete
To worthy ones before the judgment-seat.
In measure then they shall the glory share
As now they suffer loss and trial bear :
The roughest cross the brightest crown shall gain,
The greatest loss the richest prize obtain.
The tear of sorrow for the Master shed
Shall then be oil of gladness on the head ;
Affliction's pangs shall all be justly weigh'd
And everlasting glory for them paid.
And as upon the bright rewards we gaze,
And hear the voice of God the faithful praise,
We'll wish that we a greater share had borne
Of earthly loss and trial, shame, and scorn.
Then let our eyes upon that moment rest,
And, if we are of earthly goods possess'd,
So utilise them for "the crowning day"
That He who shall be Judge to us will say,
"Well done, thou faithful one, to gild thy brow
The crown which thou hast earned is waiting now."
Treasures laid up above by pilgrims here,
Though small, shall then in heaven's light appear.
And if we are not blest with earthly store,
We still can give what God will value more :
"Give me thy heart," He says : a heart to love—
A heart unto the end to faithful prove.
Yea, all our ransomed being we can give
A sacrifice, devoted unto God to live.
And when from every living sacrifice
He'll loose the cords and bid the victims rise,
Our glory shall be great, and bright our crown,
As now love's cords are strong to bind us down.
Devotion is that seed which, sown below
To be admired, in heaven soon will grow.
'Tis passed by man unnoticed and unknown,
But angels prize it, and God smiles thereon.
'Tis often sweetest in the suffering saint
Who 'neath his burden weary is and faint,
Working that faith which makes the spirit rise

To things eternal, hid from mortal eyes—
Which looks to Jesus—to the end endures,
And glory of eternal weight procures,
Love never seeks the furnace to escape ;
Its dreaded heat the crown of life doth shape.
'Tis not the active and the world-renown'd,
Whose labours are with marked successes
crown'd ;
'Tis not the few, who can their thousands give,
And yet in ease and luxury can live ;
Nor yet the faithful unto mortal eyes,
Who in that day shall gain the richest prize.
The Lord has *hidden ones*, unseen by men,
Who by His hand shall be exalted then ;
Who, when no eye but His alone has seen,
Have over secret foes victorious been.
No record of their deeds on earth is found ;
And thereat first their names will strangely sound.
But He who watched them in affliction's hour,
Or struggling all alone with Satan's power,
To men and angels shall their deeds declare,
And own them worthy all His bliss to share ;
Yes, worthy though the world upon them frown'd—
The faithful, not the famous, shall be crown'd.
O "well-done" of the Master ! sweet reward !
To gain it what reproach or toil is hard ?
For it we willingly to suffer choose,
And all the world can give prefer to lose.
This earth is meant not for a resting place
To those whom God has rescued by His grace :
Why should we love a world which to our Lord
Could but a manger, cross, and grave afford ?
Or gather up with eager hand its dross
As if 'twere worth comparing with His Cross ?
'Tis easy now *Delilah's* lap to press ;
Then let us guard against the world's caress.
To court a human smile, or fear a frown,
May cause us yet in heaven to lose a crown.
As here the race for honour, fame, and power,
Is waxing hotter, swifter, every hour,
Let every saved one the reward respect—
In self-denying grace the cross accept ;
And, though it cost our all and give us pain,
'Twill be our title with the Lord to reign.

W. B.

LETTER ABOUT COVETOUSNESS.

ONE of the Lord's labourers, referring to our remarks on 'Love of Money' (June *Treasury*), says:

"I am persuaded that that enemy of the saints has not received the attention it deserves in these last evil days. Very much of the barrenness of saints and assemblies is due to covetousness. None but God knows the havoc it is working among the Lord's dear people everywhere; and, instead of being denounced, it is often praised in one or other of the many forms it takes in these times when evil is called good, and good called evil.

"Covetousness was the first sin that caused the triumphant hosts of Israel to flee before their enemies. When God is describing the wild grapes that Israel (the vine that He brought out of Egypt) was bringing forth, the first "*woe*" is to covetousness (see Isaiah v.). "*Woe unto them that join house to house,*" &c. As it was with God's earthly people Israel, so it has been with the church. Covetousness was the first sin that was manifested, bringing down the terrible judgment of God upon the covetous persons. And I doubt not that the judgment of God, both in saints and assemblies, is easily discerned by those who stand in the counsel of the Lord. Why is it that many brethren, highly gifted as speakers, do not seem to be a means of building up the saints or leading sinners to Christ? In very many cases the cause is covetousness; for we read, 'If ye have not been faithful in the

unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?' This is surely a most important question for every saint of God. Am I faithful in the unrighteous mammon? In other words, am I faithful in the use of the money which God has put, or is putting, into my hand? To all who are exercised about spiritual gifts, the Lord's order in these verses (Lu. xvi. 9-13) is all-important. It is utterly impossible for one whose heart is exercised with gathering together filthy lucre to send forth at the same time the pure, living water; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

"I was struck some time ago in reading in Matthew vi. the reasons the Lord Jesus gives His disciples for laying up treasure in heaven and not on earth. Treasure laid up on earth is at the mercy of moths, rust, and thieves; but they cannot touch that which is laid up in heaven. Then, the heart follows the treasure. If the treasure is in heaven, the eye will be single; and if the eye be single, the whole body will be full of light. On the other hand, if the treasure is laid up on earth, the eye will be evil, and the whole body full of darkness. Then, the one who lays up treasure in heaven will be delivered from trying to do that which is impossible, viz., to serve God and mammon. Many are trying to do this: and I could give not a few instances of saints who have lost both their time and money in the vain attempt. But I must close." Yours, &c.

J. C.

“THE MAN THAT HEARETH SPEAKETH CONSTANTLY.”

Prov. xxi. 28.

THIS sentence from the book of Proverbs has often arrested our attention. “The man that *heareth* speaketh constantly.” Such speakers are much needed now-a-days;—the ear opened to hear Jehovah’s message, and then to speak. This was verily true of the great pattern Speaker, the Lord Jesus; and that was why they had to say of Him, “Never man spake like this Man” (Jno. vii. 46). Truly He had the tongue of the learner; for morning by morning His Father wakened His ear to hear (Isa. l. 4). His ear was opened, and He was not rebellious. His was a consecrated ear, quick to hear the Father’s voice, but deaf to all earthly sounds, as it is written, “Who is blind, but My Servant? or deaf, as My Messenger that I sent? . . . seeing many things, but Thou observest not; opening the ears, but He heareth not” (Isa. xlii. 19, 20). He stood in the counsel of the Lord, perceived and heard His word (Jer. xxiii. 18): therefore His mouth was like a sharp sword (Isa. xlix. 2). What effective ministry! None of His words fell to the ground. Early and late He went forth weeping, bearing precious seed. True, at times He answered not a word. Yet there was testimony even in His silence. Every moment bore its message; for all was in season. Such is the One, of whom we are to learn. “Take My yoke upon you,”

says Jesus, “and learn of *Me*” (Matt. xi. 29). “Blessed is the Man that heareth *Me*, *watching* daily at My gates, *waiting* at the posts of My doors” (Prov. viii. 34). “Whoso hearkeneth unto *Me* shall dwell safely” (Prov. i. 33). May we learn the habit of *hearing*—ascending the watch-tower to find what He will say; then going forth with the Lord’s message. If this “hearing” is awaiting—however much eloquence there may be—the spiritual mind will detect it to be a stone, and not bread; a serpent, and not a fish (Lu. xi. 11), although it may tickle the itching ears, and satisfy the deadened conscience, of worldly believers.

R. I.

“IF THOU HADST BEEN HERE.”

THE sisters of Bethany struck a chord when each of them in turn said to the Lord: “If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died” (Jno. xi. 21, 32). If Christ had returned from “beyond Jordan” (Jno. x. 40), before Lazarus was dead, we cannot conceive of the death of that loved one taking place in the Master’s presence. Indeed, it has been remarked that no one is ever said to have died in the presence of the Prince of Life. He visited sick-beds, it is true; but He never “attended a death-bed” in the ordinary acceptation of these words; for the simple reason that wherever His help was sought, disease fled before Him. We never read of Him attending a burial. And

we can easily see that His presence as a helpless Mourner on such an occasion would ill have accorded with His great mission to destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil (Heb. ii. 14). He met a burial party once, it is true, at the gate of Nain (Lu. vii. 12). But His presence soon changed that scene of mourning into one of joy; and it was a burial party no more. But even after the dead had been buried out of sight, and had lain four days in the tomb, He stands not a hopeless Mourner among those who give forth their lamentations by that grave where Lazarus sleeps—his long, last sleep, as even the sorrowing sisters are persuaded it must be. We can scarcely conceive of Him departing from that spot, and yet leaving Lazarus in the tomb. But we are not left to behold such a spectacle. The Prince of Life only speaks the word, and Lazarus comes forth. Death is vanquished: the grave is robbed of victory: sorrow is turned into joy. How beautifully in keeping is all this with the great work which our Lord came to accomplish—even to bring *life* and incorruptibility to light through the Gospel! And as we behold Him thus showing Himself Conqueror over disease and death, what confidence it inspires in the child of faith! As we linger by Nain and Bethany, we hear the great truth proclaimed: "No sickness, no death, where our Lord Jesus is."

THE ways of Christ in the days of His flesh are the true pattern for His people.

MORNING AND NIGHT SONGS.

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—Ps. xxx. 5.

THROUGHOUT the dark and weary night,
Though weeping may endure,
There cometh with the morning light
Joy unalloyed and pure.

"The morning cometh"—happy thought!
Night will not always last:
Then joy shall to our hearts be brought,
And tears be ever past.

What joy divine when, safe above,
We see the Father's face,
And know the fulness of His love,
The riches of His grace!

Then *He* who sowed the seed in tears
Shall o'er His sheaves rejoice,
And with His smile chase all our fears,
And hush each weeping voice.

* * * * *

"Who giveth songs in the night."—Job xxxv. 10.

Though weeping *may*, it need not last,
To make the night seem long,
For as the weary hours go past,
Each saint may have a song.

He giveth songs to cheer the night,
And wile the dreary hours;
Joy full and lasting—pure delight,
May even now be ours.

His servants have made prisons ring,
Though suffering grievous wrongs!
Then cease to weep; yea, let us sing,
For God would give us songs—

Songs of the Saviour's sojourn here,
His love, His grace, His might:
The glory when He shall appear,
He giveth in the night.

W. B

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

(Third Paper.)

WE have already seen that God's people are to have no fellowship with the unconverted. Such a thing is expressly forbidden in Scripture. Now, obedience to this simple truth—the truth of separation from the ungodly—would make the path of many a believer as clear as noon-day. Yonder, for example, is a believer associated in “worship” with the enemies of Christ. But he discovers, from Scripture, that God has separated him from the unconverted, and that light and darkness cannot mingle. What does the believer do? If he is obedient to the call of God, he will at once leave that forbidden fellowship. He will say to himself, “How can I continue in the thing from which my Lord declares that I am to be separate?” He does not stay to consider what will be his next step. Those who “walk by faith” are content to go forward at the bidding of God, and leave results with Him. But those who “walk by sight” will not move, unless they see every step of their future path. This was not so with Abraham. We are expressly told that, at the call of God, “he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Heb. xi. 8). Abraham walked by faith; and “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. v. 7). The man who walks by sight will never leap, except he sees a comfortable place on which to fall. With the man of faith it is entirely

different. At the call of God he will leave Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xi. 31), although he sees nothing before him but a wilderness. Many come to a standstill exactly at this point. They refuse to leave the old country of the world's religion, because they do not see very well what would be the next step. But it is not at all needful that we should have light upon more than one step at a time. If we have learned from God's word that it is wrong for us to worship with the unconverted, then our path is extremely simple, so far as that matter is concerned. We have simply got to *obey God*; and, after we *have followed* the light which He has given, we will get light upon the next step. This brings before us the great Scriptural principle that *light obeyed will bring more light*. “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead.” “But what will be the next step?” says some one. Scripture replies: “*And Christ shall give thee light*” (Eph. v. 14). This is all that the child of faith wants. There is the promise of abundance of light; but it is only after we have used the light which the Lord has already given. “Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath” (Matt. xxv. 29). How often have we seen believers exercised about certain truths; yet refusing to follow the light that God had clearly given them. What was the result? The result was, that the light that was in them became darkness; and the next time you met them they were

opposing the very truth they had formerly admitted to be a clear commandment of the Lord! This need cause no surprise. It is quite in keeping with the dealings of God, as revealed in His word. Nothing in His kingdom is allowed to waste. If He shows us light, and we refuse to walk in it, the rejected light will take to itself wings and fly away. Whatever privileges the Lord has conferred upon us must be used for Him, else they will be taken from us and given to a people who will bring forth the fruits thereof (compare Matt. xxi. 43). This explains why many who once "saw" a good deal of separation truth, now seem to see scarcely any at all. They would not follow the light as the Lord was pleased to give it. They wanted light for a long period in advance. In plain words, they refused to obey the truth that they already saw clearly; and in due time they were found building the things they had destroyed. The truth, like Him who gave it, is easily entreated to depart (see Matt. viii. 34; ix. 1). How great, then, the importance of following the light that God has given, and obeying the truth we already know! A mere student of the truth—a man of theory—may be at a loss which way to turn. But a *follower* of the truth—one who obeys as he knows—will have no lack of light. No sooner has he taken one step than new light will be found shining on his way. Thus may it be with all who are seeking to learn the mind of the Lord, on the important subject of Church Fellowship.

OBEDIENCE.

IN those words, addressed by Mary to the servants, we have a striking lesson as to obedience; and obedience is ever associated with blessing. We find this principle running through the whole word of God. First, then, let us *be clear as to what the Lord would have us to do*; then let there be *implicit obedience* in the doing of it. Mary's words were: "*Whatsoever* He saith unto you, do it" (Jno. ii. 5). We are not to choose our work to suit our own likings or the will of others. We must remember that, in the commandments of our Lord, there is a special purpose to accomplish something for the glory of God, and the blessing of ourselves or others. Therefore, obey with unquestioning obedience. If we do so, we shall in due time see the blessed results of implicit obedience to the word, even as we see in the case before us. The servants, acting on Mary's counsel, did as Jesus told them, filling the waterpots to the brim. When this was done, instead of water they drew out wine; and we see that it was "good wine." So the good wine of joy and blessing in the Lord shall be ours if we observe the commands of Him who has saved us by His grace, and who now, as our Lord and Teacher, looks for our obedience to His word; and this not in the spirit of legality, but in the spirit of that love which delights to do the things that please Him. In the keeping of His statutes there is great reward. W. G. S.

I WILL PRAISE.

IN Ps. lxxix. 30-31 we find it written :
 "I will praise the name of God
 with a song, and will magnify
 Him with thanksgiving. This also shall
 please the Lord better than an ox or
 bullock that hath horns and hoofs."

Sometimes it is far easier to give the ox or bullock than to give the song of praise or the thankful heart. It is the heart that God wants ; and, if He has the heart, the giving of the ox or bullock will follow in due course. To give the ox or bullock while the Lord is not receiving the praise of our hearts, is simply to throw away our offering. If the ox and bullock are to be acceptable, they must be the outcome of a thankful heart. But if we have no ox or bullock to offer, we can give the Lord what He values more, viz., the thankful heart and the song of praise. Truly His yoke is easy, and His burden light !

THERE are some believers whom you both love and esteem. There are others you love, but do not esteem. We are commanded to love *all* ; but it is only *certain* believers we are told to esteem. We esteem only those who have something estimable about them. Thus, we are to esteem certain brethren very highly in love for their work's sake (1 Thes. v. 13). Esteem is thus conditional, while love has no condition attached to it. We are to *love* every believer because he is Christ's. Our *esteem* goes out only to those by whom it is earned.

ANOTHER WEEK IS OVER.

ANOTHER week is over !
 The moments, one by one,
 Have multiplied to hours and days,
 And now the seventh sun's setting rays
 Declare the week is done.

Its pleasures and its trials
 Have all been left behind :
 These seemed so hard, and those so sweet,
 That hours in turn were long, and fleet,
 As I rejoiced or pin'd.

Thus weeks succeed each other,
 And, softly though they glide,
 Each marks an epoch in our life,
 A loss, or triumph, in its strife,
 Which it is vain to hide.

Time, like the rivers sea-ward,
 Doth onward, ceaseless, roll,
 And swift on its impetuous flow
 (To age too fast, to youth too slow)
 We're hurried to our goal.

Thus as I look behind me
 On life's mysterious past,
 I often wish I could recall
 Each mis-spent week, and live them all
 As I would live my last.

Then, as I look before me,
 May mine the longing be,
 That now—let days be bright or dim—
 Each hour shall be redeemed for Him
 Who gave Himself for me.

W. B.

TOISE RIVER, South Africa.

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SIXPENCE PER HUNDRED, POST FREE.

Specimen parcels of any of our publications will be sent free on hearing from you by post card or otherwise.

The "Treasury" for 1887.—As fully explained in previous numbers, the "Treasury" is now a 16-page paper, price One Penny, and published monthly.

Four Copies.—It will be observed that a monthly parcel of "The Treasury" containing 4 copies or more, is sent *post free*.

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OUR COMPLETE WRITINGS.

For the information of the readers of the "Treasury," we may mention that we were privileged to edit the "BELIEVER'S PATHWAY" during the first four years of its existence. We have a stock of these Volumes, which we shall be glad to send at the following *reduced rates*:

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Our Gospel paper, "The Sower,"

is a little 4-page monthly, containing articles, incidents, and appeals, intended to render it suitable for broadcast distribution among the unsaved.

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WILLIAM SHAW, Maybole, Scotland.

THE
Believer's Treasury.

No. 62.

OCTOBER, 1887.

Vol. II.

SUPPORTING THE LORD'S
LABOURERS.

IT is deserving of our serious consideration that there is a class of men whose number is gradually but steadily growing fewer. We refer to labourers in the Gospel, who go forth to preach Christ, and who look to the living God alone for support. In certain regions such men are lamentably scarce. Time after time we have heard the remark made: "How few servants of Christ do we now see coming about!—men who are employed by no man and no society, but who trust in God for the supplying of their need." We cannot shut our eyes to it. The fact stares us in the face. And as "the curse causeless shall not come" (Prov. xxvi. 2), so there is doubtless a cause for this scarcity of heaven-sent men. We do not pretend to know all the secret springs that have brought about this dearth of labourers and helpers in the churches. But there is *one* thing which we are persuaded is *a* reason why many a company of saints are found mourning the rare visits they receive from the Lord's servants. We believe we have *despised our own mercies*. While His messengers have ministered

to us in spiritual things, it is a small matter if we minister to them in carnal things. But we believe there has been serious failure at this point. In not a few cases it is simply lamentable how undoubted servants of Christ are being neglected, so far as concerns ministering to their need. We do not say that there has been any deliberate intention to neglect them. But we have failed to "consider" them, to "remember" them. We have thus practically said to the Lord that we did not appreciate His gifts. We have put a terribly low value upon His ambassadors. We have, by our coldness and forgetfulness, virtually reckoned them unworthy almost of the necessaries of life. Is it then any wonder that the Lord should in large measure withdraw His gifts, or bestow them where there is some evidence that these gifts are appreciated? We groan over the scarcity of heaven-sent men. But have we been faithful to those whom we cannot doubt are sent of heaven? Have we made it our deliberate business to see that yon messenger of God had a decent suit of clothes on his back? Have we made it our care to see that his cupboard was not empty? Have we considered the state of his purse, lest haply he might be

hampered in moving from place to place? Surely in this matter the Lord is calling us to bring the tithes into the storehouse. There is no lack of professions of devotion to the Lord. But the Lord wants something besides profession—*He wants the tithes.* “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house,” He says, “and prove Me now *herewith*” (Mal. iii. 10). He does not say we are to prove Him with our vows and promises, but with the tithes. Let the Lord have His portion, and His servants will know what it is to “abound.” What an interest we take in ourselves and our families, and in seeing *them* nice and comfortable! If we took only half that interest in a few of the Lord’s faithful messengers, how well they would be looked after in temporal things! It may well be asked, Why should this not be so? We would fain believe that “want of thought” is a chief cause of the neglect of the Lord’s servants. We have gradually come to think that they are well-enough off, seeing we never hear them grumble. Or, perhaps, we say to ourselves that no doubt our wealthy brother So-and-so will be attending to them. Thus we justify ourselves in doing nothing, or next to nothing, until we are awakened up to find that some faithful ambassador is in need. Then, accusing ourselves of most blameworthy forgetfulness, we thrust our hand into our pocket and give a liberal offering, with any amount of good intentions for the future. Yet all these good intentions are soon forgotten; and perhaps a long

period elapses ere the experience is repeated. But during these periods of forgetfulness, what is to become of the Lord’s servant? What is to become of His wife and family? It is very easy to fold our arms, and say, “O, *the Lord* will look after them: *the Lord* will feed them.” True. But through what channel will the Lord do that? Through the channel of His saints, we reply. We do not know of any other channel. Some believers speak vaguely and complacently of “the Lord” attending to His servants, as if manna were to be showered down from heaven, or as if a raven were to be sent with the necessaries of life. It is through you, brother, or sister, and me, that the Lord feeds His servants now. Are we willing to be channels? Is it not an honour to be a channel? Is it not a privilege to be permitted to minister to Christ in the person of His members?

FAITH.

WE never know what our faith is worth until it has been tested. It is comparatively easy to trust God when everything goes smoothly—our earthly cup full—friends many and kind, and every one thinking well of us. But when the sharp wind of adversity blows right in our face; when means are gone, our “barrel of meal” empty; and, to crown all, when those whom we love use us harshly and speak unkindly;—to be able then to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation (Hab. iii. 18), reveals a measure of faith that is truly worth having.

M. Y.

JOAB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST.

(*Second Paper*).

WE never hear of Joab during the days of David's rejection. In tracing up the history of the persecution during the reign of Saul, Joab's name is conspicuous by its absence. David is hunted like a partridge in the mountains (1 Sam. xxvi. 20). Chosen of God, and anointed king of Israel, he is yet despised and rejected. From one hiding-place he flees to another. At one time he finds a retreat in the cave of Adullam (2 Sam. xxii. 1); at another time in the wilderness of Paran (1 Sam. xxv. 1). But he was not alone. A little band of faithful ones followed him whithersoever he went. We say, "a little band," for they were a mere handful compared with the thousands who paid their homage to Saul. But among the followers of the rejected David we seek in vain for Joab. Even his brother Abishai, with all his faults, is there (1 Sam. xxvi. 6), sharing in David's rejection, having fellowship with him in his sufferings. But Joab is not found there. This is deeply significant. Joab was one of those men whose eye is ever and only on "the main chance." He was determined to be on the successful side. Others might be devoted to David's person and be prepared to do anything for his sake. But Joab knew nothing of attachment to the person of the king. He cared nothing for David in rejection. But no sooner is there a

prospect of David being successful and becoming popular, than Joab comes to the front—to all appearance one of the most devoted followers of Israel's king! Thus, alas! it is with many in the professing church to-day. The true David is rejected; and they do not know Him in rejection. Perhaps yonder is a cave of Adullam where Christ is owned as Lord. But "the many" are not found there. They have duly weighed the matter—they have counted the cost, and have come to the conclusion that it would not be *respectable* to be identified with that company. They deliberately refuse to tread the path of rejection with a rejected Lord. There is no prospect of that remnant in the cave of Adullam ever "coming to anything." Therefore "the many" are not found there. But let the Name or cause of Christ become popular—let numbers increase, and influence extend; and immediately there is a rush of patronage from all quarters. Joabs, never heard of before, are now found cordial and sympathetic—yea, joining themselves to the company of the saved, and making it clear that they are prepared to take an "office" in the church. This makes itself more or less clear at every recurring wave of revival that passes over the saints. People who would not be identified with Christ at a street corner in "the day of small things" are found in the front whenever David is proclaimed king. "The thing is going to be a success after all: therefore we must patronise it." This seems to be the guiding principle in many cases.

Indeed with the mass of believers *success* is the great argument. If any move is made in the direction of the Lord's work, they stand still to form an opinion as to whether the movement is going to be a success. If they anticipate failure, they stand aloof, declaring the movement to be unscriptural. If success is evident, they cast in their lot, and become enthusiastic supporters of the work. Thus it is that many a heaven-inspired work and many a God-sent servant are left with scant support. The Joabs keep in their hiding-places, determined not to move, until they see the crown on David's head, and a prospect of holding a good office in the church. From all such place-seekers may the Lord deliver us; and from all such sentiments let us likewise be delivered. Let us follow the Lord for His own sake, and count it an honour to suffer shame for His Name. If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him. Let our aim be to win *His* smile; and, if we have *that*, we need not care whose smile we lose.

SO EXALTED.

THERE are no believers so much to be pitied as those who are so far up in "society" that no one dare say to them, "What doest thou?" If brother A——, the railway surfaceman, goes wrong, he is brought-to-book at once, and without ceremony. But if "the lot" falls upon wealthy brother So-and-so, *that* is a different case. "We must be

careful how we judge," we are told. And, even although it is perfectly clear that the case should be "dealt with," it is hard to find any one who will testify to the "great man" that he has departed from the Lord! This is simply dishonouring God and having respect of persons in judgment. We do not see why a man's purse should fence him round so that he dare not be approached just in the same way as the poorest brother in the meeting. What "reverential awe" seems to fall upon some believers when a brother with a great purse appears in the meeting! You would almost think he belonged to some higher class than saints! But take away his gold and his position in the world, and the reverential awe disappears at once. He is then treated as an "ordinary believer"! Let us be done with this making obeisance to mere position. Let justice and judgment take their course, no matter although the offender be possessed of all the gold of Ophir. The church funds may suffer. Perhaps the rich brother will take his revenge by curtailing his offerings. Very well. Be it so. Are we to sell the truth in order to keep up the collections on Lord's-day? Are we to suppress the truth, and wink at evil, in order that we may rejoice in some great man's shadow? Never.

—♦—

"O MAY I so abide in Thee,
And let Thy word abide in me,
That on the wings of praise each day
My happy soul may soar away,
And, resting in communion sweet,
May find in Thee her calm retreat."

WHAT IS BEHIND?

A cheque on a bank account is value only for what money is *behind* the cheque; and, in the same way, a believer's testimony is value only for whatever measure of godly living may lie behind his spoken testimony. You may write out a cheque for a thousand pounds; and it looks very well upon paper. But let the cheque be taken to the bank, and lo! it is found to be worth nothing. Why? Because there was no money in the bank behind it. It is not what the cheque says that gives it its value: it is what the bank says. In like manner, you will find the value of any man's teaching, by finding an answer to the question—"What does his private life say?" We may teach and exhort; we may wax eloquent about the glories of Christ, or go into rhapsodies over our own devotion to His person; and yet it may be nothing more than "a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." What does the private life say? Is its powerful voice heard declaring, "Yes, that man lives what He preaches"? If so, it is well. The word shall be with power. But, if in private life we are seen to be different men from what we pretend to be before the saints, they will just smile at our teaching, as much as to say, "Do you really think we can be so easily imposed upon?" We have no doubt whatever that this is the reason why so much teaching seems to have so little effect. Teaching will be confirmed by signs following, only in so far as it has this sign

going before—the "sign" of a godly and consistent walk. We have heard it said that you should "receive the truth, no matter who or what the man is who proclaims it." This is true in a sense, but only in this sense, that we must not reject the truth because it comes through unrighteous lips. The truth is the truth, even although the Devil quotes it; and if the most inconsistent professor in the world stands up and exhorts the saints to "be followers of God, as dear children," Eph. v. 1. is none the less true. At the same time, shut your eyes as you will, you cannot separate the message from the man that brings it. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isa. lii. 11). In the things of God there must be a certain agreement between the two; and, where there is not this agreement, it need cause no surprise if the message is rejected along with the messenger, and the saints refuse to hear the word at his mouth. What "beautiful addresses" are often heard, finely drawn to a point, and bringing out the truth "so clear." Yet they seem to fall flat and powerless; the reason being, that they were not begotten in the genial atmosphere of a godly walk in private life. Such addresses may have weight with a certain class of believers, who cannot see beyond the surface; but if a man is preaching what he does not feel, and exhorting to a life he does not live, there will be a *something* about him—a certain unreality—making it clear to the spiritual eye that the preacher is merely disporting himself in borrowed plumes.

LONG PRAYERS.

WE are not inclined to differ with the brother who made the statement that many who say the longest prayers in public are those who pray shortest in private. His long experience in the Lord's work certainly gives him some title to form an opinion. And, so far as our observation serves us, we must say that in the main we agree with him. Long, dreary prayers are like a millstone round the neck of a meeting. Some seem to think that there is no use in rising to pray unless they pray for everything within the compass of their imagination. They must go their accustomed round—the "time" must be filled up—a prayer of a respectable length must be furnished! The result is, that long before the brother is done everybody is devoutly wishing he would draw to a close. It at last seems as if he were near the end of his list of wants; and a sigh of relief is heard. But the sigh has come too soon; for the brother seems to remember a number of things he had forgotten, and which evidently *must* be included in his prayer, else it would be incomplete! Now, we do not believe that such prayers were ever inspired by the Spirit of God; and if those who inflict them upon the saints could be told in a godly way that prayers of that kind are simply a weariness to the flesh, it would be a great service done to the church. Long, dreary prayers are an evidence of a low condition of spiritual life; while we have found short, earnest, incisive prayers to be associated with a

true revival condition of heart. We do not say that shortening our public prayers will necessarily infuse new life into our meetings; but we do affirm that long, wandering prayers have a powerful effect in keeping new life from getting into our meetings. Such prayers make the faces of the Lord's people sad, whom He has not made sad; and discourage younger brethren from taking part. How often do we see the same two or three brethren doing all the praying night after night, while many humble brethren sit silent all the time! This ought not so to be. What is wanted to put it right? Two things, at least. First, the brethren who pray long should make it quite clear that the "silent" brethren are as much privileged to lead in prayer as any others; and, second, the brethren who pray long should make it a special exercise of soul, to be sure that they are "*praying in the Holy Spirit.*"

TRIALS.

(Heb. xii. 6; Jno. xv. 2).

TRIALS are a sure token of our heavenly Father's love; and He knows exactly the kind of trial needed in each case. We often make sad mistakes, and have to reap the bitter fruit of our own failure. But our Father makes no mistakes. And even when we have taken "our own way," how often does He make the crooked path straight, and, in restoring grace, make even our own failure an instrument wherewith to chisel us into the image of the First-born One!

M. Y.

THE MORAL SENSE BLUNTED.

WE have heard it said that if you leave this country, and live for some years in certain parts of the East, your "moral sense" will gradually become so blunted by the low standard of morality which prevails there, that you would require to return to this country for a time in order to have the moral tone restored. We have no reason to doubt the statement. It is simply an example of how the law of cause and effect operates. Apply it in a spiritual sense. What is the standard of spirituality among the saints where your lot is cast? If it is a low standard—if worldliness is allowed, and fleshly conversation winked at, the natural tendency of such a state of things can only be to drag the individual believer down to the same level, and to blunt any "spiritual sense" of which he may have been possessed. This gives us a hint as to the serious responsibility resting on those who profess to be the guides of God's people. What spiritual standard do we maintain? We are not asking what standard we preach; although that has its importance too. We are asking, what is the standard of our own spiritual life? What example do we set before the saints? We cannot expect them to rise above the "general level." Then it ought surely to be our care to see that the standard of Scriptural holiness is maintained among us.

But although the natural tendency of spiritual dearth is to drag us down, it is

quite possible to rise above such a tendency. The law of cause and effect must operate. But there is a higher law—even "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." Therefore, it is your privilege and mine so to abide in Christ that, although the standard of spirituality be low, and worldliness abounding, we shall be found fat and full of sap, and flourishing even in the midst of famine. It is quite possible to rise above the general level. Enoch rose above it in his day; Joshua in his day; Gideon and three hundred men in his day; and seven thousand in Israel during a time of great apostasy. It is a bad sign of a believer when he excuses his own low condition of soul by saying that "there is so little to encourage any one in these times." We can encourage ourselves in the Lord (1 Sam. xxx. 6). He abideth faithful; and one of His greatest promises is to "*him* that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. lvii. 15). Mark the singular number—"to *him*." That takes *you* in, and it takes *me* in. It leaves no provision for the flesh, and gives no excuse for being at ease in Zion.

But there is another aspect of this question that must not be overlooked. If you deliberately make a companion of a carnal believer, nothing will save you from becoming carnal too. Evil companionships corrupt good manners. Two cannot walk together except they be agreed. The "company you keep" may affect your whole future life. The sad condition of many a believer may be readily accounted for by asking the

simple question, "What company does he keep?" You may rise above the deadening effect of the low *general* standard of godliness that prevails; but if you deliberately place yourself under the withering influence of fleshly conversation, it is as if you prayed, "Lead us not into temptation," and then walked into it.

SCATTERED IN AN HOUR.

SPEAKING on "Faithful preaching," a great preacher said not long ago: "There is nothing so much dreaded as a personal sermon: there is no congregation on earth that could not be scattered in an hour, if the preacher were faithful."

This statement is far too sweeping and unqualified. If the preacher refers to sectarian systems of religion (his own among the number), we are quite at one with him. If the "Believer's Treasury" had used the same words, we would have been accused of strong speaking. But the statement proceeds from their own ranks; and out of the mouth of one of their own prophets they are condemned. If the preacher were but faithful, what a scattering of congregations there would be; and all in an hour! That virtually means that the preacher in question was *not* faithful; for, if he had been faithful, his own congregation would have been scattered to the winds *long ago*; and a similar fate would have overtaken *every* congregation who might choose him as their pastor. There is no escaping this conclusion. The preacher thus admits his own unfaithfulness. The confession is a humbling one. But if faithfulness to God will scatter a congregation, then by all means

let God be honoured, and let the congregation be scattered at once. We are decidedly of the opinion that if preachers were faithful there would be a terrible scattering. Everything that is not "buildd together" according to Scripture, would be scattered; *or*, the faithful preachers would be silenced. This is our decided conviction as to the religious confederacies around us; and it affords some little grain of comfort to find that among the "great lights" of the denominations around us, a similar opinion is beginning to prevail.

THE LITTLE BIRD'S MESSAGE.

Matt. vi. 25-34; x. 29; Luke xii. 4-7.

MY Father's little messenger,
What wilt thou say to me?
I love to hear thy cheerful voice,
So full of melody.

Although you cannot speak in words,
Yet I can learn of Thee,
That He who daily gives thee food
Will also care for me.
Your cheerful song, so free from care,
May well teach me to give
Praise to that One who died for me,
That I to Him might live.
Your presence also tells me of
My heavenly Father's care;
For to the ground you cannot fall
While He your life will spare.
And as you have your trials too,
I may expect the same;
Then may I ever trust and sing,
In Jesus' precious name.
So may I learn your lesson well,
Consider it each day,
That I in faith, and hope, and joy,
May tread the narrow way.

Faroe Islands.

W. G. S.

WHAT MEANS A UNIVERSAL CALL ?

(From "*The Atonement*," a Poem by William Blane,
Toise River.)

WHAT means a universal call
If there be not enough for all?—
As if the Saviour passed some by
While He for others' sins did die,
And that, though all are told to come,
There's but provision made for some ;
Or that, in some mysterious way,
God means not what the Scriptures say.
Let hampered minds their thoughts expand,
Nor on such narrow footing stand :
The mighty work of Jesus scan—
He "tasted death for every man."
He "died for all" that they who live
Back to Himself that life should give.
He has for "all" Atonement made—
For all mankind the ransom paid.
God loved the world ; and when He gave
His Son, it was the world to save.
And though He knew some would not take
Of the provision He would make,
The foreseen choice of self-willed man
Changed not heav'n's universal plan,
As, in the love that moved His heart,
All in th' Atonement had a part.
Some will be lost, and rescued some,
Yet "Whosoever will" *may* come.
If not, He only mocks their fate,
Who presses *all*, "ere 'tis too late,"
To trust a work not for them done,
To take a pardon while there's none,
To fly from hell without a way,
Or perish if they disobey.
They never can the sinner reach
Who, crippled thus, the Gospel preach.
'Tis he who knows of food for all
That only can afford to call
A hungry world to come and feed—
All others would but mock their need.
O tell the tidings all around,
That every soul may hear the sound—
Th' Atoning work embraces all
Who were enveloped in the Fall.

To earth's remotest regions go,
And preach to every child of woe,
Impartial who or what they be—
The rich, the poor, the bond, the free
That Christ on their behalf has died,
That God with Him is satisfied,
And now is ready to forgive—
The simple terms, "Believe and live."
And he who disregards the news,
And doth his day of grace abuse,
Shall find the worm that never dies,
As in the burning lake he sighs,
To all eternity shall be—
"There was provision made for me :
I might have been in heaven above,
But I despised God's mighty love."

MY WORK.

TO every man his work" (Mark
xiii. 34). It will do no good to
wish we were able to do another
man's work. As an aged brother well
puts it: "When the Lord intends a
creature to fly, He gives it wings." And
if He intends us for some particular
work, He gives the needed ability for
that work. It is therefore for us to find
out "our work." We may see a more
showy and, seemingly, a more effective
line of service, which we would "like" to
attempt. But it is not a question of
what we would like. The question is
simply this: "To what work have I been
called of God?" The Lord deliver us
from being determined to soar, whether
we have got wings or not! If a man's
work is *of God*, it will be clear that the
Lord has fitted the man for the work.
We ever find that the Lord *fits-out* all
His *sent* ones.

DENYING CHRIST'S DIVINITY.

AT a friend's house I once fell in with one who denied the divinity of Christ. He believed that Jesus was a man—a good man; but he denied that Jesus was God. I referred him to the first verse of the first chapter of John—"In the beginning *was* the Word, and the Word *was with* God, and the Word *was* God." He found that a hard passage. In fact, that man simply denied the truth of the Bible; for Scripture emphatically says of Christ, "The word was God." And Christ says of Himself, "I and My Father are one" (Jno. x. 30); "Before Abraham was, I AM" (Jno. viii. 58). No mere man could ever utter such words: and if they are not true, then Jesus was not even "a good man," as my friend admitted. Truly those who attempt to deny the divinity of Christ have set themselves to a hard task. They admit that He was a good man. Yet they deny His divinity. But our Lord declared His divinity, time after time. Therefore, according to my friend's theory, Christ was saying what was not true. Yet my friend admitted that Christ was a good man! But He could not be a good man if he said what was untrue. And, if He spoke the truth, then those who deny His divinity have not an inch of ground to stand upon. Notwithstanding all this, you will find so-called "Christian" papers recognising the deniers of Christ's divinity, and giving them a place in reports as to the progress of "the church"! Truly the religious world has become

most charitable and accommodating. You may build up a sect on the foundation heresy that Christ is not divine; and lo! the world's religious press is ready to give you the right hand of fellowship, and no questions asked! But such things do not surprise us, for the simple reason that we have ceased to be surprised at anything we hear from some quarters. Not long ago, for example, a well-known evangelical paper saw fit to come down severely on the worldliness of another religious paper; and in a few weeks was found advertising and "puffing up" the very paper it had been condemning! Then, "Entire consecration" is preached in one column, while the world's novels are advertised in another! But we need not go farther. These things say plainly to the Lord's watching ones that we are already approaching the whirlpool of the last evil days. Wickedness is abounding; yea, in high places. But no anointed eye need be deceived by the great flourish of religion and worldliness, bound up in one bundle, and meeting us at every turn. The world goes in for these things; and it seems that there is no lack of those who are ready to pander to the world's taste. But surely we have not so learned Christ. Is not every new phase of so-called "progress" in the religious world another call for us to see that, in the midst of abounding wickedness, *our* garments are always white, and that our head lacks no ointment?

—♦—
 ONLY the bridling of the heart can effectually bridle the lips.

OFFERINGS BY DEPUTY.

OFFERINGS for the Lord's servants are too often done by deputy. It is "an understood thing" with some that what they put into the box on Lord's-day *pays for everything*—the Lord's servants, the poor, and the church expenses. But as church expenses and other local calls have first to be met, it need not be cause for wonder if the balance remaining for the Lord's servants is a mere pittance. How is this to be remedied? We believe it is to be remedied by each believer having an exercised conscience before God as to certain labourers who have gone forth for the sake of the Name; and then ministering *direct* to their need, either by putting his offering, duly marked, into the church box, or by sending it in some other way. If we leave the Lord's servants to take their chance of what may be left in the church box after "prior claims" are paid, we fear that their lot will be a hard one as regards temporals. Perhaps we have got too much into the habit of thinking that *everything* in the shape of "offerings" *must* pass through the church box. The result is, that we strike a bargain with our conscience that we will pay so-much a week to the church funds, and thus be relieved of any special exercise of soul as to God's servants, or needy saints of any kind. Let it be noted that such a thought is not according to Scripture; and the sooner we get rid of it the better will it be for "him that needeth." Let each of us take

a special interest in a few servants of the Lord—even although the number be but one. Let that interest be constant; and the love that *thinks* upon them will devise means whereby some little token of regard will reach them from time to time. In this matter of giving and receiving there must be a closer bond between the saints at large and the Lord's servants. Apart from money altogether, how cheering it is for a lonely labourer to receive a letter, with a little word of encouragement, perhaps from some son in the faith, or from some unknown writer who is wont to hold up his hands in prayer. Let more of such communication be established, and money matters will soon come all right.

In the ministry of the word there is very little said on the subject of ministering to what are called "the Lord's labourers." At least, very little is said by these labourers themselves. Doubtless they have a natural diffidence in referring to the subject, fearing lest they should be thought to plead for their own support. As we, however, are not hampered by any such considerations, we have been the more bold to speak freely on this matter. Nor do we think that the Lord's labourers would be acting unseemly if they exhorted to the grace of liberality, and showed the saints how they should support those whom the Lord has sent. Paul did this, even at the risk of being thought to "desire a gift" for himself. But he had no such wish. What he desired was that "fruit" might abound to the account of the saints. We

believe that among ministering servants, whether they have a "secular calling" or not, there should be no uncertain sound as to ministering to the need of heaven-sent ambassadors who have gone forth for the sake of the Name, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

"BY FAITH."

BY faith Israel "passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned" (Heb. xi. 29). The Egyptians evidently thought they had simply to do what Israel did. But it was one thing for Israel to pass through; and it was quite another thing for the Egyptians to do so. It seemed an easy thing to do what the Israelites were doing. But, in "assaying" to do it, the hosts of Pharaoh were drowned. The Egyptians could not walk by faith; and it was only "by faith" that the Red Sea could be crossed. We believe there is the germ of a great truth in this drowning of the Egyptians. We must see that we do not go beyond the measure of our faith. Brother So-and-so may launch out into the deep, having faith of God as to some particular promise of Scripture. Perhaps you are tempted to do the same thing. But it is beyond the measure of your faith; and you soon find yourself overwhelmed in the waters of failure and disappointment. Then brother So-and-so stands up to exhort the saints, and says some very plain things. Yet his word is received. It seems such a simple matter. You

are tempted to imitate him. Why should not *you* thunder out the word in the same fashion? You make the attempt. But somehow the word comes back on your own head. Why is this? It is because you are going beyond your measure. You are merely doing what you see other brethren doing; and not what you have been led of God to do. God never leads us to act beyond our measure. If we act in accordance with that measure, we shall do our work with the calmness and precision of those who are conscious that they are doing the will of God. But, if we act beyond that measure, there will be the faltering step and the trembling hand, telling plainly that we are attempting a thing for which we have neither been called nor fitted of God.

LIGHT AND GRACE.

AN aged brother once remarked that where there is difference of judgment, you may be sure those are on the wrong side who cannot talk over the matter without losing their temper. "If," said he, "the Lord gives *light* from heaven on any disputed point, not clearly revealed, He also gives *grace* from heaven, to speak gently and to bear patiently with those who may differ. But if we set ourselves on some pinnacle of our own wisdom, condemning and hewing in pieces all who may differ from us, we had better ask if we have got *light* on the subject, seeing we are so devoid of *grace* to deal with the subject."

WELDING-POINT.

SEE the blacksmith there, how he hammers that piece of iron into any shape he pleases. Why is it so easily fashioned at his will? It is because the iron is red-hot; yea, perhaps it is at what is called a "white-heat," or "welding-point." Let the Lord's people be at this point, and unity is a very simple matter. Then, let the question be asked: "What condition are we in?" If we are dwelling within the melting beams of the Master's presence, it will be easy work to "weld" us to those who are also dwelling there. But if such is not our dwelling-place, then unity is one of the hardest things in the world. It is vain for you to hammer a piece of cold iron, and expect it to take on the desired shape. It is vain to expect a piece of cold iron to make a "weld." Get saints into a "welding" condition—let them be brought into the presence of God, and melted in the fire of divine love; and then, under the hammer of the truth, they will be easily fashioned to the divine pattern. This is just where many make a mistake. They begin at the wrong end. They hammer the iron, instead of getting it into the fire. We want men who will lead us into the fire. Let there be unity; but let it be unity of the right kind. We do not want a mere outward unity—a unity of our bodies. We want an inner—a heaven-born unity. "All together in one place," may not mean unity at all; although some are satisfied with this. Something

more is needed than simply being in one place. We find that "something" in the second chapter of Acts (ver. 1)—"They were all *with one accord* in one place." Mark the divine order: First, *one accord*; then *one place*. What next? Then the great Pentecost Revival! What instruction we have there, even in the simple division of the subject into three heads! (1) One accord; (2) One place; (3) Great Revival. When God's power is reigning, God's order is observed, and "fruit unto God" is the rule of the day. Let this be noted by all who profess to watch for souls. They were "of one accord." God begins with the heart. Let us begin there too. If hearts are set right, there will be little difficulty in putting externals right.

WALKING WITH GOD AND WORKING FOR GOD.

Notes of an Address.

ENOCH walked with God . . . three hundred years" (Gen. v. 22). This patriarch had no Bible; yet he walked with God all that time. With all our privileges, could it be said of any of us that we have walked with God for even one year? Walking with God implies nearest intimacy—most blessed friendship. Look at two intimate friends, for example. How well they know each other—how they trust and confide in each other! If you and I walked with God continually, we would know Him better and trust Him more. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?" (S. of S. viii. 5). You must be

close to one to lean upon him. Then remember what was once the character of those now so favoured. They were enemies deserving hell. But God loved us, gave His Son to die for us, and has brought us into closest intimacy with Himself. He wants us to lean all our weight upon Him—to trust Him fully. Yet, instead of leaning upon our Beloved as we go up through the wilderness, how often is there a turning back into Egypt, and a leaning upon the arm of flesh! Only those can meet and overcome temptation who are leaning upon the almighty power and the changeless love of Christ.

WORKING WITH GOD.

“He . . . hath wrought with God” (1 Sam. xiv. 45). That was the secret of Jonathan's victory. Such is one of the blessed results of walking with God. Those who would be used of God must walk with Him continually. What was the secret of Paul's power in service? We find it in Col. i. 29: “I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily.” The Lord Jesus said, “The Father, that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works” (Jno. xiv. 10). Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me” (Phil. iv. 13). Beloved children of God, let us first walk with God, before we seek to work for Him. “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white” (Rev. iii. 4). Sardis was noted for its wickedness. Yet even in Sardis there were a few who walked in separation unto God. By and by we shall walk with the Lord for ever. But let it be our joy now, while in the body compassed with manifold temptations, to walk with God, and, through the energy of the Spirit, to work for Him till He come.

COVETING POWER.

SIMON the sorcerer coveted the power of God. But it was only to glorify himself. “Give me also this power,” he said, “that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts viii. 19). He desired a right thing, but from a wrong motive, and for a wrong purpose. We recoil from the thought of such a sin as Simon committed. Yet there is reason to fear that his sin is not unknown to-day. We pray for power from on high. But what for? What is before our mind's eye when we are waiting on the Lord for enduement with power? Is it not often the case that we long for power from God simply that we may have power with men? We say it is only that we may be more effective servants. Yet, deep down in our hearts, is there not a secret desire to “shine”—to have people hanging upon our words, and swayed by the wave of our hand? True longings after heavenly power have no such secret springs; and true power from the Lord will let us know our own nothingness—yea, even teach us what “great things” we must *suffer* for His Name's sake.

It is well for believers always to bear in mind that we have within us a nature that can do nothing but sin—“corrupt,” as saith the Scripture (Eph. iv. 22). Our great enemy, the Devil, knows that right well. How watchful, then, we should be, never to leave the Master's side—never to go out of His conscious presence!

M. Y.

"HE REDEEMED THE CORN."

A recent Conference a well-known servant of Christ gave a short address, in which a touching incident was told in connection with mission work in China. The place is forgotten, but the circumstances remain. In one of the districts several Chinamen received the truth in the love of it. So great was the opposition aroused, that these poor people were literally "boycotted," as Mr. Taylor put it. They were refused work; and no one would buy from, or sell to, their families. One of their number, however, was a man of substance. His heart the Lord had touched. In their extremity the poor Chinamen went to their well-to-do brother in the faith, and laid their case before him. His reply was characteristic. "Well," he said, "when my Father redeemed *me*, He redeemed *my corn* and *all that I have*; and, if my Father wants the corn to feed His children, *my Father shall have it*." The brother then took the starving "children of His Father" home to work on his farm. They spent the first part of the day in learning to read the word of God. They then went to the fields to labour, and were fed. By and by many of them were able to preach the word to others, and they did so. The Lord maketh the wrath of man to praise Him. It was so in this case. The work was not crushed, as the enemy had intended; but grew and multiplied. The "boycotting" restrictions were withdrawn, and the

believers went on their way rejoicing. Surely this incident is an echo from that distant land, to quicken our faith and love. The Lord help us, like this Chinaman, to say, "He redeemed me, my corn, and all that I have; and if *He* wants them *He* shall have them."

—♦—

WILL IT STAND THE FIRE?—A brother said to me lately that it is not his aim to accomplish a great amount of work for God. What he aims at is, to see that what little he may do, shall have the stamp of God's approval, and stand the fire of the Judgment-seat. His principle is deserving of wide imitation. "A little work" well done—done in singleness of heart unto God—will stand the testing-time, when many an imposing work, inspired by the flesh, shall be burned up.

—♦—

"Tribulation worketh Patience;" but if tribulation pass by without working patience, we cannot have "Experience" (Rom. v. 3).

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Vol. II.

CHRIST LIFTED UP IN THE LIFE.

AMONG the oldest things we remember in the way of addresses, was one on the words, "I, if I be lifted up." The preacher divided his subject as follows: (1) "Christ lifted up in Old Testament Sacrifice; (2) Christ lifted up by prophet's voice; (3) Christ lifted up on the Cross for sin; (4) Christ lifted up in resurrection power; (5) Christ lifted up in the preaching of the word; (6) Christ lifted up in the life of the believer."

While the "heads" may afford food for reflection to some who seek in a quiet way to minister the word, we pass on at once to the last head: Christ lifted up in the life of the believer—a "sermon" which the world has never yet been able to get over. They have stumbled—and we do not wonder that they stumble—at much of the flourishing profession that stalks abroad in the present day. The unconverted have access to the Bible; and, though blind to fundamental truths, they have quite sufficient "light" to compare the Christian of the Bible with the mere professor of the religion of Jesus. The world hears the mere professor, perhaps preaching himself hoarse in

declaring the blessedness of conversion. Then the world quietly compares him with the Christian of the New Testament—weighs him in the balances, finds him wanting, and rejects him utterly. The world may put up with unreality in many things. But, if it is a question of professed conversion unto God, the world must have reality or nothing. It must be admitted that the world is not unreasonable in this demand; and, strange to say, the world and the Scriptures are agreed for once; for on this point Scripture emphatically demands reality.

"Christ lifted up in the life of the believer," is a kind of sermon which, it is to be feared, a great many trouble themselves very little about. They can preach with the voice of thunder as to how Christ should be lifted up in the life of *other* believers; but they do not seem ever to sit down and calmly ask themselves the question, "Is Christ being lifted up in *my* life?" We may have few opportunities for public preaching—we may not be platform-men at all. But "Christ lifted up in the life" is a sermon which we can preach during seven days in every week. We are satisfied that the scarcity of such sermons

is one great reason why the world is so little affected by many an effort in the Gospel. No matter how obscure we may be in the church, if Christ be lifted up in the life there shall be fruit unto God. We may not see a mighty moving among the dry bones in a day. But the quiet, *constant* effect of a Christ-like life will make itself felt in a thousand-and-one ways we little think of. Barriers will be broken down, prejudices will be removed, the mouth of the enemy will be stopped—all through the simple yet powerful instrumentality of "Christ lifted up in the life of the believer." We must have more of this preaching. And the more of it we have, the less shall we have of the high-sounding profession that causes the world to stumble. The more of the *real* thing we have, the more will the *unreal* thing be detected and rejected; and the more will the word of the Lord have free course and be glorified. Let this subject engross our attention as it has never done before. While others are coveting the platform, or seeking to be great in the church or the world, let us desire earnestly that each day of our sojourn here we may preach with the all-persuasive eloquence of *Christ lifted up in the life*.

TRUE SWEETNESS.

N our intercourse with each other we want the sweetness of Christ, without the honey of the world. Our Lord never flattered any one;

although more than once we find Him bestowing a well-earned commendation. In Him the pure sweetness of heaven was never wanting, while the flattering sweetness of earth never found a place. Gentleness was ever found in Him. But it was not the gentleness of sentimentality—ever seeking to please. When you are bound to any one by his flattering speeches, or by his studied endeavours to please you, the thread of union is a very feeble one. The moment he changes his attitude, and administers a rebuke, that moment you resist his interference. But it was no such bond that attached the disciples to the person of their Lord. Flattery having no part in Him, His slightest word of commendation was valued at a high price. For the same reason His slightest rebuke was received without any resentment on their part; for they were well assured that any rebuke from *Him* was baptized in the waters of infinite love. We want His sweetness—the true sweetness—the sweetness of heaven. By adopting the sweetness of flattery and dissimulation, we may gain a certain ascendancy over carnal hearts; and, to that extent, we may have power with men. But if we would have power with God and prevail, we must watch with jealous care that our sweetness is from above and not from beneath. If our aim is to secure the smile of man, we shall assuredly lose the smile of Christ.

— — —
WHICH of us can be kept near to Christ without some thorn in the flesh?

THE ENEMY FOILED.

“**IS** it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?”

The question was the simple outcome of a well-arranged plot by our Lord's enemies to damage, if not to destroy, His testimony on the earth. A more skilful snare could scarcely have been laid. If He answered, “Yes,” His enemies would at once have gone to the leaders of the Jewish nation and said, “This Man is an enemy of the people; for He says we are to give tribute to Cæsar. This cannot be the Messiah; for *He* will deliver us from our enemies, and from all that oppress us.” If, on the other hand, He had answered, “No; it is not lawful to give tribute to Cæsar,” they would have gone straight to the Roman Governor and accused our Lord of treason against “the government.” Whether His answer be “Yes,” or “No,” He is sure to be ensnared. Then observe with what honied words they come. “Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man; for Thou regardest not the person of men” (Matt. xxii. 16). What flattery is here! But the great Searcher of hearts “perceived their wickedness.” And He let them know that He perceived it; for we hear Him saying, “Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites?” What a withering rebuke to their flattery! Then comes His answer to their question. “Show Me the tribute money,” He says. “And they brought unto Him a penny. And He saith unto them, ‘Whose is this

image and superscription?’ They say unto Him, ‘Cæsar’s.’ Then saith He unto them, ‘Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.’” The answer confounded them. They could make nothing of it. Baffled and foiled by this manifestation of infinite wisdom, they sullenly went their way—to concoct new plans whereby they might compass the death of Him whom God had sent. But although they at length succeeded in their awful purpose, they did not cut *His* time short by a single day. So long as “His hour was not yet come,” all man's efforts to take Him were futile. Even the officers of the law sent to apprehend Him were struck with wonder—yea, with admiration—as they beheld His fearless bearing, and heard the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. Their arm was rendered powerless. They seemed to forget their mission; and, in answer to the question “Why have ye not brought Him?” they could only answer, “Never man spake like this Man!” (Jno. vii. 45, 46).

Regarding our Lord's answer as to the tribute-money, it may be worthy of remark that the Pharisees interpreted it, or pretended to interpret it, as a declaration that it was *not* lawful to give tribute to Cæsar. They had no ground for drawing any such conclusion. Yet we hear them saying, “We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar” (Lu. xxiii. 2). They had no love for the government of Cæsar. They writhed under it. But, so deadly was

their hatred to the Son of God, that when it suited their purpose they could put on a great appearance of devotion to the Roman power. Truly we need not wonder at our Lord's frequent use of the expression, "Ye hypocrites!" How well was the Scripture being fulfilled that says: "This child is set for the rise and falling again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be *spoken against*" (Lu. ii. 34). Human nature is the same to-day as it was then; and if we find deadly opposition arising when the Name and Person of Christ come into prominence, let us not think it "some strange thing." "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be" (Ecc. i. 9). Our Lord is still for "a sign that shall be spoken against." If we are truly living as resurrection ones, we shall find that, being *risen with Him*, we are *rejected with Him*.

MUST HAVE THE TRUE GOLD.

 I find myself in a place where there is no church gathered simply in the Name of the Lord Jesus, I am not going to sit down and "worship" in a worldly sanctuary as a "do-no-better." If I cannot get the right thing, I won't have the wrong thing. If I can't find that which is according to God, I won't bow down to that which is according to man. The absence of the true gold of Scriptural order will not make the base metal of man's imitation a whit better. Therefore if, Jeremiah-like, I am compelled to sit

alone, I will do so, no matter what the consequences may be. I may be looked down upon as a forsaker of what is called "the Sanctuary." The religious world may class me among those who "never set foot in a place of worship." I may lose my influence with the people, and find very few to preach to, if preaching is my line. But two witnesses shall give forth their united voice in my favour—the testimony of Scripture, and the testimony of a good conscience. If God be for us, who can be against us? Let us be faithful to Him; and He can make even the wrath of man to praise Him. There are only two paths before us: the path of absolute separation unto God, and the path of identity with the world's religion. Many try to tread a middle path; but all such attempts utterly fail to please either God or the world. If you tread the middle path, you must part company with a good conscience and with many a precious "Thus saith the Lord." God's path may be narrow, and may entail suffering; but the fact that it is *His* path will be ample reward even now to the faithful heart, not to speak of the "well-done" of the Master in the coming Day.

—♦—

"JUST as of old, he that really feasted with God in the peace-offering could not do so without sharing with God's priests; so now communion with God, if enjoyed at all, must be shared with all in communion with Him."

—♦—

HE that is running a race looks not at witnesses admiring, but only at the mark.

CHRIST IN RESURRECTION.

YOU may have wondered at the great ado the world makes with its religion. But its religion knows nothing of the *Risen Christ*. The world followed Jesus to the grave—perhaps we should say, to the Cross; but farther they could not go. That was the last the world ever saw of Him—that day when they wagged their heads, and sat down to watch Him there! They never saw Him again. He rose from the dead, and remained forty days upon earth, “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God” (Acts i. 3). But the world beheld Him no more. It takes the anointed eye to behold Christ in resurrection. No unregenerate son of Adam’s race ever beheld the risen Son of God. What a *separation* we have here! In beholding Christ in resurrection, we behold the world shut out entirely! The separation between His own and the world is complete. He is invisible to all save those whose eyes have been opened to behold His glory. The company who beheld Christ in resurrection was a select one. “He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. . . . After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also,” says Paul, “as of one born out of due time” (1 Cor. xv. 8). The world, you see, finds no place in that company which beheld Christ in resurrection. And the world has no place in that company yet. All is dark—so dark—to that poor world that cried, “Away with Him,” and never saw Him again! The world may go through the form of religion. But even the Jesus they profess to know is a *dead* Saviour. They have heard of One who was crucified: but they do not know the

One who is risen. “Christ in resurrection” is one of the drier of all subjects to the unregenerate heart. But it is far different with those that know His name. By faith they have beheld His glory. Shut in with Him on the Resurrection Mount, they worship and adore; while “the restless world that wars below” is vainly groping, through dim religious light, after the very One whom in heart they reject and by works they deny.

INCREASING FAITH.

GOD delights to increase the faith of His children. He is thus glorified before an ungodly world and the powers of darkness. The confidence of His children in times of trial, discouragement, and sorrow, gives great encouragement to other believers. Thus, through our own trials, God blesses others, while we ourselves are blessed through the trial of our faith. Difficulties, costs, crusts, hindrances, bereavements, and losses, though we shrink from them, and shrink exceedingly, are the very things God uses for our development in grace. Strong faith is not to be attained at once, any more than an infant can spring into manhood at once. It is “by reason of use” that faith is exercised and strengthened. Instead of wanting no trials before victory, what we have to do is to be willing to take from God’s hand as a means, I say, and say it deliberately—trials, difficulties, obstacles, bereavements, necessities. These are the very food of faith.—*An Extract, received from W. G. S.*

THE more we exercise ourselves in Self-judgment, the more will the flesh in us be discerned *by ourselves*, and the less will it be seen *by others*.

LIBERTY IN THE CHURCH.

IN a country where there is no law, there is no liberty; and in a country where complete liberty is enjoyed, you may be sure that there is a complete system of law, or rule. The more perfect the laws of a country, the more perfect will be the liberty enjoyed by the individual citizen. Who would ever think of wishing to be in a country where every one does as he chooses, and where there is no rule to preserve order? In such a state of things injustice and oppression would rule the day. In short, if liberty is to be enjoyed, it must be the outcome of *right laws rightly* administered. This principle applies as truly to the churches of God as it does to any country under the sun. Show me a church where there is true liberty, and you may be sure you have a church where there is rule according to God. Show me a church where there is no liberty—where the gifts of the ascended Lord are rejected—and you may be sure that godly rule is not administered there. You cannot have liberty apart from rule. The attempt has been made repeatedly; but it has ever ended in confusion. In grace, as well as in nature, order and rule are a divine arrangement. And, in a church of Christ, godly rule is imperatively a “needs-be,” if that church is to go on and prosper.

In a country where law is weak, and order not maintained, we find two things arising as the natural result of lawlessness. We find that bad men are exalted, while

good men are crushed into a corner. Able and worthy men feel that they are no match for the mere adventurers who are taking advantage of the lawless condition of the country, to seize the highest offices of state. But no sooner is order restored—no sooner does righteous rule operate—than these adventurers have to *come down*, while the men of principle and of wisdom are to be found guiding the affairs of the people. How aptly does all this apply in the things of God! In a professing church of Christ, a lack of Scriptural rule will bring certain men into prominence whom the Lord never called to the guiding of His people. But let the rule of God be acknowledged and carried out, and the right men will be found in the right place. And we know that “when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn” (Prov. xxix. 2). This question of rule in the church is one of far greater moment than many seem to imagine. It lies at the root of our prosperity as churches of God, while it cannot fail materially to affect our welfare as individual believers. Let us have Scriptural order—rule according to the mind of God as revealed in His word. Let that order be carried out in the fear of God, without doing homage to any man’s person; and along with the rule of God we shall have the liberty of God.

—♦—
 “THERE may be intercourse with God without communion.”

BRINGING GOD INTO THE SCENE.

Psalm lxxiii.

DAVID is in the wilderness. It is the time of his rejection. All around is dry and barren. It is "a weary land," where there is no water. He thirsts and longs for God. He lifts up his soul unto Him who is the source of all good. David seems to forget his dark surroundings as he thus speaks to his God. His heart becomes filled—his lips are opened, and praise goes forth unto the Lord. David's hands had been hanging down; but now they are lifted up; and, instead of dwelling in a dry and barren wilderness, he finds himself rejoicing under the shadow of the Almighty. How he thirsts to know more and more of God—that One who had made the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad for him, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose! What a blessed example of the preciousness of trial! Have we yet to learn that the trial of our faith is more precious than gold?

One purpose of our God in bringing His children into trial is to show His all-sufficiency in time of need. When we receive our trials as coming from *Him*—when *He* is brought into the scene, the frowning sea divides before our sight—the mountains of difficulty melt away—the storm becomes a calm. Or, if He chooses that difficulties should still remain, we can rest calmly under the shadow of His wings; and, like the dying woman on the garret floor without one earthly comfort, we can joyfully exclaim,

"I have Christ—what want I more?" Like David in this little Psalm, however dark the night may be, we shall be satisfied as with marrow and with fatness. Or, like Paul and Silas in the jail of Philippi, our song shall ascend unto Him whose grace is sufficient to make us rejoice though every earthly stream be dried (See Hab. iii. 17, 18—"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom," &c.).

Let us learn the great secret of bringing God into all our trials, whether they be trials in the church, or in the family, in business, or in the world. Our God is *for us*, praise His name! and His purpose is that all our trials shall be for our present blessing and our eternal profit. Soon the Day of Rejection will be past. The Crowning Day is at hand, when the Rejected One shall be crowned with many crowns, and they who have suffered with Him shall enter into His joy, and share the triumphs of His might.

J. C.

IF the life of Christ be in us we shall tremble at God's word. It will be a holy fear (not dread of God). Knowing that we are redeemed is the very ground of our fear—a fear lest the craft of Satan or the power of the flesh should hinder our communion or our service; lest something should come in between our souls and Jesus, for we would keep so near Him that every thing we do should be the "*work of faith.*" We should use the warnings of Scripture to produce this holy fear; as it is written, "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," not as doubting whether the Lord is our *friend*, but as knowing that *Satan* is our enemy.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM ?

AT a street corner, one night, a preacher was asked the question, "Where did the first particle of matter come from?" The question proceeded from a scoffer, and was evidently one of his stock-phrases for resisting the truth of God. Scoffers and infidels evidently think the question is unanswerable. But the truth is, that we have an answer, and the scoffer has none! "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The very first verse in the Bible answers the scoffer's question. God made the first particle of matter: God *commanded* it to be, and it was! This is simplicity itself to the child of faith, whether he be an unlettered labourer, or Newton the great astronomer. But what answer has the scoffer to his own question? He has none! He cannot tell how the first grain of sand came into being. Some so-called learned men would fain have us believe that the world was formed by "a fortuitous concourse of atoms." That is, a vast number of small particles of dust or sand *happened* to come together, and so made the world! Truly infidelity is getting desperate in its search for arguments. But where did the *atoms* come from? Who made the grains of sand? You thus see that the sceptic utterly fails to answer his own question. He is blindly groping about in the darkness. He has no certainty, either as to past or future. Yet he would have the boldness to ask the child of faith to reject the blessed

and satisfactory light of Revelation for the cold and miserable darkness of scepticism! But what have the sceptic and the infidel ever done for humanity? They have conferred no blessings. They have failed to allure men to a higher and a nobler life. The pleasures of holiness find no place in their theology. The happiness of purity—the joy of self-denying love—is unknown in their Confession-of-faith. Who ever heard of *them* smoothing the lonely pillow, or bringing one ray of heavenly comfort into the chamber of death? Whether it be in life or in death, they are alike helpless and barren. In life they have nothing to give; and in death they are miserable comforters. Therefore, child of God, keep on thy way unmoved. Slack not thy hand in sowing for eternity, although infidelity assail thee with its questions. Beware how thou come down from thine eminence to engage in argument with the scoffer. Let it be your care to unfold the beauties of Christ—to point out the glories of His person, and the infinite value of His work; and scepticism, abashed, shall hide its head, just as the god of the Philistines fell before the presence of the Ark of Jehovah.

THE Christian must expect opposition from the world, because he is going just the contrary road from the multitude, and has to pass through them. Believer, if you and the world are upon good terms, it may be well to enquire: Have you come down from your eminence?—do you live godly in Christ Jesus?

WILL COST YOU SOMETHING.

 IF you are a Christian after the New Testament pattern, your Christianity is costing you something. It is a poor Christianity—indeed it is no Christianity at all—that aims at keeping up a high profession at the lowest possible cost. Yet in many cases this is the very thing that seems to be aimed at. We have heard of one who boasted of the small sum of money that his religion cost him in a year. Truly he had got no farther than his religion. He evidently knew nothing of “pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father.” If we have any wish whatever to “adorn” our Christian profession, we must be prepared to put our hand into our pocket. Yea, we must do more than merely be *prepared*: it must be our *custom* to put our hand into our pocket. And it *will* be our custom, *if* we are adorning our profession. This leads us to point out that there are two ways of putting your hand into your pocket. One way is to give *grudgingly*—to fix upon the smallest amount of money that will save your profession, while you inwardly say to yourself: “Money wanted again!—no end of these calls—really I can’t afford it—but then I suppose my profession compels me to give *something*.” The other way is to give cheerfully—it may be a mere mite, if anything at all; for the Lord does not expect us to give what is not ours to give. But if the Lord has so blessed us that we have “to give to him that needeth,” let us beware of the evil eye that grudges to see

that half-crown pass out of our fingers so easily. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver; and the half-crown, or the half-penny, cheerfully given as unto Him, will return to us in riches that the gold of earth cannot buy. No one is more miserable than he who hath embraced the Christian profession, while he refuses to part with his money for God—embracing the filthy lucre of earth with the tenacity of a worldling. On the other hand, he who, according to his ability, gives freely and joyfully for the Lord, shall live even here on a princely income of heavenly felicity. “The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.”

A MAN with a poor appetite is a man in poor health—indeed there could not be a more dangerous symptom. So is it with the Christian who has lost his appetite for the word. You may live for God without what is called “the stated means of grace.” You may have no opportunity of gathering together with God’s people. In such circumstances it is quite possible to tread the path of communion. But that will be simply an impossibility if you are not desiring and feeding upon the sincere milk of the word.

OWN Christ’s person; love His name; embrace His doctrines; obey His commandments; and submit to His cross. His person is lovely; His name is sweet; His doctrines are comfortable; His commandments are reasonable; and His cross is honourable.

TO DO AS WE PLEASE.

YOU must beware that your *recoil* from one extreme does not carry you into the opposite extreme; for that "opposite extreme" may be quite as bad as the first. Perhaps you have been for many years a member of some religious denomination, where man's rule prevails, and where there is no room for the exercise of the gifts of the body. You feel the bondage to be intolerable; and so it comes that one day you break your fetters, and find yourself *free*. But "free" to do what? Is it to do what you choose?—to find yourself in a company of believers where every one does as *he* chooses? Nay, verily. Such would be an "opposite extreme" indeed, and as far removed from Scripture as the extreme from which you came out. Yet such are the ideas entertained by some as to going forth unto the Lord Christ, "outside the camp." But that would simply be to leave the region of grinding bondage for the region of unbridled license; and the one region is just as far from God's mind as the other. We have gone forth outside the camp, not to do what *we* please, but what *the Lord* pleases. We have not come out to a system of things in which there is no rule. We have professedly come out to the Lord Himself—to the spot where *His* rule alone is owned. And it is only as we acknowledge His rule, and yield ourselves up to the guiding of His Spirit, that we truly know what it is to enjoy the blessing of liberty as children of God.

UNDER-CURRENTS.

IN cases of "departure from the faith" you will generally find some *under-current* that explains the departure. Sometimes a professed believer is "carried away" by some new "ism"—some deadly heresy, albeit it professes to be the only true church. At first you wonder how the young man was so easily carried away. But, on giving the matter closer attention, you discover that, for some time before, he had been *departing from the Lord*. Thus following Christ afar off, he became an easy prey of the great enemy of souls. In nine cases out of ten you will find that something has been inwardly wrong long before the new heresy was embraced. Having *inwardly* departed from the Lord, it became simply a matter of choice as to what *outward* shape the departure would assume. When a professed believer is in such a condition he is ready to embrace the first "new church" that may happen to assert its claims. He finds that the truth gives him too narrow a path to walk upon. He must have more liberty. The "new church" promises any amount of liberty in *walk*, provided you accept its *doctrine*, and pay into its funds. "Ah," says the worldly professor to himself, "this is the thing for me. I can have the world's sports here, and the concert and the theatre; and not one will find fault with me in the least—this is the church I want." Therefore he "changes his views" on church government, and is soon to be found contending earnestly for his new "belief." But the whole case is perfectly explainable on principles of Scriptural science. From all such cases let us learn that it is an evil and a bitter thing to depart from the Lord.

JOAB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST.

(Third Paper).

IN the lives of bad men you will generally find some "redeeming feature"—some ray of light to soften the darkness of the picture. Even in the case of Ahab, who "did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings xxi. 25), we find him walking softly, and by self-abasement averting, or at least postponing, the judgments of heaven (ver. 29). But in Joab's history we search in vain for some redeeming feature. The picture is all dark. The superficial observer may see excellencies in his character; but a close examination shows that these supposed excellencies are only such as the flesh has ever held dear.

In the darkest hour of David's life (2 Sam. xi.), he finds in Joab a ready tool wherewith to carry out his murderous designs. No qualms of conscience seem to have troubled the captain of the host. He wants to stand well with the king. Uriah the Hittite is in the king's way. Joab is chosen to compass his death. The deed of blood is accomplished (2 Sam. xii. 9), and duly "reported" by the captain of the host, although couched in words that none but David could understand. The king seemed to know his man. That son of Zeruah, once "too hard" for him (2 Sam. iii. 39), was now the very man he wanted. What a significant token of David's estimation of Joab!

Again, when Absalom was an outlaw from his father's presence, Joab "perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom" (2 Sam. xiv. 1). At once the thought occurs to him to effect a reconciliation. It would serve two purposes: it would please the king, and it would secure Absalom's favour. Joab therefore appears in the character of peace-maker. But in his peace-making he paid no attention whatever to the claims of righteousness. When peace is brought about in a godly way, *the right thing* must first be done: righteousness and peace must kiss each other (Ps. lxxxv. 10). But there was no such embrace in Joab's peace-making. Absalom had fled after slaying Amnon his brother; and the law demanded that he be "dealt with" concerning that deed. But Joab attempts to "hush up" the whole matter. The claims of righteousness have no weight with him. "Peace at any cost" was one of his principles—when peace suited his own purposes. In this matter let us beware of Joab's successors, for they are many. They are easily known. To-day they are to be found shedding the blood of war in peace—slaying the righteous; and to-morrow making a peace which the word of God condemns. Such is ever the character of those whose actions spring from policy and not from principle. The man whose main thought is to secure a good position among the saints, and the approval of the many, is bound to appear in one character to-day and in another character to-morrow. To-day he slays a righteous

Abner, and to-morrow he reconciles an unrepentant Absalom! Such was Joab. And such are the Joabs of to-day. But the believer who acts from *principle*, and not from *policy*—the believer who has no desire but to see the will and mind of God carried out—will be delivered from doing such opposite things. He will be as eager for righteousness as for peace; and, when these two kiss each other, we may then look for “the *peaceable* fruits of *righteousness*.” Why is it that such fruits are so often awaiting in attempted peace-makings? It is because the claims of righteousness have not been considered. The right thing has not been done. Evil has not been purged. Absalom has been embraced, instead of being judged. True, some mighty Joab has carried out the negotiations; and the peace seems to be everything that could be desired. But it is simply a matter of time; and that unjudged evil, taking to itself seven other spirits more wicked than the first, shall burst its thin covering of hypocrisy, and seize the very throne itself, as Absalom did in a later day. Therefore, let the right thing be done—let evil be judged, no matter on whom the lot may fall. Let us ever and only seek to do the right thing, apart from all personal considerations; and we shall find that “the work of righteousness shall be peace” (Isa. xxxii. 17).

—♦—
 FAITH.—“All the other graces depend upon what faith brings in to them. It provides our ordinary food and our extraordinary cordials. ‘I had fainted unless I had believed.’”

AN EVIL DAY.

IT is an evil day with us when our own inconsistencies prevent us testifying to others that their deeds are evil. Yonder is brother So-and-so, for example. You cannot fail to observe some glaring inconsistencies in his walk. You believe he should be spoken to very plainly on the subject. You feel it to be scandalous that he should keep up such a flourishing profession, and yet be well known to be most inconsistent in his practice. But if *you* were to rebuke him, you feel convinced that he would turn round and cut *you* up for *your* inconsistencies! Therefore he escapes, and is allowed to walk at large, undisturbed. You permit him to go on under the delusion that he is in the third heaven of communion, while he is in the deepest pit of hypocrisy and self-deception. Yet you daren't open your mouth. You know it; and he knows it too. If you counsel him to pull down that great sign-board of profession, he will tell you to pull down yours; and he will show good cause. You are well aware of this. Therefore evil in God's house is unjudged, and the flesh is allowed to enlarge its borders. This is a most humiliating condition to be in. If we are serving God with singleness of eye, our own mouth will not be closed in any such way. The man of God is one who has judged the flesh in himself. He is therefore in a position to deal with the flesh in others. And if any inconsistency in himself has escaped his own observation, he is ready to have it pointed out, in order that it may be judged and forsaken.

—♦—
 Do not waste time in showing that God's word is consistent with the highest reason. We are not called to apologize for the gospel, but to proclaim it.

EXTRACT

From "THE RESURRECTION,"

An unpublished Poem, by WILLIAM BLANE,

SOME, heav'nly Muse, thy sweetest accents
bring—

A scene so grand demands that thou
should'st sing.

Upon celestial pinions wing thy flight,
Nor rest until, upon the mountain height,
Thou catch the notes from angel lips that flow,
And sing them in our waiting ears below,
That, list'ning to thy strains, we may be led
Up the steep mountain-side with measured tread,
To trace the steps of Peter, James, and John,
Till, from the busy world in vision gone,
Enraptured we upon its summit stand,
Beholding by thine aid the scene so grand.
Describe to us that scene upon the mount—
The actors name; their words and deeds recount.
What would be learned therefrom we too would
know,

If to such depths thy pleasing numbers flow.

Eight days had passed since He, who many
hoped

Would lead them on to earthly glory, dropp'd
Words wrapped in myst'ry and o'erhung with
gloom,

Predicting for Himself a cross and tomb,
And for His followers a life of shame,
Bearing the stigma of His outcast Name.
Sayings so strange, like lead in water, fell
Deep in their hearts: their purport none could
tell.

With sadden'd countenance each questioned each
What such unlooked-for words were meant to
teach.

Him as the Christ of God they knew and owned,
And soon had hoped to see Him King enthroned
O'er Israel, and thence from sea to sea
His Kingdom spread, and universal be.
But, like the clouds on southern breezes borne,
That dim the lustre of an April morn,
Their Master's mention of a cross and tomb
O'erspread their hopeful sky with clouds of gloom.

The crisis had arrived: the blinded Jews
Jesus as their Messiah did refuse.
No longer therefore would He have it shown
That He was Christ—even the Promised One.
"The Kingdom," which He had proclaimed as
"nigh,"

Rejected now, must long abeyant lie;
And, as the Lamb of God, His blood must flow
To make atonement for each child of woe,
That in each ransomed heart, set free from sin,
His spiritual Kingdom might begin.
This had been in th' eternal counsels willed;
But, that the Scriptures might be all fulfilled,
Messiah must, in humble form disguis'd,
Be offer'd first to Israel, and despis'd.

The gloom of Calv'ry gathered in His breast,
And cares untold His loving heart oppress'd,
When, worn by close acquaintanceship with
grief,

He sought His Father's face—His sole relief—
And, taking from the twelve the chosen three,
Destined His glory on the Mount to see,
He (as it was His wont so oft to do)
From pressing multitudes awhile withdrew.
Up the rough mountain-side He led the way,
And on its sacred top began to pray.
The favoured three beside Him bended low,
Awed by the words that from His lips did flow.
And soon the living current of His prayer
Upon its bosom did their spirits bear,
Till, with the sacred tide so pure and deep,
Nature, out-weighed, was overcome with sleep.
Yet, in a strange unconsciousness amazed
And deeply moved, upon their Lord they gaz'd.
For, as He prayed, the fashion of His face,
On which already grief had left its trace,
Was altered, and became so wondrous bright
That, as the sun, it shone with radiant light.
His raiment too—that robe without a seam—
Was white and glist'ning as the noon-tide beam.
All heaven's splendour He at once did wear:
No human form was ever seen so fair!
'Twas well that sleep had cast its sable shade:
They could not have beheld but for its aid.
And lo! two men, in heav'n's transparent sheen,
Appeared beside Him on the dazzling scene.

'Twas Moses and Elias whom they saw—
The figures of "The Prophets" and "The
Law"—

One from the secret grave on Nebo's height,
Where God concealed him from the people's
sight;

The other from above—one of the two
Whom Death, the King of Terrors, never knew.
But Death's dark night and heaven's unsullied
day

Alike the will of the Omnipotent obey.
The prey of one, the other's willing guest,
Are by His hand in equal glory dress'd
And ushered in upon the sacred scene
In dazz'ling splendour, not a shade between.
He who has deck'd the spangled arch of heaven
Can bring the dust which winds afar have driv'n,
Or seas have lash'd amongst the countless sands
That strew the shores of far-divided lands,
And animate it with such life and grace
As doth not leave corruption's faintest trace—
Yea, vest it in such glory that its rays
Shall man transfix and dazzle angels' gaze,
As easy as He can from realms above
Despatch to earth a messenger of love.

[It must not be supposed that our esteemed contributor is speaking of the *resurrection* of Moses. We all know that Christ is the *first-fruits* of them that sleep.—Ed.]

"THE LORD'S LABOURERS."

 N esteemed brother writes us as to the leading article in October Treasury, "Supporting the Lord's labourers." He is glad that we have called attention to the subject. He considers it one of great importance; and he adds:

"Whatever may result practically, it will surely lead many of God's people to *think*."

"While the *withholding* on the part of God's children has its lessons of contentment and patience for the labouring one, as indeed the

abundance has its teaching, yet the neglect to care for those who have gone forth exposes the labourer to the temptation either to go among the sects, or to hold back the truth lest he himself should suffer temporarily; or he may have to return to business, that the labour of his own hands may supply his need.

"That there are those whom God has sustained in the path of faith amid much to try them, is cause for thankfulness. But their number is small; and, locked up in the secret of their own experience, are memories of trials they could not mention, lest speaking of them should seem to suggest the "care" of brethren. Those who go forth for the Name are both like and unlike other men. They are like them in having similar needs, cares, anxieties, duties, and responsibilities—having rents, rates, and other items of expenditure: but unlike them in being unable to mention various circumstances, or even trials, for fear lest the thought should intrude itself—"The announcement is an advertisement of his own need—he is asking for help." And so he is shut up to God.

"Does God fail? No. Then why refer to the experience? There are two sides to the question. On the one hand, God's goodness and care is proved. On the other hand, the neglect and indifference of His people is made manifest. That He never fails, each of us gladly, thankfully owns. But that cannot, and does not, excuse His saints. Yours, &c."

—♦—
God delights in putting faith to do that which the flesh declares impossible. Oh, how precious a jewel is that resolute Faith which walks with God under all circumstances, wrestling against the powers of darkness, making no bow to the Haman of evil customs, or evil principles!

I MUST DECREASE.

IT belongs to the highest Christian experience to be able to say, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Self may be our greatest enemy, while we may be entirely ignorant of the power of such a foe. It is therefore well to sit down betimes and ask ourselves the question, "What is the motive power of my zeal in the Lord's work?—Is it the constraining love of Christ?—Or, beneath all my seeming earnestness, is there a secret, undefined longing to make a name for myself, or to build up something in which I can glory?" There is at least one test that we may apply to our devotion to the Lord; and it is this: If our eye is single for Him we will be quite ready to rejoice in the success of another man's labours. We do not say we will be ready to rejoice in *anything* that professes to be work for God; for in that case we would be found rejoicing in very much that is simply a caricature of the "glorious Gospel." But what we say is, that if our zeal is from above, we will be found rejoicing in every work for God that is manifestly from above. It will not matter whether *we* are the instrument, or some other person is the instrument. Is *Christ* exalted? Is *He* increasing? If so, that is enough for every one who is truly devoted to His person. There may be no increase as regards *my* prominence in the work. On the contrary, I may be on the decrease. The Lord may be exalting other workers, while I am being overlooked and forgotten by the saints at

large. But what although this be the case? If I have the spirit of the Baptist—if my zeal has had a heavenly origin—I will rejoice. It would surely be strange if that which causes joy in the presence of the angels should awake no responsive echo in my breast! "Rejoice *with Me*," says Christ. Self finds no part in that invitation. We are invited to rejoice with Him. Are we ever ready to rejoice?

If we can fight well in the closet, we shall walk happily with God in all His ways. We should begin our every day's journey with *Him*: and, comparing need with supply, shall we not take pleasure in infirmities and necessities? because Christ will thereby take occasion to magnify His grace, and to lead us to springs of consolation in Himself.

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THE Believer's Treasury.

No. 64.

DECEMBER, 1887.

Vol. II.

THE GREAT WANT.

T seems clear that worldliness is not on the decrease, whatever may be its increase. But this is ever the result of a low spiritual condition. We have often remarked that in a company of believers where revival has been going on, there is scarcely any need for the exhortation, "Love not the world." In revival times God's people seem to have a kind of spiritual instinct that teaches them to shrink from anything approaching to worldliness. And if, in revival times, the truth needs to be proclaimed as to separation from any form of evil, it is wonderful how readily the saints receive the word. Not long ago it was our lot to be at a "Conference" in a place where there were evident tokens that God was working. On remarking to an old brother that we hoped the truth proclaimed was not "too strong" for the people, he replied, "Not a bit too strong: at the present time the people here will stand anything within the boards of the Bible." In other words, God's people were in a revival condition, and were therefore prepared to receive *anything* that the Lord has spoken. But when the tide of power has fallen—when low

life is the general rule—when, if we may so speak, the revival sun has almost set, worldliness and a thousand other evils come out of their hiding-places, and stalk boldly abroad in the dim twilight that prevails. Purse strings are then in great measure tied up; the Bible is displaced by the newspaper; zeal in the Lord's work is reckoned fanaticism; while "exhorting one another" becomes a thing of the past; for every one wishes to be let alone, and therefore lets every other one alone. If a faithful witness for God should appear, he is narrowly watched, to discover if he is "preaching at" any of the abounding evils. If he gives a scathing exposure of sin and worldliness and inconsistency—if he proclaims *Separation* in all its length and breadth, he gets a cold reception—if, indeed, he does not arouse open hostility. Such is the order of things when "twilight" prevails in our church life. In such times you will find believers doing things they would never have proposed to do had the light of heaven been shining on the assembly. The owls of evil seem to have it all their own way in the dim twilight.

Now what have we to learn from all this? We have to learn the simple lesson that we *must* have a revival

condition of things in the churches. Is it the case that the professed physicians of God's heritage have not discovered her disease? It would seem as if false causes of banishment have been assigned to the present low condition of things. Ecclesiastical battles are being fought over certain points of detail—how certain forms should be observed. But, while we are discussing these points on the *outside* of the circle, worldliness and heart-departure from God are holding a banquet *inside* the circle! Satan will allow us to wax eloquent and violent over *how* things should be done, provided he can blind us to the *inner corruptions* that may be eating our life away! We are convinced that the time has fully come to lay the axe to the root of the tree. We have no objection to considering the question of *how* things should be done in the churches. But, *first of all*, we believe that the guides of God's people, laying aside for the moment any matters of detail, should bend all the energy of their redeemed nature to the great question: *How can we have a revival of spiritual power?*—How can vital godliness and Christ-like living have their true place among us? We believe that these are *the* great questions of the present time. Reader, do you believe that too? If so, then let your voice be heard. Who knows but thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this. If the "candlestick" is to remain in its place, there must be a revival of spiritual power—we must sanctify Christ as Lord *in our heart*. The chariot of heavenly

unction and joy in the Holy Spirit must be no longer obstructed. We need not wait for others to move. Let *us* move; and others will be moved. We trust that this great question will find an echo all over the churches. It will do no good to sit down and flatter ourselves that we are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. *We have need of a mighty revival of spiritual power.* Who then will *pray* that the windows of heaven may be opened? Who will *live* as becometh that expectation? Let us gird ourselves to this great question. And when, in measure, it is solved—when the windows of heaven have been opened—when the genial rain has descended—when the heavenly sunshine has come, and the beams of the Master's presence have chased the twilight far away—how easy *then* to settle matters of detail, and to reach oneness of mind on many questions that may now be exercising our hearts! And, even where there may be some difference of judgment, what gentle forbearance is *then* shown one toward another, while patiently waiting for the Lord to "reveal even this unto you"! Haste, thou happy day, when, among the churches of Christ from Dan even to Beersheba, the heavenly sun shall shine, and the heavenly love shall reign!

—♦—

"ONE thought direct from God gives much nourishment. The Christ who feeds one can feed a thousand. It is not many thoughts that make a good meal for the soul, but Christ ministered. A little *in the Spirit* goes a long way."

AI IS NOT TAKEN.

Josh. vii.

THE victorious march of the armies of Israel was brought to a sudden stand before the walls of Ai. It was but a small place—so insignificant, indeed, in their eyes that we find them saying, "Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few" (ver. 3). Such is the fleshly confidence that exalts itself whenever there is sin in the camp. But few as were the people of Ai, they were too many for Israel in departure from God. Who is so weak as the believer out of communion? Who is so utterly helpless to resist the Devil, as the child of God who is harbouring what God has forbidden? Israel considered that three thousand men was an ample force for the destruction of Ai. Yet in the next verse we have the ominous words, "And they fled before the men of Ai." There was sin in the camp, and Israel had to flee. As it was then, so is it now. We may marshal our hosts, and make elaborate arrangements for the taking of Ai. We may put out large-type intimations that a special effort is to be made, or "mission" conducted; we may secure high-sounding names, and proclaim all the "attractions" we have provided. The appearance is doubtless imposing. But the walls of Ai refuse to fall. Why? Because there is sin in the camp. There is evil unjudged that ought to be judged. Israel found it a

hopeless task to go on victoriously with God and yet have the accursed thing in Achan's tent. And we will find it as hopeless a task to carry on real work for God while there is unjudged sin in the company. Joshua was amazed at Israel's defeat. He could not understand it. But he took the right place—he "fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord" (ver. 6). Then comes the question, "O Lord what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? . . . and what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name?" Joshua implied that, for some reason or other, the Lord *had failed*; and therefore Israel was defeated. But God had not failed. Although we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim. ii. 13). It was no part of the divine counsels to bring defeat upon Israel *without a cause*. This great truth was one that Joshua had to learn; and he was taught it in these words of rebuke: "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? *Israel hath sinned.*" The whole secret of failure was thus made plain in three words—"Israel hath sinned." The Lord had not failed; but Israel had failed; and that great law of the kingdom at once came into operation—"The Lord is with you, while ye be with Him . . . but if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you" (2 Chron. xv. 2). The mystery of defeat was at once revealed. Through sin being fostered in the midst of Israel's camp, Israel had departed from the Lord; and for the time being He had departed from Israel. Therefore they

were weak as other men—yea, ten times weaker. Have we learned the same lesson? Has it not happened again and again that amid a great flourish of trumpets we lay siege to Ai, and Ai refuses to fall? We make great efforts to very little purpose. We look for much, and lo, it comes to little (Hag. i. 9). And we then are inclined to take refuge in the thought that perhaps the Lord does not want Ai to be taken! Vain refuge! and even of itself a powerful witness that something internally is wrong. There is *sin in the camp!* We may shut our eyes to it—we may even be blind to it. But there is a way to find out the sin. Let us get down on our faces before God, as Joshua and the elders of Israel did; and then we will be in the fair way of discovering why the chariot of the Lord's work drags along the way so heavily. But to "get down on our faces before God" is the last thing we think of. We are determined to keep up the siege of Ai, and go through all the routine of preaching and planning and working. It would be so humbling to get down on our faces before God—it would be such an admission of our own barrenness. We could not think of humbling ourselves to that extent. No. We prefer to keep up every outward appearance of power—yea, rather to *increase* the appearance. Yet, in all such cases it would be a thousand times better for the Lord's work and our own souls, if we called a halt, as Israel did, and asked with bowed heads before God, "Why, O Lord, this barrenness and

failure?" When such is our attitude, it is very soon made manifest who are the troublers of Israel. Sin cannot be indulged—*forbidden fruit cannot be eaten*—without affecting the onward progress of that church of Christ with which we may be connected. There is grave reason to fear that the cause of so much defeat before the walls of Ai is simply this, that there is "death in the pot" somewhere. We know it is not popular to get down on our faces before the Lord. That means a searching of ourselves, followed by humiliation and confession. Every Achan is opposed to a search; for an inward voice seems to say that the lot will fall upon himself. But let the search go on notwithstanding. Let us get down on our faces before God, and the peaceable fruits of humiliation and confession shall soon be apparent, followed by the downfall of many an ancient Ai, and the triumphal march of the saints along the path of power and blessing.

HE WILL REST IN HIS LOVE.

(Lines suggested by Zeph. iii. 17.)

"He will rest in His love." Hast thou sinn'd? Art thou fearing

His patience is wearied, His favour is gone?
Nay, Thy God ere He chose thee foreknew all thy weakness,

And, loving thee once, will for ever love on.

And O! when the light of my life is declining,
When heart and flesh fail me, His arm from above
Will comfort my spirit, will guide me, will lead me,
Far off from the shadows, to "rest in His love."

E. S.

JOAB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE HOST.

(Fourth Paper).

JOAB'S work as a peace-maker was but of short duration. By his intervention a patched-up restoration of Absalom had been effected. But, like every peace not founded on righteousness, it only ran its course. In due time unjudged evil burst forth. Absalom, by his flatteries, having stolen the hearts of the men of Israel, seized the throne; and David had to flee from Jerusalem. Such was the fruit of Joab's peace-making—surely a beacon-light for all whose principle seems to be “anything for the sake of peace.”

Although “the conspiracy was strong,” and “the people increased continually with Absalom,” yet Joab remained faithful to the king. Why was this? Considering Joab's character, we should rather have expected him to have gone with Absalom. But we need not suppose that he had any special devotion to David's person; for in a later day he was found on the side of rebellion (1 Kings ii. 28). But it is not hard to understand why he is now found a seemingly faithful supporter of the Lord's anointed. Joab could not fail to see that David's followers, though few compared with Absalom's supporters, were yet the stronger party by far. In Hushai's counsel to Absalom we hear him saying: “For all Israel knoweth that thy father is a mighty man, and they that be with him are valiant men” (2 Sam. xvii. 10).

No one would know this better than the captain of the host, whose practised eye would at once estimate the strength of the respective parties. Joab was one who was determined not only to have a chief place, but to be on the strong and successful side. This comes clearly out in the account of the expedition against the Ammonites and the Syrians (2 Sam. x. 6-14). “When Joab saw that the front of the battle was against him before and behind, he chose of all the *choice men of Israel*, and put them in array against the Syrians; and *the rest* of the people he delivered into the hand of Abishai his brother.” Joab made sure that he had all the “choice men” of Israel fighting under his own standard; and Abishai could take what was left! Joab was determined to be successful at any cost. True, along with all this confidence in “mighty men” there could be a great profession of faith in God. “Let us play the men,” he says, “for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good” (ver. 12). But Joab's confidence was evidently in the “choice men of Israel.” This is ever the case with men of the Joab character. You rarely find them going forth single-handed for God as Jonathan did (1 Sam. xiv. 6). They must have “mighty men” on their right hand and on their left. In carrying on work for God they have an eye to every “attraction” that is fitted to “draw” the people. They do not care to run the risk of having a “small meeting.” In fact they cannot get on with small

meetings. They are not prepared to go on quietly and stedfastly for God, witnessing for Christ, whether the people will hear or whether they will forbear. Their faith in *means* is unbounded: their faith in *God* is small indeed. They live in the atmosphere of apparent success; and in any other atmosphere they cannot live at all.

The longer you follow up Joab's history the darker it becomes. For some reason or other the king elected Amasa to assemble the men of Judah for the expedition against Sheba the son of Bichri (2 Sam. xx.). Amasa having tarried "longer than the set time" (ver. 5), David instructed *Abishai* to pursue the rebel. But why not Joab? Was he not captain of the host? Yet he seems to be ignored; and that honour is reserved first for Amasa, and then for Abishai. Now comes out one of the most outstanding features of Joab's character. He could not bear to see another getting a greater honour than himself. To be quietly thrust aside and see other men leading Israel, was more than he could stand. Amasa or Abishai might lead Israel *to victory*. But that was of small moment with Joab. He must have a position of honour *for himself*; and if such a position was not given to him, he would take it. He hated the man who was preferred before him. Amasa was "more righteous and better than he" (1 Kings ii. 32). But Amasa stood in Joab's way; and that was a sufficient reason why he should die! With the kiss of pretended friend-

ship the treacherous stab is given; and Amasa is no more (2 Sam. xx. 9). In Joab's case envy had borne its fruit. And fruit of a similar kind it is bearing in the church to-day.

To grudge a brother the honour which God may put upon him, is the surest evidence that we are walking in darkness. Many a righteous Amasa has been wantonly silenced by the sword of the tongue, and for no other offence than this, that the Lord had selected him for special honour. Let us not read Joab's history in vain. Let us have grace to take the low place. If the Lord sees fit that others should be more signally "used" in the salvation of sinners, or in the building-up of saints, why should we not rejoice? If we allow the Joab spirit to get possession of our hearts, we may be assured that such a spirit will effectually prevent our being used in any way for God. If we are not honoured in running His messages, it is simply because we cannot bear the honour. We would be so puffed up with a sense of our own importance that the Lord has to pass us by and select others to do His work. But let the Joab spirit be mortified—let the love that "thinketh no evil" have its place in our hearts—and we shall find a "ministry" which the Lord would have us to fulfil. It is when we are most ready to rejoice in the prosperity of others, that we are best fitted to be honoured of God.

—♦—

If we have not the spirit of supplication and thanksgiving, let us begin with the spirit of confession.

HIS OBJECT.

IN continuing a word on Titus ii. 14 (see page 41 of March number), we would point out how our Lord Jesus desires to have us near Himself—yea cleansed to Himself as an acquired people; who, because His, and not their own, are free to be *zealous* doers of His wishes.

This purifying to Himself has a happy exposition in Eph. v. 26, where we read (R.V.) that Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify, *having cleansed* her by the laver of water in the Word—that is, by the sayings of God in the Word. Whence we learn that the cleansing He would make us to experience is by the Word; and which, if ours indeed, we may determine by the enquiry, Does my obedience to that word bring me near to Himself? This, of course, raises the question as to where He is; for here it is not His being with us that is spoken of; but our being with Him. And just as an absent Thomas was not with Him where He was (Jno. xx. 19—25), and yet was indeed the Lord's own, and with him the Lord was (Heb. xiii. 5); so now, many are verily the Lord's, and with them the Lord ever is, and always will be; yet, alas! alas! these are not purified to Him. This arises chiefly because they will not, or have not, been redeemed from all lawlessness; that is, from all "law" that is not the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning them. Thus they are not cleansed as believers by obedience to that

will as made known in the Scriptures. We do well, then, to ask ourselves, "Am I where the Lord is?" Have I indeed been purified to Him? To some He cries aloud (2 Cor. vi.), "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separated, and touch not the unclean, AND I WILL receive you." Some, thus addressed, come out; yet touch the unclean, and are not separated. Others remain fast in. Alas, that both should account themselves as received by Him who is Lord Almighty! But it is not so, beloved of God. Hence, let us awake; and "having *therefore* these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit" (see John iii. 6), "perfecting holiness in the fear of God," and thus go forth unto Him without the Camp, bearing His reproach.

The third view of His giving of Himself, as Titus ii. 14 speaks, is a presentation of that holy zeal, which, it is His desire, should characterise those who are with Him—yea the *beautiful* works that cause lookers-on to perceive that the workers "have been with Jesus." The word "good" is radically "beautiful;" and O! what a mine of truth is here for the digging! For what is beautiful work in one, may not at all be beautiful in another. Yea, one may so mar good works, instead of adorning them, that the work is evil spoken of (see Rom. ii. 23, 24). For example, "the rich are exhorted to be rich in beautiful works, as well as to be good. Let the rich in gift, in substance, in time, in opportunity, in privilege, in responsibility, ask themselves whether their works are beautiful *as attached* to

them. And, besides this, let such ask again whether they are what our Lord gave Himself that we might be, viz., *zealous*. O! my soul, let the word search thee—*zealous* of beautiful works! HE would have our beautiful works to be seen. He *testified* of one, "She hath wrought a beautiful work on Me." Overseeing the flock of God is beautiful work. ALL BELIEVERS are expected to be careful to maintain beautiful works (Tit. iii. 8). Yet, and such as ARE WITH HIM are expected to be *zealous* thereof. But are they? O my soul—myself—art thou with Him indeed? If so, bethink thyself, art thou *zealous* of beautiful works? "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Art thou, then, as a lawless, sacrificing, disobedient Saul? or an obedient, hearkening imitator of Him whose meat it was to do the will of Him that sent Him?

J. B.

—♦—

"A GOOD man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. xii. 35). You cannot separate a man's actions from himself. The "good man" is known by what he "brings forth." Even a man's words will let you know what is in his heart; for people, as a rule, speak about what is nearest to their heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34). If the treasure of the heart is good, then golden speech and beautiful works shall be the outer adorning.

DESIRES.

—♦—

WORD, 'tis my desire to *know*
 Only Thee—
To follow, and to *serve* below,
 Only Thee;
To know Thee I'd Thy sufferings share—
To follow Thee my cross would bear—
To serve Thee would go anywhere—
 Only Thee.

Well I know these faint desires
 Are not mine,
 But the longings heaven inspires—
 All divine.
 Then, O keep me constant, true—
Knowing, following, serving too;
 For the grace to bear me through
 Must be Thine.

Wake, O Lord, each morn mine ear,
 That I may
 Thy divine instructions hear
 For the day.
 Thus *Thy knowledge* I shall gain—
 Thus *Thy follower* remain—
 And *Thy servant's* joy obtain,
 All the way.

May the "little while" be pass'd
 Thus by me,
 Till Thy face, O Lord, at last
 I shall see—
 Till in heaven I *fully* know—
 Follow *wheresoe'er* Thou'lt go—
 Serve as *I ne'er can* below,
 Only Thee.

W. B.

—♦—

WHEN God gave Paul the thorn in the flesh, he knew not at first the value of the gift, and would have cast it away, had he been left in his own hands. The Lord was his keeper, and taught him, and us by him, that the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness.

DID CHRIST DIE FOR EVERYBODY?

THERE seems to be a little confusion in the minds of some in regard to this question. But there need be no confusion if we keep simply to *what is written*. We believe that the Gospel, as Scripture plainly declares, is good tidings of great joy "to all people" (Lu. ii. 10). Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, distinctly says that "Christ died for the ungodly" (v. 6). There can be no misunderstanding of such a passage. In the face of such a Scripture we do not see how any one can take up narrower ground. Scripture declares that He "tasted death for every man" (Heb. ii. 9)—that He "gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6). Therefore we preach a free and eternal salvation to every son and daughter of Adam's race. God has made no exceptions: therefore we make none.

There are two aspects in which we can view the atonement; and, as Scripture is its own best interpreter, we will find a striking illustration of these two aspects in the two goats of Leviticus xvi. One goat, on which the Lord's lot fell, was offered for a sin-offering. The other goat, on which the people's lot fell, was presented alive before the Lord, "to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness" (ver. 10). These two goats present us with the two aspects of the atonement to which we have referred. In the first goat (the one on which the *Lord's lot* fell), we clearly see the Godward

side of the atonement. It is not a question of individual transgression, or forgiveness of sins. These questions come up in connection with the *second* goat. The first goat thus gives us the atonement in its general or Godward aspect. But, in the case of the second goat, there is confession of iniquities, transgressions, and sins, which are borne away into a land not inhabited (ver. 21, 22). We do not think a more striking picture could be found of these two aspects of the atonement. The death of Christ has satisfied every righteous claim of a sin-hating God. Sin has been atoned for; God has been satisfied; and He can be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26). Some fail to mark the difference between forgiveness and atonement. Yet there is a wonderful difference. *Atonement* has been made for sin, whether the sinner believes on Jesus or not. But before there can be *forgiveness* there must be believing and confessing (see Rom. x. 9). God has made provision for all; and, on the ground of completed atonement, He is proclaiming forgiveness to all that believe (Acts xiii. 39).

But while God's word warrants us—yea commands us—to make a world-wide proclamation of His good news; while we preach a free and unfettered Gospel unto "*all people*," we rejoice in the great truth that God has an elect people—that we have been chosen in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world—that all that the Father hath given

Him shall come to Him (Jno. vi. 37 ; xvii. 6). This is one of the great mysteries of Redemption—how to reconcile the two great truths, that God has an elect people, and that man is responsible for his rejection of the gospel. Many have tried to reconcile these two truths ; but they have done it (or, rather, tried to do it) by running away with one side of truth and denying the other. We hold to both sides of the truth. We believe in proclaiming a message to the unsaved, as free as Rev. xxii. 17. At the same time we believe in the doctrines of election and God's sovereignty as definite as 2 Thes. ii. 13, and as eternal as Jno. x. 28. We dare not trim and explain-away God's truth so as to commend it to the carnal mind. Such is not our mission to the unsaved. We have a glorious gospel for them ; and it is at their peril if they reject it. God's saints have already the blessed possession of "*eternal life*"—not a mere temporary reprieve, but the place of sons in the Father's house, there to abide for ever ! Outside as sinners once we stood, reading these words of universal invitation : "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17). When, by grace divine, we entered in (we use the illustration of another) we found inscribed *inside* the door these wonderful words : "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4). Until the day come when we shall know as we are known, let us accept, in the simplicity of faith, all that our God has spoken ;

preaching the "Glorious Gospel" to *every creature*, and encouraging the hearts of His saints in the precious revelations He has been pleased to make concerning His elect ones.

HUMBLY WITH MY LORD TO WALK.

 OH, 'tis better far than talk,
Humbly with my Lord to walk,
And His loving voice to hear,
Ministering words of cheer.

Walking worthy of my Lord,
Pleasing Him, shall joy afford :
Oh, my Lord, to follow Thee,
Now my constant care would be.

To deliver me from hell,
And the Father's fulness tell,
At the place called "Calvary"
Jesus gave His life for me.

There the mighty flood did roll
Judgment's waters o'er His soul ;
Then the dread three hours of gloom—
Then three days in Joseph's tomb !

But Jehovah, from on high,
Raised Him up, no more to die ;
Seated Him upon the Throne,
There appearing for His own.

We shall walk with Him above,
Sing the wonders of His love,
See that face so wondrous bright—
Dwell in uncreated light !

Now to walk with Him below,
In His likeness daily grow—
Better far than gold or fame,
Joying in my Saviour's name.

He that bore the curse for me,
That I might His glory see,
Lo ! He comes : my soul, prepare
Soon to meet Him in the air !

THE DOCTRINES OF ELECTION AND FREE-WILL.

(In connection with our remarks on the subject of Christ dying for all, we have thought it might be of interest to some of our readers if we printed the sub-joined article which we published in a local evangelical paper more than ten years ago. We have not found occasion to change our views, to the smallest extent, on this great subject).

DO you believe in the doctrine of election? Do you believe in the doctrine that man has a free will? Many battles have been fought around these two questions; and many and grievous have been the divisions they have caused in the Churches. But the fight has not ended there; for it is still carried on in the shape of skirmishing by individual Christians who happen to differ on the election and free-will doctrines. The whole question, stated briefly, is this: The Bible declares that God's church has been chosen by Him in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4; 2 Thes. ii. 13; &c.). It also declares that man is left to the freedom of his own will; and that if he dies rejecting the offer of salvation he shall be held responsible in the day of judgment (Jno. iii. 19; Prov. i. 24-31; Jno. v. 40). The extreme election Christian (we avoid more specific names) looks at these two truths, and he is puzzled. How can *both* be true?—God having an elect people, and yet all people having a free offer of salvation, and being held responsible if they refuse. The one truth seems to contradict the other. What is he to do? He believes *one* of them. He believes the election doctrine; and the free-will doctrine he throws overboard; or—which is the same thing—he modifies it, and qualifies it, and explains it away till it is

as good as out of sight entirely. The extreme free-will Christian also looks at the two doctrines. He is likewise puzzled. He sees them in the Bible before his eyes. There they are. "*No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him*" (Jno. vi. 44): "*Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*" (Rev. xxii. 17). What is to be done? He can't get the one to "dovetail" into the other. Which is he to believe? He takes the free-will doctrine; it sounds *reasonable*; and the other he throws overboard, or—which is the same thing—he tones it down till it means nothing at all. In plain language that is a simple statement of the election and free-will doctrines that have caused so much discussion. Why there should be any discussion we are quite at a loss to see. But how can discussion be avoided? you ask. What do *we* believe? We believe what God says. We believe *both* the doctrines: and why should we not? There's election: we believe it. There's free-will: we believe it. Do we believe both to be thoroughly true? We do. How do we reconcile the one with the other? We can't: nobody can; but we believe what God says, simply because God says it. God says He made the world out of nothing. We believe that, but we cannot explain it. If we are to wait till we get the truth of God's Word to chime in with human wisdom before believing it, we may close our Bible at once. Those who would try to serve up God's truth suited to the palate of this world's *wisdom*, have surely never learned that the world *by wisdom knew not God*. We find no warrant for exalting one part of God's truth by denying another; for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in

righteousness" (2 Tim. iii. 16). With discussion on the election and free-will doctrines we have little sympathy; for each view contains only half the truth. Such discussion seems to us to be well illustrated by supposing two men to get hold of a pair of scissors. They take out the little pin, seize a blade apiece, and then attempt to do the work of a pair of scissors. But they make no progress. The blades won't cut. The attempt is a dead failure. Join the two parts, and what a difference! In the same way let us take God's Word as a living whole, and we shall indeed find it to be sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. iv. 12). Let us accept the little boy's definition of faith—"FAITH IS TO BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAYS, AND ASK NO QUESTIONS."—(From "*Maybole Evangelist*" of 24th February 1877).

COMFORTED OF GOD.

IT is only as we ourselves are comforted of God, that we are able to comfort others. We have no comfort to communicate to others except what is communicated to ourselves. Am I walking in the comfort of the Holy Spirit? If so, then in that measure I can be a comfort to my brethren, and have a word in season for him that is weary. But if I am not walking in the comfort of the Spirit, I have no comfort to communicate to any one. I may go through the form of comforting the afflicted; but it will be only a form. It is one great law in the Kingdom of grace that we can give only what we have received.

—◆—
"With the lowly is wisdom."

ACCORDING TO OUR MEASURE.

IF we would exercise rule according to God, we must rule according to our measure. Every man has his measure; but every man does not know his measure; for every man does not know himself. Self-knowledge is needed in all who would rule for God. It is of the utmost importance that, in exercising rule, I keep within my measure. If I do so, I have some ground for expecting subjection to my rule. But if I step beyond my measure—if I assume an authority over God's saints which I do not really possess—I may expect my rule to be resisted. Many who have been acknowledged in a humble sphere of rule have found themselves suddenly rejected when they stepped into a sphere beyond their measure. In an assembly of saints, the more perfectly the will of Christ is owned, the more perfectly will each individual member be found acting according to his measure. "If any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth" (1 Pet. iv. 11). When this Scripture is neglected, confusion must ensue. Therefore, whatever the nature of my service may be, it becomes me to see that I am acting according to, and not beyond, *the ability which God giveth.*

—◆—
"Let me ask the Lord to give me self-knowledge; for self-knowledge, though a painful, is a necessary thing, worth all the trouble of the search, and all the mortification it may cost me."

THROUGH FAITH.

WE need not attempt to live an overcoming life by making good resolutions. Paul says, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. ii. 20). Paul did not attempt to live in the power of his own will; nor did he seek by the strength of his own resolutions to keep from sinning. He knew that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing. He gave *self* its true place, saying, "I am crucified with Christ." But, although crucified, he lived. "Yet not I," he says, "but Christ liveth in me." Paul's power to live came through *death*. The flesh was set aside entirely. Paul's power was not "of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jno. i. 13). *Faith* was the great medium through which God wrought mightily in the apostle of the Gentiles; and *faith* is the great medium through which God still works. Are *we* longing for a more experimental nearness to God? Is the language of our soul, "O for a closer walk"? We believe there are not a few who would fain "launch out into the deep"—not to have "a brief glance, a passing word" from the Master; but to *dwell* in His calm and joyful presence. Then, assuming the reader to be such an one, let us ask, How shall we thus dwell in His courts and be ever praising Him? We have tried resolutions—have we not?—and in the energy of mere nature we have determined that we would live a life more becoming the children of a king.

Yet to-day finds us no farther on than we were yesterday; and old besetments (weaknesses, we perhaps call them) come up and overcome us as they have done many a time before. What does it all mean? It means that, like the Galatians, having begun in the Spirit we would fain be made perfect by the flesh (Gal. iii. 3). We need not expect the flesh—be it in believer or in unbeliever—to rise above its own level. We may *resolve* with all our might that we will be different, and live a more Christ-like life. But the mere *resolve to do* will not communicate the *power to do*. Such power comes only through faith; for without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. xi. 6). We must pass on from Christ the *Sacrifice* to Christ the *Life*. In conversion's happy day we laboured hard to enter into rest. But no rest came. We had to give all trying over: "simply trusting, we were blest." Through faith in Christ the Sacrifice we passed into rest. As it was with Christ the Sacrifice, so must it be with Christ the Life. He has entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; and it has pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell (Col. i. 19). That fulness is all for us; and it becomes ours *through faith*. It is *through faith* that kingdoms (including the great kingdom of *self*) are subdued; it is through faith that righteousness is wrought (Heb. xi. 33). We may have been trying some other way—we may have summoned all the might of nature to resist some particular

form of evil. But repeated failure is surely sufficient to teach us that by such might shall no man prevail. Let us put our case entirely into the hand of Him who is mighty to save (Isa. lxiii. 1), and who has said that none that *trust in Him* shall be desolate (Ps. xxxiv. 22). "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no Physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" (Jer. viii. 22). Why should we not be able to say with the apostle: "Who always causeth us to triumph in Christ?" (2 Cor. ii. 14). If out of weakness we are to be made strong, it must be *through faith*. If that besetting sin is to be overcome, it must be *through faith*. If Christ is to be manifest in the life, it must be *through faith*. If the power is to be ours, the glory must be Christ's; and when all the glory is ascribed to *Him*, all the power is seen to be *of Him*. Such, so far as we have learned, is the path of faith; and we know that the path of faith is ever a path of power. We do not say that we shall thus find ourselves removed from the domain of conflict. There will be conflict; but it will be victorious conflict. The Devil shall be resisted successfully; the flesh shall be mortified continually; and concerning the world we shall be able to say in the language of assured confidence: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 Jno. v. 4).

—♦—

KNOWLEDGE often exceeds grace; but communion with God and poverty of spirit go together: if the one decline, so will the other.

NOT PEACE, BUT DIVISION.

YOU need not wonder at the opposition of the world. Your nearest relations may be found your most determined enemies, if you are determined to be faithful to the Lord. We find from Luke xii. 51-53 that He came not to send peace on earth but division. The reason of such division is, that the world is under the power of the Devil, and in darkness; and we know that He that doeth evil hateth the light. Jesus was the true Light. The world hated Him; and the world hates all who honour Him by faith and obedience. Therefore let us rejoice when we are counted worthy to suffer for righteousness' sake. Our resting and reigning time is coming, when the rejected Lord Jesus will come to receive us to Himself. In our "little while" down here, let us so follow Him, that we may enjoy the blessing of His presence now, and "have confidence" before Him at His coming.

W. G. S.

LONGING.

IF you find yourself longing to live more for God, praise Him for that desire. Many who profess the name of Christ, seem to have no such longing. But we must not be satisfied with merely longing after the "inner court" of communion. Let us avail ourselves of that liberty to enter, which is ours by virtue of the precious blood. Let us arise and pass over "this Jordan," into the exceeding good land which the Lord our God hath given us. Longings are good; but we must not rest until we can truly say, "He satisfieth the longing soul."

TO OUR READERS.

AT the close of another year we raise our "Ebenezer" once again; for we can truly say that it is by grace alone we have been enabled to complete another Volume of the *Treasury*. We have been cheered beyond measure by testimony from many quarters, telling how that this paper was found to be a word in season to many of the Lord's weary ones. We can only say that such testimony has been a cause of deep humbling to us. We were convinced, as we are still convinced, that the earthen vessel is nothing; and, if the Lord is pleased to let any heavenly light shine through these pages, it becomes us to be "not high-minded, but fear." No glory to the earthen vessel. Unto the Lord belongeth glory; and He will not give that glory unto another. At the same time it is encouraging to know that our labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

Our "congregation" of readers is quietly but steadily increasing. We cannot speak of a *great* circulation. But we have the satisfaction of knowing—whatever be the present position of the paper—that it has made room for itself. Every new periodical has its difficulties to contend with; and the *Treasury* has been no exception to that rule. But we were satisfied that, if the Lord had need for the paper, He would make room for it; and if it was clearly His mind that there was no need for the paper, we had no wish that it should continue. But we believe the Lord has made room for it; and more room is constantly being made. We cannot but feel that our responsibility is great. We address a company of believers now numbering some thousands. What is the effect of our ministry? What shall its effect

be found to be when we stand at the Judgment-seat? Are God's saints, through these pages, allured to a higher and holier life? These are questions that we desire to keep before us in carrying on this ministry. To this end we feel the great need of being right with God ourselves. And to that end, again, we feel the great need of the prayers of God's people. Therefore, brethren, pray for us—that we may be kept by almighty power, and be found a channel of blessing unto the saints.

We have to thank all who have been helpers in this work, either with their pen or otherwise.

We now gird ourselves (God permitting) to commence another year of this service. May it be indeed a *new* year to us all—a year of new power, new love, new devotion. And unto our God let there be glory in the church, through Christ Jesus, now and ever, Amen.

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