

THE



ORTHERN WITNESS.



“For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”—GAL. II. 16.

“For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”—EPH. II. 8.

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WHILE we would say to our Readers, “a Happy New Year to you all,” it is feared that many, if not all of us, must, on looking back on the past year, bemoan and confess our many failures in fulfilling our mission to witness for God on the earth, as our Lord did while down here, (John xx. 21)—we who “are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that we should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light”. (1 Pet. ii. 9.)

And also how disobedient we have been in our open rupture with our brethren whom God has truly received as well as we—a circumstance, above all others, which testifies to the world that at best it is a doubtful matter to know whether we belong to the world, that is, the devil, or to the living God.

Brethren, the enemy has made sad havoc in our ranks—the enemies of our Lord have substantial grounds to blaspheme God’s holy name through us. Are we to enter this year as we end 1875?

Are we to look at the work of witnessing for God as too great for us, and therefore deliberately shut up our commission in a napkin? Far be the thought. Rather let us examine ourselves, seeking instruction from the Spirit of God through “the word”. To some of us the case of Samson may apply—who was commissioned by God to subdue the enemies of His people, but when he succumbed to the allurements of the instrument of Satan, and let his locks of hair be cut off, he lost his power, and when awakened out of sleep, he said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself,” wisting not that the Lord was departed from him.

Or, again, the case of the Apostles who, on the

descent of our Lord from the Mount of Transfiguration, were unable to cast the devil out of the child at the request of the afflicted father, although, but a short time previous, they were empowered and commissioned by the Lord to cast out all devils, &c. Soon after, they all suffer a total defeat at the hands of Satan—they could not cast the devil out of the child. It is evident they tried to do so.

Brethren, have you all come off victorious in the warfare during the year 1875? Have you fulfilled your mission? Have you fought a good fight? Can you say you can, through the grace of God, claim the crown the Apostle Paul looked at as his? If not, is there not a cause? Where? No failure or shortcoming in our great Captain—thank God for that. The failure is in ourselves, within us. Samson failed under the honied words of a woman. The Apostles failed by reason of a desire for supremacy, for we are told they had a dispute among themselves who should be the greatest, and the enemy did not lose his opportunity, but the next day, when they were come down from the hill, it is recorded that they suffered a shameful defeat at the hands of Satan, which drew out the sorrowing expression of our Lord, “Oh, faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you.” Our Lord told the Apostles, when asked why they could not cast out the devil, this kind cometh not but by “prayer and fasting”. Dependence on God, and entire mortification of all fleshly desires.

Brethren, does not our own experience teach us that if we go out in the warfare as witnesses for the Lord with a desire for pre-eminence in our hearts, our testimony will not be received, the cause will be dishonoured, and we will be put to shame in the presence of God’s enemies.

Brethren, the year 1875 is gone, but our Lord is still the same—all power in heaven and earth is in His hands. Let us learn by the past defeats, and be up and avenged on our enemies—our weak, failing, sinful natures, which we, through lack of faith and watchfulness, allow to triumph over us.

Let us gather as the Israelites did at Mizpah, remembering and confessing that we are as water poured forth, insufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, forgetting not that our Great High Priest, who has passed into the heavens, will not cease to pray for us, that we may be delivered out of the hands of our enemies.

Brethren, our adversary is a real one, and our sinful natures are also very real. See how he acted at the very time Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering of the sucking lamb to the Lord. (1 Sam. vii. 10.) The Philistines drew near to the battle, but the Lord thundered upon them.

It is when we are as water poured out, acknowledging our helplessness, that Satan loses patience and attacks us. Our place is to let the Lord thunder upon our adversaries, and it may be He will use us to follow up the victory, but let us be careful not to raise a memorial of our success, other than Ebenezer, giving glory to God.

Brethren, fellow-soldiers of the cross, let us close our ranks; each eye fixed on the great Captain; and, like the living creatures mentioned by Ezekiel, going straight forward, "Whither the Spirit was to go they turned not as they went," so let us go; each of us sustaining the shock of war (for we are in a real conflict) on the ground allotted to us, that when the king comes by-and-by, He may find the portion of His inheritance committed to our keeping, secure for His glory, and great will be the reward.

Brethren, let us look to ourselves that we lose not the things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. "Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." He saith, "Surely I come quickly. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

'SHADOWS OF CHRIST.'

PART I.—INTRODUCTORY.

"NO man hath seen God at any time, the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (John i. 18.) Sin

had interposed such a barrier between God and man, that to man, in the condition in which he is found by nature, God is not only unseen, but unknown. Hence at Athens, the very centre of human wisdom, an altar is erected "to the unknown God". (Acts xvii. 13.) To know God is the highest and deepest of all knowledge, and the wisdom of the Greek only brought him to the verge of the infinite unknown. There he stood, after all his researches, conscious that whatever knowledge he had acquired—he knew not God. Doubtless there is much to be known of God in creation. "The invisible things of God, &c., &c. (Rom. i. 20) are clearly seen, even His eternal power and Godhead." That which could be known of God they cared not to know, and, instead of owning their ignorance, they professed to be wise—therefore were they fools, and God gave them up to their folly. But God's purpose to reveal Himself was not to be frustrated, either by sin or by man's unwillingness to know Him. The revelation of Himself is of interest to a wider circle than to man or this world. When earth was created, there were unfallen beings who discerned in its creation His eternal power and Godhead. It was so far a revelation of Himself. And as they beheld a fair creation spring into being, ordered and completed by His word, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy". Even fallen man might have apprehended this from creation, but he would not. He *did not like* to retain God in his knowledge, hence the science (falsely so called) of the present day, of the boastful 19th century, with all its heritage of the learning of ages past, doubts if there be a God at all, denies creation, and substitutes a theory of development and natural laws for *God*. But after all, creation with all its glory, tells only of His *power* and *Godhead*.

Providence tells jointly with the voice of creation that God is good. He left not Himself without a witness—in that He did them good—giving them fruitful seasons, "filling their hearts with food and gladness". (Acts xiv. 17.) He makes His sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and His rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust. Thus again He partially reveals Himself, going further than to shew His power and Godhead. He gives a little glimpse of His mercifulness and goodness. To this man is also blind. He glorifies Him not as God, neither is thankful.

But yet there was that in God which was unrevealed.

Deep in the bosom of God was hid the unopened fountain of *grace*. To unseal this fountain, to display this wondrous attribute of the character of God in its fulness, to shew it in combination with and in harmony with all His other attributes, was from eternity the purpose of God. It was before creation, for before the foundation of the world the Lamb was foreordained for sacrifice, so that creation and the fall—the entrance of Satan and of sin into the first creation, with all its terrible results, its confusion, and havoc, and ruin—are only so many steps in the mysterious plan of God, so many stages towards the great platform whereon God was about to reveal Himself, in a fulness infinitely surpassing all revelations that had ever gone before. And herein lies the ultimate design of the stupendous mystery of the incarnation, the sacrifice, the resurrection, and the glorifying of the Son of God. To save a lost and guilty people was a purpose worthy of God, but even this is not the ultimate design, rather is it “that, in the ages to come, He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus”. (Eph. ii. 7.) It is the complete revelation of Himself; it is the opening out, so to speak, of the very heart of God, that He, the Unknown, might be known—that, being known, He might be loved with an ever-deepening love, and praised with a fuller and higher joy by every unfallen and redeemed being.

Oh, the deep, deep meaning of that word uttered by the only One who had fully known God, who knew Him by dwelling from eternity in His very bosom. “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” (John xvii. 3.) It is life eternal to know God, not to know Him is death.

It has pleased God, therefore, to make Himself known, to reveal or discover Himself in the person of His Son. “He is the brightness of God’s glory, and the express image of His person.” (Heb. i. 3.) “God manifested in the flesh.” (1 Tim. iii. 16.) So perfectly, so accurately represented to us, that He could say, in answer to Philip’s question, “shew us the Father,” “Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” (John xiv. 9.) But the natural man has not the capacity to comprehend even the perfect manifestation which God has given of Himself in His Son. “He was in the world, and the world knew Him not. He came to His own, and His own received

Him not.” (John i. 10, 11.) “Had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1 Cor. ii. 8.) Those only recognised Him who were drawn and taught of the Father. It has been well remarked that the Flesh of Christ was that which veiled and yet revealed the Godhead. It was a veil so thick, that the carnal eye could not penetrate it. The natural man only saw in Him a root out of a dry ground, a man with visage marred, the son of Mary and Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth.

But through that veil of flesh there shone, with holy tempered radiance, a glory such as faith could discern. “And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John i. 14.) To the opened eye, He was God manifest in the flesh, Immanuel, God with us. But the word made flesh is no longer on earth. We see Him not though we love Him. In the meantime, there is given to us the written word, and the Holy Spirit of God to take of the things that are Christ’s, and shew them unto us. (John xvi. 13, 14.) We are thus not left without a comforter, nay, it was expedient for the disciples that Christ should go away, that the other comforter should come—through whose teaching and anointing they should know more of Christ than had he sojourned with them on earth. And it is through the written word that the Spirit of God ministers Christ to the souls of His people, for therein has God with infinite skill treasured up for us His Christ, giving us every lineament of His character, every detail of His work, His sufferings, and His glory—every relationship that He bears to God, to His saints, and to the sinner. No mere historical record could accomplish this, no biography ever attempted it—the idea is God’s.

To effect it, He has therefore resorted to a great variety of methods. 1st,—There is the purely historical record of the four Gospels, giving us Christ as seen by man among men. His outward life as He passed before the world and His disciples. Then there are the prophetic Scriptures of the Old Testament, to which the book of Revelation in the new might almost be regarded as an appendix and a key. These giving the official glories of Christ as the Heir, and a glimpse here and there at the sufferings through which He acquired the glory. Distinct from these stands the book of Psalms, wherein we are brought, as it were, to listen to the very breathings, to feel the very throbbings of the heart of Christ in the midst of those sorrows, and

temptations, and agonies, that were relieved by no human sympathy. This is the way God has taken to lead his loved and highly-privileged children into a nearness and intimacy with the only-begotten Son, into which no biography, however detailed, and not even personal acquaintance upon earth, could have introduced them. To this class belongs the book of Lamentations and the Song of Solomon—the one giving the sorrows and the other the joys, that found no outward expression among men and therefore could not find a place in the history of His outward walk as given in the Gospels. Finally, there is the law with all its multitudinous array of types and shadows, a very picture gallery of Christ, where every aspect of His atoning work is unfolded and dwelt upon. It is to this latter department of Divine teaching that attention will be directed in the following papers. May the eyes of our understanding be enlightened in the knowledge of Him. (Eph. i. 17, 18.)

Doubtless there is room in all such enquiries for mere natural ingenuity to work. It is well jealously to watch against this, and rather for a time to come short of the full understanding of a type than to press into its interpretation, that which was not in the mind of the Divine Author. And whilst unhallowed curiosity and the desire of the fleshly mind to intrude into things that are hidden from it, has its bounds assigned and its rebukes ministered in the Word of God (Ex. xix. 21, Numb. iv. 20, 1 Sam. vi. 19) there are nevertheless the enquiries in His temple to which He delights to respond, (Psal. xxvii. 24) and the desire to look into the things that are revealed which be it in Angels or in Saints is well pleasing to God.

J. R. C.

“CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.”

COL. iii. 11; EPH. iv. 15.

1. **TO SINNERS.**—Come to Christ, now. Matt. xi. 28.
2. **TO CHRISTIANS.**—Come OUT of Judaized Christianity and the world. John x. 3; 2 Cor. vi. 17; Gal. i. 4; Eph. v. 14; 2 Tim. ii. 21; iii. 5; Heb. xiii. 13; Matt. xxv. 6; Rev. iii. 12; xviii. 4; Song of Sol. ii. 10—13.

3. Come out to whom? To the Lord Jesus Christ. Heb. xiii. 13; Acts v. 14; xx. 32; 1 Peter ii. 4; Song of Sol. iv. 8. “To My Name.” Matt. xviii. 20, Greek.

4. Hence, to come together because of any principle, or on any doctrine, or on any such ground as of “the one body,” is not in accordance with the divine will. Nay more, these are all false grounds of assembling believers together, being either invented by men or devised by Satan, and tending only, as we can ourselves easily behold, to divide and scatter the children of God. Not thus could those in Acts ii. have come together. For though they were the one body, yet since the doctrine thereof was not revealed until Paul was raised up many years afterwards, therefore this was not their ground of coming together. As is proved from No. 3, a living present Christ is our one centre. To Him alone, “Jesus only,” the Spirit gathers us. Let the reader also contrast the teaching of Matt. xii. 30, with Mark ix. 40. In the latter passage, the Lord speaks of the preachers of His message. Hence, there He uses the plural “us,” or “you,” as in the Greek. (Compare Phil. i. 15.) But when it is a question of gathering souls, then in the former passage, the word is in the singular, “with ME”. He who gathers with any thing but Me,—that does not exclude everything but ME,—scatters. (See also Matt. xxvi. 31.) And the fulfilment of this His warning is patent all around us.

5. Next, whilst separation from sin to God and Christ is holiness; so conversely, separation from holiness is sin. We ought not to be separated from each other. His will is that His people should be together, and be “all of one heart and of one soul”. (Acts iv. 32.) Distance as to locality should be the only thing that separate two assemblies of Christians. How then is any one assembly gathered simply round the Lord, to be associated with other assemblies similarly gathered? Then the responsibility devolves on them. For to THEM surely, the oft-repeated injunction applies: “Receive”. (John xiii. 20; Rom. xiv. 1; Rom. xv. 7; 2 Cor. vii. 2; 3 John 9.) Oh, that this command to “receive one another to the glory of God” were more heartily obeyed! Of course, when there is *really* evil, as of any allowed wickedness in an individual, or of unjudged bad doctrine as to Christ in an assembly, it would not be “to the glory of God” to acknowledge such. But the following hints may help some to ascertain where the blame must rest in cases where there is actual separation of two parties or of two assemblies of Christians:—

(a.) If the separators have no such evil in their assembly; but the rejected ones do allow the unjudged

evil among them, then the separators are clearly in the right.

(b.) If the rejectors and the rejected have each of them evil in their midst, then both parties are clearly in the wrong.

(c.) If the rejectors have evil, endorsing, for instance, unscriptural statements about the "third class sufferings of Christ," and if the rejected ones have no such evil, then are the excommunicators clearly in the wrong.

(d.) Lastly, if the rejectors sanction no evil among them, and likewise the rejected ones also allow none, than the rejectors are indubitably the party on whom the onus of division rests.

Now it is intensely important, as bearing on the above, to note that Mary of Bethany, in the very few places of Scripture where we read of her, was twice the accused one. And in each case, as often happens, the accuser was in the wrong. (Luke x. 40; Matt. xxvi. 10.) So on each occasion the Lord Jesus fully took her part, even to the extent of declaring that her action was grateful to His heart. And, in the latter of these two instances, the leaven did indeed spread; but it was only amongst her accusers. For the evil, though it began with Judas, yet quickly infected all the Apostles. (John xii. 4 with Matt. xxvi. 8.) Also compare what has been traced as to the Lord's judgment of Peter's boastful exaltation of himself over his fellow-disciples, in the First Series of these Leaflets, No. 3, page 4. "*Love*"—"love in the truth"—is God's bond of perfectness. (Col. ii. 2; iii. 14.)

6. Further, individual acknowledgment and reception of those assembling themselves to the name of the Lord, is insufficient obedience on the part of any assembly or assemblies. "Receive US." (2 Cor. vii. 2; 3 John 9.) N.B.—All the second epistles specially bear on the last days. Then the third epistle of John must, in its prophetic glance, touch on the extreme end of this dispensation. It is the only third epistle which we possess. How very significant this is! For it is the frequent way of the Spirit to convey to us hints of the gravest character in an apparently incidental manner. Thus are our faith and obedience more fully tested. Query—Is it not assumed, in this third epistle, that the last divisions among brethren will continue on to the end?

Assemblies are often enjoined in the Word, to "be perfect". The Greek word, which is used in such cases, properly denotes the being perfectly fitted to-

gether into one body or piece. Now the mode in which this is to be accomplished, we can learn by observing how the sons of Zebedee were mending, or "perfectly fitting together," their broken net. (See Matt. iv. 21, where the same word in Greek.)

Now, in what way did they proceed to combine it altogether, and make it into one again? Surely not by cutting out each thread from the one broken part, and severally joining those cut-out threads, one by one, to the other part. Yet this is the way in which some foolishly, vain-gloriously proceed to work in the Church of God. Instead of all the parts being drawn together, they would take each several believer from other assemblies gathered to the name of the Lord, and thus, and only thus, unite such with their own little fragments of that Church.

7. Again: whilst the command is oft found to come out of evil, not one single line is to be found throughout God's Word about our joining any party. Nay, rather of this thing we are distinctly warned. (Rom. xvi. 17.) Men talk of affiliated assemblies. But who affiliated them, and what are they affiliated unto? And Acts ii. 47 ought to be translated thus: "The Lord added together daily such as should be saved." (See chap. v. 14.) Imagine two assemblies ascending on two beams of light towards the sun. Is the one assembly to go over, and every member thereof, individually, to the other? That is only possible by a slant, and such is not God's work. But let each press on to the Sun—to Christ. As it is written: "Beloved, build up YOURSELVES on *your* most holy faith." Nor does God lead His people by jumps and jerks. His way of guidance is by one step at a time. The case of Paul has been objected as against this view. The answer is, We are speaking of the path of obedience, along which the Lord conducts His *saints*. But if we would "build up ourselves," how are we to do this? A simple perfect answer is found in 1 Peter ii. 4, 5: "To whom (Christ) coming, ye ARE built up".

Another objection to this is attempted to be made thus: "If there be nothing in the Word about joining, yet there is much about identification." But this objection contains a fallacy. The idea instantly suggested to the mind by the word joining, is, unto some *men*; but, in identification, the thought is again of Christ and His Word, and only through Him as the way to come to any others. The same remark applies to 2 Tim. ii. 22, which text is occasionally quoted in proof

that joining men is there commanded. Strange, that it can be so misread even by any eager partisan! For the precept is to follow divine THINGS first, and men only in the *second* place. For Christ is the *entire* way, not only unto the Father, but to *all that which is of God* in Christians. To make the fallacy quite evident, I quote an extract from a well-known writer's Introduction to the Gospels, page 22. There, speaking of Christ's baptism, he rightly remarks: "It is the Saviour identifying Himself with the godly-feeling remnant." And again: "Thus (*i.e.*, by His baptism) He publicly joined Himself with whatever was excellent on the earth." Very well. Then let us, and let those Christians who in any particular locality have separated from human systems, begin with Christ, and His own ordinance of the Supper. Let such do this, not in any spirit of opposition, or of protest, or of accusing others; but in humble obedience to the twice-uttered word of our Lord. Let such heartily acknowledge all other such groups of Christians gathered to His care, as far as they can according to the four hints specified under No. 5. Then will it be apparent that local distance alone separates two such clusters. But waiting for human sanction, or refusing to do this in remembrance of Him, except with some only of our own little coterie, is worship and fear of the Lord according to the precepts of men. (Isa. xxix. 13.) Whilst, as to those who stand aloof from us, they must answer for this to Him.

8. But if joining be not the divine mode of union, neither is CONFEDERATION of certain assemblies the true way of their being welded into one. Not thus is genuine oneness to be effected or manifested; for true union commences from within. (1 Thess. v. 23.) Now if hearty reception of each other be the scriptural method as to individuals, then likewise, on the part of assemblies, their mutual drawing together in the Spirit, their closer approximation to the written Word, and thus their mutual GRAVITATION towards each other is the holy and actual mode of their union. And this view also disposes of the vexed question of each assembly's immediate and direct responsibility to the Son of God. As faith is strongest when the eye is *wholly* off self; so the Church is most in the mind of the Spirit when her thought is *solely* of her Lord. In other words, as each individual believer must begin with Christ, so also must the two or three, or the two or three hundred be gathered unto HIM exclusively;

so, thirdly, must these divers assemblies congregate round HIMSELF alone, *in order to be drawn in very deed unto each other*; and likewise, fourthly, will all the assemblies blend into one when He descends from Heaven, and with a shout summons all to His blessed presence, and receives the whole Church unto Himself. Men may persist in gathering by other names and means; not so God. (Matt. xii. 30; Luke ix. 50; 1 Thess. iv. 16-18.) N.B.—It can be shown that the passage in Luke ix. 50 is in designed contrast as to Christ's way towards His people, on the one hand, with Elijah's intercession against his brethren, on the other (Rom. xi. 3, 4); and for which naughty intercession that prophet was superseded in his ministry by Elisha.

9. But if union to Christ by the Holy Ghost be the only true mode of union, how will this, some may object, lead the world to believe as Jesus prayed in John xvii.; for this sort of union, undoubtedly, the world cannot see? Now, first, let us remember that the union in John xvii. refers not to any ecclesiastical confederacy; but to something infinitely more real and true, as Bellett testifies. Secondly, the world can see the effect, though not the cause—it can see our love in the truth to each other by our beholding of Christ in each other. Thirdly, and specially, it is not so well known as it ought to be, that the word "one" just before the mention of the world believing, is an interpolation. It is absent from the Manuscripts B.C.D.; that is, it is not in the Vatican M.S., nor in the Ephraim M.S., nor in Beza's. It is found, indeed, in the Alexandrian and in the Sinaitic; but the Alexandrian M.S. is admitted to be most inaccurate in the gospels. The meaning is obscured by the insertion of the second "one". Lachman, and Tischendorf and Alford, all reject it. The passage, I am convinced should be arranged thus:—

Prayer for ultimate object. "That they all may be one."

Prayer for present stage of accomplishment. "As Thou Father art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe."

Then finally, the ULTIMATE end in glory. "And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them that they may be one even as we are one. I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know", &c.

Thus Christ's prayer for us now is that we may be in God, that the world may believe; and that we may be *ultimately perfected into one*, that the world may know, etc. Such, too, is the force of the preposition *eis*, in verse 23. It denotes drift or tendency. Also the the word for "perfect," is in the Greek, "perfected," and by the Lord Himself is connected directly with "*the glory*". We are in God now; such is God's present work. For this, Christ prays to be the case now. And this, His prayer, is being continually answered now. (See 1 John iv. 16.) Then the oneness shall be fully perfected in the glory by-and-by. Also note John xvii. 21 is partly expounded in 1 John i. 3.

10. Those who can find any texts about COMING IN, or JOINING a party, please write them below.

WM. LINCOLN.

[*This is to be No. 1 of Lincoln's Leaflets, Second Series.--Ed.*]

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS &c., BY THE

LATE J. G. B.

No I.

THE BLOOD.

THE death of the Lord Jesus Christ accomplishes what all other virtues that may be, and surely are found in Him, could never accomplish. The value of His blood-shedding or death, in meeting our need as sinners, is testified through the Scriptures. Nothing can do the office which is attributed to it, but itself. It was declared in the very beginning, in the words, "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel"; for they tell us, it is most true, that he who had the power of death should be destroyed;—but then such destruction was to come by the death of the destroyer. The one who was to be the bruiser of the head, was to have His own heel bruised. And the ground on which this necessity rests is very simple. Life had been forfeited by sin, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die"—this was the due penalty, if man would separate himself from God, he should separate himself from life also, and then death was righteously incurred—and ere the penalty could as righteously be removed, *death must be sustained*,—or in other words the penalty endured. The law which was afterwards the witness and security of righteousness, consequently expressed this: "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth," &c. (Ex. xxi. 23, 24.) Nothing can be simpler than this; it com-

mends itself as so just a rule of righteous retributive dealings; and thus in order that our God may be just, and yet the justifier, He must get blood for blood,—life for life. But such life is not to be found in the sons of Adam, for death passed upon all of them; therefore, it must be looked for elsewhere; and, consequently, the first promise shews us where it was to be found—even in *the woman's seed*,—there life might be found,—for there was one, though of flesh and blood, yet not in Adam—not under penalty of death; and thus the bruised seed of the woman would be competent to render up life for life, or to meet the curse of sin.

This righteous provision of blood for blood—life for life, became, from the beginning, the principle of all true faith, and was life: Adam understood and received it, for he called the woman the mother of all *living*, and took the skins for coats, or in other words, put on Christ. So Abel—he by faith, offered his sacrifice, and his sacrifice was a bloody victim, one, who typically, carried life; thus his worship was according to God. Noah knew the same divine secret, and offered of every clean beast, and clean fowl. Abram divided the victims; and these samples are abundant to shew the object of faith, and that on the ground of *blood-shedding* they stood as worshippers.

As soon, however, as the Lord rises more conspicuously again to deal both with and for His people, we see the blood in its value before Him: by *it* alone is Israel secured in Egypt, and redeemed from death and judgment there (Ex. xii.), *all that the Lord looked on was the blood*, and He owned Israel's title to full security, in the midst of judgment; as of old, all that He *smelled was the blood*, and he promised like security to the earth (Gen. viii. 21), so that not only in the work of redemption, but for the settling of the covenant, blood was used; the people became a covenanted, as well as redeemed people, by virtue of the blood. (Ex. xxiv.)

And to pass by other notices of the value of the blood, in the esteem of God, I may look at Leviticus, there atonement or remission of sins is accomplished by it; and there also things and places are purged by it, not that such things and places were, in themselves, unclean, but that had the children of Israel been brought into contact with them—they would have become defiled had not the blood been on them (Lev. xvi. 16)—nothing could introduce Israel to the holy or holiest place,—nothing could allow them to meddle in

anywise with the habitation or worship of God, but the worthy *blood*.

So, in the next chapter, the doctrine of the blood is strikingly taught us—it is there declared to be "*the life*". No Israelite was to eat it, for that would be man's re-assumption of the life he had righteously forfeited; it would have been like Cain, the denial of his apostasy from God, and of his conviction of death in trespasses and sins; but the blood of life was to be owned as exclusively God's; it was to be offered to Him (Lev. xvii. 11), but there we are graciously given to see how He uses it, namely, in making atonement for us. He sees life in the *blood*, and that life, or blood, He uses for the remission of our sins, as He has seen life in Jesus—death in all beside, without any capacity in them to recover it; but then He has taken of the life He has thus found in Jesus, and given it upon the altar,—poured it out upon Mount Calvary for us, that we may find in it atonement or remission of sins. This chapter is indeed a beautiful Scripture on the blood, shewing it to be the material used in atonement,—the sinner owning that life has returned to God—that in himself it is not, and that *there God uses that life for the dead sinners*. And I might here add that in order more fully to express the sinner's loss of life if the Israelites had no means of bringing the blood of his animal to the altar of God, he was to pour it out, and bury it in the dust—that is, to put it out of his sight, to own that he had himself, as it were, returned dust to dust, and that he could not see life—could not own life, but on the altar of God (verse 13).

Again, the need of the blood is shewn in the ordinance appointed for the expiation of uncertain murder. (Deut. xxi.) Though none could be proved guilty, yet the land where God dwelt and walked was sensitive of defilement, from the loss of life there, and nothing could give it rest again *but blood going for blood*. And in the case of the Gibeonite, we find the land again sensitive of defilement—blood had touched it, and it had refused its fruits three years, and the divine oracle tells the people that until blood had gone for blood, the controversy of the land with the people could not be quieted. (2 Sam. xxi.)

These incidentally tell us of the great doctrine of the value of the blood, nothing could be in the place of it—righteousness had made its demand, 'life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth'. In

the day that Adam sinned he died, he lost life to God, and ere he could recover life to God—life which God could prize as such must be rendered up to Him, that He might be *just*, and the justifier of sinners; and in Lev. v. 11, where an ephah of flour is accepted as a sin-offering, it is as clear as it can be that such is accepted only on consideration of the poverty of the offerer, and really stood in the place of blood.

The same character is given to the blood in the Scriptures of the New Testament, it is there seen also that nothing can be a substitute for it—nothing can do for us what the death of Christ has done. At the beginning of the Gospels we have this value of the blood, as we had it at the beginning of Genesis, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world". (John i. 29). It was only as the Lamb that the Saviour who was then appearing could do His work, His great work of taking away sin.

So, in like manner, He afterwards tells us that it is only by eating His flesh and drinking His blood that we can regain life. (John vi. 53-56.) That life lies in the death of Jesus—that faith feeds on that death—that no acceptance of Jesus in any other character than as a crucified Saviour avails to bring the seed of new life into the soul. *His flesh and His blood*; not His life merely, or His virtues, or His instructions, or His example; but *His death*. His flesh and blood must be fed on by faith. I stop not to notice the incidental testimonies in the Lord's ministry, to the doctrine, in passages such as these—"To give His life a ransom for many," but I would look to the actual surrender of that life, and the fruit of it; having given them the bread and the cup,—taken of His body and blood, given for the remission of sins, according to the New Covenant. We know that our blessed Lord dies—surrenders up the Ghost—yields up the life which He had, and which none had title to take from Him. But the moment that was done, then the results broke forth, that all His precious life had never produced; it was then, and not till then, that the veil of the temple was rent,—the rocks were rent, and the graves were rent; heaven, earth, and hell, felt a power then which they had never owned before.

The life of Jesus, His charities, His holy subjection to God, the savour of His spotless human nature, the holiness of that which had been born of the Virgin—none of these, nor all together, nor all beside, short of

the actual surrender of life, could ever have rent the vail, or broken up the graves. God would have been still at a distance—hell still unconquered, and he that had the power of death still undestroyed, had Jesus stopped short of death. By *death*, Jesus destroyed him who had its power. This is a striking fact, in the history of the blood, that it thus did what all beside never did—never could do. So, as before, I stop not to notice testimonies incidentally arising in the Apostles' ministry to the peculiar value of the blood—such as “being redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ”. (1. Pet. i. 18-19.) But I just notice the teaching in Heb. ix. 16-22. There after having revealed the value of *the blood*, in purging the conscience of the sinner, and giving him the place of a priest or worshipper before the living God (verse 14) and after also telling him and us, that it was only through death, as the mediator or administrator of the new covenant, Jesus could meet the transgression of the old covenant (verse 15) the apostle shews us three distinct virtues that lie in blood, and in blood alone. 1st, without it no covenant could be ratified; by this I learn that no intercourse could be set up, as between God and man—no mutual dealing between such could subsist—God could not be the God of any man or people, but on the ground of blood being shed; the original sentence of death for sin precluded further intercourse till death was endured. 2nd, without it no vessels of ministry could be purged; by this I mean that no services could be rendered, no place of worship be entered by man, but on the ground of the purging virtue of the blood. 3rd without it no sins could be remitted; by this we learn that nothing availed to remove any blot upon us from before the eyes of God, but blood. This Scripture is a plain and striking witness to the peculiar value of the blood; that it does what nothing else could do—it alone reconciles, by blotting out sin—it alone introduces to the place of worship and service—it alone ratifies all treaties, or establishes any dealing between God and us. No excellencies in Jesus—not all other excellencies together, could do the office of the blood—the blood alone gives God title to act in grace, and the sinner title to trust in grace. If there be a doctrine clear, simple and decisive; *it is this*, throughout the whole book of God. For any one to say that it is Jesus' moral righteousness, and not His sufferings that God values, is destructive of this truth, and is very

like refusing to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, for it is refusing to rejoice in the value of His death. I need scarcely add that it is the blood of Jesus, which is to be celebrated in the glory. *The Lamb that was slain*, will be in the midst of the throne, and the blood He shed *for our* redemption will be on the lips of the hosts that surround it.

SUNDERLAND, October 12th, 1875.

MY BELOVED BROTHER IN JESUS,—As you will know, we have been for some time without a meeting-place, and, just at the time of our deepest need, the Lord opened up our way most wonderfully. A fine hall, formerly known as Candlish Schools, in a densely populated neighbourhood, turned up. Several were after it, but the Lord gave it to us, at about half the rent we were asked for it twelve months ago. We had not a seat to furnish it, it also required painting, and gas, and other fittings. As soon as it became known that we had secured the hall, seats and money were sent us from many parts of the country, which enabled us to almost completely furnish it. Our brother, John M'Gaw, who was then labouring at Jarrow, came here to the opening meeting, which took place on Lord's Day, Sept. 26th, and has since been preaching with blessing to many precious souls every evening since. Believers who now attend the meeting, who were in a cold, heartless state, have been specially blessed. Backsliders have been reclaimed, and are now rejoicing in the Lord. The work among the unsaved has been astonishing, so that God's dear people are led to exclaim, “Behold what God hath wrought”. Two Roman Catholics among the number who have attended the meetings have been led to see it is not works or penance, but “Believing” and resting in the Finished Work. The souls of the Lord's people in fellowship have been stirred within them to deeper and closer communion. Our brother has been much owned of God here, and we are sorry he is obliged to leave us for the present. Other dear brethren agree to take part in future meetings, which will be continued (D.V.) every evening, as long as God is working. Believers visiting Sunderland will find fellowship at the West-end Gospel Hall (late Candlish Schools), Water Works' Road, High Street West. Prayer meeting, Lord's Day mornings at 7.30. Breaking of Bread at 10.30. Gospel meeting at 6.30.

J. B. LOW.

THE SUCCESSIVE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

BY WM. LINCOLN.

IN speaking of the temple of God, we mean that in which God can rest—does rest with perfect and exquisite delight. At the outset, I must ask you to be on your guard against a misapprehension in the word “rest,” as applied to God. When we speak of the rest of man, we are wont to have the thought of a rest consequent upon our being tired; but God is never tired; the most High fainteth not, nor is weary. When the Word of God points us to the *rest of God*, the thought is where God’s whole soul can repose with perfect and infinite delight. So long as there is any bar to that delight, His rest is not perfect; but never is there any thought of God being weary. As you know, His creation rest has been marred. He did rest in it; that He did, we have this evidence, that the Sabbath He sanctified after He had finished the six days’ creation; and with what an eye God looked upon His creation!

We get a very interesting little touch from a passage of Scripture I do not often hear quoted, and brought to bear upon His creation rest; I mean the passage in the prophet Jonah. We find that Jonah was angry because God did not at once destroy Nineveh, and you know the way in which God patiently instructed Jonah. He caused a gourd to grow up over the head of Jonah; presently a worm was allowed to destroy the gourd. Then Jonah’s anger at his shelter perishing was God’s plea. The prophet must either cease to grieve for mercy to Nineveh, or for judgment on the gourd. Either his anger at God for suffering the gourd to perish was unreasonable, or else he must acquiesce in God’s patience with Nineveh, for which God had toiled and worked. There were very many souls in Nineveh, and God had made them for His pleasure, and the idea underneath the surface is something like this: that God had created the world, which was the gourd, if I may so say, in which he might find pleasure; but there was a worm at the root of it, and that worm was the liability to sin, and creation fell from God, and God was left, as it were, a stranger, like as Jonah was, outside Nineveh. God was left a stranger in His own creation, man departed from God, man was the loser; but so I would reverently say God was, for God lost His companion. “My delights were with the sons of men.” He will rest in His creation yet; but only in resurrection. Jonah delivered from the whale’s belly represents, as we know,

Christ and His people in Him passing through death into a new state, into which sin cannot enter; but where God is all in all. But for the present, God lost His companion; for the friendship that had begun at the creation was broken up, and throughout the Book of Genesis we never find that God had a rest on earth; never once throughout the Book of Genesis. We read of Him as a friend visiting the people. We read of Him as appearing, and speaking to this, that, and the other patriarch, as if He were a stranger. He could not be put off without having interviews, if I may so say, with those He loved; but He could not come and rest among them, because that rest had been disturbed and polluted; so to one and another He appeared, and when He had appeared, and talked with them, the language of Scripture is, “And God went up *from such* ;” and the first time you read of the habitation of God, in the Word of God, is after you read of redemption—after Israel has been brought up out of Egypt. In the light of that redemption by blood study Moses’ and Miriam’s song. There you find express mention of several words for the first time; amongst which you read twice over in that song of the “habitation” of God. Observe that it is consequent upon redemption. The redemption had been in type achieved, when the passover lamb had been slain, and when Israel, under shelter of the blood, had been brought out of Egypt. It would be very interesting to show you how the Book of Exodus is constructed, with that thought as one of the leading, main thoughts of the book. I mean of God dwelling among His people; and observe, I shall endeavour to press that upon you; dwelling, wherever He does dwell, with perfect, intense, infinite delight. I would just sketch in five minutes the plan of the Book of Exodus, because it will serve to illustrate the nature of God, and the love of God. At the beginning, there is Israel in Egypt, and God says distinctly He has come down to deliver them. He sends a message to Pharaoh, “Let my people go;” Pharaoh throws down the gauntlet, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?” God takes it up, and next speaks to Moses in Egypt; before that He spoke to him in the wilderness. Thus God comes nearer to the battle. Then ensues the battle between the Lord and Pharaoh, and before the final blow, Israel is sheltered under the blood of the lamb, and Israel is brought out of Egypt. Then, as I say, you hear of God having a habitation prepared for Him, and then Israel is brought to the Mount of God.

If you search the Word, you will see the plan of the Book of Exodus ; but people generally read a chapter without seeing the plan of any book or epistle. If you search you will see how that, with seven distinct blessings, Israel was brought from the Red Sea to the Mount of God. And what for? The design of God is, that they should feast before Him, and hold a sacrifice to the Lord in fulness of joy, and then march under His guidance at once straight into Canaan. But when they are brought to the mount they insist upon being put under a conditional covenant. You will find these words twice over in two different chapters, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do," showing that God will call great attention to the fact, that Israel wanted to be under law. Their desire is granted. The scene is changed. When Israel will place itself under a conditional covenant, God acquiesces, and gives them ten words—as little as ever He can—and then having given them ten words, Moses, Aaron, and seventy of the elders, the representatives of the nation, are called up to eat and drink before the God of Israel. He is seen as a God of light and purity, and so bidding the sinner to keep off. Since no trespass had been yet committed under this covenant—for this scene was immediately consequent upon that covenant being ratified—all was concluded with due solemnity in His immediate presence.

Quickly, however, Israel commits sin in the worship of the golden calf. Then, as God could not dwell in a polluted earth when Adam had sinned ; so neither now could He dwell in a polluted camp after Israel had sinned. But God takes Moses up into the part of the Mount higher than where he received the law, and gives him a pattern of the tabernacle ; and you know that that foreshadowed the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and there Moses learns all about the way that God can dwell amongst His people, founded upon the atoning blood of the precious Lord Jesus. Moses comes down, and then the tabernacle is built ; and when it is built, as the 40th of Exodus tells us, the Lord enters His tabernacle with joy. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle."

When it says the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, the idea is that God could not restrain Himself any longer. He had desired and longed for it, and now has it. He has a place where, through redemption, He may come and dwell among His people. The glory of

the Lord filled the tabernacle. "I have got it now ; I will have it all to Myself ; I will rest in joy now ;" that is the thought of the glory filling the tabernacle. "And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." It was, as it were, gratifying to the heart of God, when at last, though only in type, He could come down ; not merely to visit His people, as in the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; but come and dwell with them, and be manifestly their God.

I must just add here, because it is so very seldom observed, that thus again His people are taught, through the type, that God would deal with them in the way of grace ; that He was now prepared, if I may so say, (albeit the sin of the golden calf,) to lead them at once into Canaan with a high hand. Has it ever occurred to you from whom the proposition emanated that they should send spies to search out the land ? Putting the different accounts together, you will find that God proposed to at once take them into Canaan after the tabernacle was constructed. He did not mention anything about sending out spies first. The journey from Mount Horeb to Canaan is eleven days (see the 1st chapter of Deut.) Now when the tabernacle had been built, and God could come and rest in the way of grace amongst His people, He was prepared to take them at once, albeit their sin, right into Canaan ; but we find that Moses, in Deuteronomy, says, "Ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us," (chapter i. 22). The proposition emanated from the incredulity of the people. What resulted from those spies going to the land and searching it first ? They tarried in the wilderness forty years ; and not until the sword of Joshua led the way, did they take possession of Canaan ; and there they dwelt, because the work was not done, unto the days of David, and David had to complete what the sword of Joshua had begun, namely, to root out Israel's foes, to make as it were a clear platform for the temple of the God of peace ; and so then David having thus served his own generation by the will of God, falls asleep, and Solomon is raised up in his stead, and then the building of the temple is at once commenced.

It is a very interesting fact to observe, that God says that the whole span of the time, from the bringing of the children of Israel out of Egypt to the building of the temple of Solomon, was only 480 years. (1 Kings

vi. 1.) But how is this true, because you will find that a great many more than 480 years had elapsed since that period. In the verse I have referred to we read, "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." It was considerably more than 480 years, and yet God tells us it was 480. Colenso tells us that therefore the bible is untrue. The answer is so beautiful and so characteristic of the ways of God; it is this: if you deduct the years Israel was in captivity under the Judges, you will find that, without counting those years, the time was 480 years. God did not count those years that Israel was in captivity. He would not acknowledge those years during which His people were in bondage. You are aware that when Solomon built the temple, he built it after a divinely prescribed pattern. The language that is used of this pattern is very striking. We are told that David drew it "according to the hand of God upon him". I pray you think of that expression of David drawing it "according to the hand of God upon him". These are the words of Scripture. David's hand was, as it were, a child's hand with God guiding it. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 12 and 19.)

How clearly this goes to show, concerning those developments of the temple of which I have yet to speak, that the end was seen by God from the beginning, and that all His thoughts of love towards us were in His heart long before we knew anything about them. Also it shows us that in His arrangements of the temple, nothing was left to accident; man might not do anything as he pleased. So it was with Moses and the tabernacle. Have you ever counted the number of times we are told Moses did everything according to pattern. Seven times in the 40th of Exodus, we are told that Moses did everything "as the Lord commanded Moses". Nothing was left to human ingenuity; it was to be done precisely according to Divine pattern. So with the temple of Solomon; everything drawn by David was drawn according to the hand of God upon him; and when everything was done, it is very striking to observe that precisely the same language is used about the way God entered this temple that Solomon built, that had been used with reference to the manner God entered the tabernacle which Moses built. In 2nd Chron. 5th ch., and last two verses, we read: "It came even to pass as the trumpeters and singers were as one

to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever," mark what follows—"that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God." He was taking possession again, and taking possession with His whole heart.

I ask you to observe, before we pass on, this other very beautiful touch—it is more than a touch—it is the fundamental principle of the difference that obtains now between God's creation rest, and His rest in redemption. The principle I mean is this: when God rested, as He certainly did, in His creation, before the worm had eaten at His gourd, it was because—now mark the reason—it was good, "it was very good." The language is: "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." And God had rest. Cannot you see how the worm could get in? because his rest depended upon the creature continuing good. Mark the principle, even in the type of redemption. "They praised the Lord because *He* is good." God is not now resting because of anything good in the creature; but God rests in His love now on account of His own goodness, and His own mercy; and mark the difference of principle, the fundamental change of thought. He rested first because *it* was very good; He rests in redemption because *He* is good.

The creature depending for its continuance upon goodness in itself, could not but fall from God. Creation must go from God; but when things rested on a new basis, through Christ and His blood—thus, linked hard to the throne of God, the worm can never get at his gourd. There is a Psalm which beautifully illustrates the way of God as respects this rests that Solomon in type found for Him.

In the 132nd Psalm you will find three petitions to God in reference to the rest that this temple of Solomon provided, and you will find three answers; and I would ask you to observe that each of the three answers goes beyond the request; we are so prone to think that God blesses us according to our need,—what a mistake! His wont is to bless us according to His riches in glory by Christ. Now look at the three petitions here. After alluding to the afflictions of the Greater than David, who willingly came here to suffer, and so to work that

God's rest in His love and grace might be undisturbed for ever, we read the first, "Arise, O Lord, into thy rest, Thou and the ark of thy strength." Then the answer to that petition is in the 14th verse, "This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." Mark that; I want to rest among my people, to dwell amongst them. The answer was not merely in accordance with, "Lord, do come and dwell;" but it was,—I shall come and dwell among you "for ever," and my heart longed for this. The 2nd one is, "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy." Mark the answer: "I will also clothe her priests with *salvation*, and her saints shall shout *ALoud* for joy." The replies are given at once; so quickly in the same Psalm, without any condition, that they are often read without the Lord's ready goodness being perceived. Then again, thirdly, "For thy servant David's sake, turn not away the face of Thine anointed." The answer is, "There will I make the horn of David to bud; I have ordained a lamp for my Anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame; but upon Himself shall his crown flourish."

You should study this Psalm; I have only hinted at the line of thought in it. You will find the Psalm really consists of three petitions in reference to God's grand and final rest. Through the afflictions of the true David, and through God's exceeding all human expectations, and all human thoughts as to His approbation and His delight in what David has done,—I mean the Son of David—the true temple shall be built, and God's home be for ever in it. If I were to pause over Ezekiel, to expound the line of thought in it, it would take all the time. In the 1st and 10th chapters there is the glory seen retiring,—first as it were mounting up from the house, and then over the city, and then departing; but at the close of the book coming down again and resting for ever. But passing from that: knowing that Israel had sinned the glory away and grieved God, though God is never balked, never disappointed,—for we know that where sin abounds, grace does much more abound,—God goes on. Accordingly the next step is the blessed Lord Jesus Christ coming into the world. There was He who was the Son of God himself.

Has it ever occurred to you when the Lord Jesus was born? I believe, if the question is examined, it will be found that He was born at the feast of tabernacles in September. I know God's people keep Christmas day

the 25th of December; but I believe there is no truth outside the Word of God, and I believe He was born at the feast of tabernacles in September. There was the beginning of the grand feast of tabernacles, but not the end; and there seems an allusion to that fact in the well-known words with which John opens his Gospel,— "And the Word was made flesh and pitched his tabernacle amongst us." The Word was made flesh. Now mark the advance of thought. They had sinned the glory away; but still God would not be turned aside from His purposes, and He came nearer. He came, if possible, more fully out in His grace.

I must pause to tell you a little fact that I think will interest all present. At a meeting a few days ago, of a great number of Christians, amongst whom I believe were many who seek to get closer to Scripture, a cry went up, "Where is God? where is God? where is God?" and when I heard that dear brother's cry, it seemed to me as if we were just brought to the confines of the dispensation, and that the very next thing for the saints in that room, and in the world, was, to be lifted up bodily into the clouds, to see the Son of God who shall say,— "Here I am". We know He had been teaching His prophets to announce His coming for a great number of years, and at last was seen among them; He who had spoken to Adam, who had visited Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so on,—who had dwelt in the Shechinah over the mercy-seat in the temple. At last He, He himself, stood amongst them. You know well, beloved friends, I suppose, that the same blessed One, who from the beginning had been leading and guiding His people was He that at last stood unveiled before them in human flesh. True, it wanted the Spirit's teaching by the Father to see He was the Son of God as He said:—"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you; but my Father which is in heaven." There He was Himself, the same who had loved to visit patriarchs, who had dwelt with Israel in the tabernacle, who had desired to rest for ever with them, as His Word in Psalm cxxxii. has assured us. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Observe too the manner in which He came. We are told that when He was born there was a voice in heaven praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest." As some one very beautifully and poetically puts it—the angels were so full of joy that they broke bounds that morning saying, "Glory to God in the highest;"—and as it was with the angels in heaven, so we find it was with the

believers on the earth. Zachariah had his song, Simeon had his song, the believers had their song, those in heaven had their note of praise, those on earth had their song. And why? Though He came in lowly guise, it was He Himself, and He never comes into His temple but He comes into it with all His heart; it gratifies His heart to come among and dwell with His people.

The blessed Lord Jesus was God manifest in the flesh; and if you bear this in mind, beloved friends, it will preserve you from the very grave mistake which is rife now-a-days among some of the evangelical teachers of the day, that when the Lord Jesus came He lived in exile from God. These are the very words of one of the great teachers of the day, that when He came, He was, as it were, one of the Jewish remnant, and had to work himself up to the favour of God; fearful blasphemy I am sure. No; He was the temple of God and the smile of God was ever upon Him. When he was baptised, God declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Was He an exile from God when He said to Philip, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?" No; He was ever with God save upon the cross, and then for a little while there was that mysterious aversion of the face of God, that wrung from His heart the cry, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" But He was the temple, and he could point to His body and say, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again." It is very wonderful to think, if you had touched Jesus you would have touched infinite love; if you had touched Jesus, you would have touched infinite mercy. It was, as it were, all there; for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. It was only the soldier's spear that was needed to break the bars, that the love and the grace and the mercy might flow out to us poor dying sinners.

As some of you may be asked to keep Lent, I will tell you a little fact about His tarrance here after His resurrection forty days. The numbers in Scripture are all symbolical, and all the forties refer to Israel in Egypt; whether they occur in connexion with Moses, Elias, or the Lord, they all refer to Israel in Egypt. When Christ rose from the dead He tarried here forty days. It was tantamount to saying, The old state of things is discontinued; you have done with law; you are now linked with Me in resurrection life; you do not stand with Moses under the law, but you stand

with Me in grace. That is the true doctrinal reason of His bodily continuance here being equal in duration of time to the period of His fasting after His baptism. All was now changed. The old economy He had previously signified to the hearing ear was about to be abrogated. Have you ever observed that whilst the Lord speaks of "His feast" and "His house" in the Old Testament, as if truly His, in the New He continually calls them "theirs;" for instance, in Exodus we read about the feasts of the Lord, in John of the feast of the Jews; in the Old Testament we read of the law of God, in the New Testament we read of the law of Moses; in the Old Testament we read of the house of God, meaning the temple, in the New Testament we read it is "your house". "Behold, your house is left to you desolate." Because, when they were clinging to the shadow, without seeing the underlying reality, it was a vain thing, it was a mere piece of brass, it was worth nothing; so Gōd said, "Behold, your house is left to you desolate."

Christ having returned to heaven, the development of God's purpose is advanced a stage. There succeeded a further fuller evidence of God's delight with His people, and his desire to dwell with the sons of men; for then as you know, the Holy Ghost came down Himself personally. It is not my purpose now to enter at length upon the great doctrinal fact, that the Holy Ghost has been present in this world, in this particular sense, only a few more years than eighteen centuries. He has been here just as long as there has been *the Man* upon the throne of God. When the Man Christ went up to heaven, the Holy Ghost came down to link other men on to that Man upon the throne of God; and the two events are parallel in point of time. So long as the Man is up there, the Holy Ghost is down here; and when once that Man comes down again, the Holy Ghost, with the Bride of Christ, will take up the church and bring them into the presence of the heavenly Bridegroom. The Holy Ghost came down in person, and ever since He came down, He has never gone away.

I think sometimes the 2nd of Acts is read even by intelligent Christians as if there was some confusion in the mind between the gifts and the Person of the Holy Ghost. I think in the 2nd of Acts there is distinct reference to both of these: "Suddenly there came a sound as of a rushing mighty wind;" there is the Holy Ghost. "And it filled all the house where they were sitting; and there appeared to them cloven tongues;"

these are the gifts. Do you not see the marked distinction in the 2nd of Acts between the Person and the gifts of the Holy Ghost—I was going to say the third Person in the Trinity; but I do not like to say anything disparaging to the Holy Ghost in the Trinity. There came the sound of a mighty rushing wind—"wind" and "Spirit" are the same in the Greek. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues"—GIFTS. So again in the 4th verse, "And they were all filled with the HOLY GHOST." Then there follows a reference to the gifts, viz.: "And began to speak with other tongues." It is important to draw that distinction, because otherwise we are in danger, as we do not see the gifts, to conclude that the Holy Ghost is not here; whereas the two are widely different. If you turn to I Corinthians xii., you will find all about the gifts there. God never pledges *those gifts* to continue.

[To be concluded in our next.]

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The Meetings will commence as follows:—

FRIDAY.

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" 11 to 1 P.M. - - - For Exhortation.
" 3 to 5 P.M. - - - Scripture Reading.
" 7 to 9 P.M. - - - Gospel Preaching.

SATURDAY.

From 10 to 11 A.M. - - - Prayer Meeting.
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AT

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JANUARY 24-27, 1876.

MONDAY, 24TH JANUARY.

7 P.M. - - - - - Prayer.

TUESDAY, 25TH JANUARY.

11 A.M. to 1 P.M. } Prayer, Confession, and Thanks-
3 P.M. to 5.30 P.M. } giving.
7 P.M. - - - - - Addresses to Believer.

WEDNESDAY, 26TH JANUARY.

11 A.M. to 1 P.M. - Consideration of Scripture.
3 P.M. to 5.30 P.M. - Consideration of Questions.*
7 P.M. - - - - - Addresses to Believers.

THURSDAY, 27TH JANUARY.

11 A.M. to 1 P.M. - Consideration of Scripture.
3 P.M. to 5.30 P.M. - Consideration of Questions,*
7 P.M. - - - - - Addresses to Believers.

Dinner each day - - - at 1.30 p.m.

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THE

NORTHERN WITNESS.

"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. II. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. II. 8.

No. 14.

FEBRUARY, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

JACOB AT BETHEL ;

OR,

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE RIGHT WAY OF DOING THE
RIGHT THING.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning." (Rom. xv. 4.) "Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Cor. x. 11.)

IN the history of the patriarchs, as recorded by the pen of inspiration, there is much to exercise the conscience of the follower of Jesus, and also to comfort the heart. One lesson we find in every page—we might say in almost every line of their history—is this,—the path of faith is the only path of safety and of peace. It is well for us that their failings and infirmities are recorded, as well as their graces. If we had only the fair side of their character given us, we would often lose heart, but God, in His grace and mercy to those who would seek to tread their footsteps in the narrow path of faith and obedience, has presented their lives to us without any garnishing or concealment.

When we read in their history an account of their wanderings, and how the eye of God was always upon them, and His almighty arm was ever ready to protect them, even when they sinfully exposed themselves to dangers ; we can, in the midst of our failings, thank God and take fresh courage.

The life of the patriarch Jacob was a very chequered one, and doubtless it was different from what it might have been had he "followed the Lord fully" ; if he had trusted more to the living God, and less to his own craftiness, his heart would doubtless have been pierced with fewer sorrows. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee," is very often God's way of leading the wandering heart

back to Himself. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7) was true in Jacob's day, and it is still as true. If you or I, dear reader, "sow to the flesh," we may depend upon it "we shall of the flesh reap corruption," for God has said it, and "God is not a man, that He should lie ; neither the Son of Man, that He should repent". (Num. xxiii. 19.) "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

But to come more particularly to our subject. We find, in Gen. xxxi. 3, that the "Lord said to Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred ; and I will be with thee," but we find in chap. xxxiii. 17 to the end, that Jacob does not go all the length of the *word of the Lord*, he went only *so far*, and settled down there, instead of going up to Bethel, *i.e.*, the house of God, for some reason or other he halted and built a *house for himself* (verse 17), he also erected an altar, and called it after his own name (ver. 20), and many an individual believer, and many a company of dear saints since Jacob's day have been caught in the same snare. Many a company of devoted Christians, since the Church lost her first love and primitive purity, having separated from the world and surrounding apostacy on a crusade to recover primitive order, purity, and power, have stopped short of the whole truth, and, instead of going up to the *house of God*, have made a house of their own—have also erected an altar, and called it by a name of their own. They got into fellowship with the world again, and are of no more use as a testimony for God, than if they had never made any profession of separation, *but are rather a testimony against separation.*

Well, but although Jacob got himself into trouble by thus settling down at Shechem, God spoke to

him there, and said, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother". (Chap. xxxv. 1.) Jacob probably had in a measure forgotten the meeting he had with God at Bethel many years before, and the vow he there made—but God had not forgotten neither the meeting with Jacob, nor the vow that Jacob vowed (chap. xxxi. 13), and he touched Jacob's heart by reminding him of that remarkable interview he had with the living God, and Jacob at once responded to the call of God, and it is very instructive how he set to work. In chap. xxxv. 2 we read, "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the *strange gods* that are among you, and be clean, and *change your garments*". "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever" was a truth that Jacob had learned so thoroughly on that night when God appeared to him at Bethel, that he had never forgotten it, perhaps that was partly the reason that he settled down at Shechem—he knew his household were unfit to take the divine place of testimony. He brought them as near it as their "strange gods" and "filthy garments" would allow, and, doubtless, this is the reason why many who have responded to the call of God, to "come out from among them, and be separate" (2 Cor. vi. 17), have stopped short of taking their stand on "thus says the Lord," and owning no rule but the rule of God, and no name but the one name of the Lord Jesus Christ—they followed the truth until they found that to go all the length would involve the putting away of their strange gods, and changing their garments, —they also found out that New Testament position and order requires New Testament purity of heart, conscience, and life, and they could not pay the price, therefore they settled down at Shechem, or some such half-way house, and bought a field, and got into fellowship with the people of the land.

In chap. xxxv. 2, 3, we have two things—the *right place* and the *right state*, and we find Jacob attending to the *right state* first, and *then* the *right place*. If this order were always observed by believers in taking their stand on "thus says the Lord," there would be fewer heart-burnings among saints who are gathered unto the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, if our hearts have been emptied of our idols, our consciences judging by truth, and our walk fashioned by the *word of God*, before we took our place in the *house of God*, the

ruling of the house would be comparatively a light matter, but how often do believers professedly take their place in the house of God, without attending to the conditions of their heart, conscience, and life, and, as a consequence, they are only a source of vexation and weakness. There is also here much practical instruction for those who are concerned about getting the saints to take their "true place," as it is called. Dear Christian worker, remember it is *state* first and then *place*. God will never thank any of us for "gathering saints into His house," unless their "strange gods" are first put away, they are "made clean," and their filthy "garments" changed, if we would seek to serve God by leading His saints out to stand on "thus says the Lord," let us learn to begin with their heart and conscience, and having got these into a clean and healthy condition, we may then say, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and make there an altar unto God". May the Lord enable us to lay this lesson to heart, and not be in such hot haste about the right place until the state is attended to first.*

It is also of great importance in these days to notice what *right condition* consists in. Jacob did not set his household to sit in judgment for Esau's fleshliness—on Lot's degeneracy, or Noah's drunkenness—but he said, "put away the strange gods that are among you", "and change your garments". They might have been quite orthodox on all the sins and failures of others, and still retain their *own* strange gods and filthy garments. What God wants is personal holiness of heart and life, and He will have nothing less and nothing else—"Be ye holy for I am holy." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Before the believer can "draw near", the heart must first be purged from an evil conscience, and the body washed with pure water—the heart and conscience under the power of the blood, and the walk judged and regulated by the Word of God.

At verse 4 we read, "And they gave unto Jacob *all* the strange gods which were in their hands, and all their ear-rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was in Shechem". The way that Jacob disposed of their gods and their ornaments tells us where his heart had been when he was buying "a field," and "pitching his tent before the city".

How differently Moses acted when he came down from the Mount of God. "And he took the calf which they had made, and burned it in the fire; and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." (Exod. xxxii. 20.) But Moses had been on the Mount with God, and had grace to intercede for the sinner, and also strength to come down and thoroughly judge their sin.

But Jacob, from his proximity to the world, had no such ability—he could only hide the strange gods of

* Attention to "condition" as well as to "position" is not always kept in view. And when taking up the "position," the "condition" may be fair, but it requires constant and ceaseless watchfulness, according to the Word.—Ed.

his household under an oak ; a solemn lesson this to us. How many a child of God, in a time of special blessing, has laid aside some fleshly lust, some sinful habit, or some idol of the heart they then felt was not fit for the presence of God. It may have been a lust of the flesh, a lust of the eye, or some position that ministered to the pride of life, or anything that hurt the conscience when under the power of God's presence and truth. Alas ! it was only *hid*, and when the season of blessing passed by, they have gone back and dug up their strange god, and gone back to their idolatry. Were believers judging themselves in the power of communion with God, such things would not happen as they do ; but how often is it true, in a measure, of many a believer, "The dog is returned to his vomit again ; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire". (2 Pet. ii. 22.)

It is very pleasing to dwell upon this bright passage in the chequered life of Jacob. Verse 5 tells, "And they journeyed ; and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them". We often hear a cry for power, but here we have the secret of true power, a true heart, a good conscience, and a holy life ; and with these, and walking in the path of obedience to the word of the Lord, there would be less need to cry about *power*. The power of God would be with us, and that is the only power that is worth having.

"And he built there an altar, and called the place—El Bethel." He did not need his own name added to it. He had got his household cleansed, and had got to his right place, and the name of God was sufficient. The lesson for us is that New Testament purity, and New Testament place, need no appendages.

"And God *appeared* unto Jacob again, and blessed him." (Verse 9.) In chap. xxxi. 3, it is said, "And the Lord said unto Jacob," and verse 11, "And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream". And again in chap. xxxv. 1, "And God said unto Jacob." But when he got back to Bethel, God *appeared* unto him, God *speaks* to the child of faith when he is in a wrong position and a wrong condition, but, when we get into a right state and into a right place, He *appears* Himself to our souls, and blesses us, and tells us, as He did to Jacob, what blessings He has in store for us.

It would be very instructive to follow Jacob in his wanderings. God not only said unto him, "Arise, go up to Bethel," but also *dwell there*. But we find, at verse 16, "And they journeyed from Bethel". And Jacob got into sorrow again, and verse 21 tells us, "Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar".

And more sin in Jacob's family, and more sorrow for Jacob's heart. But, for the present, we shall take leave of the subject, and may the Lord enable both reader and writer to lay these things to heart, and enable both to follow the faith, and shun the failures of those who have trod the path of faith before us, and to His name be all the glory. Amen.

"WHY ABODEST THOU AMONG THE SHEEP-FOLDS ?"

"IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS."

EIGHTEEN hundred years have passed away since our blessed Lord Jesus was upon earth.

Nearly His last words were : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature".

He had given His life for the world ; He had made a "propitiation for the sins of the whole world" ; He had "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" ; He had "preached peace," having "made peace by the blood of His cross". Poor guilty ones had believed the message, and had been pardoned, "justified," "accepted in the Beloved," made "kings and priests to God".

These saved ones had the glorious mission of announcing the love of God to man. They were called to the high office of "ambassadors for Christ," and "fellow-workers with God". For a time they realized their mission, and "multitudes were added to the Church". But soon they seemed to forget their Master's order, and a persecution was needed, by which they were all scattered abroad, "except the apostles," to bring them to a sense of their responsibility.

Then they that were "scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Lord Jesus ; and the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord".

But soon the Church fell asleep again, and the Lord's command and the desire of His heart was forgotten. The gospel was not preached ; centuries of darkness passed, and the Church slumbered almost in death.

But now God, in His grace, has begun to awaken us, and says, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light".

Some think that they can almost hear the distant sound of the Master's chariot-wheels approaching, and they remember that "we must all give an account of the things done in the body" ; and as they think of His question to each one, "How much owest thou unto my Lord ?" they are obliged to bow their heads in shame. The blessed Lord who asks them, bears the marks still of His wounds ; they remember He had not where to lay His head, and they see His eye notices their worldly prosperity, and their comfort, if not their

luxury. They begin to remember how large a portion of their life has been spent, either in accumulating treasures on earth, contrary to His express command, or in providing for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and for the world which they now see to be just about to pass away for ever. "The time is short," He repeats again, "and the fashion of this world passeth away".

Beloved saints of God, ought we not to "arise from among the dead?" Shall we not realize our high calling and our responsibility? He has entrusted to us this service, and to no one else; and we must obey in His strength. In Great Britain, Ireland, and America, we have enormous responsibility; much has been given, and much will be required. In His providence, the whole world is now open. India has long been open. Africa and Japan are open. All China, with its 400 perishing millions, is open, and those who have penetrated hundreds of miles into the interior find hearts prepared by God for the gospel, and already some have believed on Jesus. A missionary, 700 or 800 miles from the coast, says: "The harvest is plentiful; we are reaping, not merely sowing. God is with us". A Chinese, living in a province containing 25 millions, and where the gospel has been proclaimed for the first time this year, said, "Come to us, I know there are many in this city, who, like us, are seeking the true way". Have we been faithful to our trust? What response has been given to the cry for help of those who are being "drawn to death"? It is true that some hundreds of devoted labourers have gone forth, sustained by the prayers and pecuniary help of many at home; but the marked blessing that has rested on missionary efforts, is only a louder call from God to "go forward". "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

There are probably 40,000 congregations in England; it would have been a very small proof of love for the Lord if only one from each of these had gone forth to fulfil the Lord's command. But it is thought that not nearly 2000 are in the field from this country, so that from about 38,000 congregations, not one is proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation? It is of these that the question must be asked: How are you obeying the Lord's command? "Go ye!"

Will you "people of God," who "have been called out of darkness into His marvellous light, to shew forth His praises," gather together, and consider this

matter before the Lord, and in the light of His return? Are there none who are willing to go for His sake? God does not necessarily want men of intellect. "Not by might, nor by power; but by My Spirit, saith the Lord."

Listen to the cry, "Come over and help us," not only addressed to men, but to women. Help is needed to conduct schools, visit from house to house, and instruct enquirers in the Word of Life. Will each enquire what are the reasons why he or she should not go out? Is it business? Matthew, Peter, James, John, Andrew, were all in business when the Lord called them to follow Him, and they "left all and followed Him". Have you bought a farm, and "must you needs go and see it"? or "five yoke of oxen"? and is this the only reason why you say, "I pray thee have me excused"? Perhaps some are simply engrossed with the things of this world! If so, remember "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof". Your brethren and sisters in the battle-field are hard pressed, and often nearly worn out. Will you look on and see them die at their posts, and not go "to the help of the Lord against the mighty"?

But possibly you are, by God's grace, engaged in definite work for Him at home. Still you have to consider whether the very fact of your having been trained by God, and used of God, is not a call to you to go abroad. God can supply your place at home, and make your absence a blessing, as calling out some who are slumbering to "work while it is day".

If you say the work is too hard, He says, "Follow Me". Dear child of God, as the angels look on, at your daily employments, do they praise God that you have indeed presented your body as "a living sacrifice"? or have they to say, "even weeping," that you are almost like those "whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things"?

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." At least 600 millions have never even heard the name of Jesus; and probably, at least, 400 millions of the remainder have never heard the gospel in such a way as to know that it is glad tidings of great joy—that there is a Saviour for them. Multitudes of these perishing ones are groping in the dark after that peace with God which you have found, and know to be for them also.

If you saw them on their death-beds, passing into an eternity of darkness without Christ, how could you

answer the reproaches they would heap on you, if they found that you knew the way of salvation, but that your love of ease or worldly advancement had deterred you from making a single effort to tell them the light and joy you had found in Christ Jesus? Remember, you may in all reality be a fellow-worker with God. Arise, "let no man take thy crown!"

"As a good soldier of Christ, endure hardness."
 "If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him."
 "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again." "If He laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."

Will you who have read this, seek to gather together the church or company of Christians with whom you worship the Lord God Almighty, your Father, to consider how you may obey His command to you; and pray that, AT LEAST, ONE FROM AMONG YOU may be so constrained by the love of Christ, as to go forth with the message of salvation? Let those who remain count it their privilege to sustain the labourers by prayer, and by ministering of their substance; so that, "tarrying at home," they may "divide the spoil".

"BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY."

"ONE ANOTHER."

AS believers in the Lord Jesus, we are all baptised by ONE SPIRIT into ONE BODY (1 Cor. xii. 13), and are therefore members ONE OF ANOTHER (Rom. xii. 5; Eph. iv. 25), and have the *new* commandment from the Lord Himself, to *love* one another as He loved us (John xiii. 34; xv. 12, 17; 1 John iii. 11, 23; 2 John 5); to *love* one another because love is of God (1 John iv. 7, 11), and we are *taught* of God to *love* one another (1 Thes. iv. 9), and not only to love, but also to *abound* in love towards one another (1 Thes. iii. 12); we must also *care* for one another (1 Cor. vii. 25), and *pray* for one another (Jas. v. 16), be *kindly affectioned* to one another, in honour *preferring* one another (Rom. xii. 10), having *compassion* toward one another (1 Peter iii. 8); we must be *kind* to one another, *forbearing* one another in love, *tender-hearted*, *forgiving* one another (Eph. iv. 2, 32; Col. iii. 13), *like-minded* toward

one another (Rom. xv. 5), of the *same* mind toward one another (Rom. xii. 16); we should *bear* the *burdens* of one another, and *so* fulfil the law of Christ (Gal. vi. 2); also *serve* one another (Gal. v. 13), and *consider* one another, to provoke unto love and good works (Heb. x. 24); *receive* one another as Christ received us (Rom. xv. 7), and also *tarry* for one another when we are gathered together to remember the Lord's death in the breaking of bread (1 Cor. xi. 33); *comfort* one another with the hope of the Lord's coming (1 Thes. iv. 18), and *exhort* one another while *this day* lasts, and we see *that day* approaching (Heb. iii. 13; x. 25); also *teach* and *admonish* one another (Col. iii. 16; Rom. xv. 14), so as to *edify* one another (Rom. xiv. 19; 1 Thes. v. 11); *submit* to one another and be *subject* to one another, and be clothed with *humility* (Eph. v. 21; 1 Peter v. 5); even *confess* your faults to one another (James v. 16), and *wash the feet* of one another (John xiii. 14); *use hospitality* to one another, and *minister* to the wants of one another, as good stewards of God's manifold bounties (1 Peter iv. 9, 10); finally *greet* one another with a holy kiss (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Peter v. 14).

"BELOVED LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

Don't provoke one another, or *envy* one another (Gal. v. 26); nor *bite* and *devour* one another, lest we be *consumed* of one another (Gal. v. 15), neither *speaking evil* of one another (James iv. 11), nor *grudge* or *groan* against one another (James v. 9), nor be *puffed up* concerning one another (1 Cor. iv. 6), nor *lie* to one another (Col. iii. 9), and above all, don't *judge* one another (Rom. xiv. 13).

"These things I *command* you that ye LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

"If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another (*i.e.*, Christians) and the *Blood* of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all sin*." (1 John i. 7.)

"O Lord! with sorrow and with shame,
 We meekly would confess,
 How little we, who bear Thy Name,
 Thy mind, Thy ways express."

"Give us Thy meek, Thy lowly mind;
 We would obedient be;
 And all our rest and pleasure find,
 In fellowship with Thee."

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another." (John xiii. 35.)

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS, &c.,

(By the late J. G. B.)

No. II.

ON GENESIS XV.

IN the preceding chapter, we see the patriarch carrying himself in beautiful faith before the Lord. He went to the battle when the danger of his kinsman called him there, and, in the strength of God, he rescued him; and then, on his return, he accepted the pledge of a conqueror's reward from the hand of God's servant, but refused all present portion from the hand of the world's representative. His faith, then, was perfect before the Lord. We cannot but know the value of obedience, in preparing the soul for communion. It surely has this holy virtue in it—obedience, conscious integrity, holy acknowledgment of the Lord in our ways, blessedly keeps the soul in readiness for communion; as we read, "If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter" (John xiv. 15, 16), and again, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him". (John xiv. 23.) And so we find it here, Abram had been in obedience, his faith through chap. xiv. had been perfect before God; and we find here, in chap. xv., his communion or intercourse with God to be perfect also, manifesting the most striking holy correspondency of mind between the Lord and His servant. He had kept the words of God, and now God was, as it were, making His abode with him. This intercourse is opened by the Lord, and opened too, according to this integrity in Abram, of which I have been speaking. Abram had, in the battle, trusted God as his shield, and, after the battle, received Him as his only reward, and, according to his faith, it is unto him. The Lord will now give him the happy assurance that all this precious faith of his soul was abundantly warranted. For such are the sure and appropriate joys of faith; all it counts upon it gets with sweet assurances from the word or spirit of God. Like the poor sinner in the Pharisee's house, who counted on forgiveness, and got it with a token. (Luke vii.) But it is not only in this word of approval that we see Abram enjoying the fruit of his obedience. We find, as I observed, an easy unforced intercourse between him and the Lord. The Lord had said, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward". Blessed this was, but it left desires still in the heart of Abram

unsatisfied. He had no child, and what were all gifts and honours to Abram while he was childless, and while his house, and home, and inheritance were likely to be established in a servant, and not in a son? Was this slighting the word of the Lord? Was this making little of the promise that God Himself would be his shield and his reward? No, to the mere ear of man it may sound so, but the whole intercourse here forbids the thought. The Lord's ear tries it, and finds it expressive of quite another thing. The Lord at once approves it and honours it, and relieves this thought of the soul of Abram, which was thus leaving him unsatisfied, though in the midst of gifts and promises. And here is disclosed to us one of the workings of the soul that is so blessedly in correspondence with the mind of God. Abram felt that no promises or honours would satisfy him without a child, and as long as he feared that a servant would be his heir,—that in Eliezer of Damascus his house was to be established. Now all this is entirely according to God. Our God desires that, above all things, we should value the *standing of our persons, as children*—that we should esteem the spirit of adoption, or of liberty, as the choicest item in our list of prerogatives—the want of which would make all inheritance or glory an unsatisfying good. This was Abram's mind here. And the Lord delighted to find it so. He at once honours this motion in the soul of Abram, and promises him a son. For, indeed, the standing of our persons is the sweetest and deepest truth of all. To *consent to be a servant* is deeply grieving to the mind of God. This is shewn by the indignant answer of the Holy Ghost in the Apostle, to those who were going back to the law, or the spirit of bondage, and deserting the liberty of children which the gospel had brought them (see Galatians and Colossians). Is God's grace to be so little set by? Is acceptance "in the beloved" so little to be valued? Are we to do what we can to blot out the Father from the great economy of divine love? This cannot be. God must resist this attempt, as He does eminently among the Galatians. And this value of our God, for our esteeming the standing of our persons, as children before Him, above all that He can impart or promise to us, is shewn here, in this approving the motion of Abram's heart, dissatisfied without a child, though God Himself offered to be his shield and his reward. For God has fixed it as His purpose. He has settled it to be His own joy, to have *children* and not

servants, in his house for ever—to have the scene of glory, by-and-by, filled, not with the spirit of bondage or fear, but with the spirit of liberty or adoption. It is His own gracious divine gratification. It would not do for Him even to gather praise here, if He did not gather it from children.

Abram's desire for a *child*, unsatisfied with the presence of a *servant*, exactly corresponded with the desire of God Himself. And, therefore, this motion in the heart of Abram must have been altogether grateful to the Lord, as we see from the way in which it was entertained, that it was. For it is our duty to magnify *grace*, and make it honourable. Christ alone did this with *law*. But we are to do this with the *grace of God*. That is really the sweetest, most accepted fruit we can offer to our God and Father. And this valuing of our standing as sons—this tasting that even glory itself would be no glory without it—this experiencing that, to have a child and a reward in God, if we had not a Father in God, would not do—that though we might have a large inheritance as His gift, yet if that were to be enjoyed by us as servants, or as Eliezers of Damascus, and not as children, all would not satisfy. This shews that we value what God Himself values. This shews that we are in blessed companionship with His own thoughts, and have our souls fashioned by His Spirit, as we see that it was in not Galatia. The return, then, to the standing of Ishmael, and the desertion of their condition in Isaac, awakened all the Apostle's fears lest they should be found to have no lot or part with God at all. This I judge to be a wondrous notice of the divine mind which we get in this chapter. We there see the formal ground of Abram's righteousness before God brought out. He believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. He believed Him to be a quickener of the dead, that is, he left the whole *work* in the hand of the Lord, and consequently the whole glory. (Rom. iv.) He took the place of a conscientiously dead sinner, and was debtor to divine love and power altogether, for righteousness or life. This was the formal expression of his standing. He had walked by faith already. He had conquered by faith already. He had looked to the glory already as his only portion. But now comes the occasion for manifesting that principle, even faith in God, as a quickener of the dead—upon which he was accepted as righteous. For let our services, even of faith, be what they may—they do not justify. It is God Himself, apprehended

by faith, as doing all the work, who justifies. As in the case of the same poor sinner in Luke vii. She loved, and loved much, but it was not her love, but her faith that saved her, so here with Abraham. Affections towards Christ, and single-eyed services to Him have gone on, but all such did not justify.

The leaving of Ur, the conquest of Chedorlaomer, the rejection of the offers of the king of Sodom, did not make him righteous, but his faith in God who quickens the dead. The standing of Abram's house being now fixed, the question of the *person* being now settled, we turn to that of the *inheritance*. And here we may notice the same intimacy between the Lord and Abram. There was still that easy and unforced flow of mind and communication between them, which, as I have already observed, ever comes from the soul and the feet of the saint, having been found perfect with God. The Lord promises Abram the land where he then dwelt for an inheritance. Abram asks, "How shall I know that I shall inherit it"? But this is not to be read as the language of doubt. The whole intercourse here forbids that thought; as before we were forbidden to judge that Abram was slighting God, as his shield and reward. No; this was not the language of *doubt* but of *desire*. The same words were doubt on the lips of Zachariah, and Gabriel resents them as such. But here, instead of resentment, there is approval and gratification. For the ear of the Lord again tested these words and found them to be *desire* and not doubt; therefore, He at once sets Himself to gratify or answer them. Abram wanted to read his title to such rich promises. He *desired* to look into the divine witnesses for all this. It was delight in the promise that made him thus search after the ground of it.

This is very natural. We find ourselves in a wealthy place. We distinctly trace the path that brought us there. It is like a believer occupying his happy thoughts about the virtue of the blood of Jesus. It is not that he doubts that virtue: he feels it in his peaceful conscience, and because he feels it there, he likes to look at it, he enquires into it, and searches out that wondrous thing that has such a charm for him. The occupation of his thoughts about Jesus and His blood, is not the busy way of doubt therefore, but of desire and delight. And so here with Abram. It is because he valued the promised inheritance that he now asks "whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it"? And it is because our God delights in our

valuing of His promises, that He here immediately sets Himself to answer Abram according to his desire. But in the Lord here answering Abram about the nature of his title to the inheritance, we have some great principles of truth unfolded. First, we see a sacrifice ordered by the Lord, and prepared by His servant. This telling us that everything proceeds on the ground of a sacrifice,—that there is indeed nothing but through the blood of the great sacrifice—on the ground of the Lamb slain. We live and we are glorified by that one only title. We are sons by it, and we are heirs by it. We feast now on it—thus owning our life to be bought by blood,—and we shall take the glory by-and-by, in the name of the same blood. This is the first grand and leading truth here presented in this deeply interesting scene. And according to this, Abram's only duty and service is jealously to preserve the purity of the sacrifice of the precious Lamb of God. For it is our title and ground of everything, we have to watch it lest any should touch it. The fowls of the air must not light on it. The unclean things must not soil its pure and cleansing virtues. Anyone that would meddle with it must be frayed away. As Abram here watches, let the Lord tarry long or short, over that sacrifice on which all God's covenanted promises, and all his own covenanted hopes rested.

All this has great interest for our hearts. But there is more. We have not only thus the nature of our title to the inheritance, and our duty till the inheritance itself comes; but also the character in which we ourselves are to go into the inheritance. It is as dead and risen ones. In no other character can we enter the inheritance: as by no other title than that of the blood of the Lamb, can we have a claim to it. This is now shewn to Abram. A deep sleep and horror of great darkness falls on him; and he is then told that ere his seed can enjoy the land, they must be bondsmen 400 years, but then come forth with great substance into this place of promised inheritance. Now all this was very significant. It told Abram in what character he or his seed was to enter the land of promise. The deep sleep now falls on him, and the horror of great darkness—as on his seed was to fall the bondage and affliction of Egypt. But all was to end in the glory of the inheritance. And all this shews a dead and risen people. As here the day dawns again on Abram, after this night of deep sleep and horror; and as Israel,

afterwards we know, comes forth like a people in resurrection, full of substance—not a feeble person among them, and the glory of the Lord hovering over them,—from their long dark sleep in Egypt—that place of graves and of death to them, under their brick-kilns and taskmasters.

This is another great revelation we get here. It tells us, as I have noticed, the character in which the heir of God goes into his inheritance. And so, indeed, whether it be Israel's inheritance of Canaan, Christ's inheritance of all things, or the church's in Him, and by Him, still it is in this our character of a dead and risen people that we enter severally upon our glories and possessions. The sleep may be for a night, and the sun go down, and the smoking furnace show itself, but the burning lamp will follow, and usher in the day of the covenant, when the land of the inheritance and of the glory shall be made sure for ever. The Lord then seals His covenant—His covenant granting this inheritance. But it is a covenant of promise only. It is not one upon conditions, it is not one in which Abram has to do anything. It is a covenant of promise simply, the Lord being the giver and Abram the receiver; and, according to this, it is only God who seals it—Abram puts no seal to it—Abram undertakes nothing, he simply receives the promise. God's representative, the burning lamp, the symbol of salvation (Isa. lxii. 1), and in that sense, the symbol of Jesus passes through the pieces of that sacrifice, on which, as we saw, all title ever rests. And the land with all its appurtenances is made sure by God to Abram without conditions. The grant of it rests on the covenanted promise of God (Jer. xxxiv. 18, 19); the blood of Jesus sustaining the praise of God, as the great munificent Giver of it, and establishing likewise the joy, the certain joy of the poor sinner, in the sure and conscious possession of it. Thus we have great secrets and great counsels of God told out in this wondrous chapter, and we might have expected this from the character of the communion here, and the intimacy of mind that we have seen subsisting between the Lord and His servant.

There remain, however, as I judge, two other secrets still to be listened to. Abram's seed was not to get immediate possession of the land, as we have already seen, for they were to go through their previous affliction in a land of strangers. But not only so, "The iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full", says the

Lord to Him. The Amorites were then the holders of the promised land, and Israel was not to go in and possess themselves of their possessions till they had filled up the measure of their sin. This is another secret of the Lord here disclosed. We have not space here to look at the full illustration of this in other Scriptures, but may just observe, as we all know, that it is this which still detains the Lord in the heavens. He does not yet descend, as He will, in judgment, because He is long-suffering and patient; not hastily laying hold on vengeance. As of old, He did not come down in answer to the cry from Sodom, nor to visit the Tower, which the children of men in their rebellion were raising, till iniquity was ripened. And what we further observe here is the word of the Lord to Abram, about his own personal place in all this promised and unfolded scene of glory in the distant inheritance. "Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shalt be buried in a good old age." These words tell Abram a secret immediately touching himself. His seed was to have the land, but he himself to be gathered to his fathers. What this meant, or what was to be Abram's position in this distant promised joy, was not made clear by this. But in the increased light of further revelations, we have reason to know that Abram's is the higher or the heavenly department of glory. We see him taken in company with others to the glory of the Son of Man, at the right hand of God. We hear Stephen beautifully tracing, by the Holy Ghost, the histories of the Old Testament witnesses of Jesus, illustrated in Abraham, Joseph, and Moses, and following them in spirit with the great witness (then in the view of the martyred Stephen himself), up to the right hand of God in heaven. This was the true gathering of Abraham to his fathers. Such words may have another and a more primary sense. I question not that; but in this further unfolding of the mind of God, we see the real gathering of Abram, and of all who like him, stand in testimony to Jesus in the world that rejects Him still. (See Acts vii.) It is a gathering to Christ in heaven. We may say, therefore, that great secrets are disclosed in this chapter. It was a time of blessed intimacy between God and His elect one, and some of the deep things of His bosom therefore came forth. May our souls be formed by the power of these truths, and not merely our thoughts engaging themselves about them, and may we know as Abraham did, the communion for which walk with God prepares the soul. May we more love Him, more keep His words, and thus more enjoy His sensible manifestation and abiding with us.

KENTISBURY, Sept. 27, 1875.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN JESUS,—Yours came to hand yesterday all safe. Truly the Lord is kind, putting it into your hearts to remember one of His weakest servants in His service. I have been exercised about coming to Scotland, being pretty much worn out in the work, but I leave it all in His hands, willing to go or remain. He has supplied all my wants, ever since I took that blessed step, not knowing a step of the road, "and since my soul has known His love, what mercies has He made me prove". Dear Perrin and I used to sing that hymn—we were happy in the work, and the best is yet to come. Our sister P—— has been preaching to females in Melbourne. The Lord blest His word to four souls. I have just returned to Kentish, being absent from the brethren three months. Brother M—— and T—— had the joy of beholding, as far as we know, 140 souls brought to Jesus. 2 Cor. ii. 14 is ever with me, the secret of it is "abiding in Christ". Then comes the triumph, because of fresh power obtained, and when we look at every place, this man and that man was born there. Many a time I look back at the eight years' struggle, afraid to hang on God lest I should fail, and that struggle was going on when in Glasgow, where I attended a Bible reading in the —— Hall. The Lord delivered me, and ever since all care is gone. His love is easy to carry. The brethren here are going on well, the average attendance (Lord's Day) to remember the dying love of Jesus, is 70. Although poor, they are happy in the Lord. Six volunteers from this gathering go forth to preach Jesus and Him crucified, and the Lord has given them souls for their hire. They are putting up a building to meet in. The Lord has enabled me to give them a helping hand—they could not make it out at first, preaching for nothing, and then helping them towards their building. They are also putting up a school-house. A dear brother is going to be their schoolmaster. Lost all his money in London, converted on board ship coming out, can speak several languages, he wants only to serve the Lord, is growing hard in the word, is as gentle as a little child. We thank the Lord for him. The Lord has given him some souls. A dancing master was brought to the Lord here fifteen months ago, has joined brother M—— at Sherwood, the Lord giving him three souls, and one of them an old companion, a fighter. Several pugilists there are now on the Lord's

side. It is about sixteen miles from here. Twelve were to be baptised yesterday—same number Paul had once. Breaking of bread has been of late established here; also Northdown, where over fifty souls decided for the Lord. The last township where breaking of bread was established is called Sassafraas—forty grand cases there. Some pray twice in a meeting, they are so full. All sorts of characters are amongst those whom the Lord has delivered. Transported from Scotland, now translated, every one I see melts my heart within me, to see them free. One man (80 years) called Old Yorky, once killed a man, now he is seeking to bring all he can to Jesus. 6 feet 2 he is, and quite erect. It's a pleasure to see him. When parting with him, he said, "I believe I'm the happiest man in the country, with the blessing of Jesus. I should like to live as old again, to tell everybody about Jesus". An old lady converted, 73 years of age, calls me always her son, said, "Oh, I wish I could go through all the world to tell of Jesus, and how happy He has made my soul". Her husband, same age, has opened up his large house for breaking of bread and gospel services. Since he found the Lord, he preaches at home and abroad, he can't rest. The whole country side is stirred to its very depths. In this part of the Island, several infidels have been converted, also several Roman Catholics. The power of the cross is telling its own tale. We just keep to this, and we know God is glorified. One little girl, 10 years old, sings all day, and prays before all the people, astonishing every one that sees and hears her. Her hymn-singing is disturbing the Roman Catholics. The devil is raging against us, ministers are saying we are breaking up their churches, stealing their best sheep. We just tell them there must be something the matter with their fences, or they never would get out. We have stirred them to work, they are following us where we go, holding services every night in opposition, running us down to the very lowest. We just keep to Jesus, and get the crowds, as well as the victory. The people say, "What's the matter, the ministers never looked near us before?" I fear many will have to give a fearful account of their stewardship. A dear brother has left the Church of England, looking simply to the Lord. The Bishop was very unwilling to accept his resignation. The Lord has given him more souls since he left this year than any previous year. He needs all our prayers. I thought you would like to hear a little of what the Lord is doing here. *More*, I pray Him to bless it to you. I always do that. I often think Christians forget to ask blessing on their letter writing. You have my prayers and love.

Yours ever in Christ,
(Signed) WILLIAM RROWN.

THE SUCCESSIVE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

By WM. LINCOLN.

Concluded.

OBSERVE Eph. iv. ; the gifts *there* spoken of are pledged to the end. So the gift of the Holy Ghost is pledged to the end ; but not the tongues. And He came with the same marked evidences of full delight, as God had exhibited before, in order that He might fill them with Himself. I believe that is the thought in these words : " And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." He came "rushing," not to be detained a moment, now that the High Priest had gone up, and everything was clear for the Holy Ghost. He came and dwelt with His people : " I desire to dwell here ; this is My rest for ever." It shows again, that when the Holy Ghost did come, He came with all His heart and mind and soul. He loved us ; He wanted to be with us. But God the Holy Ghost did not stop there. We find that as He dwells in the church, and makes it altogether a temple ; so too each atom of that temple is instinct with spiritual life ; and each individual is the temple of the Holy Ghost. A thought has occurred to my mind lately. I would not like to say absolutely it is true ; but I lean to the conviction that it is ; and I throw it out as a suggestion ; because, if true, it seems a very precious thought ; for in this temple that God is now building, I have given proofs that God had the end in view from the beginning. He knew that He wanted a living palace of living souls, in which He might come and dwell for ever. God cannot enjoy death ; death must flee from Him ; He wants a living palace of living souls, that He may come in person to enter, and let His soul go forth in joy as He takes possession. The thought is this, that every atom of the spiritual temple which God is building is the exact fac-simile of the whole—is a temple in miniature, resembling in all respects the entire one that God is preparing—that each one of us has God with him, the hope of glory ; and if he has Christ in him, is he not God's temple ? If that is the case, now see how simple is the work. God has just to put these living atoms, these living miniature temples one upon the other in their place, and as He puts them there, it is to be a temple instinct throughout, foundation and superstructure, with the Spirit. However, whether the suggestion now made commends itself to your judgment

or no, certain it is that never before did God possess a temple of living stones built by the Holy Ghost upon Christ, the sure Foundation Stone. To build by creation, or by redemption and resurrection, is divine architecture indeed. Ere God can begin this work, He must take the manhood into Himself ; ere He can build He must conquer. So Christ must first die and rise again ; then the Holy Ghost comes down to gather the stones out of the quarry ; and oh ! it is indeed wonderful to think of God the Holy Ghost entering this temple with such fulness of delight, when you reflect that man had just before crowned His sin by the murder of the Son of God.

But further, each single stone, whether a facsimile in all respects of the entire temple or not, has a God in all His attributes engaged upon it. God's masterpiece is taken out of the lowest dust ; and every atom of His true temple shall fully exhibit all His love and all His holiness. Who can say what each single piece of this temple cost Him, not only as respects the sufferings of Christ ; but also the patience, the grace, the condescending goodness of the Holy Ghost in quickening us sinners, who were dead, with resurrection life, causing us to believe in the Lord Jesus, and then coming to dwell in us even individually, and filling us with His presence.

It is a wonderful thing to be filled with the Spirit. If I could conceive of such a thing as a worm, in which dwelt an archangel, how wonderful it would be. Think of my having a worm in my hand, such as I might pick up from my garden, and I knew for certain that there was an archangel in that worm, what a wonderful sight it would be for me to gaze at. It is nothing to the reality—positively nothing. “ Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost ? ” As if we needed correction, so prone are we to forget that great grand truth—our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost. When God really takes possession, He takes possession with joy. The Holy Ghost never dwells in a man until he has believed in Christ, because he must be purged with the blood of the Lamb. When once he has believed, God the Holy Ghost comes and dwells in the spirit, the soul, and even in the body, and at once, because His joy in getting us, in the taking possession of us, is as great as we have seen it to have been in the earlier developments of His way. Think of God the Holy Ghost dwelling in the body. Now here—because this is a very practical part of the

subject—I would ask your attention to this important fact. We were speaking just now of the temple of God as a whole, the church, and of each individual forming an integral and complete part. Please to recall to mind the type for a moment, mark that God never allows the slightest human ingenuity to be employed in its construction. Moses had to make the tabernacle just as he was told, because it was a pattern of things in the heavens. Solomon had to make the temple according as David, with the hand of God on him, had drawn the plan ; and much more therefore concerning the church of God. Now can you not see how profane it must be, how fearfully wicked it must be, in anything in the ordering of the church of God, for man to put a finger. Can you not see that when the church meets for worship, we should have no book but the Book of God, to show us how we are to worship ? If Moses must not touch the tabernacle, and if Solomon must not touch the temple, at least it is incumbent upon us, where two or three are gathered together, that nothing should be done but just as the Word of God says. We must not allow any human skill to have the slightest ordering of the concern, because the church of God, as we are often told, is the most consummate piece of architecture God ever built, because He is building the church for Himself. Hence note that human skill must not be allowed to enter into the building, or any of the arrangements of God's temple. Here I pause to interweave one or two practical thoughts with my address.

You will find that wherever you read of the temple of God, there is always living water flowing out. Wherever God dwells, the water of life flows therefrom as if to say, “ Although I am here, my purpose is to work from here as a centre, and to bless outside.” Was it not so with the blessed Lord Jesus ? There was living water in Him, and the soldier pierced His side ; and living water has been flowing into our souls ever since. The Lord said, He that believeth on Me shall not only have living waters in him ; but out of him shall flow living waters. Wherever God's temple is, there is to be a stream of blessing for the wilderness around. We should bear in mind that we are living in a wilderness of death and sin, and wherever we go we ought to carry life with us. If to an unconverted man, then it should be a bad job for the devil that he ever came across our path ; if a converted man, it will comfort him when perhaps he is in sorrow and tempta-

tion. Is that not the case with the children of God sometimes? Then if you are a child of God, from you should flow living water to cheer that heart.

Another grand consideration is that in the 2nd Corinthians, which I will just refer to. It is,—Because you are the temple of the living God; you should be separate—so separate as not even to *touch* the unclean thing.

Mark that, that if you are the temple of the living God, you are to have no contact with death—do not touch the unclean thing.

But presently the last stone shall be brought out of the quarry with shoutings of joy. Soon, too, all the multitude of temples shall be cemented into one, that God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, in their fulness, may dwell therein for ever. For the Holy Ghost, who dwells in the Body, will, when Christ comes down, lift us up to Him. Ever remember, that the power which is to raise us, is in us *now*. See Rom. viii. 11. God will quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwelleth in us *now*. Then will ensue the final form of the temple.

Oh God! All the toil and the labour—all the patience needed—is being expanded here; and then as you see the stones polished and chiselled, and fashioned, they are taken home, and all is peace and love, and joy. Here He is carrying on His purpose with regard to us, amid a great variety of conflict and temptation, in order that God, by sustaining, renewing, refreshing, strengthening us, may manifest Himself. Not a phase of human experience, and need, and sorrow, but will be represented there to show out God—His grace, His love, His purity, His glory. In the mansions of wealthy noblemen in this world are to be seen costly and varied pictures: in the temple of God there, each part of it will have a history and a price attaching to it beyond all present conception. There already many stones have been carried, and suddenly, and in a moment, we who remain shall be caught up by the Holy Ghost, that it may be finished and perfect ere it appears to sight. In the 21st of Revelation it is called a city. Before I just read it, let me ask attention to this thought. You will find the church of God in Scripture compared to four things: to a bride, a body, a temple, and to a city. I believe the first three refer to the church of God, standing Godward; and the fourth standing creationward; that the body is for the Spirit of God to dwell in; that the bride is for Christ; that the temple is for God; and then the city is the aspect

of the church of God creationward. We read here (21st Rev.) of it as a city, as a temple; and we read also, that it is a bride. From the 10th to the 12th verse we read, “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as a crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” Then it says, in one of the verses, a voice is heard, saying, “The tabernacle of God is with men.” Mark that expression. “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” There is the entire city, called the tabernacle of God. It is not a city like as this, with a temple here and a temple there; but every part is a temple. God is equally dwelling in the whole. The tabernacle of God is the entire city. As it says, “And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.” That is, there is no part whatever of that city, which is more favoured with the Divine presence than any other. Every stone of that temple, or every street of that city, has the sunlight equally shed down upon it. God is dwelling in the whole of it, and in each part of it—as much in one part as any other part. It is the tabernacle of God; and when He does take possession of this great temple of His, is there the same thought of unmixed joy? There is! I believe that when it says here, “I heard a great voice from heaven, The tabernacle of God is with men,” there is the thought of joy. “I heard a *great* voice;” as much as to say, Now I can go and dwell with my people; I desired it, and now my desire is fulfilled.

Allow me to draw one or two lessons in conclusion. I will begin with a solemn one. We find, that wherever in Scripture we read of the temple of God, and a further development of that temple being made, sinners are destroyed. As Egypt was desolated, as the sword of Joshua, and presently of David, subdued the Canaanites, ere the temple was erected, and as Jerusalem was swept with judgment; so too when God's temple is completed, the sinners will be dealt with. When a man is executing some beautiful piece of workmanship, he pauses ever and anon to cast the refuse into the fire

and when it is completed, he gathers all the refuse, all the chips, for the fire; so, as God proceeds with His work, sinners are destroyed, and then at the end He will deal with them all in judgment. Another very important lesson, and a very precious one to you who are seeking to be more established in the way of life, is to be found in the 3rd and 4th chapters of Hebrews. I want you to see the great precious lesson, that God the Holy Ghost, like God, dwells and rests with His people. Before I ask your attention for five minutes to the 3rd and 4th chapters, I will just say, that the 1st chapter speaks of the Person of Christ in the redemption; the second of Christ and His people as one; and the 3rd and 4th are about the rest of God. Now see what is said about this rest of God. You will often hear dear Christians talk thus: God rests in Christ for ever—that is true; but it is not the full truth of God; the precious gospel truth is, that God in Christ rests in us for ever. God wanted to possess us, to joy over us, to rest in His love of us, and God in Christ can rest in us for ever. Now observe the manner in which this is put in the 3rd chapter, and then in the 4th chapter. We are called God's rest. I will read one verse. "But Christ, as Son over His own house, whose house"—that is, whose rest are *we*. God through Christ can come and rest in us. He wanted sinners, He needed sinners, He wanted to show out His grace, and so in the 4th chapter we are called to rest in the rest of God. God in Christ rests in us; we in Christ can rest in God's love to us. The junction of the two makes the thought so precious. God in Christ comes through Christ, and rests in us; we through Christ can come and rest in God. In Ephesians 1st, we read that we are God's inheritance in Christ, and that God is our inheritance.

But though God rests through Christ in us, observe there is no exhortation with reference to God resting in us. God, as we have seen, or as I have tried to sketch in the developments of the temple, did not need any exhortation to come and rest with us; it was the very thing He had arranged with Christ before the beginning of the world—to bring a great number of sinners to glory. There is no exhortation in the 3rd of Hebrews about God entering into His rest; but what is there? a great deal of the 3rd and the entire of the 4th, is taken up with exhorting us to enter into God's rest. We are slow to enter into God's rest; God was not slow to enter into rest in His love of us. The cloud

filling the tabernacle, the glory filling the temple, the angels' ascription of praise, the mighty rushing wind, sealing of us immediately on our believing, all showed that God entered into His rest with joy. But we are so slow to rest in God's love of us in Christ, to "hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Do you not see how precious the two are together. God through Christ getting to us, so that He could joy over us—"This my child was dead, but is alive again; was lost but is found." He rests in us for ever in Christ. In the fourth chapter the figure is changed from a temple to Canaan, which rest we are to enter; "for we which have believed do enter into rest." The meaning is this—just in proportion as you believe, you really enjoy God's rest *now*. As you believe in God, you are getting into His rest; as you see the love of God in Christ to you—as you grasp it more and more—so you enter into His rest. "We which have believed do enter into rest." Like as He says in the Old Testament: "Every spot the sole of your feet shall tread upon is yours;" so He says with respect to this rest: "According to your faith be it unto you." We which believe, then, do enter into rest." God has got me, is rejoicing over me; and as I believe, I enter into rest.

May God bless His Word, for Christ's sake.

THIRST FOR THE LIVING GOD.

MY spirit thirsts a richer grace,
A deeper joy to know—
To taste "the days of heaven on earth,"
To walk with Christ below.

All that God's word of promise speaks,
My longing soul would claim:
"The work of faith with pow'r," and strength
To glorify His name.

Dispel my sadness, O my Lord,
As I Thy fulness see;
Oh let me hourly hear Thy voice,
And let me dwell with Thee!

I know Thy word can feed my soul,
I know Thy faithful love;
But there remains a further joy—
To rest with Thee above.

Here pain and sorrow intervene,
And dearest friends must part;
The sight of Thee alone, O Lord,
Can satisfy the heart.

I long for Thy perfection, Lord,
And to be like to Thee;
To love, to serve, and to adore,
From sin and sorrow free!

THE CRUCIFIXION.

LORD, when I read the awful word
 "They crucified Him there",
 The overwhelming sense of guilt,
 May well nigh silence prayer.

His glory in its boundless height,
 The heavens could not contain ;
 He, dwelling here, by wicked hands,
 Was crucified and slain !

Emmanuel, the Prince of Peace,
 Like lamb to slaughter led ;
 Was murder'd on the accursed tree,
 And number'd with the dead.

And Thou didst still forbear, O Lord !
 Thou still didst silence keep ;
 Nay, 'twas by Thy decree He died,
 The Shepherd for the sheep.

How else could love and justice meet,
 Mercy with truth have sway ?
 How couldst Thou even smile on man,
 Were sin not put away ?

And here I see the wondrous cost :
 Thou didst not spare Thy Son ;
 And He in meekness bowed His head,
 Because Thy will was done.

Here is the mystery of grace,
 And here we come to know,
 How through the guiltiest act of man,
 Forgiving love can flow.

M. W.

THE CHRISTIAN.

A SWEET illustration of the Christian, in the trifold components of Spirit, soul, and body, is found in the well-known twelfth chapter of the Gospel according to John, first three verses, inward application. Martha served ; Lazarus sat at the table *with* Him ; and Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair—her glory.

Reading these three positions backwards, we get the privilege of every Christian, even what and where we should be in spirit, soul, and body : that is, as Mary sat at His feet anointing them with spikenard, very costly, wiping them with her glory, so we in spirit, and with our spirit this should ever be : while, at the same time, Lazarus-like, our souls should be seated with Him

at the table spread for us, and Martha-like with our body we should ever be serving Him ; so, corresponding with this, we find the Trinity of Heaven engaged to bless these three, while the Trinity of Hell are set on defiling, as witness—The Spirit witnesseth with our spirit, and is our Comforter ; the flesh opposeth the Spirit. And Jesus, having cleansed the soul after raising it from the dead, becomes Shepherd and Bishop thereto, while the devil seeks to seduce us in our soul. Then the body is the especial care of God, who *would* quicken and use it ; while against His purpose is set the world—that mighty utiliser of the body of Christians ! So has it ever been, as we may learn even in the Garden of Eden, where the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life come fully out as *the cause* to sin, for children of God are attacked where they are likeliest to yield. So, when the liar from the beginning comes in his subtlety, it is through the lust of the flesh, which is much more extensive than may be truly defined. Therefore, Christian, watch your spirit, for here Eve fell—"And *when* the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it was pleasant to the EYES, and a tree *to be* desired to make one *wise*, 'she took', 'she ate', and 'she gave'". Notice here : Mary took, Lazarus ate, and Martha served or gave. Meditate upon this contrast, and observe further, "Mary" means "exalted", "Lazarus—the help of God", and "Martha—who *becomes* bitter". And who that knows anything of yielding themselves as those who are alive from the dead unto God, but knows that body-presentation as a living sacrifice, is indeed the path that becomes bitter?—for "Hebron is in the *plains* of Mamre". Moreover, Eve, in the path of disobedience, walked counter to the truth taught by these three names ; she exalted herself, got helped to death, and came indeed to bitterness ; and thus the illustration and contrasts here given may well teach us one thing, namely, to have the Holy Spirit who *is* in us ever ungrieved ; for, if this be maintained, soul rest and strength (Neh. viii. 16, last clause) with glorifying God in our bodies, which are His, *will* follow ; while, if not, the soul cannot but have unrest, weakness, and barrenness. And what is more, how it must grieve the Spirit of God, and wound the living heart of that precious Saviour who bled and died in order to deliver us from all iniquity. Again, sin is to be no longer our master, therefore this OUGHT not, and NEED not be. (Rom. vi. 8 to end.)

Φιλολόγος.

THE KILMARNOCK MEETING.

December 13, 1875.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—You and the readers of the *Northern Witness* may be interested in a brief account of the Eighth Half-yearly Meeting of Christians in the district of Ayrshire, which was held at Kilmarnock on 8th of current month.

From 10 to 11 was spent in prayer, which, indeed, betokened the shower of blessing with power that was vouchsafed by our blessed God, and for which thanksgiving becomes every reader. (2 Cor. iv. 15.)

By 11 o'clock a goodly number (perhaps over 300) had gathered together, and the purpose of the meeting was spoken of from Rom. xii. 1-8. Then an address on the inward application of John xii. 1-4 was given, the substance of which is sent you separate, and need not be commented on here.

This was followed by Mr. Thomson, of Dundee, reading and commenting on Eph. i. 1-6, showing from chap. ii. where God found us, thus bringing out the "union side", he passed on to the walk becoming such, referring to Col. i. 19, he connected it with Eph. iii. 14 to end, dwelling on "Strengthened with the Spirit that Christ may dwell"; we know His love and so be filled with all the fulness of God, and then the glory flowing back to God of the Spirit in Christ Jesus, being the outward and onward application of John xii. 1-4.

Mr. Mark Kerr, of Ayr, followed after prayer, remarking that all *who will* live to God will find opposition every step of the way; to overcome we must have to do with God for ourselves. We must have something to lean upon if we would stand, and referred to Isa. xl. 28-31 as the secret for "standing", pressing home our changing of strength by asking how much stronger we were that day than six months ago, and stated his conviction of all failures to be lack of fellowship with our God, who asks not so much our money as "our heart", which given, all else follows.

Mr. Cochrane, of Glasgow, continued with 2 Cor. v. 14—Paul's consecration; the constraining love of Christ; his (Paul's) occupation with the love of Christ to him more than his to Christ, closing a very practical word by pointing on to the judgment-seat of Christ.

Mr. Albert Boswell spoke a stirring word on the Lord's coming, being to us a *living* hope, closing with Luke xxiv. 50, asked us to note every word in this

blessed Scripture; showed how the position was taken, even *led out* by Him, turning their back upon all, He turned His on, viz., Carnal Religiousness, and as the Carnal ordinances went on after, though He was not there; so the world has gone on religiously where He cannot be found.

From 3 to 5 was spent on reports of and consideration of the Lord's work, which meeting was exceedingly profitable and encouraging, whilst it was truly heart-searching and position-determining, and thus altogether the *eighth* meeting savoured much of the New Creation.

To His name be all the glory.

Affectionately yours in Him who *is* coming,

J. B.

THE ABERDEEN CONFERENCE

Is past, and yet in results it will never be over. The time was precious and refreshing—the Word of the Lord was in power. One of the chief characteristics of the Meetings was the *place* given to "Thus saith the Lord." The Northern Christians were very happy and glad, and so was the writer.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 7, 8).

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"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. ii. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. ii. 8.

No. 15.

MARCH, 1876.

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Of this nature is the story of Abraham and Sarah, Ishmael and Isaac—"which things," saith the Scripture, "are an allegory". (Gal. iv. 24.) And then the apostle proceeds to shew how perfectly this historic allegory illustrates the principles of the two covenants—law and grace.

Of this nature, doubtless, is the short record given of Adam. The strokes, though few, are drawn by a master hand, and are deeply significant.

Created upon the sixth day, he is ushered into a world already prepared for him—and to him, jointly with Eve, is given dominion over every creature.

He is born to rule. All things are put in subjection under him. All in the sea, all in the air, all upon the earth. Adam is ruler of all. Not only so, to him are brought "every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air"—"to see what he would call them, and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof". (Gen. ii. 19, 20.)

Thus not only is he made ruler, and set over the works of the hand of God, he also has, as it were, in embryo, the prophetic office, understanding the mind of God, he expresses the same, and the names he gives

to the creatures are approved of by God, and thenceforward by those names they are called.

To apprehend the import of this transaction, it is needful to bear in mind the importance that Scripture attaches to names, not only of persons, but also of places and things. This of itself would be an instructive study, but here it may suffice simply to refer to the following Scriptures—Gen. v. 2, ii. 23, iv. 1, v. 29, xvii. 5, 15, 19, xxxii. 28; Gen. xiv. 18; compare Heb. vii. 2; Isa. xl. 26; John x. 3; Matt. xvi. 18; Rev. ii. 17; Matt. i. 21; Exod. xxxiv. 5-7; and, in contrast to these and very many more Scriptures, see Ps. xlix. 11; and Luke i. 59.

It is not difficult to discern that the fashion of the nineteenth century is rather to follow the principles of the last two Scriptures, notwithstanding that God has so marked them with his disapproval.

Further, it is evident from the whole narrative, and especially from iii. 8, that the voice and presence of God were familiar to the unfallen Adam. He thus enjoyed that access to God, and communion with God, which were specially the priestly prerogative.

And how evident it is that Adam was the object of the affections of God, when we see the void of His human heart considered and gratified, and, in a very remarkable and special way, a companion and help suited to his intelligence and dignity, provided for him, and brought to him, and given to him as a gift from the Lord.

And all this is made the subject of song by the Psalmist. "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man that Thou visitest Him?"

For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned Him with glory and honour. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things under His feet; all sheep and oxen; yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth." (Ps. viii.)

Sad, indeed, would be the retrospect of such an hour of glory—"the glory of the terrestrial" (1 Cor. xv. 40), seeing how completely the entrance of sin has marred it all, were it not that by faith, and under the instruction of the spirit of God, we can see it all in another light. No longer as a dream or vision that has died away for ever but as a shadow, an earnest and a pledge of infinitely more glorious and eternal things that are yet to be revealed.

Like the vessel that was marred in the hand of the potter (Jer. xviii. 3, 4), which could not be put together again, but had to be made another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it, so was the whole creation marred by sin. As to man, "he must be born again"; as to the creation, the word of God is passed, "Behold, I make all things new." (John iii. 7; Gal. vi. 15; Rev. xxi. 5.)

The history of the world has, since the entrance of sin, been one continuous unfolding of the consequences of disobedience to God. The instant the man partook of the forbidden fruit, his personal dignity was gone, and his official honours passed away. Ashamed, he hides from God. Communion with God is lost, and wisdom and dominion are departed also.

Ever since, the struggle of man has been to regain the dignities lost by sin, and without which his nature must be for ever unsatisfied. Blindly has he ever sought after wisdom—ignorantly through a thousand religions has he sought after the lost communion with God, and relentlessly has he struggled for dominion, but all and only to find that his wisdom is folly—his religion, vanity, his power but weakness.

But this is only permitted for a season, the purpose of God in permitting it, mysterious though it be, is rapidly being fulfilled, and, when the appointed time has arrived, it will be seen that, in the promised seed of the woman, the Son of Man, every personal glory that was lost to Adam in the fall is infinitely more than restored, and every official honour, which, en-

trusted to man, has over and over again proved that fallen man could be entrusted with nothing, will be taken up and sustained to the glory of God.

His, will be the dominion of the age to come—who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords. His, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and His, the eternal communion of the bosom of the Father. (1 Tim. vi. 15; Col. ii. 3; John i. 18.)

Thus Adam, as head of the first creation, is a shadow of Christ, the head of the new creation; and it is this which warrants the language of the eighth Psalm already quoted. The question, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" finds no adequate answer in the first man, but God Himself replies in Hebrews ii.: "We see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour."

Of Him it is that the Psalmist spake—the second Adam, the new Man, who shall not fail, but fulfil all the purposes and counsels of God.

But even the entrance of sin did not destroy the typical character of Adam's position and relationships. The fact that, through his sin, a sinful nature, with corruption and death as its necessary consequence, has been transmitted to all his seed, is taken up in Rom. v., as showing, by way of contrast, the life and righteousness that come to all who are brought by faith into vital relationship with the new Man, Christ Jesus.

God sees, as it were, but the *two men*. Hence, in 1 Cor. xv. 45-47, there is "the *first* Adam and the *last* Adam", "the *first* man and the *second* man".

All are by nature the children of the first man, having his character, and being begotten in his image, even as Seth. (See Gen. v. 3.) Many generations may have intervened, but the nature is unaltered, the moral likeness to Adam remains, as well as the mortality and corruptibility.

But by faith in Christ Jesus the transit is made from death to life, from condemnation to righteousness, the believer being looked at by God no longer as "in Adam", but "in Christ". So, it is written, "As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 47, 48.)

And very blessed is it to know that, as it is no mere

imagination, but a solemn reality, and matter of experience, that we have inherited the corrupt nature of the first man, so really and experimentally do we partake of the life and righteousness of the new Man.

Very simple and satisfactory is the view thus given of the two great federal heads in Rom. v. 12-21, and of our relationship by nature to the one, and by grace to the other. How complete the ruin in the first man! How full, free, and perfect the restoration in the second Man! It is good for the soul to linger over the heritage of blessing that is contained in such expressions as are here used—"The free gift", "abundance of grace", "shall reign in life", "justification of life", "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord".

Thus, to the instructed heart, the very ruin that sin has wrought, and the inevitableness of its consequences tell of a restoration in Christ that shall more than compensate for the sorrow of the past. The groans of a suffering creation become the travail pains that shall issue, ere long, in the birth of a new and redeemed creation that shall stand eternally secure and glorious in the life and righteousness of the Son of God. J. R. C.

TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH AT — W R I T E.

IF Revelations is a book of symbols, should we not judge as to whom God here refers, by examining first what He says of angels, and then who can here be symbolised by "The angel"?

In Ps. ciii. we read of angels "that they excel in strength, that they do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word".

Again, in Heb. i. 14, of the angels we read, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation"?

Now, in writing to these churches or assemblies, who can excel in strength but those who, like Paul, are able to do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth them. Then, who do God's commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word, but those of whom John writes in his epistle, "Ye young men, I have written unto you, because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one". Again, the Spirit by Paul says, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness".

Would not these passages show us who are the individuals who have a message from God to the assembly they are with?

The injunction so often given, "He that hath an ear to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches", shows that the angel or messenger is not receiving his message in a miraculous way, but is to be like the Romans in the 15th chapter and 14th verse, "Full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and so able to admonish one another".

If every gathering of believers that ever was, or ever will be, meeting in the name of Jesus is described in these seven pictures of seven churches, as I doubt not is the case, are there not some broad principles laid down to help those amongst them, who, being strong in the Lord and the power of His might, would run to do their Lord's work?

E.

"BEHOLD HE COMETH WITH THE CLOUDS."

REV. i. 5.

THE Lord shall come, the very same,
Who once in humblest fashion came; *
The Lord shall come, and ev'ry eye
Shall see Him come in Majesty.

The Lord shall come, but not alone;
No more unfriended and unknown;
A man of sorrows now no more;—
He comes as King and Conqueror.

Behold! He comes, and pealing loud
Resounds the bursting thunder cloud;
But grander sound, the spirit stirs,—
The song of countless worshippers.

For there, with lightning speed display'd,
The angels' cloud in light array'd;
And saints adoring lead the cry,
Which speaks of heavenly ecstasy.

High above all, in triumph thron'd,
Behold the Lord with glory crown'd;
Unsullied light, and praises high
Bespeak essential Deity.

Behold the reign of peace begin,
Behold the banishment of sin;
The trophies of His grace shall vie,
To tell His love and majesty.

* Phil. ii. 7.

M. W.

"THE SONG OF SONGS."

"I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valley."—
2nd Chapter, 1st Verse.

WHAT flower is there to be compared with the rose? Were we privileged to see the rose as grown to perfection in Sharon's fertile plains, no doubt we should discover its superior excellency to those of this country. Our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, while setting forth certain important truths, takes a tree (as in John xv.—"I am the true vine"); or a flower, as in the text before us, to represent Himself. Such symbols are interesting to some people, just as some flowers are attractive to those who have a taste for them; but it is a melancholy fact that no son or daughter of Adam by nature have any relish for the Son of God, who "hath no form nor comeliness" for them. When they hear Him extolled by His admirers, there is no beauty in Him that He should be desired. It is very blessed, however, that others, a few, the "little flock", the "peculiar people", do admire Him, having discovered Him the chief among ten thousand, yea, the altogether lovely One. In verse 2—"As the Lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters". Christ still speaks, yes, it is the Rose speaking of the Lily, his Bride. Consider the comparison, as a lily would appear among thorns, so my love, my bride, so believers appear among the unconverted daughters.

In verse 3—"As the Apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste". "As the apple-tree, &c."—We may view this still as the Lord speaking, or, rather the teaching of the Spirit appears to be the Church, the Bride replying to Him, extolling Christ's graces, as in Psalm xlv. :—

"Thou fairer art than sons of men :
Into Thy lips is store
Of grace infus'd ; God therefore Thee
Hath bless'd for evermore."

An apple-tree is a fruit tree; the trees of the wood are without fruit, therefore the fruit-bearing tree is to be preferred to fruitless ones, so is the superior excellency of Jesus before the sons of men, greatly to be desired by the Bride. "I sat down under his shadow", this is what the Bride does, "the Lamb's wife". In Isaiah xxxii. 2, Christ Himself is the shadow. "A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry

place, as the *shadow* of a great rock in a weary land". We all need shelter from the heat of God's wrath against sin, therefore has He given us a man to be an hiding-place, a cleft rock, a covering from the coming tempest. Reader, have you hid yourself in this cleft Rock? You will need his protection by-and-by. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the *shadow* of the Almighty." Christ Jesus is this "secret place", Christ is this "shadow", and all who confide in Him are safe from the coming wrath, "because thou hast made the Lord which is my Refuge, even the Most High thy habitation", *i.e.*, thy place of dwelling.

"I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Is it so with you, reader? Are the fruits of Christ sweet to you? If so, you have been "born again." You are a new creation in Christ Jesus. Such a relish for Christ is a striking proof that you have been made a partaker of the divine nature, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned". It requires the God-nature to know and appreciate them. Christ's fruit is sweet to believers, He loads them with His benefits.

In verse 4—"He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was LOVE". We must all be partakers of the Gospel feast ere we can enjoy the glory feast. This is a wonderful feature in the Good Shepherd, "He brought me". Sinners would not go if left to themselves; for it is written, "the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost". Is Christ leading you, dear reader? He will yet lead His people as a flock to living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; then shall they see clearly that His banner over them was LOVE. How becoming, then beloved, to praise Him in these words :—

"To Him that loved the souls of men,
And washed us by His blood,
To royal honours raised our head,
And made us priests to God!
To him let every tongue be praise,
And every heart be love!
All grateful honours paid on earth,
And nobler songs above!"

In verse 5—"Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love". "Sick of love"—here we have the Bride's love for the Bridegroom intensified.

How is it with you, believer? Were you ever in such a case?

In verse 6—"His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me". This attitude of Christ declared by the Bride proves their love to be mutual. In verse 7—"I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please". Here is the Bride enjoying Christ, charging the unconverted daughters not to disturb her in her feast. In verse 8—"The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills". Is not this the marriage of the Lamb anticipated? the fair millennial morning, proving that all the foregoing dainties have only been by faith, and are calculated to increase our longing for the time

"When He cometh, when he cometh
To make up His jewels;
All His jewels, precious jewels,
His loved and His own.
Like the stars of the morning,
His bright crown adorning,
They shall shine in their beauty,
Bright gems for His crown."

In verse 9—"My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice". Jesus is very fleet now, he has got into the Spiritual Body, from which He shall go no more out. "He looketh forth at the windows." "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." "He showeth Himself through the lattice." Sometimes we only get peeps of His beauty, as Moses was privileged to see His "back parts". A full view of the Lord of Glory would, doubtless, be too much for poor frail humanity, as in the case of the beloved John in Patmos, "when he fell at His feet as dead"; so the adorable Jesus in His infinite wisdom knows to reveal Himself to us only at a distance, or with His glory veiled.

In verse 10—"My beloved spake and said unto me, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away". Here we have Jesus calling his Bride, rousing her out of sleep; so we read in the parable of the Virgins, that "while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept"; He therefore wakens her up for the joy of her Lord—"Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away;" (verse 11) "for lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone".

"Long hath the night of sorrow reigned,
The dawn shall bring us light;
God shall appear, and we shall rise
With gladness in His sight."

In verse 12—"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land". "The flowers appear"—This is millennial glory, *i.e.*, the Rose and the Lily, Christ and Believers "appear on the earth", proving literally Rev. v. 10, "WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH", and Zech. xiv. 5, "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee". Yes, blessed be God, the Rose and the Lily will be married, and "the time of the singing of birds will come", the GLORY dispensation! Hallelujah! praise, praise to our Redeemer King, for Christ's beloved will step into everlasting youth, and their union will be apparent, while blossoms of glory richly deck Immanuel's land.

In verse 13—"The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise my love, my fair one, and come away". "The fig-tree putteth forth, &c."—We find our blessed Lord in Matthew xxiv. referring to this very subject, His personal return; mentions this same tree in verses 32, 33—"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender and putting forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh, so likewise ye, when ye shall see *all these things*, know that it is near, even at the door". Wherefore His call to the Church universal, "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away"! In verse 14—"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely". As the dove is the emblem of peace and of the Holy Ghost, so all those dear ones who have come into possession of peace with God, by being hid "in the clefts of the Rock of Ages", will be called upon by the great Bridegroom, that He may see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; for then and at that time His Wife, having made herself ready, nothing will satisfy Him but her own dear personal presence, which longing, indeed, would appear to be reciprocal on the part of His Bride; also "let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely".

"The Bride eyes not her garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;

I will not gaze at glory,
 But on my King of Grace.
 Not at the crown he giveth,
 But on His pierced hand;
 The Lamb is all the glory
 Of Immanuel's land."

In verse 15—"Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes". The foxes have been called little sins, if, indeed, there be such things as *little* sins. It is evident, however, that sin is the great hinderer of spiritual development, the spoiler of fruit in the Christian's account with God. Oh, what need, then, for watchfulness beloved, lest Satan gain an advantage.

In verse 16—"My beloved is mine and I am His: He feedeth among the lilies". Here the Bride expresses her confidence in her espoused husband; this is full assurance. Have all Christ's members come up to this? Can you say so, reader?" "MY BELOVED IS MINE AND I AM HIS." What does this feeding among the lilies prove? That there is a striking moral likeness between the Bride and the Bridegroom. In verse 1, Christ is the Lily; in verse 16, the Bride is the Lily, reminding us of His matchless love in giving us His divine nature and putting away our sins. We have only to turn to Ezek. xvi. 5 for a picture of her who was the desire of His affection, and there see her lying in her own blood, exposed in the open field to the loathing of her person; but for the great love wherewith He loved her, even when she was dead in trespasses and sins, what does He do? He takes the place of the dead, and "death by dying slew". He who at first breathed into man the breath of life, now, having through death spoiled principalities and powers, becoming the resurrection and the life, breathes afresh upon the dry bones, so that all His members become animated with spiritual life, yea, beautiful and comely, the renowned among the heathen, perfected with His own grace, bestowed upon her a meet companion, and sharer of His eternal joys. "He feedeth among the lilies." What do you give Him, beloved? This is communion at the King's table, and when the King comes in, He sups with the Bride, and she with Him. Christian, is the banqueting house thy delight? Dost thou invite Him, saying, "Let Him come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits"?

Believers, being partakers of the divine nature, are qualified for fellowship with God! How marvellous that such worms of the dust should be prepared for

such a glory; to walk in the light, then, is necessary for this "high calling", that our fellowship indeed may be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. How long does this feeding continue? Till faith is changed to sight. Till He come! "For yet a little while and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

In verse 17—"Until the daybreak, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether". "Until the daybreak"—It is now night with the Bride, the shadows are long, although she is betrothed as a chaste virgin to Christ, she mourns his absence in the far country. The days having come when the Bridegroom has been taken away, these are the days for fasting. The world, however, does not believe in this, and herein reverses God's order to their own destruction. Who now sow in joy will reap in tears throughout a lost eternity. Peter reminds us that, although we are blessed with Gospel light, it is only darkness compared with the exceeding weight of glory that will burst upon our wondering gaze; when Jesus, "the bright and morning star", arises with healing in His wings. Wherefore, it becomes us diligently to obey His exhortation, which saith, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed in your heart, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place *until the day dawn, and the Day-Star arise*".

"Light of the lonely pilgrim's heart,
 Star of the coming day!
 Arise, and with Thy morning beams
 Chase all our griefs away!

Come, blessed Lord! bid every shore
 And answering island sing,
 The praises of Thy royal name,
 And own Thee as their King.

Bid the whole earth responsive now
 To the bright world above—
 Break forth in rapturous strains of joy,
 In memory of Thy LOVE.

Dear Lord, Thy fair creation groans,
 The earth, the air, the sea,
 In unison with longing hearts,
 And calls aloud for Thee.

Thine was the Cross, with all its fruits
 Of grace and peace divine;
 Be thine the Crown of glory now,
 The palm of victory Thine!"

W. M., JUN.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE disciples at Corinth had become relaxed. They much needed to be quickened and drawn forth, in the renewed energy of the Spirit, from a state of natural ease and indulgence to which they had slipped back. This condition shews itself from the Apostle's rebukes in the 1st Epistle to them. They had been indulging their tastes, and had thus become carnal, walking as men. This was one form of their return to mere nature. It may have been the more refined part of nature, the *intellectual man*; but still it was nature they were indulging, and thus they needed to be braced up. (I.-IV.) So in the next chapter. They were resting at ease, though sin was in the midst of them. Achan was in the camp, but Joshua had not wept. They were allowing Agag to live, the uncircumcised to eat the passover; all this sadly betrayed the want of that Phinehas' zeal that would see to the purifying of the congregation. So again—how little were they exercising their functions in the Lord, and their faculties in the Spirit. They have not one who can judge between his brethren, though they were called, in prospect, to judge even the world. (VI.) Perhaps they were proposing questions to the Apostles somewhat in the same way of their nature. Being an intellectual, a Grecian, an inquisitive people, they indulged, perhaps, their minds somewhat; even in the enquiries they put to the Apostle. And in answering them on the subject of marriage, he has to stir them—to draw them forth in language like this—"The time is short—it remaineth that they that have wives, be as if they had none—for the fashion of this world passeth away". (VII.) In the next subject which occupies VIII.-X., he is very urgent with them to arise, and be stirring themselves. They were evidently indulging themselves in what their *knowledge* allowed—not sufficiently careful of the claims of *love*. They were acting in their own right, as people speak, and not on the principles of grace and love towards others. They did not, therefore, consider others, which is always a symptom of a relaxed state of soul, or state of mere nature. Knowledge, not love, formed their ways—a sad witness of their selfish ease and indulgence; so that in the midst of exhortation on this point, he has to use language like this—"Know ye not that they who run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize" and again, "Wherefore let him who thinketh he

standeth, take heed lest he fall". Just so in the next matter. The Apostle touches on the observance of the Lord's Supper. There they had been so relaxed, indulging themselves, walking in nature, not in the Spirit, in highmindedness, not in grace, not waiting for each other, but eating each his own supper, so that he has to rebuke them for eating, not the Lord's, but their own supper—for being hungry, drunken. (XI.) The next subject easily proved itself a temptation to them, and they fell into the snare. Being a Grecian, an intellectual people, the exercise of gifts of ministry may easily be perverted, by their enemy, into an occasion of rivalry and mere display of power, and so it was. Their spiritual gifts seem to have been valued in the proportion of their attractiveness rather than of their real value for edification. Tongues were exercised only for the purpose of displaying them, without having a regard to their profitable use, and to the service of the saints. (XII.-XIV.) So they had made the mystery of resurrection a subject of their speculative philosophy. This was nature again. This shewed but little girding up of the loins, but little energy in the Spirit, to meet and answer the wrong direction of the long formed habits of Grecian minds. Relaxation of the soul and indulgence of the liberty of thoughts, long practised in vain philosophy evidence themselves here. And yet all their wisdom is strongly treated by the Apostle as folly, and he arouses them to the better knowledge of God by awaking again to righteousness, and leaving their evil communications which could but corrupt them. (XV.) And in the closing chapter, he has to call on them to be strong, to quit themselves like men, and to do all their works in charity—to cease thus from nature or themselves, and to act in both the energy and the graciousness of the better mind. With Grecian natural superciliousness they might be tempted to despise Timothy, young as he was, and it may be, untaught in their classic way. But they are warned against this. (XVI.) I doubt not that it is this condition of the saints at Corinth, which the Apostle takes knowledge of in this Epistle, and rebukes. And as we here see, a relaxed state of soul may be in many forms, from the indulgence of the taste, or the intellect, or even the exercise of spiritual gifts, as well as of carnal ease or appetite. But in whatever form the Apostle detects it, he rebukes it and arouses them out of it doing all he can in the energy of the Spirit. And according to all this, at the end he says,

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong, let all your things be done with charity”. This, by way of a general closing exhortation, strongly marks what the purpose of his Epistle throughout had been, and what his sense of their condition was. And after this exhortation, he instances the house of Stephanas with the most marked approval, and all this because they were a bright exception to the general state of the disciples at Corinth; having addicted themselves to ministry in true energy, and with souls braced up and not relaxed—having thus put themselves into harness, helping and labouring with the Apostles. Thus this epistle is most valuable—not only as giving us divine answers to many questions and thoughts that may still arise among us, but as generally shewing us how jealous the Spirit is, that we walk on in spiritual diligence—not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.

A knowledge of the value of the rich and glorious doctrines taught in Scripture, such as we meet with in the early chapters of the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians, is of most serious and weighty importance to the soul; because when we are engaged in handling the great things of God, and when we are dealing with exceeding rich grace and glory, when we are feeding on the treasures of goodness that we find opened in some portions of the Word, and are dwelling on counsels such as God has taken about us in ages of glory still to come, our souls get at once the blessed consciousness of this, even that they are handling truths and doctrines which are intrinsically and necessarily divine, which are worthy of Him who alone is God, whose name is love, and whose delight and praise it is to glorify Himself in bestowing abundant blessing upon poor sinners, and that they had, indeed got fully up to God Himself: for in these glorious truths, He does surround us with reflections of Himself; in communicating them, He gives us an apprehension of our walking in the light, as He is in the light. So there is important value, though of another kind, in the smallest practical details of duties such as we meet commonly at the close of the Epistles: for they tell us, on the other hand, that it is with our very selves that God is dealing. If rich and glorious doctrines tell me that it is with God I am dealing, these common practical details tell me that it is with me God is dealing; and this is very blessed, because it gives such a personal reality to the dealing that exists between me

and God. The doctrines taught in scripture have relation to the upper or higher parts of man; they open his eyes, his lips, and his ears,—they feed his faculties and affections, making them the seat and the instruments of divine strength and joy, thus capacitating the individual for holding communion with God, in His own life and light. The precepts have relation to the lower or inferior parts of man, directing his feet which are still walking here below, but while thus guarding his feet, they tell us that it the *same person* that is dealt with—that we poor sinners are the objects of all this care. In the *doctrines* we learn ourselves to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; in the *precepts* we learn ourselves to be poor, fallible creatures who require to have such an admonition as this addressed to us, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth”. But how marvellous is it that the same Epistle which declares that a believer is a *fellow heir with God the Son*, should warn him not to steal any more. Thus then this union of glorious doctrines with detailed precepts tells us that it is our *very selves*, *God is dealing with*, and that it is with God Himself, we are dealing; it also tells us that the head which is thus exalted, and the feet which are thus liable to be soiled and therefore need washing, belong to the *same individual*, and that we ourselves (flesh and spirit as we are) sinners also, though in Christ are such individuals, the *very* and *near* objects of all these counsels of marvellous grace and glory.

—◆—

“JESUS CHRIST GOD OVER ALL.”—Justice once took her stand at the bar of truth; her voice immediately flew through heaven, and earth, and hell, to attest the glories of the Son of God. Infinite and finite beings were summoned, and all obeyed. Angels descend from heaven to proclaim Messiah, “Unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Devils proclaim Messiah, “What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?” Enemies, as well as friends, proclaim Him. “I find no fault in Him at all,” said Pilate. “Truly,” said the centurion, “this was the Son of God.” Ask the earth—the grave shakes death into life to sympathise with Jesus. Ask the testimony of God Himself, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Heaven, earth, and hell once, and once only, united in their testimony—they proclaim that Christ is God.

ON DISCIPLINE.

RESTORATION is always God's object. The children of Israel were not brought into the promised land merely by a Redeemer, but by a Restorer; they were not called out of Egypt only to be settled in Canaan, but there was patient, gracious, restoring discipline exercised towards them throughout their pilgrimage, there was instruction communicated to them all through their wilderness journey.

In Ps. xxiii. 3, the Lord links His name with restoring grace, "He restoreth my soul for His *name* sake". This was the highest act of divine goodness. His name was not linked with leadings to the waters or to the pastures, but with restoring the soul. Why does He leave the fatness of His olive tree to reign over the brambles and the thorns of the desert? It is love that induces Him thus to act. Restoration is equal to redemption, nay, it is greater, for redemption brings a sinner from his sins, but restoration brings him back from the forgetfulness of his redemption.

In 1 Cor. v., the Apostle had to awaken the Corinthians to a sense of themselves, but in 2 Cor. ii. he had an entirely different object in view—he had there to quiet those who had been awakened by the sense of grace (5-11). Satan could get as much advantage over the saints at Corinth in this as in allowing them in their evil, in their dullness of conscience noticed in 1 Cor. v. Discipline is the anticipation and the preventive of judgment, therefore it can never be anything but gracious. If Eli had acted in discipline, Shilo would never have been a mark of God's displeasure. Eighty valiant priests of the Lord withstood Uzziah the king. This was all gracious, for the house of God must be kept. This act of theirs was for the prevention of judgment, therefore were they valiant.

We find that the feast of the Paschal lamb was connected with that of unleavened bread, and if we separate these feasts, judgment comes in. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was engaged in keeping God's house; and how did He keep it? *He never separated from disciples, because of differences in either judgment or attainments.* Mary was sitting at His feet; Martha was serving. One saint may have the Mary position, and another Martha's, but both bow down to the Lordship of Jesus. *It is better that the house of God should be in disorder, than that it should possess all the order of the flesh.* But when the Lord was to exercise excommunication, how did He act? How did He send

out the unclean one? He gave the sop to Judas—He raised that standard of goodness towards him—He acted upon him by the power of grace, and it is always to our shame, and is an evidence of our weakness, when we are obliged to excommunicate formally, and it is because of the little love that we have to one another that we use so little discipline—we do not like the trouble attendant on it. Where the power of spirituality exists, it is impossible for evil to abide, or for excommunication to be necessary—discipline never acts beyond evil that is *manifested*. The disciples asked, "Who is it, Lord, that shall betray Thee", and then the sop sent Judas out. This is the Lord's discipline, but the Father's is upon an evil *not* manifested at all. The mixing up of individual remonstrance with the Father's unmanifested discipline, and the Lord's discipline over His house, causes all manner of confusion.

It is an awful thing to identify discipline and excommunication. Discipline, instead of being identified with excommunication is on the contrary, designed to prevent it; and in nine cases out of ten, this discipline must be exercised by individuals. When it comes to be a corporate act, it is an evidence of the most miserable failure in discipline to restore, or of spirituality to send the evil person away, so that that act becomes a *confession* of our own shame. If in sorrow, distress, or misery concerning any soul, deal with God about that soul, and then bring to that soul *that which God gives you for it.*

If we are meek, we shall pass by all second causes, and consider the insults and injuries we experience at the hands of our fellow-creatures (as in reality they are) messengers sent by God to visit us with wholesome chastisement.

We never know Jesus to be the Son of God, till He searches the heart. Nathaniel knew that Jesus was Christ, but knew not that He was God, until He read out the thoughts of his heart to him. It was this that converted the woman of Samaria, who acknowledged Him to be the Lord, when He told her all her secrets.

THERE is now a general profession of Christianity, but very little conviction of sin, which prevents the reception of the truth. We cannot know too much of our weakness and depravity. The danger is in knowing too little. We cannot see the depravity of sin till we contrast it with the mercy of God; neither can we appreciate the mercy of God till we contrast it in some degree with the evil from which we are saved.

LUKE XII. 1-9.

THESE are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, spoken to us, not so much as children of our Father, but as *disciples* of our Lord and Master.

The occasion is, when crowds are following Him—just as now, when a recent stir has called forth crowds of followers.

Our Lord begins to say “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy”.

Startling for us to need such a caution, and yet how useful when we look at our ways. If we turn to Mark xii. 13-17, we learn the Master's meaning of the term. The object his adversaries had in view was “to catch Him in His words”; but, instead of going openly about it, they gild their design with a coating of intense admiration for their intended victim, “we know that thou art, &c.”

So in Luke vi. 41, 42, we as brethren may discern fault in our brethren, and in accordance with God's injunction in Lev. xix. 17, may not suffer sin upon our brother; but this must always be done in self-judgment, so that, being in the light of His own presence, we shall see our brother's sin as a mote, and our own as a beam; reversing this order is hypocrisy, according to this Scripture.

Turning now to Luke xii. 2, the reason is given why we are to avoid this leaven, viz., there is a time coming when we shall be judged as to our works, according to Luke xix. 12-27, 1 Cor. iii., and 2 Cor. v. 10—when the folly of not judging ourselves shall be manifest, for in the light of His presence, all we have not judged here will be set in its true colours.

Then “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them *here* shall find mercy”. “Then,” or as it is put in Luke xii. 2, “There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known.” Oh may this search us more and more.

How foolish, in the light of the judgment-seat of Christ, to cover over the backslidings of these hearts of ours with the cloak of *outward zeal* for His service, to go on in the rut of labour without confession of what we are before Him; since the day comes when many a work, to *man* fair and beautiful, will melt away before the consuming fire of His holy presence, and though, when in His likeness standing before Him, we shall say amen to His judgment *of our works*, yet shall we not suffer loss? (1 Cor. iii. 14.)

May we then seek to be honest *before God*; in the sight of God speak, letting the Word draw confession from us, as it may search and expose our brethren.

But what keeps us in the proud unhumiliated place? We don't like to appear before our brethren in our real state—the fear of *man* bringeth a snare—hindering us from humbling *ourselves* under the mighty hand of God.

Therefore, our Lord and Master in verses 4 and 5 would awaken us to our danger by contrasting the power of *man* and the power of *God*, in order that we may walk in the *fear of the Lord*.

Man can but kill the body—this is the utmost limit of his power—he cannot touch the soul.

God, on the other hand, has power both to kill the body and to cast soul *and* body into hell.

How foolish, then, to walk in the fear of man. How wise to walk in the fear of God. And yet, how often does the sneer of man hinder our testimony? Nay, the *fear of it*, is enough to ensnare us, and this, just in proportion, as we have not the fear of the Lord, hence we can only “perfect holiness *in the fear of God*”. Noah was moved by the fear of God. His eye took in what God was able to do, and he at once followed His directions to escape coming judgment. Thus, the fear of man being shut out, he became a preacher of righteousness, and condemned the world.

So, when God revealed Himself to Abraham as the Almighty God, he fell on his face, and in that posture God made known His gracious intentions to him.

Thus, *the fear of the Lord* is the beginning of *wisdom*; not the slavish fear of a *servant*, but the filial fear of a *Son*, who knows his Father in His love, and seeks to be well pleasing to *Him*.

Then, walking in the fear of the Lord, we are in His hands. If sparrows are cared for by Him, surely all our interests will be looked after. So in verses 6 and 7 we are encouraged to leave all with God,—our reputation, our all; for “we are of more value than many sparrows”. God gave Christ for us, and being of more value than many sparrows, we are peculiarly the objects of our Father's care. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things,” and so “all things are yours, *for ye are Christ's*, and Christ is God's”.

Then from verses 6-9 our Lord lifts the veil and reveals to His faithful confessors their future reward and future power.

Their reward as His *faithful* disciples would be to be confessed before the angels of God, to be owned as such in the Father's presence. (Rev. iii. 5.)

Thus their faith in Him, though sorely tried, would be found unto honour, and praise, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

While (solemn warning) those who confessed with the mouth, but in works denied Him as Lord (Titus i. 16), denying the *Lord* that bought them (2 Pet. ii. 1), would, however fair these works in the eyes of men, be denied before the angels of God.

Evidently, in this verse, our Lord contemplates the whole tenor and bent of our lives, otherwise Peter who denied His Lord would be denied, but our Lord owned him on earth (John xx. 1), and will do so in Heaven.

Let us then be bold for our Lord, fearlessly "confess a good confession before many witnesses" (1 Tim. vi. 12), considering the Apostle and High Priest of our *confession* (Heb. iii. 1), drawing near when faint-hearted unto Him (Heb. iv. 14-16), that we may obtain *mercy* for failure, and grace to help our need; and thus, in the faith of Him, "hold fast the *confession* of our hope *without wavering*, for "He is faithful that promised" (Heb. x. 23).

T. C.

CHRIST is the most humble in heaven. That which makes Him so is His superior knowledge of finite being; His consciousness of the honour done to His humanity. In His humanity we see the image of God in all its glory. The discipline He underwent here led Him into the inmost recesses of the moral perfections of *Deity*. The image of God never appeared in created being in all the fulness of glory as in Christ. The believer is destined to wear it in the midst of many infirmities.

Mark the Saviour's exquisite sympathy to the last moment of His sufferings. We are such weak creatures, that the least degree of pain fully engages us; so that we cannot pay any attention at all upon others—not so with the Saviour; when in the depth of His sufferings, we behold Him exerting His energy to raise the dying thief from the pit of everlasting destruction to enthrone him with Himself in glory for ever. Here is sympathy. Here, indeed, is "a brother—born for adversity". Trust in Him, O ye trembling believers, at all times, and in all places; you will then be possessed of the happy art of living far beyond the reach of disappointment.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Will you allow me, through the *Northern Witness*, to moot a subject which has not only exercised my own mind for a long time, but that of many of my brethren; especially those in gatherings which are of comparatively recent date.

Composed, in many cases, of those who have seceded from the different sects around, seeing it was more in accordance with the Word of God, "to gather to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," &c., &c.

I always understood the so-called "brethren" or assemblies gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, were professedly separate from, and in contradistinction to, the numerous systems around, and had taken that position on scriptural and so-called "ecclesiastical" ground, and hold

Truths akin to the following:—that

"Believers should gather to the name and person of the Lord Jesus Christ only. Having no other formula or creed but the written word of God." (Matt. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. v. 4.)

"Acknowledging the personal presence of the Holy Ghost in the assembly, and full subjection to his authority in using whom He will for the edification of the body—the Church." (John xiv. 16, 17, 26; 1 John ii. 20-27; Rom. viii. 26; Eph. vi. 18; 1 Thess. v. 19; Eph. iv. 30.)

"Thus recognising the various gifts Christ has given to the Church, of which He is the only Head." (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11, 12; Rom. xii. 6-8; 1 Cor. xii. 4-31; 1 Pet. iv. 10; 1 Thess. v. 4.) "Breaking bread the first day of the week." (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 24.)

"Baptism of believers." (Mark xvi. 16; Acts ii. 41; Acts viii. 12; Rom. vi. 4.) "Taking nothing of the Gentile." (3 John vii.)

"And entire separation from judaising Christianity," &c., &c. (John xvii. 6, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 17.)

If my conclusions in the main are correct, I should like to ask what is our position and deportment to be towards those of our fellow-believers who are still mixed up with things that we have judged to be anti-scriptural by our withdrawal from them. And can it be consistent with our confession, as well as profession, to go and take part in, and have fellowship with, principles and practices we would not tolerate in the assembly, and at the halls, rooms, and places where we

are accustomed to gather together. Is it consistent, and does Scripture justify participation in things outside the assembly, which the assembly, and those possessedly gather in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, have judged by their separate position to be diametrically opposed to the primitive order and government of the Churches in the days of the Apostles. To be understood, I will mention some of the principles and things I refer to.

For instance, conferences where a chairman, or one holding the same capacity, is appointed. The speakers arranged either before or at the meetings. Persons called upon to pray. And where truths such as I have referred to above dare not be introduced.

And where it is known that persons take part who are unsound in doctrine, holding such views as "non-eternal punishment," and hold conference meetings which are called "unsectarian," where Christians can have a grand opportunity, and unlimited power, to sacrifice all principles. I write about this subject, because I know many, very many beloved saints of God are deeply exercised about the matter.

And, in some cases, whole gatherings have been brought into great difficulties thereby, resulting in division, withdrawals, &c. ; while, on the other hand, whole assemblies have drifted into I know not what ; at any rate, they have lost their testimony as a witness of separation unto God.

I do pray that these matters may be seriously and solemnly weighed before the Lord, and, if the position we have taken be a scriptural one, let us show our fellow-believers around that we cannot afford to make any compromise, and what we would not do in our assemblies, we cannot participate in outside of them. For, if we did, we should be building again the things we destroyed, and thereby become transgressors. May the Lord keep us in a right condition as well as in a right position.

B.

Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ : wherefore He saith, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men : and he gave some, Apostles ; and some, Prophets ; and some, Evangelists ; and some, Pastors and Teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

EVIL SPEAKING.

LOVE is of God. Love to others is the reflection of God's love to us. It is the end of the commandment. It is the crowning grace of the Gospel. Without it all gifts and attainments are, in God's sight, but an empty sound.

How solemn the word !—"He that loveth not his brother" "is not of God," but "abideth in death". And can we love our brother and speak evil of him ? There is, perhaps, no sin into which the Christian is more liable to fall, or of which he takes so little account, as that of "evil speaking" and yet by our Blessed Lord, evil thoughts and evil speaking are classed along with "murders, adulteries, and thefts". What a horror then, should Christians have of this sin !

There are three considerations which should lead to greater watchfulness :—

(1.) "Evil speaking" and "blasphemy" are identical. They are only different translations of the same original word. In common parlance, blasphemy is only used of evil speaking in reference to the Lord ; but it is not so in Scripture. It is there used, in like manner, in reference to men. He who speaks evil of his brother wrongfully, is literally and scripturally guilty of blasphemy.

(2.) Satan is "the accuser of the brethren," and from his so acting, he is called *διάβολος* (*diabolos*), "an accuser, a slanderer". (Parkhurst.) The very same word (*διάβολος*) is applied in Scripture to those who "slander" or "falsely accuse" their brethren. (1 Tim. iii. 11 ; Tit. ii. 3, &c., see Greek). False accusation is therefore literally and scripturally "diabolical".

(3.) He who sins against his brother, "sins against Christ". (1 Cor. viii. 12.) "Why persecutest thou me ?" "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Would it not be for Christ's glory, and would it not contribute greatly to the peace of the Church, were Christians to bear in mind these three short hints ?—

(1.) Never condemn another on hearsay, without having learned what he has to say for himself.

(2.) Never repeat an evil report, without having ascertained whether it be true, and even then, not without considering would it be for "the glory of God".

(3.) When speaking of others, never make use of a

word which you would not utter were God visibly present.

RUTH.

THE cords of love, those wondrous cords,
 Made willing Ruth to come
 From other gods and other lords,
 Her country and her home.

An earthly love was all she knew
 To lead her footsteps on ;
 But God in love was working too,
 In ways to her unknown.

He led her to her kinsman's field,
 Beneath his eye to glean ;
 And He her constancy upheld
 In every trying scene.

That kinsman the Redeemer's place
 Had will and power to take,
 And gave his wealth with ready grace
 For the poor wanderer's sake.

She came a stranger seeking rest,
 Whose earthly hopes had died ;
 But soon with fullest joy was blest,
 And made her kinsman's bride.

And if we trace the earthly line
 Through which the Saviour came—
 Soft as a star in brightness shine—
 Behold Ruth's honoured name.

Another Kinsman wins a bride,
 By death makes her His own ;
 He brings her to His wounded side,
 And seats her on His throne.

M. W.

THE consciousness of our interest in Jesus, and His being our portion in life and death, and for ever, was intended by the Lord as a little heaven to be carried within our hearts while travelling through this wilderness to the mansions of eternal blessedness.

It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him ; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct Him? *But we have the mind of Christ.*

SANTAL'S MISSION.

(EXTRACT.)

“LET us now turn to the last day of a Santal Christian. An old man called Doola (*i.e.* Love) who was the next in authority to the head man of his village, was baptised after he was upwards of sixty years old. Nothing would satisfy him then until he had learnt to read, and this, by dint of praying for help and strenuous efforts, he at length succeeded in. After this he was never to be seen without his hymn-book and catechism as his constant attendant ; and, though troubled with an impediment in his speech, he was always getting hold of some heathen fellow-countryman, endeavouring to persuade him to embrace Christianity, and dilating on the joys of a Christian. Although much troubled at home by his eight children's refractory and trying behaviour, he lived a most consistent Christian life, and was a light and example to all around him, during the three years which succeeded his conversion. He had also the great joy at seeing all his children, save one or two of his sons, become Christians ere he died. One day he was bitten in the calf of the leg by a mad dog, and the wound bled profusely ; he turned round and killed the dog on the spot by strangling him with his hands. Some three weeks after he sent to us for medicine, which was so far blessed to him that the wound outwardly, at least, healed up. Three months afterwards, however, it broke open again, and symptoms of hydrophobia manifested themselves. He endeavoured to bite all around him, and warned people off him, saying he could not help it ; for, wonderful to say, he was in full possession of his intellect the whole time. His hands had to be kept down while he was fed, as otherwise he would have bitten his own hands in feeding himself. He sent for the other Christians of the village, and with them prayed that this great affliction might be taken from him. On the second day these symptoms entirely disappeared, and he was much relieved. On the morning of the third day he called his wife to him and said, ‘To-day, I shall go home to the Lord Jesus, I know, for He has told me, and I am very happy’. The Christians were again sent for, and when all were gathered around him, he told them his time was come, and asked them to join him in prayer, which he led. He then called his family round his bedside, and apportioned to each their share of his property, and, turning to his wife, said, ‘I am only going on a little before, and you will soon follow me, so do not

grieve. I am going to the dear Lord Jesus, who has many mansions prepared for us, and when you meet me there, we shall never part any more, but spend eternity together with Him'. Then, turning to the assembled Christians, he exhorted them to stand fast in their faith, and to follow their Saviour, saying, if they only did so, they would be so happy, they would never leave Him. They continued in prayer and conversation with him for some time, and then, taking his wife's hand, he said to her, 'I am going home now, Farewell'; and turning himself round in his bed, he quietly died. The Christians were all almost petrified with astonishment, and sobbing aloud exclaimed, 'May our last end be like his', a wish we can only heartily re-echo.

QUICKENING OF THE BDOY.

(Read Romans viii. 9-13.)

THIS Scripture is understood and taught by many as referring to the Resurrection of the dead in Christ, but feeling assured that it is a *present* reality to be known by the Christian, to such I submit the following, and would ask the reader's prayerful consideration. Now, according to the "analogy of faith" (see Greek of Romans xii. 6, and compare 1 Cor. xi. 12, 13), and words of Scripture before us, in His presence and fear let me make this so plain, that "He may run that readeth", and thus glorify Him who formed us *for* His praise; also have the joy of *so* pleasing Him now, with the profit thereof in the day of Christ.

Notice, then, firstly—It is the "mortal body" that is to be quickened, because of, or by the Spirit that *dwelleth* in us. Turn to the Scriptures where this word "mortal" occurs, and thus we may learn its Spirit-used meaning.

In 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54 it is used in *contrast* with "corruptible" body—the body which has passed through the article of death, that is, the living and dead in Christ at His coming are contrasted, the first as putting on "immortality", the other "incorruptibility".

The next time the word occurs is in 2 Cor. iv. 11. Please refer to and read the passage; and is there applied to the present life, as the *time* or *sphere* in which we are to manifest the life of JESUS.

Then in chap. v. 4, we get the apostle's desire, viz., the Lord's coming again, that "the mortal" might be swallowed up of life. The only other instance we have

is in Romans vi. 12—"Let not sin therefore reign in your *mortal* body", which clearly means our present bodies. Thus, the youngest in Christ may perceive the simple meaning of "mortal body", which is a body liable to death or deathable.

Secondly, the quickening is the result or effect of the Spirit of God *dwelling* in the "mortal body". Now, from the word "mortal" itself, it is clearly a present experience; but, if not, the fact that Scripture nowhere speaks of the Spirit of God dwelling in a corpse, may dispel every doubt, and give acceptance to the truth.

Thirdly, "Therefore, brethren, we *are* debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh ye are about to die". (Verses 12, 13.) Observe here, it is on the ground of what is stated before that we are debtors, not to the flesh, to LIVE after the flesh, for that manner of living brings death, even falling asleep in Jesus. "For every branch IN ME that beareth not fruit He taketh away." (John xv. 2.) On these three grounds, then, it appears most conclusive to me, that the quickening by the Spirit is *now*; while the apostle's prayer (Eph. i. 17, &c.) confirms this belief:—"That ye *may know* what is the exceeding greatness of His *power* to us-ward who believe, according to the *working* of the might of His power, which He wrought, &c., &c." (Compare chap. iii. 16 Greek, also v. 20.)

The apostle's one aim likewise corroborates and incites to likeness of desire—(see Phil. iii. 10)—"That I may know Him, *and* the POWER of His resurrection". Then, turning to the things written aforetime for our learning, I find this blessed truth *set forth*, at least in illustration if not in type, in the Candlestick of the Tabernacle—(Exod. xxv. 33)—"Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a *knob* and a *flower* in one branch; and three bowls made like *almonds*, in the other branch with a *knob* and a *flower*, so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick". Now mark, these branches which came out of the shaft, having on them "Buds, blossoms, and fruit", while they rested on "buds", which express the seat of power to bear; while the fruit borne, remembering that the Oil (type of the Spirit) had been poured in, tells how such fruit has come. (Read Exod. xxvii. 20; xxv. 37.) With which compare the beautiful allegory in Num. xvii., where the dead rod, with the High Priest's name upon it, in God's presence, by God's power, "budded",

bringing forth buds, blossoms, and fruit, setting forth the trifold fruit-bearing of the Christian. (John xv. 2-5)—Fruit, *more* fruit, MUCH fruit; (see also verse 8). Which candlestick, in its oft-repeated dressing, “From evening to morning”, in order that its flame (light) might be caused to ascend up, giving light over against the face of IT”, tells us of the Spirit’s energy when un-grieved in us, leading to the showing forth of JESUS, or “giving light over against His face”; while of the same Spirit by Him flows up to God continual thanksgivings. (Heb. xiii. 15.) And just as the dead branch laid up before ЖЕHOVAH budded, &c., through His power quickening it, on account of the High Priest’s name being on it, and itself representing “a joined one” (Levi), so is it now that our mortal bodies—“which, if *Christ* be in us, are, indeed dead, *because of sin*”—in the hand of God by His Spirit (if His Spirit dwell in us) are quickened to bring forth buds, blossoms, and fruit; or, if you please, (these shadows not being the *very* image)—Fruit, *more* fruit, MUCH fruit. “Wherefore, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye *present* your BODIES a living sacrifice, HOLY, acceptable unto God, your resonable service.”

Φιλολόγος.

SIMPLE TRUTHS FOR CHRISTIANS.

Dear Christian Reader, please to examine the Scripture proofs, which can be greatly multiplied.

THE word church, in the New Testament, does not mean a building called a church, it means an assembly of people. Thus *the* Church of Christ means all Christians, and *a* Church of Christ means all the Christians who assemble together in any particular place.

Ephesians v. 22-32. Acts xx. 28. 1 Corinthians i. 2.

Different sects or parties were not allowed in the Church in the early days; these things are sinful; and Christians were called Christians, and did not take such names as Episcopalian, or Baptist, or Methodist, or Plymouth Brother, &c.

Acts xi. 26. 1 Corinthians i. 10-13; iii. 3-5.

Christian fellowship is based upon this,—that the persons who have this fellowship are in Christ, that is, that they are converted people. Taking it for granted that unconverted people are Christians, because they have been christened (christianed?) that is, sprinkled or baptised, is a delusion; there is no warrant in Scrip-

ture to bring such people together as Christians, nor to call an assembly of such people a Church of Christ.

John iii. 3-5. Romans viii. 9.

God is gathering out of this wicked world, by the gospel, a people for Himself; but the great mass of mankind remain unconverted. There are Churches of Christ *in* England and *in* Scotland, but there is not a Christian Church of England nor a Christian Church of Scotland.

1 John v. 19. Acts xv. 14.

The union of the State with the Church is a thing entirely opposed to the Word of God. Christians are strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

1 John ii. 15, 16. 1 Peter ii. 11. James iv. 4.

When God sent His dear Son into the world, the great Redeemer finished the work which the Father gave Him to do, and having died for our sins, He rose again and received from the Father all power in heaven and earth. Then He appeared to the Apostles, and commanded them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and He said He would be with them to the end of the world (or age). Therefore, the Lord Jesus is still with those whom He sends to preach the Gospel.

Matthew xxviii., especially 18th, 19th, and 20th verses.

The gospel means the good news—good news about a Saviour—about God’s mercy to us sinners through Jesus Christ.

Here it is—

1 Corinthians xv. 1-4.—Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, &c.

The same blessed news is again declared in another form, in 2 Cor. v. 18-21.

There is pardon, righteousness, salvation, to all who believe this gospel. All are naturally ruined, lost sinners, but all who believe this gospel are saved.

John iii. 14-18. Rom. iii. 9-31. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

But the mere assent to the truth of this gospel is not sufficient. A person must really receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and must beware of merely adopting an opinion. There must be personal dealing with God. There must be individual reception of the Lord Jesus as the only Saviour.

Rom. x. 10. Col. ii. 6. John i. 12.

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"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. ii. 8.

No. 16.

APRIL, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

LECTURE DELIVERED AT TEIGNMOUTH,

JULY 22, 1862,

BY THE LATE H. W. SOLTAU, Esq.

WE are met together this evening to consider the principles of the truth that we desire to maintain, and for which we, a little company, meet together in the Lord's name. These are peculiar times in which we live, and one great peculiarity is the rise of those Christians commonly called "The Brethren". I believe when we reach the other side and are raised to be with Christ, we shall look back with great delight on this little movement among the Lord's people, for it has no parallel in the whole history of the Church of God, because in no other instance has the word of God (freed from all tradition) been taken as the guide of those who have sought a revival in the Church of God. It would be very profitable for all to read with attention the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Haggai, for you would there see what a few weak helpless persons can accomplish for God's glory. The word "revival" now so commonly used, ought only to be used with reference to God's children—it has nothing to do with the unconverted, but it means a reviving of God's work in the souls of His saints. The unconverted cannot be *revived* because they have never been *alive* before; when an unconverted person believes in Christ, he is raised from the dead and not *revived*. If there be one here unconverted I would solemnly say to such an one—you are *dead* in trespasses and sins, and all the efforts you make to be religious are but the struggles of a dead body, they are like the throes of death, they are nothing but *dead* works with no life in them, nothing for God's glory or your blessing. What a fearful thing

it must be for God to look down on the struggles of a dead sinner in his helplessness. There is only one thing that will avail, "faith in Jesus," and that is life eternal. Therefore the word "revival" does not apply to the world but only to the people of God. The revival amongst God's children which began about 35 years ago, was a very remarkable one. It commenced by their searching the Word of God—they read the Bible together, and at the same time they made discoveries in truth respecting Christ's coming and respecting the Church of God. They cast away all traditions, and read the Bible without note or comment. Many of them were men of understanding and learning, but they laid aside all traditions and commentaries, and resolved by the help of God to search for themselves. As they searched the Bible they looked around them, but they saw nothing like what it describes in the Church of God—they could discover nothing around them like what was depicted in the Scriptures, and that startled them. Where did they find persons living as those did who were described in the Acts, or meeting together in the way spoken of in the Epistles? Nowhere. They looked at all the sects but they saw no *fac-simile* of the description contained in the Epistles. The Church of England was still further off than Dissent, because it was based on that fearful doctrine "Baptismal Regeneration". This little company was in the condition of persons groping their way in the dark, but with a lamp to light them by which they could see their way if they kept close to it. Thus they separated from the Church of England because of the grossness of its errors and the fearfulness of its delusions. About the same time that these few believers were searching the word of God in simplicity, rose up the Tractarians in the

Church of England, and they began to publish their tracts which have had such mighty effects in increasing the superstition all around.

Thus the struggle of light and darkness was going on simultaneously. These Brethren then found in the word of God that the believers used to meet on the first day of the week to break bread, and they said, "Why should not we do so"? Do we read of any authorized minister or priest in the Bible who consecrated the elements? No. Or do we find there was any ordained minister to consecrate or distribute the bread and wine? No, none at all; but that they could meet as Brethren and hand round the bread and wine to one another. They found it was not necessary to have an authorized minister to consecrate or distribute the bread and wine, but partaking of the one loaf and the one cup in remembrance of Christ, as it was done in the early days of the Church. This was the first step towards truth. Some of them were considerably gifted in instructing the saints—others in preaching the gospel, and other Christians were attracted by the sound that they heard, for with this advance in truth, the gospel was preached with more clearness and the testimony given was that no long process was needed, no long time of repentance or praying in order to be saved, but that instantly a sinner believed in Jesus he was saved, and that so far from having to wait he might be saved as he sat, or stood, or walked, for they found in the Bible that the only instance in which there was apparently a process, was when the woman possessed by a spirit of divination followed Paul and Silas many days, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God," &c. &c. That was not of God but of the devil. Thus the gospel was preached with wonderful clearness by a few believers, comparatively, and the great secret was that with them the Bible was everything, from first to last they would have nothing but the Bible, and it was soon remarked that they generally carried a Bible in their pockets. This startled some, for though the Bible had been kept for Sunday, it was not a book of daily reference. Then they discovered the great truth respecting the Church of God that it is a whole body. In the Bible it is described as a body with members, joints, and bands. We know that for a body to be healthy, all its members, and joints, must be in action—if the arm is dead the body must suffer, if any joints, or limbs, do not act well, the whole body must suffer, thus they found that for the church to be

a healthy body, its limbs, and joints, and bands, must be in activity; but they looked around them and saw the body inactive. With the Dissenters they saw one man acting as pastor, teacher, evangelist, the ordained minister had to do everything—where was the rest of the body, the joints, and bands, they were all asleep. They looked at Dissent as being the best thing, for it was no use to look at the Church of England, which had not an atom of truth to stand on, every one of its principles being false. Among the Dissenters there were points of truth here and there, yet there they saw the one person doing the work, that ought to be distributed over the whole body, and that they saw was wrong. Another thing they saw was that the sheep choose their own shepherd—whoever heard of sheep choosing the shepherd? That was a very strange thing, the general way is for the shepherd to choose the sheep, but there were the sheep coming together to choose their shepherd, and they moreover selected the one that pleased them most—was this in the Bible? Quite the contrary, for we find the sheep often dislike the shepherd, so that one of the best shepherds they ever had—Paul—was obliged to say, "All Asia is turned away from me, and the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved"; the sheep would certainly never have chosen him though he was one of the best shepherds that ever lived. They found in the Epistle to the Ephesians that it was God who gave Apostles, Pastors, Teachers. Then another thing that struck them was that the Dissenters made their membership more narrow than the membership of Christ (I say struck them, because I am telling you of truths which I myself learnt from others), they had a membership which is not in the Bible, *i.e.*, they would say, are you a Baptist, or Independant, or Wesleyan, and these Brethren said, why should we have a congregation smaller than the Church of God? Or any membership, short of the membership of the body, being a member of Christ? We are members of Christ not of a chapel or chapel-book, and being the body of Christ, His flesh and bones, let us have no membership narrower than Christ, but a membership that will include all believers whoever they are, one as much as another. Again they were troubled because on going to the Baptist's, and asking, will you allow me to sit down with you at the Lord's table? They were told, oh, yes—but supposing a case of Church discipline come on, they were not allowed to be present, because, as was said, they were

not members in consequence of all these things. A little company originating in *Ireland*, and subsequently appearing in Plymouth (whence the name given to them of "Plymouth Brethren") found there was nothing to be done but to try and begin over again, and this was a toilsome work, for it is far easier to follow on in an orderly track where the rules are written down for you. But, in beginning over again, they had no rules but what are in the Bible, and that book contains a vast amount of truth; they, therefore, constantly searched it, and tried to get at the reality of it, for it is the book of God's wisdom, and Christ would never leave the Church without sufficient rules for its guidance. It would be very strange for a father to leave his family without giving them any directions, or for Christ to leave the Church without proper rules to guide them until the end of this age. I believe there are rules in the Bible written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost for the guidance of the Lord's people. The Brethren formed themselves into a little company on such a basis that they could admit every believer all over the world, so that, if any one presented himself, they simply tried to find out whether he was a saved person or not, and, if he was, they said, "you have as much right as we have to remember Christ, for it is the Lord's table, not *ours*." I remember very well when I was myself at Plymouth, there was a board at the entrance of the room where we met, headed, "To persons desirous of being received into communion." This was objected to by some persons, and with reason, on the ground that *we had no power to receive into communion*, God only can do that, but we could only acknowledge them in communion; but, whether they came to meet with us or not, we were actually in fellowship one with another in the sight of God, for we were all members of the same body; then all we could do in the meeting was to own them as believers in Christ, having the same interests as ourselves, linked in the same life in Christ. This attempt to carry out the principles of truth were not made without great cost in many ways, for there was not one sect of believers that was not opposed to it, every one was against this strange little company, and thus it was, at the cost of many friendships, that the separation was made. But still it seemed to be according to God's Word, and, if the Lord Jesus had come when this movement was in its infancy, would He not have approved of it? Does He now approve of it, or not? Or do

you think that, when we meet around the Lord Jesus in resurrection glory, we shall find that we have lost anything by having tried to go as near to the Word as we could, and thus to serve Him? Surely not, though we have sadly lacked grace, there we have lamentably failed. I believe the great mistake from the beginning has been, not in the act of separation, but in the ungracious way of exposing the mistakes of other Brethren, and for this the Lord has solemnly judged us, but even that is a blessing, for I believe it is a blessing to be, in any circumstances, where God can judge us; it is better to have a rebuke, than to be allowed to go on in our own way. Let us not throw stones at one another, but remember how much each one has to overcome in himself, how many hindrances there are, for we are all still suffering under God's judgment. The divisions of Brethren are the greatest scandal we see in the Church of God; they are the result of the want of grace shown one toward another. Still let us remember that God's principles do not loose, however much *we* may fail. Never look at what we are in our actions, but at what the truth of God is. Do not be copying the examples before you, but seek to ascertain what is the truth of God.

I have thus simply introduced the subject in a narrative form, in order that I might be more easily understood, and let me say here that the believers commonly called "The Brethren" never gave themselves that name. They desired not to have any sectarian name, for it is sectarian ever to say, "I am of Christ," because you are as much of Christ as I am, and I have no right to take any blessed word (and "Brethren" is a very blessed one) and to adopt it to myself to the exclusion of other Christians. The Brethren thus avoided calling themselves by any name, but others adopted that word to designate them, not knowing how to distinguish them by others. The principles of truth that they desired to follow were, 1st, that they were one with all believers, and that, whether other Christians would meet with them or not, they had as much right to come to the Lord's table as they themselves had. They were at liberty to come if they pleased, but we are not responsible if other Christians will not meet with us, for we put no test and ask no questions, but the principles we desire to act upon are that a saved person has a right to the table of the Lord, and to the fellowship of the Lord's people, and he should be acknowledged as a brother in Christ—treated as such, warned as such, and cared for

as such. In acknowledging this truth, another comes out, that there is no exclusive priesthood, that is, all believers are equally priests in God's sight, from the weakest to the strongest. One can approach God as much as another, and there is another truth connected with this with respect to the Holy Ghost, which is one of the peculiarities of the Brethren's teaching. They believe that the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost, and that there will not be another pouring out; for the Holy Ghost is present in the world at this moment, dwelling in every believer. He dwells in the believer as in a temple, so that every believer's body is the temple of God. The Holy Ghost is not an influence, but He is actually dwelling in us. He is not a mere power from God acting on us, but He is God actually dwelling in our bodies, as the Lord Jesus said, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "He shall abide with you for ever." The Spirit enables the believer to say, "Abba, Father". Every believer is a child of God, and is able to say to God, "Father". All are equally children. There is not one higher or lower than another as to their adoption, but the Holy Ghost has also given to each believer a gift, or gifts, so that every child of God has something to do in the body of Christ, for which he is qualified by the gift he has received of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit, in His wisdom, bestows on each some gift whereby he is fitted to occupy some place in the body. Every believer has something to do in the body—he is necessary to the body. Without Him the body could not carry on its proper actions; every one is either a limb, a joint, a band, or a member. So we find, in 1 Cor. i. 12, 13, by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. All the body is not the eye, or the hand, or the foot, but it is made up of many parts; therefore, each believer should try and discover what God has given him to do in the body. We always desire to be something. The natural desire of the heart is to be prominent, and thus to be able to speak, or teach, or preach the Gospel to large companies. These are prominent gifts, but there are others quite as precious before God—the less prominent—which are often overlooked. The Apostle reproveth the Corinthians for showing their gifts—they could speak with tongues, and were making a great confusion in the meetings—every one had a Psalm or a Revelation, &c. The Apostle says that all should not try to speak at once, but that they should

speak to edification. If I look at the believers in this town, I see that, perhaps, not more than one-sixth of them are meeting simply on these principles of truth. What is the result? *Many gifts that might edify the Church are locked up. Many Christians are shut up in their pews week after week, listening to sermons; and what are they in the body? Nothing! They consider they have done their duty if they go every week to chapel, and the gifts that each one possesses are thus shut up, and are not in exercise, and the result is that many gifted persons who might be of great use to the Church of God, spend their lives in listening to a preacher. They are like isolated links cut off from the chain.* At the same time, that we may not be discouraged, God, who knows our necessities, supplies, in a measure, what we need, for Christ will and does care for His sheep. And it is an important truth that there is one body, and every member has something to do, and that is the reason why we desire to have open meetings, in which, if a person has the power to exhort, he may exhort; or to teach, he may teach; or to preach, he may preach; or, if any can speak to instruction, or lead in worship, in prayer or praise, they may have opportunity to do so to edification. In such a meeting, every one thus fitted by God to speak and pray is not expected to take part, but there is room for such gifts to be in exercise with prayer, and waiting on God. For Christ also is with us when we meet together. "Where two or three are gathered," &c. Christ is thus in the midst of us as Lord, and, as such, to direct and guide the meeting, and He will give a savour to the meeting if we wait on Him.*

If we are in our proper place before the Lord—rejoicing that He is in the midst, I believe the meeting will always be a blessed one. Supposing a person come to the meeting prepared beforehand to speak, he may get up and give forth some very blessed truth; but it may be quite out of place at that time—we should always wait and try to discover what turn the meeting takes. It may be that a hymn sung, or an expression used in prayer, may suggest any thoughts to some one present, and the Lord will use such little occurrences—if the heart is really looking to Him for guidance—especially in the meeting around the Lord's table. There is no meeting like that one, no other meeting comes near it, for it is the one meeting that the Lord Himself instituted—"This do in remembrance of Me". It is a meeting I could not absent

* This waiting on God some Brethren seem not to understand, for they jump up in quick succession to exhort or do something else, and in some cases they attend the worship meeting with the hymn-book leaves turned down ready for action. Thus there is no room or time at all for communings with God in His own secret place. This is an evil.—[Ed.]

myself from (unless the Lord were to prevent my going to it), and *I dare not stay away from it for the sake of my soul's joy and peace—for it is the only meeting and the unity of the Church.* The remembrance of Christ in His death is shown in the breaking of bread; but let me say a word here, that it is not breaking bread if the bread is cut. If you observe, the stress laid on breaking in the New Testament is very great; you always find the word used "breaking of bread". They came together to *break bread* for the one great emblem of the supper is that the bread must be *broken*, for it is a remembrance of Christ being *bruised* on the tree. This is entirely lost sight of, when in the Church of England the Minister repeats the words "This is My body which is given for you," instead of broken for you. Then as regards the bread it has two aspects—1st, It represents Christ's body being broken on the tree, and next it tells us of the unity of the Church. We all partake of the *one* bread, because we are *one* bread. In 1 Cor. x. 17, it is said, "For we being many are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread". Thus in eating the one loaf, we show that we are ourselves one bread. The Lord's Supper is the only occasion on which we can shew the unity of the body—no other opportunity is given us of doing so—we can speak of it; but we cannot show it in any other way but by the breaking of the one bread. Let us keep before our hearts that we are members of one another and members of Christ, and let us love one another, and have fellowship one with another; because we are members of the body of which Christ is the head. The Lord's table also leads into deeper appreciation of the Cross of Christ. I need not say how little we appreciate it as we ought; but at this table our souls are drawn off from the mere listening to the sermon, to seeing Christ broken for *ourselves*. We each eat and drink for ourselves, we do not get sustenance for another but we get food in Christ for *ourselves*. This is the only thing we can do in remembrance of Christ, and yet it is often neglected and put off by Christians to once a-month or once a-quarter. We, therefore, simply meet together on the Lord's Day around the table of the Lord, as the special time when we have fellowship one with another with Christ, and there we sit as Brethren. One may be poor and another rich, but we are fellow-believers in Christ Jesus, and it is not so much a place of instruction as worship and

fellowship with the Lord. Can any say this is not according to Scripture?

Besides this, the Lord has gifted individuals for holding peculiar places in the Church, some as pastors, others as teachers, evangelists, &c. Each should have the opportunity to exercise his gift. We do not hold that one person is fitted for everything, he may have one gift or many, and God may raise up others to help in various ways. There should be opportunity when a company of Believers meet for those things, to be manifested who are gifted by God to edify the rest. Let us remember that gifts are not only given for Sundays, but for every day of the week, and we should seek to know how to behave ourselves in the Church of God, while sitting in our houses, or walking in the streets, or while engaged in our business. When Paul said to Timothy, "that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God," he did not mean when he was in a so-called place of worship but in passing through life, for the Believers are always in the house of God—the Church. These are some of the leading principles on which we seek to act; but we are still learners. We have had to learn by other's failures and by our own, and we have not yet searched far into God's truth; but we desire to go on learning, and not to think we have a code of principles complete, but still to receive instruction from the Word of God, and any help from our brethren who may be able to shew us something we have not seen or understood. If we think we understand all we shall form a system, and we shall all become dry and sapless. All I would say to Believers around us is, Do not be afraid of an open Bible. Bring everything you hear to the test of the Word of God, for be assured the day is coming when everything will be tested; and we cannot help seeing how God is manifesting His principles of truth in other countries. Look at what He is doing in Italy,—we find there a company of Italians gathered together in nearly the same way as we meet, knowing nothing of different Christian sects, but simply reading the Word of God. When some persons wanted to introduce the Prayer Book amongst them, they said, "Show it to us in the Bible we have been in prison for the Bible and we will have nothing else". The Bible is their great rule, and there they have found the same truths as we have, and are therefore meeting as we do. And you would find the

Brethren in Spain, if they had liberty to come together, would do the same. They would have no old superstitions, no trace of Popery; but if they are let out of prison they will take nothing but the Bible for their guide. And more than that, in London and other cities where the Revival has been going on, the poor who have been converted do not like to go to Churches or Chapels, where they have to sit in pews and are pushed into the free seats, they like to be treated as Brethren. They have most of them been converted in a theatre where they sat side by side, and they are obliged to get rooms to meet in where they break bread together; not having been taught to do so by any man, but their spiritual instinct, so to speak, teaching them to remember Christ. And so you will find wherever there is a fresh spring of the Gospel, and sinners are quickly converted, they always meet together for the Lord's Supper. But it is not possible to get the truth without cost; it is always purchased at some loss, either of reputation or respectability in men's eyes. God says, "Buy the truth and sell it not". There was not one of those who came out on those principles of truth who had not some loss, but they did it for the glory of Christ. The Lord give us grace that we may so act that when He comes He may find us watching—our loins girded and our lamps burning; and that we may continue and not neglect to search the Word of God, and I know that if we continue to search the Bible, it will result in our seeking more to please God, by following His Word and in having more love one to another.

Does the sun shine at the present moment in the heavens? It does, and who tells us this? The sun itself. We do not want a rushlight; no, nor yet a torch to tell us that the sun is shining. Does the Bible come from God? It does. How are we to know it? It tells us itself in the best possible manner. Its own glories proclaim its origin to be divine. The external evidences of the Christian religion are valuable. They have their proper use; but the internal evidences are the treasure of the Christian; they sift him through and through, while they are wafted into the inmost recesses of his heart on the wings of Deity Himself.

CORRUPTION, strong as it is, has its source in the creature, and can only be fed by the creature. Grace, however weak it may be, has its source in God, and will be fed and nourished by God. Dare we doubt which is destined to prevail?

THE GOD OF JACOB AT BETHEL.

"He stayeth His rough wind in the day of the east wind."—

ISA. xxvii. 8.

THE history of Jacob is in many ways interesting and instructive. Rich and varied, too, is the Divine teaching graciously given in connection with, and making up, this eventful and chequered life. But it is the ways of God and His character evolved, and coming out in His dealings with and towards this ancient patriarch, that we would delight to look at and think of.

Here God very manifestly reveals Himself as the God of all grace, so much so that we heartily take up the ancient song, "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help." (Ps. cxlvi. 5.) Jacob's natural character and leanings are well described by the prophet, "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God. . . . He is a merchant-man, the balances of deceit are in his hand; he loveth to deceive." (Hos. xii. 3, 7.) So that the Apostle says, respecting all the grace lavished on him, "Not of works, but of Him that calleth," (Rom. ix. 11.) And most certainly will all of us who have been brought nigh by the blood of Christ cheerfully acknowledge, "By grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast". (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

How Jehovah met him going toward Haran, which was turned into Bethel by His presence; how in that place He put Himself under special obligations to Jacob by the four times repeated, "I WILL," and how (although Jacob was frequently and long, slow to enter into and possess the joy and the strength of Jehovah's "I will") still He did all, and exceeded all he had said, until at last even Jacob could say, "The God that fed me all my life long unto this day" (Gen. xlviii. 15), and again, "By the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. . . . The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills." (Gen. xlix. 24, 26.) How God wrought all this, nevertheless, of Jacob's crookedness, craftiness, unbelief, failure, and sin; reveals Him as the God of grace in such a way that, as we look at it, our heads are bowed in adoration, our eyes overflow with tears of gratitude, while there flows from our lips and hearts—unbidden—the ex-

clamation, "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy". (James v. 11.)

When Jacob and his mother, by taking their own way, had brought things to such a state, that he could not remain in his mother's tent, nor around Beersheba, nor longer drink of its waters, although that was a place rendered so desirable and agreeable by a special visit and blessing of the God of Abraham; where the promise to him had been confirmed to Isaac with the assuring "I will," and the encouraging "fear not". When Abimelech, too, with his retinue, came and sought His friendship, and confirmed it with an oath. Where a new well had been dug with complete success. Where his father's tent had been pitched, and an altar to Jehovah built. (Gen. xxvi. 23-33.) His brother's vengeance was threatening to descend upon him, he could not live there; his mother urges him, "Now, therefore, my son, obey my voice and arise, flee". (Gen. xxvii. 43.) Poor Jacob, who had never been far from his mother's tent, where he had been brought up, her special pet and favourite; knew little of the loneliness, the privations, and the dangers of being a wanderer away from home, friends, and protection, and less still (till now) of being a fugitive fleeing from the avenging sword of his deeply-injured brother. When that lone night, without one solitary companion to share his sorrow, and with not so much as a little carpet bag to put under his head, "He lighted on a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set, and he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows" (Gen. xviii. 11), and began to learn that "the way of transgressors is hard", (Prov. xiii. 15.) The Lord God of Abraham and Isaac there and then met him in such tender grace and grand manifestation. Showing now, as subsequently, "That He stayeth His rough wind in the day of the east wind." (Isa. xxvii. 8.)

That night the Lord showed him a ladder which stood upon the earth (just where Jacob was), but its top reached to heaven (just where Jehovah was), and perfect access from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, perhaps to teach Jacob that, nevertheless of all his artifice, scheming, and intrigue: that, above all his seeming successes, or manifest failures, "The heavens do rule". (Dan. iv. 26.) But "the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest to thee WILL I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed

shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south, and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed". (Gen. xxviii. 13, 14.) Jacob might look up and say truly, "the promise is by grace, that it might be sure to all the seed". (Rom. iv. 16.) And the Lord is, as it were, saying what he did say subsequently, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold I WILL lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires". (Isa. liv. 10, 11.) But still the Lord, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"—(Ex. xxxiv. 6)—comes down nearer and nearer still to the desolate, heart-sore boy. And lest this great magnificent promise should be too big for him, and not meet his present need in the weakness of his soul, badness of his conscience, and the absolute destitution, loneliness, and desolation of his circumstances, so as to lift the burden from off his heart and make him courageous, happy, and glad, although treading a path new and strange, beset with difficulties and surrounded with dangers. He who "healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (Ps. cxlvii. 3) gave Jacob something peculiarly for himself additional to, and above what Abraham and Isaac had, and so divinely fitting to the very circumstances and need of Jacob. "And behold I am with thee, and I WILL keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and I WILL bring thee again into this land, for I WILL not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of". (Gen. xxviii. 15.) Is not this the perfection of divine adaptation and divine grace? (Jacob was lonely in the extreme, neither counsel nor companionship had he; defenceless, and utterly unprotected. Esau, (the "cunning hunter") (Gen. xxv. 27) might have been somewhat a match for the dangers from wild beasts, and otherwise by the way; but Jacob, (the "plain man dwelling in tents") (Gen. xxv. 27), none at all. Besides the dread that he might be pursued and overtaken by the cunning hunter, his deeply-wronged and highly-infuriated brother. And, besides all, going to a strange land he had never seen, and among a people he had never met.) The Lord met him with the announce-

ment, "I am the Lord God of Abraham, thy father, and the God of Isaac". (Gen. xxviii. 13.) Jacob had heard of Him often, and knew about Him well. So the lone Jacob has got the God of his fathers as his companion, for, says He, "Behold, I am with thee". (Gen. xxviii. 15.) The defenceless wanderer has got the "God Almighty" (Gen. xvii. 1) of Abraham to take care of him, for He says, "I will keep thee". (Gen. xxviii. 15.) And the "everlasting God" (Gen. xxi. 33) of Abraham to bring him back again, and to implement every promise to him, even to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. This is the God of Jacob at Bethel, and "This God is our God for ever and ever". (Ps. xlvi. 1.) How often, dear brother in Christ, has this God met us with the assuring "I WILL," and the encouraging "FEAR NOT," and how often do we need such grace? And, as we understand His heart and apprehend His grace, our hearts repose on His bosom, and we do exclaim, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul". (Sam. i. 24.)

J. S.

THE WAYS OF GRACE OF THE RISEN SON OF GOD;

SHOWING HOW IN RESURRECTION HE PLACES HIS PEOPLE IN FULL ASSOCIATION WITH HIMSELF. (JOHN XX.)

REMARKABLY brief is the narrative of the Lord's resurrection, both in Matthew and in Mark. Presenting Himself alive, after His passion, as the King or Royal Master, in Matthew, He insists on obedience to all the commands which He had uttered, and assures His disciples of His presence to the end of the age. As the Divine Servant, in Mark, He is beheld, even from His glory at God's right hand, working with His servants. But in each of the two other gospels—which set forth the one, the manhood, and the other the deity of Christ, the account of the resurrection is fuller. Luke's record of that event seems specially designed to assure us that to-day in resurrection He is the same as He was yesterday when on earth. Hence what occurred during and after a walk with two of His disciples, is put in the forefront by that evangelist, and indeed, is almost all that he tells us. And singularly the Acts—which as we know, is by the same inspired writer—also recounts some of the incidents connected with another walk of the Lord with His chosen. Thus the two writings of Luke

reveal to us—the one, Christ Jesus the perfect Man whilst here in the world, and the other, the same wondrous Man, but in heaven and glorified. Thus in none of these three gospels is the Lord's full association of Himself in resurrection with His people set forth. And yet the corn of heavenly wheat does not rise alone. For in death He had bridged the infinite gulf that separated us from Him. His resurrection involves, and is followed by ours. Nay, we rise together. "But now, by His resurrection He is declared to be the Son of God in power". (Rom. i. 4.) And further, since the church is built upon the divine Sonship of the Lord, so accordingly here in John we have brought before us the gracious ways of this risen Son of God towards us, who through Him are made sons of God too. And thus, as in John xvii. we are by Him officially presented before God, and we are permitted to overhear the statement of the divine purposes in our predestination; so in John xx., xxi., we ourselves are severally and unitedly dealt with in person, according to all this amazing grace. These two scriptures xvii. with xx., xxi., are the observe and reverse sides of the same picture. And the cross is necessarily placed between these two. For unto God, who sees the end from the beginning, the word of the Lord, even before the cross, is: "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do". But to the children the cross must be an accomplished fact, ere such grace could be bestowed. Hence we can perceive the very extreme importance attaching to these last two chapters of John's gospel. For they exhibit the formal, authoritative grouping of the children around Himself in xx. and next, as we shall presently see, His reception of them to Himself in xxi. In other words, we have in xx. the risen Son of God with us; in xxi. our place is seen with the risen Son of God. In xx. we have traced distinctly and exactly before us what is His present way with us; in xxi. we have in symbol sketched first, His reception of us on eternity's shore if we die, and specially if we die as we ought, in His service, and then secondly the disappearance in the same glory of the Lord both of the dead and of the living saints, who are severally represented by Peter and John. At the end of xxi. it is assumed as if as surely as the actual Head of the mystic body had been raised after two literal days, so will all the body likewise follow His footsteps heavenwards, after two prophetic days. And the curtain in John falls with the disappearance from

this earthly scene of the sons of God, all, almost simultaneously with the Lord's own departure. As if the period intervening between His own ascension and of ours were but what is, only a "little while," indeed.

But first, let us, in the remainder of this paper, note His action when risen, as still *with us*. Then in another paper it is proposed to look at the two modes of our departure to be *with Him*. And here we see in the opening of the chapter, how when He has quite reached us in our misery by His death, He triumphantly disposes of all our foes; then follows, in the next place, the record of His way with an individual believer; thirdly, His way with the assembly; and fourthly, His way with an absentee. How diverse and how many are the persons here in this divine drama:—the foe utterly routed, the divine Son, that great Shepherd of the sheep, His and our Father and God, His Spirit, a single sheep, His "little, little flock," and a wayward unbelieving one.

First glance at His action towards the discomfited foes. Their hold on Him and on us is represented in the picture by the grave clothes with which His body had been bound. Thus was He and were we enthralled. Those garments of death certainly figure the chains by which the captive was bound. This we know from an inspired commentary on this passage in its own proper place, I mean in the epistle to the Colossians, the subject of which is, the fulness of our Head. For there, thrice referring undoubtedly to this very scene, we have a Greek word, *σπερδννα*, and which occurs nowhere else, and which denotes to "strip off" the opposing powers of evil. (Col. ii. 11, 15, and iii. 5). As he stripped off those prison garments, so did He divest Himself and us who believe in Him, of that which those garments were the badge, to wit, of all that was against us. But the leisurely manner in which He does this, is tranquilizing and very beautiful to behold. There is no hurry on His part to leave the tomb, such as prisoners betray when they escape. Those are glad to get away as best and as quickly as they can. Not so he. Even after life has re-entered His body, observe how He sorts and folds together the various bandages. There is a purpose in all this, and one which it is designed we should well contemplate. For this leisurely mode of His procedure, ere He comes forth from the tomb, is evidently a tacit challenge to all opposing powers, as to whether they have any further claims on Him, as our Head and

Representative; and is an emphatic witness that they have all been righteously and triumphantly disposed of. Therefore it is that the gauntlet, as it were, is thrice thrown down in the face of the enemy, in Romans viii.; in verse 33, by God; in verse 34, by Christ; and in verse 35, by the Holy Ghost. In similar thoroughness will Satan and his accusations be treated by God after the rapture of the church. He is not turned out of heaven in haste at once; but his presence is brooked there for three years and a-half afterwards, in order that all he can allege against us may be fairly looked at, and righteously quashed. And, as the suitable ending to all this, it will be the once tempted ones who, under Christ, will be the agents of his being finally hurled down from heaven. (See the author's *Lectures on Revelation*, at chapter xii.)

There follows next a specimen of the risen Lord's way with an individual soul that belongs to Him. And the case purposely selected, is one who had, ere He had drawn her to Himself, been a sinner indeed. Her first glance at the tomb might help her to apprehend that the Lord cannot accept ignorant affection in lieu of intelligent faith. For faith teaches us that it is the Son of the living God who visited us in our grave, in order to lift us out thence, and to bring us eventually where He is. Therefore she is not in John allowed to hold His feet, as are those women in Matt. xxviii. For here we have the heavenly calling, and not as there, Jewish blessing in the land. Therefore it is that He says to her, and that in a message for others, "I ascend". Therefore it is that now, for the first time, He calls us His "brethren". Once in Matt. xii. 50, He had used the word, "brother;" but He had also termed the same "disciples," and at the same moment, His "mother". But here, as in Psalm xxii. 22, after the cross, the term is applied in its full unqualified significance. (Heb. ii. 11.) Therefore it is that He now uses those heart-cheering words, "God and Father," and with those precious pronouns, "My, your; My, your;" so sharing all His Father's love with us, and so giving us those claims on God implied in this carefully measured, but yet full and tender and endearing language. Therefore it is, I repeat, to an individual soul, and to such an one, that His wondrous love is opened out. For we who believe are each and all brought nigh to God. In all this there is the amplest, richest grace of God commenced now to be displayed to our enraptured view by His risen Son.

After this, in due order, we have next disclosed what is the Lord's way with the assembly, that is to say, with a group of believing souls. This order too, is itself perfect and divine. Man's way is with majorities. His proud motto is, "The greatest benefit to the greatest number". Here we see the Lord carefully attending first to the single stone of His temple, and beginning with each one severally, before He deals with them in larger numbers. Ofttimes, in the other gospels, the Lord is seen with crowds, but rarely so in John, whose picture of Him is as Son of God. How much of this gospel is composed of the Lord's dealings with individuals. Thus in iii. He is seen with Nicodemus; in iv. with the woman of Samaria; in v. with the impotent man; in viii. with the woman taken in adultery; in ix. and x. (for these properly are but one chapter,) with the man born blind. Even the invitation in vi. 37 is in the singular number, and so far unlike Matt. xi. 28. It is the way of grace to begin with the lowest, weakest, least. So in Eph. iii. you hear about the church, indeed, but in Eph. i. about the individuals thereof.

Well, on the first Lord's day evening after the resurrection, when His disciples are together, there He is seen where from His word we might be sure He would be, "in the midst". Invariably this is His own proper and beautiful place. So does He gather us unto Himself, even as a hen would her chickens. Hence we can see what should be our object in coming together, to cluster round Him, to worship Him, to commune with Him, and that He may show us still more plainly of the Father. Here we see what gives the assembly, however weak or small it be, such a solid ground, and makes it such a holy place. Here we can see how clerisy, whether avowed or incipient, disarranges all this. And observe, they come together now as "disciples," even as afterwards in the Acts, as "believers," "brethren," "saints," "christians". Their centre is Christ alone. His first greeting of them is with His old, familiar, gracious word of peace, "not as the world giveth." On the contrary, by Him in resurrection it is uttered more authoritatively than ever. For Christ risen is Himself our peace. And hence we see that whenever in the assembly He speaks, what His first word is. Yea, more; possibly we may have implied here how, even in the great gathering in the air, He will break the silence. At all events, whenever we come together, thus can we learn that so does He set Himself to remove all fluttering from every heart,

and stablish all in peace before Himself. If the assembly, or anyone therein, is unquiet, such should behold how He, suiting His action to His word, directs attention to His own Person, showing all His hands and His side; His hands evidencing that He was the same Who had been crucified; His pierced side proving that He had died; whilst He Himself before them assures them that He lives again. And the effect must ever follow, even as it came to pass with these: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord."

But a second time He says, "Peace be unto you." This is no needless repetition. The former word "peace," was for their own hearts; this second was for them to take as His message unto others. For He preaches peace to those afar off, viz., to the irreligious; and peace to those that are nigh, viz., the Jews, or the religious. The word "peace" is found twice in Eph. ii. 17, Greek. Now that this peace was for their message unto others is evident from His next words: "As my Father has sent Me, so send I you." And so we learn who they are that should preach peace through Jesus Christ unto others. Even those alone who are in the enjoyment of that peace themselves. Then by breathing upon each of them, the Lord formally and actually introduced them into a resurrection standing. There can be no question that these disciples had divine life in their souls before. But the difference with them between then and now was, that now they had life more abundantly than ever. Before the cross this life, as it were, only oozed out from Him. Sin was not put away. The fulness of blessing was therefore hindered from coming into them. Not so now. The spear that had pierced His side had opened a free outlet from which life might flow forth from Him into them. Not even yet, however, was the Holy Ghost given unto them to dwell personally in them. For this the ascension was needed. Beginning with the cross, every step in the path of Christ involves increased blessing to His people. (Rom. viii. 34.) And His return to receive us to Himself will be the crown of all. But here we see that as God, when He made man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life so that man receives an unending existence; otherwise what becomes of that breath of God? So when the Lord had accomplished redemption, eternal life and incorruptibility flowing from Himself He made His own partakers of.

The other words of verse 23 need not startle anyone. Though they may have been much abused by Romanists and others, we cannot afford to neutralize their force.

They were not uttered to these as to "apostles," but as to "disciples," (verse 19,) and again, "disciples," (verse 21.) Also note that before the Lord uttered these words, He had said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost". Hence it is only when the disciples, gathered together round the Lord, act in the way of remitting or of retaining sins—it is only when such action is in the Holy Ghost, that it is valid before God. But then clearly it is, as Luther used to say, "No fold, no flock; no discipline, no church". In the former clause, concerning remitting sins, we behold the *gates* into the assembly; in the other clause of retaining sins, we see the *walls* of the assembly. Each of these actions is practised by the assembly, when scripturally constituted, everywhere.

Lastly, the case of the absentee, Thomas, finds its counterpart to-day in those who, through partial unbelief in the Lord Jesus, are not found, on the Lord's day, in the assembly of His people. But we must not infer from the fact of only one disciple being incredulous, that therefore this thing is rare. As well might we dream that because when the king came in to see the guests, only one was found without a wedding garment, therefore nearly all professors are true christians. But the actual truth inculcated is, that God is dealing with men individually. It seems probable that the great majority of those whom we hope to be found true christians, are absent from the table of the Lord, preferring their own sects and ways to the will of God, and not crediting that where two or three are gathered to His name, He is there. Such will have to answer for this unbelieving attendance towards Him, at His judgment seat. Now the Lord here came a second time, partly to assure our hearts that every Lord's day He is with His own when gathered according to His own holy will, and partly, too, for the sake of Thomas himself. Yet though Thomas was dealt with graciously, the Lord would prove that he was a loser. And the opening of xxi. shows that he felt this. For Thomas is there mentioned second in order, an arrangement of these disciples that obtains nowhere else, as if Thomas were at length determined to be present with his own company whoever was not there.

[The above is to be No. 3, Second Series, of Lincoln's Leaflets, written and corrected by his own hand.—ED.]

MR. SPURGEON AND THE OPEN-AIR PREACHERS.

ON Monday evening last week, a large company of open-air preachers were gathered to hear an address by Mr. Spurgeon. We append the leading points in his address, which was enthusiastically received.

After some introductory remarks as to the undoubted antiquity of preaching in the open air, he advised them first of all to look well to themselves, for they could not give out what they did not possess, any more than they could possibly get more out of a well than there was within it. A man's success was, of course, dependent on the Spirit of God, and there was a Divine sovereignty which they could not map out, and to which they could not assign any rules; but still, all things considered, God uses most that vessel which is most fit for his service, and He did have an adaptation and fitness in every instrumentality He employed. *Let them not make a mistake, and say God uses always the weakest and unfittest things. He did use the weakest, but not the unfittest.* It often happened the weakest was the most fit for the display of His strength.

It was well always to furbish up their *mental gifts*. The Holy Spirit did not give them the gift of languages, but he thought that whatever they had lost by the withdrawal of miracles they had gained by the invention of printing and numerous other advantages they enjoyed. The Holy Spirit did not either teach them English grammar, and it would be well for some of them to learn it. If they would be useful to others they must know something themselves, and open-air preaching should accompany indoor study. They should search the Scriptures, and endeavour to understand them by the light of the Holy Spirit through their own experience. Whatever helps they could get should not be disdained.

Next he would ask them to pay a little attention to their *manner*. Here Mr. Spurgeon illustrated various eccentricities of manner which were objectionable and not uncommon.

Further, let them not fall into imitations. He would say especially to young men, "Be yourselves," for they wanted preaching men, not preaching monkeys—original, not eccentric and singular preachers. He would not have any preacher of Christ be so grotesque that it took away the attention of his hearers from the solemn subject in hand to some little oddity in himself.

The main thing, however, in preaching, was the *matter*. What should they preach about? He did not think there was anything to preach about in the streets except Jesus Christ, and he might add, nor indoors either. "Oh," says one, "that's confining us to one thing!" Nay, He was the Infinite and Boundless One, in whom there was a wonderful circle for them to sail. Jesus was the head and front, the beginning and the end of it all. He was glad to hear a sermon on doctrine in the street, and did not think brethren should be shut up to one line of thought; only let it all point to Christ. Christ and him crucified should be their subject, and they would never want another as long as they lived. And let Christ be preached, not as though He belonged to the people in South Australia, or had reference to the inhabitants of the moon, but right down amongst the people. He would advise them to preach in short sentences too. They were soon uttered, but not so soon forgotten. Speaking of illustrations, he said he thought they were a little overdone with tales just now, and some of the tales must be very good ones, for they had been told so many times. A house all windows was hardly a model structure; some foundations, walls, and solid matter were needed; and so with their addresses, there should be solid instruction, as well as pretty tales.

Respecting the *places* where they should preach, he found that some preferred the main streets, and did not like alleys, and courts, and nasty places. He admired their taste, though he could not quite see their wisdom. If they were lamps, and the Lord said, "Here is London all dark, where will you stand?"—they would, of course, say, Hyde-park or Piccadilly, where lamps looked well, and people could appreciate them. The most sensible brethren, however, would wish to be placed where there was most darkness, where all manner of evil existed, and where they might be most useful; and though they might meet with rough treatment and *possibly* be killed, yet it would be a grand thing to earn a martyr's crown.

After some advice as to how to answer captious objectors—by turning their own weapons against them—Mr. Spurgeon concluded by advising his hearers to get a shot at the devil whenever they saw him, not being particularly choice as to where it was; for surely the world took liberties enough with them. If other people had a right to swear, they had a right to preach. If a person were drowning, he had a right to save him,

even though he were not an ordained Royal Humane Society's man. And he might not be a man-ordained preacher, but sinners were dying, and he was bound to help in the salvation of his fellow-men. He strongly urged them to go on heartily with their work with more earnestness, and, he prayed, with more success than ever. Let them expect great things, and according to their faith would it be unto them.—*The Christian.*

WITNESS-BEARING.

"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts i. 8.)

THESE are the last words of our blessed Lord before He ascended to take the place He now occupies. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." (Heb. ix. 24.)

As to believers' *acceptance* He has taken the "church" with Him into the presence of God. "Wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) Acceptance is not a blessing the believer gets by degrees, he has it as full and complete as ever he will have it. The moment he accepts Christ he is "made accepted in the beloved". This is the Divine statement regarding acceptance, and faith asks no more but simply rests on and enjoys what God has said. In writing to the church at Ephesus, we have Paul praying "that they might know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come". (Eph. i. 18, 19, 20.) We read, also, in the second chapter, verses 4, 5, 6, "But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus". This is the statement of God, as to believer's standing, and faith without any reasoning receives it, and joyfully sits down in the place God

has given it, holding that place against all assailants by the one weapon 'God has said it'. And it is in proportion as the believer receives, rests in, and enjoys his place now in Christ up yonder, that he will be able to take up and maintain the place of true witness-bearing down here. The believer is virtually in Christ where He is, even now the object of the Father's infinite delight, the object of His complete and perfect approbation, and without this precious truth, understood and enjoyed, it is useless to talk, or read, or write of witness-bearing for Christ down here. If believers were enjoying their place in Christ in the highest glory, the world would soon give them their place outside the camp; what we, as witnesses for Christ, need, is not more truth about witness-bearing, but more the image of Christ; which can only be got by dwelling in His presence. It is useless to talk of "shining as lights" unless we are living in the light, and if our souls are living in the light of the Divine glory where Christ is now seated, we shall shine ourselves unwittingly.

We cannot proceed to give a few practical thoughts on being witnesses unto Christ, without deeply deploring and confessing before God how the Church has failed in this her mission in a dark perishing world, and how in these days, when God has been revealing unto His children so much of the meaning of His precious Word, there is so little of the image of His dear Son to be discerned in their life and service. It is Christ Himself that draws saints and sinners away from their idols—"If I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me". (John xii. 32.)

If we would be faithful witnesses unto Christ, our absent and rejected Lord, we must present Himself—Christ the power of our life and Christ the substance of our message. It is essential to our being faithful witnesses unto Christ that we bear His image; but it is also well to be acquainted with the practical truth as to how He would have His disciples occupied until His return to fulfill His promise to "receive you unto Myself". (John xiv. 3.) It is necessary, in order that our service be approved of, that we do all things *unto* Christ. "Inasmuch, etc., ye have done it *unto* Me." (Matt. xxv. 40.) Without this quality no service can or will be accepted, and when this test is applied to our service, our consciences even now testify that very much that looks well will have to go to the flames; but whilst we cannot be too faithful with ourselves on

this point, *i.e.*, a single eye to Christ, it is nevertheless well to fulfill our service intelligently. "And if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." (2 Tim. ii. 5.)

This subject we have introduced is so great, and so intensely practical, that we are almost afraid to touch it, it is so great that it is difficult to know where to begin, and so grand that there is the greatest danger of marring its grandeur by want of duly apprehending its deep importance. Christ was just about to ascend to His Father, to take His place on the right hand of God, when He uttered these words to the devoted little band who clustered around Him, whose souls He had redeemed and whose affections He had centred on Himself: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me". He had finished the work which the Father had given Him to do, "who His ownself bare our sins in His own body on the tree;" He had been the Divine scape-goat; He had borne all the iniquities that were laid on Him, and "unto a land not inhabited," when He had by Himself purged our sins. He was about to ascend as the Divine High Priest into the presence of God to "make atonement for all who believe on His name". There seems to be in the experience of most believers something radically wrong on this point. The cares of the world seem to be too much for many a dear child of God, many who have trusted the Word of the Lord for salvation, scarcely think of trusting the same Word for temporal blessings. But the same Word that tells us "he that believeth hath everlasting life," also tells us "your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things;" and because of not believing the Word of the Lord in this matter, many are rendered completely useless as witnesses for Christ. Some are continually haunted with fears about the future, others are occupied in trying a race for riches with the people of the world, and in various ways "the love of the world and the things that are in the world," so fill the heart that both the power and desire to testify for Christ is lost, and the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ left His disciples behind Him, for the very purpose that they might be witnesses unto Him is forgotten, and the believer wakes up when too late, only to find out that although saved himself he has "lost his life" and sold an eternal crown for a mere bubble.

But there is another and more common snare that robs believers of power to testify for Christ, and that is the snare of being occupied with self in some form

or other—a notion that believers are left, after conversion, to go through a certain process that will qualify them, or make them meet for heaven. And for want of understanding properly and receiving into the heart the precious truth taught in Col. i. 12: "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" many believers are never really free to serve Christ. It is to be feared there are few Christians who believe a complete Gospel, that all their need for past, present, and future is fully and completely met in Christ. "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him." (Col. ii. 9, 10.) There is certainly growth and progress in the Divine life; but in no part of the Word of God that we know of, is it taught or implied that growth of grace adds to a believer's meetness for glory. The substance of the song of the redeemed will ever be "unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father". (Rev. i. 5, 6.) They "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore are they before the throne". (Rev. xii. 14, 15.) Christ hath "obtained" eternal redemption for all who believe; we got one instalment when we believed, and we shall get the other when Jesus comes. When this unspeakably precious truth is received not merely into the head but enjoyed in the heart, the question comes with irresistible power on the conscience—What are we left here for? What is our real business in the world—if union to Christ be our meetness for glory? The answer to this solemn question comes from the lips of the Lord Himself: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me". He had completely accomplished His mission in the world, He came to "reveal the Father" and "make an end of sins"; to give meaning unto all the shadows and types that had gone before. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." The Jews had rejected their long-promised and long-expected Messiah. Jew and Gentile had united together to crucify the Lord of glory, who was also "the Lord of all the earth". And the Jewish nation, on account of their hitherto unparalleled guilt, was set aside from being what they once were—God's witnesses. "Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord." (Isaiah xliii. 10.) What was once "a noble vine" had become "turned into a strange vine"; but from among the wreck and ruin that

Satan had made, the Lord Jesus gathered a little company of devoted hearts around Himself; gave them a place higher than ever the Jews occupied; promised that if He went away He would send another comforter "who would abide for ever". He not only provided for the comfort of His disciples, but also gave them something to do, with the promise of power to enable them to do it. And what is the proper employment for His redeemed and loved ones? Is it to get a position in the place where He Himself was murdered? Is it to get riches in the place where "He had not where to lay His head";—to tinker up this world that has chosen Satan for its prince and god, or to mend up a world that lies under the judgment, for God has brought in the whole world guilty? Has Jesus left anything unfinished in the personal redemption of those who believe? By one offering He hath forever perfected them that are sanctified (Heb. x. 14); He hath obtained eternal redemption for us; and is not Jesus Christ up yonder and the Holy Ghost down here capable of bringing redemption to its final consummation? (Heb. vii. 25; Phil. ii. 13.) And has not the Lord Himself given the most complete assurance regarding the things of this life? (Matt. vi. 25-34; Luke xii. 22-34; Phil. iv. 6-7-19.)

Then let us,—the redeemed of the Lord, look our mission right in the face. We have no resting-place or portion in this world, *our portion is away before us*—laid up in heaven, and we shall soon, we know not how soon, be there ourselves. Then let us wake up to the deep meaning of these words, the last that fell from the lips of Him who gave Himself for us, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me". If the Lord will, we shall look again at the practical way in which the early followers of Jesus set to work whenever they received the promised power, along with some important truth on this subject, to be found in the Old Testament.

May the Lord wake up many of His children to realize they are left to be witnesses unto Christ, until He come for us to receive us to Himself, and also to understand that in order to be faithful witnesses we need two things—to be under the power of His spirit, and to tread in His footsteps. There is often much of the spirit of Christ about some who are ignorant of His Word, and often also a great amount of zeal for the truth of God with very little of the image of Christ Himself. Before we can witness for Him we must be like Him and know His will.

QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH FELLOWSHIP.

1.—**I**S there not a difference between the Lord bringing into the Church, as built on Himself (Eph. ii., and I Pet. ii.), therefore perfect, *i.e.*, none but living stones built in? and the Church at Corinth, or elsewhere, as gathered to Him on earth, responsible, therefore, as to those received, bringing in.

2.—If so, a person might have been received by the Lord, but he would have to be received by the Church at Corinth on the ground that the Lord had received him.

3.—When told to put away, was it not from that into which they had received?

4.—Are there not many now, who have been received by the Lord, and built up as living stones, but who, instead of then being received into a scripturally-gathered assembly, have been brought into a sect?

5.—Have not such to be received as a young Christian, or even with greater care, seeing that the one just converted has not had time to take the wrong step of joining a sect!

6.—Are there *two* ways of receiving into fellowship?

7.—According to Scripture, were some received *into fellowship*, and others only to *break bread once*, or occasionally?

8.—Would a person, if allowed thus to break bread, be in fellowship as others? Would you, if you kept a list of names (Acts i. 15), put his amongst the others? If not, why not?

9.—If, afterwards, he did not come to the Table, would you *i.e.*, those who guide, seek him out, and in love rebuke? If *not* with him, would you with any, and, if so, why the difference of action?

10.—Are there two circles? 1st, those who are in fellowship, whose names would be in a list, and who receive and put away, and 2nd, those who break bread when they like, and who take no responsibility as to any of those things?

11.—Supposing one professing conversion—a brother who is acknowledged to have discernment, believing that one to be converted, brings him, the following Lord's day, to break bread, would he be received at once? If not, why not?

12.—Should not those who have oversight, act together in commending anyone for fellowship, and should not such be brought to overseers. (Acts ix. 26.)

13.—And if so, ought anyone to be received, even though known to a few of the Christians, until those

who have oversight have had time unitedly to exercise the gift of discernment for the Lord who gave it?

14.—Can you ignore the existence of sects, and act as if there were none?

15.—Should not those who guide seek to bring before those wishing fellowship, that they, by the very act of coming, are judging as evil the sect with which they have been connected?

16.—Is it not due to those asking fellowship to do this, in order that they may see it is not another sect, but a gathering to the Lord Jesus (our object) and that then the result of being gathered to Him is the judgment of all sects as evil?

17.—Is it making *knowledge* the ground of fellowship to tell a young Christian that Christ is Lord, that we own it, and seek to submit to the rule of His house, and if not, is it when we urge this upon one who has been connected with a sect where that Lordship has practically been disowned, and where human rules have been substituted.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus ii. 11-14.)

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APRIL, 1876.

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IN QUEEN'S ROOMS,

CLIFTON STREET (West End Park),

10 till 10-45.—Prayer.

11 till 2.—Fellowship and Ministry of the Word of God.

2-30' to 3-30.—Dinner and Tea for those from the Country and Suburbs.

5 till 8.—Fellowship and Ministry of the Word of God, as in the Forenoon.

FRIDAY, 7th,

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WITNESS.

"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. II. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. II. 8.

No. 17.

MAY, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

WITNESS-BEARING:

OR,

TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST. (Acts i. 8.)

THERE are two aspects in which believers are seen in Scripture—"inside the veil" in Christ, and "outside the camp" unto Christ. These two aspects of the believer's position were foreshadowed by the feast of the passover, and the great day of atonement. In the passover, the *blood* was *outside* and the people *inside*, and, on the day of atonement, the *blood* was *inside* and the people *outside*. Inside the people were *feasting*, outside they were *fasting*, for the command was, "Ye shall afflict your souls". (Lev. xvi. 29.) Inside they were worshippers, outside they were as witnesses. Inside they were having fellowship with God, as a redeemed people unto Him, outside they were waiting for the return of the high-priest who had gone into the holiest to make atonement for them.

The careful reader cannot fail to perceive that, in the 9th chapter of Hebrews, we have the substance of that which was foreshadowed by the Jewish day of atonement. The high-priest going into the most holy place with the blood of others was a type of Christ, "by His own blood entering once into the holy place," even "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," and also the people waiting outside foreshadowed those who are now "looking for Him to appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.) Our Great High-Priest is now representing us before God, and He has left us to represent Him before the world, and our fellowship with Him in the coming glory will have an inseparable connection with our faithfulness here as witnesses unto Him. (Rom. viii. 17, 18; 2 Tim. ii. 12.)

When the high-priest of old went into the Holy of Holies, there were certain instructions given unto the people outside how they were to deport themselves until he came out again. "Ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all" (Lev. xvi. 29), and God repeated the same injunction again and again, and, whosoever disobeyed, was "to be cut off from among his people". (Chap. xxiii. 29.) And whatever else might be implied in the ordinance "ye shall afflict your souls," it clearly means the opposite of feasting, and cuts at the very root of all carnal, fleshly feasting, now, on the part of those who are left as witnesses unto Christ. Believers are exhorted to "keep the feast," but it is because "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us". It is a feast on Christ as our passover. There is nothing in this feast on which *nature* can feed, and, while we are to feast as worshippers, as witnesses we are to "afflict our souls," and, if we break our fast, we will as certainly suffer as the disobedient Israelite of old did." (Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. xi. 30.)

Another injunction was, "ye shall do no work at all". The day of atonement was to be observed as a "sabbath of rest". And this rest evidently pointed forward to that rest which believers are exhorted to "labour to enter into," which is described as ceasing "from our own works". (Heb. iv. 10, 11.) There are two *rests* in the past, creation rest and Canaan rest, both of which were broken and defiled by man's failure and sin, and there is in the future a rest to the Jew, "there remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God". (Ver. 9.) There is also a rest from *service* to the believer, but there is a present rest in Christ as the *sin-purger*, and it is this rest that seems to be fore-

shadowed by the Jewish rest on the day of atonement, and this is the rest believers are to enter into and to keep. Man defiled God's rest in creation and Canaan, and now He is resting in that which man cannot defile, in the perfect sacrifice and finished work of His dear Son, and for any one to raise the question of sin, even in thought, is to be guilty of breaking that rest we are enjoined to keep. It is, indeed, a solemn thing to raise a question that God has settled once and for ever. May the Lord lead you, dear reader, into that perfect rest that He Himself now has in Christ.

But, while the blood of Christ is fitted to give a perfect conscience and rest to the soul, it also introduces the believer into a new service—the service of “the living God”. (Heb. ix. 14.) We might well enquire if this service was anywhere foreshadowed in the Levitical types; we have seen that there were certain prohibitions enjoined on the congregation, while the high-priest went into the most holy place. Was there any positive duty enjoined to be done on that day? If we turn to Lev. xxv. 9, we find this command, “Thou shalt cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land”. It is true that this was to be done only once in fifty years, and foreshadows a jubilee yet to come, but the fact that it was to be done on the day of atonement, clearly teaches that it has a practical application to believers, as witnesses unto Christ. And if we turn to the Book of Acts we find how this positive duty was carried out. The risen Christ entered as our great high-priest into the presence of God. The promised Spirit came down, and the chosen little band of witnesses thus endued with power, at once commenced to carry out the commission left them, to “preach repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”. (Luke xxiv. 47.)

If we look carefully at the commands of the Lord Jesus to His apostles “to teach all nations,” to “preach the gospel to every creature,” and how witness-bearing was connected with the descent of the Holy Ghost (Acts i. 8), and also when the Holy Ghost came, He first led the early believers out to the world to bear witness or testimony unto Christ, and then gathered all who believed together as worshippers, we cannot fail to see the radical difference between witness-bearing and worship. We have both clearly defined by the

Apostle Peter, where he calls believers “an holy priesthood” (*Godward*) “to offer up spiritual sacrifices,” and a “royal priesthood” (*Manward*) “to shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9.) Man is always bent on disagreeing with God; at one time separating what God has joined together, and at another time confounding together what He has shewn to be distinct, and in nothing is this more manifested than in the way in which man confounds *worship* with *preaching* the gospel. Now it is not our design to go into this subject by way of proving that preaching the Gospel is not worship, but rather to point out that worship is not testimony. That believers gathering together to “break bread” is not of itself carrying out the divine commission to bear witness unto Christ. The phrase “out on testimony” that we hear so often, is as unscriptural—as it is understood by many—as the term “public worship,” with this difference, that it lies at the other extreme. In chap. xvii. of John, Jesus, in praying to the Father for His disciples, reveals two things, that they were given Him by the Father “out of the world,” and that *they were not of the world even as He was not of the world*, but He also says, “As Thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world.” (Ver. 18.) It is not taking up and maintaining our place of separation *from* the world, that is the New Testament ideal, of testimony, but it is fulfilling our mission as a people “sent into the world”—that is, the divine thought regarding testimony. “And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”. (Acts iv. 33.) “And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord”. (Chap. viii. 25.) “Paul was pressed in the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ”. (Chap. xviii. 5.) “They will not receive thy testimony concerning me”. (Chap. xxii. 18.) These will suffice to shew that what the Apostles and early believers understood by being “out on testimony” was a very different thing from the meaning that many attach to that term now-a-days. It seems to be little else to not a few believers than a device of the devil's to puff them up, and render them useless in the service of Christ. No believers can be right until they are in the right position, but if they make that position a nest to settle down in, they are the most useless and hopeless believers in Christendom. And not only is this sort of *do-nothing* testimony un-

scriptural, but it reveals the spiritual condition of those who are satisfied with it. It shews a state of heart completely out of fellowship with Him "who went about continually *doing good*," "who gave himself for us," who wept over the doomed city of Jerusalem. A heart beating in fellowship with the lover of lost sinners, can never be satisfied with passive witness-bearing—if such a thing be possible—how differently did Paul act when he "by the space of three years *ceased* not to warn every one night and day with tears". (Acts xx. 31.) And those who "daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ". (Chap. v. 42.) Who said, "For we *cannot* but speak the things which we have seen and heard". (Chap. iv. 20.) They were drinking at the fountain of living waters, and they must give out to others. The joy of salvation and resurrection liberty in Christ is so great, and of that nature, that it must have others with whom to share it, and if we have lost the desire for others to possess this blessing, it is a sure proof that we have lost the joy of it ourselves.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. B.

I WAS thinking yesterday how strikingly the Apostle speaks of the stone in 1 Peter ii. He seemed to me to present our Lord as the stone in two aspects, which he distinguishes by the titles "the chief corner-stone," and "the head of the corner"; the "chief corner-stone" is the same as "the stone" for foundation. It is therefore *laid*, while the head of the corner is *brought in* (see Ps. cxix.), and these two conditions of the stone represent *grace* and *glory*, or the present and future dispensations. In the present, grace is dispensed—or Jesus is to be used as the "chief corner-stone". In the future, glory will be dispensed, or Jesus will be *admired* as "the head of the corner". If I wanted to ascertain the stability of a building, or to know whether I might trust myself to it, I would properly look to its foundations. If I desired to enjoy or admire a building, or to be engaged merely with its beauty, it would not be the foundations, but the head-stone I should direct my eye to. So, dear sister, Jesus invites us in both these ways, for *grace* and *glory* are both in Him. He is strength or stability so that we may use Him, and He is beauty so that we may enjoy or admire Him. This dispensation gives

Him to us in grace—the coming one will give Him to us in glory. The Scriptures are very full of the Lord under the figure of a stone. You remember that Daniel tells us as a stone He is to smite the images, and then to fill the whole earth with His power. And Peter, in this place, tells us that He is a *disallowed* stone—disallowed of men, though precious to God. This is a holy and serious truth, for it reminds us that if by faith we are united to Christ, we may fully assure ourselves that we are dear to God, and are precious in His sight, but we may also assure ourselves that there will be a distance between us and the world—for we are one with Him whom *men disallow*. The 119th Psalm shews His people in the latter day bringing in Christ as "the head of the corner"—that is, in glory. And they do so with great joy. So Zechariah anticipates the same (chap. iv.), and then all the glory, all the joy is owned to be the fruit of grace, for the shoutings have this burthen, "grace, grace". The prophet Isaiah has declared that Jesus as a foundation-stone would be refused by the *nation of Israel*, and that only a remnant of them would at first receive Him. As St. Paul says, "they stumbled at that stumbling-stone". So strikingly do the warnings of the prophet and the commentary of the Apostle combine, and together set forth the fact, as we indeed see it with our eyes to this day. And Joseph (Gen. xlix.) represents the stone. For Joseph was *rejected* of men, but *upheld by God*; and it is by that process that the true Joseph has been made the stone and the shepherd. Whether we look at Him as a *gracious* or a *glorious* stone, as the "foundation" or the "head of the corner," both have come from His death and resurrection, from the archers having shot at Him, but the God of Jacob having strengthened Him. Therefore Jacob, seeing Christ in the type of Joseph, says, "From thence is the shepherd the stone of Israel". But this disallowed stone will be the glorified stone by-and-by. He will be the enthroned stone, like the jasper or the sardine. (Rev. iv.) What a history thus does Jesus, as the stone, go through—pierced by the archers, lifted up by the God of Israel, offered as a foundation, disallowed by men but precious all the time with God, at length brought forth in power and glory to smite the enemy, and then to shine as the enthroned or glorious stone for ever. This thought, which has just been going through my mind, dear sister, may lead you also into a happy meditation. May the Lord ever keep you safe in the midst of many temptations, and enable your heart to ponder well the excellence of Christ, above all that may ever show itself to you.

DEAR SIR,—Your correspondent “B” has, in the March number of the *N. Witness*, raised a question which is, doubtless, one of real difficulty to many. Will you kindly give me space for the remarks that follow upon the subject?

We may conceive of the Church of God as existing in His purpose before the world was; we may think of it as manifested in glory with Christ in the day of His appearing when that purpose is realised; or we may consider it as existing at any given time (say to-day) on the earth. If we think of it as it exists now on earth, we may regard it as composed of all upon the globe, however scattered and severed, who are one in Christ, or we may have in our minds the gathered assembly of Christians meeting in a specified place, at a stated time, in the name of the Lord Jesus, say in ——— Street, in the town of ———, at 11 o'clock on Sunday morning. At all times, and in all places, those who meet there are members of the body of Christ. The Christian man at his daily work, the Christian wife guiding the house, the Christian child at school; do not cease, while thus occupied, to be of the Church of God. But on the first day of the week they are assembled together. They are gathered around the Lord Jesus. They are met to worship God in the spirit, to shew forth the death of their Lord, to exercise, for their edification, the gifts that have been bestowed upon them. This is the assembly—the Church.

The first Epistle to the Corinthians—an epistle addressed to all who, in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord—shows, in the 12th chapter, that the body of Christ consists of many members, and has many gifts, and, in the 14th chapter, that there is liberty, in the gathered assembly, for the exercise of such gifts as are for edification. We cannot admit that this chapter is obsolete. We consider its principles still applicable, and that it exhibits the abiding model of the Christian assembly. Though some of the gifts with which the Church was once endowed be found no longer, its great Head is not unmindful of its necessities, nor has He ceased to give gifts for its edification. We contend that these should be exercised on the principles of I Cor. xiv., and cannot allow that chapter to be severed from chap. xii., or set aside as belonging to a bygone age. The age is one. We are not living in a different dispensation from that in which these Corinthian believers lived,

and we do not find a more excellent way of Church-meeting revealed to us in the Scriptures. We cannot, therefore, restrict ministry in the Church, when it is gathered together, to one person, constituting him the only channel through which it can receive edifying, and the only mouthpiece by which its worship and its prayers can be offered, and forbidding others present to take part, even though capable of doing so to edification, impelled to do so, and more in tune at the moment for such a service than the appointed person. We cannot say—there are gifts in the Church, but they shall not be used when the Church is gathered together. I do not wish to put the case harshly or too strongly, but to admit the gifts, and deny their exercise in the assembly, while allowing and encouraging it outside (as in “special services”) is as if one should say to the members of a musical band—you may use your different instruments at any other time and place you find it convenient, but not when you are met in full orchestra.

Holding firmly to the principle of liberty of ministry (*i.e.*, true, God-given ministry) in the Church, when assembled, we also hold fast the liberty of the individual believer to serve God on other occasions where he finds opportunity. If it would be absurd to forbid a musical band to play in concert, it would be tyrannous to forbid one member of it to use his instrument in fitting circumstances apart from the rest.

It is most desirable to hold meetings for preaching the word of God at stated times by persons qualified for this service. We value and practise a stated ministry of preaching and teaching, while we carefully distinguish between a mixed audience addressed by a preacher, and the priestly congregation of believers, in recognised fellowship with each other, met for worship and the discharge of the functions of the Church of God.

With regard to taking part in meetings not held on the distinctive basis of the Church, and not professing to be so held, we may be instructed from the 13th chap. of the Acts of the Apostles. There we read that Paul, a member of the body of Christ, a minister of the Church of God, came with his company to Antioch in Pisidia, and “went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.” And

Paul did not refuse to speak when he was asked, but said on. He spoke plainly and faithfully, without compromise, but he spoke, and what he said shewed that he had no *fellowship* with the sin of the nation to which he and his hearers belonged. He used his liberty, and kept his conscience clear.

And, observe, Paul did not look upon his audience merely as people to be testified against. He regarded them as those who might be saved, and taught better and higher things than they then knew. This is the spirit in which we should be, both in preaching to the unsaved, and in seeking to set the truth before brethren who have erred, or who are as yet unenlightened.

Again, when at Philippi (Acts xvi.), he and those with him went out of the city by a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made, and sat down and spoke unto the women which resorted thither. How these prayer-meetings were conducted, we do not know, but Paul went and took the opportunity of usefulness they afforded.

We are, then, entitled and bound to hold liberty of ministry in the gathered assembly, exercised under the leading of the Holy Ghost, under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as in the presence of God, who is not the author of confusion but of peace, and also to maintain liberty of ministry apart from the gathered assembly, wherever fitting opportunity is found for its exercise.

Lord, we love the habitation

Where Thy glorious honour dwells,
Built on Christ, our strong foundation,
Every stone Thy glory tells.

Once in darkness, dead and silent,
Raised by resurrection might,
Soon to shine with Christ resplendent,
Heirs of God, and sons of light.

In Thy holy name, Lord Jesus,
Thus we meet to worship Thee,
Lowly, as but dust and ashes,
Bent the head and bowed the knee,
Yet in Thee, through grace, accepted,
With these priestly garments on,
Lo! we stand erect, victorious,
Beauteous in the Holy One.

Strong the Rock once laid in Zion,
Glorious grace that built us there,
Of our God, the living temple,
Thus Thy praises we declare.
Soon the shout, the voice, the trumpet,
Soon the last one gathered in,
Morning Star and Root of David,
Bid the nightless day begin.

A. S.

TWO LIKENESSES

GIVEN TO HIS BRIDE BY A DEPARTING BRIDEGROOM.

A WORD TO CHRISTIANS

IN order to have a likeness, there must be a reality. To discern the likeness, the reality must be known, and in measure as it is known and loved, will the likeness be prized; otherwise, it may be of no value, however beautiful. Not for the value of a likeness do we regard it as among our treasures, but inasmuch as it brings more vividly to memory the loved form it represents, do we esteem it. This is its value to us. To one unacquainted with that form the likeness will have no such voice, and so it is in the things of God and the kingdom of His dear Son, specially with the truth we are about to look at. The heart to whom Christ is all, finds His words more than "much fine gold," and His ways "pleasantness and peace". To others they may seem as "idle tales".

Two great realities are taught us in the Word of God as accomplished in the cross of Christ; and our blessed Lord Jesus, before ascending to the Father, left His people two beautiful likenesses of the same, that, by them, these realities might be ever fresh in our remembrance. If we know and love the reality, we will readily accept and prize the likeness. First, look at the reality.

The first lesson of the Cross is, "Christ died, was buried, and rose again" *for us*. (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4; Rom. v. 8.)

The second—we are dead (Gal. ii. 20), buried (Rom. vi. 4), and risen (Col. iii. 1) *with Him*.

As our substitute He died *for us*, as our representative we have died *with Him*. *For us*, as sinners, the Lamb of God died, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. (1 Pet. ii. 24.) *For us* He was buried, our sins, too, being buried in the depths (Micah vii. 19), and remembered no more (Heb. x. 17). *For us* He rose, that we might be justified. (Rom. iv. 25.) This is the glad tidings of the gospel, and when a sinner believes the message, he is forgiven (Eph. i. 6), cleansed (Rev. i. 5), saved (1 Cor. xv. 2), and accepted in the Beloved (Eph. i. 6). The death of Christ *for us* is the foundation of every blessing flowing to us in time or eternity, and in heaven gathered with ransomed myriads around His throne, our everlasting song shall be of the Lamb slain *for us*.

But in the cross of Christ we also learn that we have died *with Him* as children of Adam, with a sinful

nature, enmity against God. (Rom. viii. 7.) We have met our doom in the cross, there our end has come in the sight of God. We are "crucified with Christ" (Gal. ii. 20), "our" old man is crucified with Him (Rom. vi. 6). Only by death could we be freed from the mastery of sin (Rom. vi. 7), the power of the law (Rom. vii. 4), and the rudiments of the world (Col. ii. 20). This freedom now is ours, for we are dead, and have been buried, and are now risen *with Him*. (Col. iii. 1.) His death, burial, and resurrection our own. Glorious reality. Wondrous truth, to be apprehended by faith, and enjoyed now. To keep these truths ever before us, the Lord Jesus, ere He left earth, instituted and left for us the two likenesses of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper the likeness of His death *for us*. Baptism the likeness of our death *with Him*. The latter to be observed by believers once, the former to be repeated "till He come".

Christian Baptism was *instituted* by the Lord Jesus, after He rose from the dead. (Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16.) Its order is *after* believing, and *only* believers or disciples to be baptised.

Christian Baptism is *explained*, in Rom. vi. 4, 5, as "burial into the *likeness* of the death of Christ," buried with Him "in baptism, wherein also ye are risen" (Col. ii. 12.) As Noah and His family were carried by the waters of judgment into a new world, so, by our resurrection with Christ are we carried into a new creation (see 1 Pet. iii. 20-21), and water-baptism is a beautiful figure of the same. Thus, when a believer is baptised, the water closing over his body, he ignores his place in the first creation, he is buried out of it in figure, and, when raised up out of the water, he confesses thereby he is risen with Christ. He receives in baptism a likeness of death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. Where the reality is known and loved, the likeness will never be questioned, but gladly obeyed.

Christian Baptism, as *celebrated* in the Acts of the Apostles, is our guide and example in every age. Thus, when Philip goes to Samaria, he preaches Christ (Acts viii. 5), and *when* they believed they were baptised, *men* and *women* (Acts viii. 12). An eunuch from Ethiopia is converted in the desert of Gaza. (Acts viii. 27-39.) He learns, from the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ's death *for him*, and, as a consequence, his death *with Christ*, and at once demands of Philip, "See, here is *water*, what doth hinder me to

be baptised?" (Acts viii. 36.) No Scribes or Pharisees being at hand to offer any objection, or defile his Spirit-taught soul with their traditions, the young convert steps from his chariot *into* the water,—is there buried with Christ in baptism, and goes on his way rejoicing. Having known the reality, he hastens to receive the likeness. Cornelius and his house, having *all* received the Holy Ghost, are baptised (Acts x. 44-48), and the Philippian jailor and his household, *all* believing, are baptised the same hour (Acts xvi. 33). Twelve men at Ephesus had already been baptised with John's baptism (Matt. iii. 11), but hearing of Jesus, to whom John pointed, they offer no objection to receive the likeness of Christian baptism, but are baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts xix. 1-5). The great Apostle of the Gentiles, on being converted, is asked—"Why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised" (Acts xxii. 16), and immediately allows the disciple Ananias to baptise him (Acts ix. 18), taking thus the first step in that wondrous life of obedience to the word of God, which only ended in death. We see Christian baptism, therefore, *instituted* by the Lord Jesus, *celebrated* in the Acts of the Apostles, and explained in the Epistles, but not *one Scripture in the Word of God, neither precept or example, for sprinkling infants*. Christian reader, if you have not yet received the likeness your blessed Lord has left you, delay not to do it. "Arise, and be baptised." Any baptised believer may do this for you, it neither requires human "ordination" or human "license" to do so. (See Acts viii. 5, 12-38; x. 48.)

The second likeness is the Lord's Supper. *Instituted* by the Lord Jesus the "*same night* in which He was betrayed" (1 Cor. xi. 23; Luke xxii. 12), bearing with it all the sacred memories of that wondrous night, and His own request, "this do in remembrance of me," to be continued till He come. (1 Cor. xi. 26.) It is a feast for His disciples *only*, where they gather to remember Him, to celebrate His victory and their deliverance.

Explained in 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 23-29 as the Lord's Supper, where the members of His body feast on Him, the "roasted Lamb". (Ex. xii.; 1 Cor. v.) The bread and wine are emblems of His broken body and poured-out blood. Thus they *shew* His death "till He come" to gather them around His table above, where these likenesses will not be needed, for "they shall see His face". (Rev. xxii. 4.) Hallelujah!

The Lord's Supper *celebrated*, we find, in the Acts of the Apostles, three thousand are converted, baptised, and added at Pentecost, and continue stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (Acts ii. 42.) The two likenesses were both received. Again, in Acts xx. 7, in the first day of the week, when the disciples *came together to break bread*, Paul preached, &c. To come together to "break bread" was their practice, not to hear preaching (although on this occasion, Paul about to leave them, did preach), but to remember Jesus in the "breaking of bread". This was done every first day of the week. (See John xx. 19-26; Acts xx. 7.) No president was needed, for "the King sitteth at His table" to comfort, cheer, and fill with joy His guests, making their hearts burn as He talks with them, and around and to Him they gather, to worship and adore Him. Although they only number "two or three" thus gathering, "there am I" is the Lord's own promise (Matt. xviii. 20), and every obedient Christian gathering in the first day of the week to break bread finds the promise fulfilled. There they meet the Lord. To neglect the feast is to slight the love that planned it, and cold must the heart be towards Christ who can live in continuous neglect, or wilful disobedience, of so precious a likeness, of so great a reality, as the agony and death of God's beloved Son, not to mention the fact that some of the Lord's redeemed can sit with the unconverted, and even give and take from the hands of the "enemies of the cross" the emblems of the body and blood of their dear Redeemer. O how deeply is His heart oftentimes wounded in the house of His friends.

Christian reader, these two likenesses are provided for you by Him who loves you, and left in the word for your reception and obedience, and, if hitherto you have been careless about Him, be no longer, but, by obedience to His Word, shew your love (John xiv. 23) to Him who has bought you with His blood, and is coming again to receive you to Himself.

J. R.

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed, at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. iii. 23, 24.)

"CHILDREN OF LIGHT."

IT is at once manifest that the spirit of judgment is solemnly and without reserve condemned by our Lord. This must have been so. We may say, "judge not, that ye be not judged" is therefore His word upon it. Delight in judging others, a readiness or aptness to do so, is thus at once rebuked by Him. Careful watching against the exercise of such a spirit should accordingly be cultivated with holy diligence, for, indeed, it is very contrary to Christ. But there is with equal certainty to be the action of judgment ever going on in the soul of the saint; and himself and his ways are to be the subject. He is ever to be the judge of Himself, and this is one way of keeping the feast of unleavened bread, that feast which accompanied the passover, as now our joy in the full remission of sins is ever to be associated with the full condemnation of all evil in ourselves. These things are plain. But there are other scenes and exercises of judgment. In the Churches, for instance, we are taught to keep the *gathering or the body of the saints clean*, as each *individual saint* is taught to keep himself clean. The old leaven is to be purged out of the assembly of the saints, as it is out of the soul of each of them. They come together for the worse and not for the better, if this be not so. For the profession they make of the name of Jesus, if evil and corrupt, as an unjudged thing must necessarily be, gives the adversary occasion to reproach that name; and thus such a church or assembly of professing people of God, instead of being a testimony *to*, is a testimony *against* Jesus. This is also simple and clear from Scripture. But still there is more. For though, as we saw, the spirit of judgment or delight in the exercise of it is surely condemned as something most contrary to Christ, yet still there is to be judgment, and, in one sense, judgment upon everything. *Jeremiah*, for instance, was ever judging all around him. He dwelt in the midst of evil. Jerusalem was then full of provocations, and Jeremiah could not but judge it. But we see *this connected with grief*, because of it. *Connected with deep sorrows in his own soul*. He wept over it. He confessed it to God. He spoke to the people about departing from it, and *pleaded with the Lord about forgiving it*. There was nothing of the spirit of judgment in Jeremiah. No delight in the exercise of it. That would have been, as we saw, an undivine, an *un-Christlike affection*. But he sorrowed

over the evil, and thus his judgment of it was holy. As Abraham, standing with the Lord, judges the sin of Sodom. But the judgment of it was associated with intercession; and this made it, like Jeremiah's, a holy judgment. So with *Ezekiel*, he looks back on Jerusalem and judges the evil that is there. In parables, figures, and symbolic actions, he sets forth all that evil just to expose it all, and to show its ripeness for the judgment of God. But, all the while, he is separated entirely from all that which he was judging. Not a speck of it stains his raiment. For he is among the captives at Chebar; but this evil is in Jerusalem, and therefore he can judge with a holy judgment. The holiness of Jeremiah's judgment is expressed in one way, by tears and sorrows over the thing he is judging. The holiness of Ezekiel's judgment is expressed in another way—by entire separation from even the scene of the evil, but each, in its season, is exactly according to God. Lot could not judge Sodom, as Ezekiel judged Jerusalem, for, unlike Ezekiel, he was in the midst of it. But these things become our holy patterns. In exercising judgment on the course of the world around us, we must have Jeremiah's tears or Ezekiel's separation. If this be not so, we cannot use their ministry divinely. If we are boasting over the evil; or exalting ourselves because of it, or if we are not clearing ourselves from the touch of it, we shall have no divine authority or strength in speaking of it or judging it. Paul could judge the Corinthians on this principle. He could say to them, "Ye are yet carnal, for whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" Because he was separate from all such envy, and could add, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" He could also judge the boasted human learning or eloquence that was there on the same principle, for of himself he could say, "I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom". This is a strong illustration of what I am saying, and we are hindered in similar judgment, because we are not thus like Paul or Ezekiel, with sufficient certainty in our own souls, separate from what we judge; or, with Jeremiah's godly sorrow, weeping over it. But beside this judgment, in the way of positive active testimony against evil, there is also constant judgment, by the *passive testimony* of the *light that shines in us*. This was the judgment which the life of Jesus was ever to perfection, passing on all

around Him. He did not come to judge, but He was ever judging. He came to save sinners, but He was ever judging sin, if not by word of mouth, by the shewing of His life. He was ever saving sinners, healing, feeding, cleansing, quickening them; but all was judgment likewise. At times He would judge by word of mouth, as when He met a Pharisee actively and immediately resisting the salvation which He was bringing and publishing. But this was only *at times*. Yet, in another sense, He was *ever* judging. The light of His life, in such perfect separateness as it was, was ever judging all that was around Him. He left nothing but the little that was of faith or of God's Spirit, unmanifested. There was no speech or language, but its voice was heard. He thus testified of the world, that its works were evil, and such a light was hated by such a world. I might here somewhat turn aside for a moment just to observe, in connection with this, that our Lord was light in the world, in a twofold character. He was the Light of life, or quickening Light, as being a beam from the Father's bosom (so to speak), and, as such, He was *quicken*ing every poor sinner who would look to Him, like the adulteress. (John viii. 12.) But He was also the *judging Light*. The Light that refused the darkness of the world, as being the perfect expression of *God*. He told the world that God was light. (1 John i. 5.) In this character, its darkness not comprehending Him, hated Him—and in this twofold shining of light in Him, He was the witness of all *righteousness* and grace—of righteousness to judge men, of grace to save them; and thus, as I said, while He was constant in the ministry of saving sinners, He was constantly judging them—saving sinners, but judging all their ways. To be, indeed, a child of Light, is to act after this pattern of the Light of the world. A child of light is ever in his measure judging and saving. Light in Jesus, said, "He that followeth me shall not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life". Light in us says, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light". Thus, in both Him and us, it rebukes and yet saves. The only difference is that He preaches Himself. We preach Him, not ourselves. He says that He will give His followers the light. We say to them whom our light rebukes, "*Christ shall give thee light*". This is, indeed, the excellent action of a child of light (Eph. v.), and we are exhorted to walk as children of light. If we do so, the darkness of the world will find

no countenance from us, but the sin and misery of poor sinners will find all healing, guidance, and comfort—a glorious place to put us into, if we could but duly prize it! Fellowship with any evil so far takes us out of this place and character. So does the refusal of doing in any wise that which is good. We are, as such children, to be ever acting in grace, but abstaining from all appearance of evil—to be *followers of God as dear children*, and yet carrying ourselves in *all purity as becometh saints*. (Eph. v.)

J. G. B.

“PLAINNESS OF SPEECH.”

THE Apostle John in his first epistle writes to “fathers”, “young men”, and “little children”. His epistle shows the children of God as a family; hence it speak of “fathers”, “young men”, and “little children”. We desire to call attention to these three phases or stages of the Christian life. We are afraid that by many they are much overlooked. A brother may have the “word of knowledge”, and yet lack the “word of wisdom” as to when, where, and how to use his knowledge; and where this is so, there is sure to be confusion. Let it be observed that the “word of wisdom” comes first in 1 Cor. xii. 8, and it is “given by the Spirit”. In James i. 5, we read—“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God”. Thus wisdom—not the wisdom of this world, but that which cometh from God—is within the reach of all, “if any of you”, &c.

It surely requires wisdom from God to know how to preach the gospel. “He that winneth souls is wise”. (Prov. xi. 30.) And it is no less needful to know when, and what, and how to teach the saints. In 1 Thess. we have some very sweet and touching expressions of the Apostle’s tender and affectionate care for the saints—might we not say, “little children?”—in the church at Thessalonica. In chap. ii. 7, Paul says, “We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children”. Dear brethren, can the young believers with whom we come in contact bear testimony to us as they did at Thessalonica to Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, as to our holy, just, and unblamable behaviour among them? (Verse 10.) Is it true of us, “Ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children”? (Verses 11, 12.)

We have a growing conviction that many who believe

themselves gifted to teach saints, take too much for granted, as to the knowledge and grace possessed by those who hear them. We have found in our experience that truth which, because familiar to ourselves, we judged to be so also to those who heard it, was really not understood or received at all.

In Nehemiah viii. 8, we read—“So they read in the book, in the law of God *distinctly*, and gave the sense, and caused them to *understand* the reading”. The three points embraced in this portion of the Word are well worth the consideration of those who seek to minister the Word among God’s children. As to the first point, reading distinctly, we have often been led to ask ourselves, does that brother consider his own words of more importance than the Word of God, his reading being so careless? We ought to read the Word *distinctly*, so as to give the sense. It may be, some brother is able both to read distinctly and give the sense, yet his patience has been tried by the dulness of the hearer; still, let such remember the words—“caused them to understand the reading”. We apprehend the Apostle Peter is seeking this when he says—“I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets”. And the Lord Jesus, in Matt. xiii. 51, asks His disciples—“Have ye understood all these things”? Would it not be productive of much good if brethren would ask a similar question at saints among whom they labour, for saints have often difficulties as well as the unsaved? We may be sure, if we do not cause those who hear us to understand what we preach or teach, there will be little, if any, fruit. (1 Cor. xiv. 14.)

It would be well if those gifted to teach, and who exercise their gift, would remember that there may be amongst those they are ministering to “babes, young men, and fathers”, and seek grace and wisdom to speak accordingly. Is there not a danger of the “flock being over-driven”? How short-suffering even an elder brother is apt to be with the “little ones”, because they cannot walk fast enough, or see things quick enough. Let us not forget that the “servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all, apt to teach, patient (or forbearing). (2 Tim. ii. 24.) How sweet it is—no matter how much of God’s truth we may have learned, or how far advanced we may be in the ways of the Lord—when we can, in happy fellowship with the Spirit, come down (in our teaching) to

the level of "little children", and, through His grace, minister the sincere *milk* of the Word, even although we should by others be accounted "shallow teachers". Let us use "words easy to be understood", and "great plainness of speech", that "all may be edified".

M. K.

January 21, 1876.

[Young "Children" and "Fathers" can live on "milk," but while the latter, if in health, appreciate *strong meat*, the former starve on it.—ED.]

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM J. G. B. TO —

THE remembrance of you, surely, is pleasant to us—far more so than it is to yourself, I doubt not. For, if one may speak for another, I can well suppose that self has long wearied you. Paul found it as a carcase at his heels, all the day long, and his figure is not too strong for the experience of our souls, after we have been giving ourselves a full reflection for a minute or two. But God has brought in another object to fill our vision. And what fullness of repose for the soul, when it can get one calm, quiet, believing look at it. Oh, that that image may move or rest under the eye of our soul abidingly, dear sister. For, indeed, it is a weary scene. The strife of tongues abroad—the clash of human thoughts—of the interests, passions, and tempers of men. And then, more keenly sorrowing than all, the little power of grace in the saints to keep out of sight and out of action, the flesh, with its affections and lusts: the waters that, working there, do cast up their mire and dirt continually. But the more we see or feel of this, the more is grace and divine love magnified. We thus get sweetness out of even such an eater as the failings and the weaknesses of the saints. For all such set off the exhaustless riches of that kindness of God our Saviour, which rolls all away.

I was thinking, dear sister, just as I sat down to write to you, of the blessed way in which God has *steadily* (to speak as a man) been revealing Himself throughout this world's history. Ever faithful to Himself, ever telling out the one precious tale that "He is love". Thus He revealed Himself in all the bountifulness and attraction of the garden of Eden. That was His witness to Adam. But when that testimony was blotted through man's folly, who refused to read his happiness in God, and was for making his

own happiness, still our God changes not. He reveals Himself in the promise that the woman's seed should repair the recent mischief which man's folly had wrought. There is God quite Himself still. It is in the love of a promise that He is to be seen now, as it was in the love of a garden of delights He was to be seen at the beginning. Adam, Eve, and Abel by faith enjoyed this revelation, and walked with God—happy, therefore, though toiling in sweat of brow, because God was the same calm, unchanged, unchangeable God of love to them. Cain, in his folly, refused this testimony, and hugged his own misery and ruin, took his own skill and labour instead of taking God and His promised resources for his liberty, and joy, and portion. So, afterwards, the sons of God became apostate. Instead of walking in the faith of their fathers, they began to take their own way again, like Adam or Cain. They took wives of all that they chose. They made their own happiness. No rejoicing in the mother of all living, nor in the man gotten from the Lord, as Adam and Eve rejoiced, believing the promise, but they rejoiced in the wives they had chosen. Man was flesh. There were giants, men great in flesh, mighty and renowned ones, but none of them animated with the precious faith and joy of the promise—none calling on the name of the Lord, as Seth had done, offering the lamb as Abel had done, or walking with God, like Enoch. Their flesh, and their credit in the world, and their wives were all to them. But this, *their way*, was their folly. God is not to be seen in all this. It was man's way. But God, again Himself, again the witness of His own love, is seen in the act of calling Noah out of all this misery and death to which man was reducing himself. God repeats, as it were, the promise to Noah. God tells Noah again that He had resources in Himself for all the world's ruin, as He had of old told Adam, and He orders the ark of gopher wood to be prepared, to carry Noah out of death into life again, out of judgment into a kingdom again, as of old he had spoken to Adam of the woman's seed. This is God's witness in that day. The wickedness then abroad was the fruit of man's departure from God—the witness of man taking his own way. But Noah preserved, Noah blest, Noah made happy again and honourable again, in a ruined creation—that is God's witness. That is the fruit of God's way having been observed, of His revelation having been believed and valued. That is the blessed end of one who would

trust God, and commit the making of his happiness to Him. So, after this, the earth goes its own way again. Babel is the fruit of man's folly, and all the scatterings and divisions that disgrace and sadden the whole human family to this day, have come from man giving up the promise of God—no longer feeding on divine joys and resources, but seeking his own happiness *in his city and his tower*, the strength and honour that he sought and fashioned for himself. But God is seen in Abraham. There God's witness is to be found. One drawn forth from this confusion, to walk in the light of the knowledge of God—one brought back to the promise, brought back to divine resources, and made to trust in the Lord for life and blessing—in such an one God's work and witness are to be seen. Blessed relief this is to turn from man to God, and to see that it is only in the comfort and liberty of the promise that God is to be seen, and His way discovered, while all the confusion and evil enters through repeated departures of man from that which divine love had given. And the same is still strikingly presented in the outward history. The Lord drew Abraham's seed out of Egypt, as Abraham's God, all in His own grace. He delivered them from taskmasters. He guided them through the wall of waters that blocked up their passage. He put a new song into their mouth. He fed them and clothed them in desert places. He bore their manners, and did not punish their murmurings; nor did He leave His mercy till He had planted them in the joy and honour of the Mount of God. (Exod. i. 18.) But man must take his own way again. He will have a righteousness of his own—stand on terms of independency like Adam, Cain, or the builders of Babel. He forgets the promise, refuses to feed on the provisions of God, and insists on taking his own way, making his own happiness and righteousness, and standing thus in himself and separate from God. (19th.) There was immediate fruit of this, and man's "way" was again found to be his "folly". But the fruit of this is only fully read in the sorrows, and scattering, and degradation of Abraham's seed to this day. Sinai is *still* gendering bondage, and man, who sought his own happiness, tastes misery: he sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. But the blessed one is not in all this. Departure from Him is in all this. Man and not God is reflected in the present dispersion of Israel. But God is still Himself, and when He rises to bear witness to Himself, it is still after the pattern of the

garden of Eden, or after the pattern of the original promise, or of Noah's ark, or of Abraham's call out of a world of confusion and evil. It is in the face of Jesus Christ—there we get the full image of the blessed One. And all there is grace, and goodness, and love, without measure. There God is to be seen, and the present sorrows and confusions that are abroad in the earth come of other sources, and tell other secrets than God's secrets. They are not His witnesses, but the witnesses of departure from Him. As James tells us, that *no evil* comes from Him, but that *all good* does. (James i. 13, 17.) And we learn the same doctrine from two striking passages. In one (John v. 17) the Lord tells the Jews that, all through their history, God had been acting as the Father, or witnessing to Himself *in grace*, or, after the manner of the pool of Bethesda, that He was reflected, not in the diseased ones that were lying there, but in the waters that healed them. In another (Acts xiv. 17) Paul teaches the Gentiles that God had been at all times bearing witness to Himself, in all that was *good*, that the service of idols was *their* own way, but the rain and the fruitful seasons, and the food that gave gladness of heart, was *His* way, and, finally, we are, with great authority, told by St. John where to look for God's testimony (1 John v. 9), that it is in the love, and in the blessed fact that we have life in Him.

PSALM XXXIII.

THIS Psalm contains the words of one who knew what it was to walk through a lost world, pressed with trial and temptation. They are the words of the Lord Jesus when on earth, in circumstances of trial and sorrow. He was not unconscious of the existence of danger, of snares, of the roaring lion going about to devour; but, in the midst of these circumstances, with a heart peculiarly tender and sensitive, He could say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want". Here was the full sense of the care, the tenderness, the all-sufficiency of God. It is also our full privilege to say the same, because we are identified with Jesus. There is no limit to the Shepherd's care. The want may be spiritual—it may be the need of outward blessings, or of some joy here: whatever it is, we may still say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

(2nd). "He leadeth me beside the still waters." The false shepherd, Satan, is always trying to make us

think we shall find green pastures in that which nature simply gives; if we cannot find it to-day, he deludes us with the idea that we certainly shall to-morrow. But Jesus knew this could not be, He found nothing but barrenness and drought here; nevertheless, He lay down in the green pastures, where His soul was occupied in communion with the Father—in contemplating His love, care, and blessing; and, though we shall never meet with anything here save barrenness and a parched wilderness, yet, whilst we receive the streams of the Father's blessing which flow to us through Christ Jesus, we shall know what it is to lie down in green pastures. We shall ever feel, more or less, the different passions of our souls—hatred, affection—rising up into dominion, and giving us much trouble. We must never expect to be freed entirely from this during our sojourn here; but even though the storm within us may be great when turning to God and to the consideration of what He is as our portion, we will be enabled to say, "He leadeth me beside the still waters". It is needful that we should *turn away* from the evil, as dead in Christ, and remember that God is our portion.

(3rd). "He restoreth my soul." Properly, He revives—the expression being intended to relate to the renewal of life which has become faint and weak, of which Jesus felt the need when sorely pressed with the state of things around, and the trial of daily circumstances into which He was cast. But *restoration* conveys the idea of sin, a departure from God. This was never true of Jesus, though often of us, and graciously are we restored, but it is not this truth that the 3rd verse is intended to illustrate. Jesus did not think it strange that He should feel this pressure, but He said, "He restoreth my soul". If there is any anxiety as to treading in the paths of life, remember "He leadeth in the paths of righteousness for *His name's sake*". How often do we turn back under our shepherd's guidance, and even rebel against Him, so that, unless we could say for His name's sake, we should utterly faint under the sense of our own unworthiness and failure.

(4th). Jesus always felt this world to be the valley of the shadow of death, a lost world, where death reigned, and Satan was the God—the ruling prince—but He saith, "I will fear no evil". Though Jesus saw that Satan was here—though sensitively alive to all the trial, danger, and snares to which they who

sojourn in this world are exposed, He said, "I will fear no evil, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me," these are the two emblems of care and sustainment. It is not that the rod may not sometimes give a blow. Nevertheless, it is the rod of comfort. For whose hand is it that holds it? Is it not the hand of our God?

(5th and 6th verses.) Surely these describe the joys given here. I pass over it that I may speak on this last point: these joys are but the pledges of what we shall fully learn in the House, the abiding dwelling-place, at the end. There we shall not need to say, "I shall not want," there we shall experience no more need—we shall rest from all our labour, as God did from His. In the midst of our blessings here, we need the assurance of the abiding fullness of blessing at the end. Jesus has come to the end, and His glory is our joys—His fullness of blessedness *ours*. There is nothing which is now made good to Jesus, that is not our present portion. It is not in reviewing our past lives when in the world that we learn what sin is, but when we are endeavouring to walk in the paths of life and light—to walk as remembering God is our Shepherd—that we feel our failure, and learn truly to value redemption and the preciousness of that blood which cleanseth from all sin. I would say, in conclusion. What was Jesus in the world? As a partridge hunted in the mountains—through suffering and trial He learned to open His tender bosom to the weary heart; and if, through a similar path we learn to do this, it will be very blessed. He knew no sin, but He learned the bitterness of sorrow, and of heavy pressure. Thus He was meek and lowly, and therefore invites us to learn of Him—to find rest in Him.

B. W. N.

It becomes every saint, in his or her measure, to be the witness of this. Oh, to learn more of Jesus! To be taken up more entirely with Him! "For ever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven." What a comfort! *The Living Word*. Commotion, change, failure, disappointment, dissolution—these go on below; but Jesus sits upon the throne above, and it is a throne of *grace* still, and will be till the feeblest of the ransomed flock is called to inherit the throne of glory. (1 Sam. ii. 8, 9.) Oh, may the Lord's beloved ones think of this, and pray for one another constantly and earnestly, until the day dawn and the shadows flee away.

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

ACTS V.
(FRAGMENTS.)

HOW soon, how *very soon*, after God's infinite grace in giving the Holy Ghost, and in gathering souls round, and to a living Christ—how soon this *terrible* affair occurred. This is the *first* cloud, as it were, in the beautiful sky, in the earlier chapters of the Acts. Hitherto, things had gone on most grandly, gloriously, holly! Here is the first sign of something being done in the assembly of God contrary to His holy will. It is a wonderful thing, beloved friends, how *very soon*, in each dispensation that the Lord has given unto men, something has been done to *upset* God's order. When He put Adam in Paradise, it was only a few hours after he was created, that he fell, and then things went from bad to worse, until the flood came, and cleared the earth. God gave Noah authority, and things were nearly restored, when he got drunk. Then, when God brought Israel out of Egypt, and gathered them to Sinai, Aaron was hardly installed as the priest of God, before Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord. Then Israel corrupted themselves, and set up a *king*; then after David, Solomon reigned, but his wives turned away his heart, and soon things got from *bad to worse*, till the kingdom was swept away. And here, how *very soon* was the beginning of failure. This is the first hint in the church of God, that things would not keep as God had set them up. Here are Ananias and Sapphira pretending to be what they were *not*. And so, when man is allowed to be or to do anything, all ends in failure; not that *God* gives up His purpose when His own time has come, but all will be put forth in a better state of things by-and-by.

Did Noah fail when he was made, as it were, the king of the world? Did Aaron's sons fail? But see in Rev. iii. and iv., the Priesthood set up again in heaven, and in such a way that failure *cannot* get in. Those seven blessings in Rev. ii. and iii., said to allude to the various dispensations, and to show what man has capsized, God will set up again in beauty and power. The thing in man's hand, every tending to ruin; in Christ's hand, ever enduring.

Now, what was the crime of which Ananias and Sapphira were guilty? It strikes me that it was pretending to be more real and devoted to God than they were;—there was a *reserve* at the bottom. Now, beloved, this is *very solemn*. God is not mocked. Even

in singing an hymn, had we not better take care ere we challenge His judgment? It must be a solemn thing to *say* to the Heart-searcher that we desire to be *thorough*, and yet to have some reserve after all.

You are not to conclude, because Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, that they were *lost*. They were guilty of sin in the assembly of God, and God judged it. The reason why God thus interfered was to keep the Church pure. He does not strike people dead now, while they are guilty of enormous sins. He is letting things *alone* to ripen for judgment. Things have got into chaos in the church, and yet requires an exercised conscience to see things in *God's light*; to see things in any measure as God sees them. In the beginning God interposed when there was something wrong, and judged it *instantly*; so, in 1 Cor. xi. 30, "weak and sickly", not discerning the Lord's body. How many come in bustling and late, thinking *little* how they disturb the worship of others! There is no taking the shoes off the feet, remembering the place is *holy ground*.

God is now speaking to those who have the hearing ear and *trembling* heart. He is not now dealing as He did in the *beginning* of this dispensation; but it seems to me *so solemn*. Let us take *heed*, and see to it, that we are *real*, that we are *genuine*. God may appear as if He took no notice, but He will speak out some day. How good it was of God, that when He did interfere, it was in order to keep the assembly pure. Does it not show us how careful we ought to be to keep out mere profession? It ought to be our duty to watch each other. (See Heb. xii. 13)—"Make straight paths for your feet." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Looking diligently lest *any man* fail of the grace of God." Not merely watch ourselves, but others in the assembly; *acting the Bishop* (for so the meaning is) to each other; overseeing, lest any man fail, lest there be any spiritual fornicator, who for one morsel sold his birthright.

Beloved, my duty is to set before you the *whole* counsel of God. God is very jealous for the holiness of those who come near Him. "I will be sanctified in those who come nigh to me." Pray, bear in mind, that the louder our profession is, the more jealous should we be; the whiter the dress, the more careful of a spot. These are *not* popular doctrines, but we don't want popularity. May we *see to these solemn things*! The only proof of our being right with God, while the Lord

Jesus is away, is our having the Holy Ghost. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Must not the Holy Ghost have been *present* when Ananias tells Him a lie? Now, is the Holy Ghost in our midst or *not*? It seems to me, beloved, that if we really believe in the *immediate presence* of God, there would be a seriousness of manner even in the way we take our seats! We should so *feel* the immediate presence of God that we should do *anything* rather than disturb it.

Now, either God the Holy Ghost is *here*, or He is *not*? If He is sinned away, then we are nothing. *Is* the Holy Ghost with us? We *know* He is. See, then, what it involves. Read the Epistle of Jude. God will speak *out* in His own *time*, and when He *does*, it will be *awful*. It is the only place in all the Word of God where our faith is called "most holy", because of the iniquity everywhere abounding. It shows us that we should be more careful than ever, not merely in our bed-chamber, but "building up yourselves, praying in the Holy Ghost". In Acts ii., the Holy Ghost came down. When did He go away? If He *has* gone, we are not Christ's. Whenever He *does* go, He will take up the true people of God, and leave the shams behind.

Oh, dear friends, do see how *careful* we should be of ourselves! Saying we surrender everything, and yet, having a little reserve! The crime in Ananias was pretending to be more than he really was.

Let us transport ourselves back to those days in the fifth chapter of Acts. Don't you *feel* that God was present? Could you stand it? A man telling a lie in the very presence of God! "Holiness becometh thine House, oh! Lord, *for ever*." Let us spend the next half hour on our faces before the Lord. Is there one Christian here who has not cause to be deeply humbled on account of continual failure? Surely we need it both for ourselves and for spots in others. These things are *solemn realities*. May we seek to be a *holy* people! Amen.

THERE are two pleas which are always valid before God and with God—*Jesus died*, and *Jesus lives*. Here the believer rests upon an eternal foundation. Heaven and earth will pass away, but this rock, the Christ of God, moves *never*. "The righteous one is an everlasting foundation." (Prov. x. 35.) How calm, how secure the soul that trusts in Him! There is consolation in Christ when all is slipping around—when there is not a green leaf for the eye to rest on, or a twig to stay the wearied wing. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

ANSWERS

10

QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH FELLOWSHIP.

(See *Witness* for April).

1. **W**E get the Lord's receiving in John vi. 37. "All that the Father hath given shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Here we see the Lord receiving into the Church, which is His body, from which He will never cast out or put away one that He has received.

2. Undoubtedly, one having been received by the Lord, and then seeking fellowship with His saints, gathered to His name, would have to be received by them as was Paul (Acts ix. 27; also Rom. xv. 9). Here we see saints exhorted to receive one another as Christ also has received us to the glory of God. It was with a perfect knowledge that the Lord received us, and surely this implies that there should be knowledge on the part of those receiving, and of the one wishing to be received.

3. Putting away by the Assembly can only be from that to which it has received. (See 1 Cor. v. 13). "Put away from among yourselves." A person being in that condition that the Lord by His Word orders putting away, we are responsible as the House of God to carry out His rule. (Matt. xviii. 18.) "Whosoever ye shall bind on earth *shall have been* bound in heaven."

4. 2 Tim. ii. shows a fuller development of those evils spoken of by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. i. 10, and iii. 3; also Acts xx. 29, 30. Saints have gathered round men and turned away from the Lord, as did Israel when they made the calf.

5. A young convert was received when he had repented and been converted to God. Surely 2 Tim. ii. 25, implies the need of repentance on the part of those who have been ensnared by the devil. This repentance God alone can give, and surely we are responsible to see that it is given before we receive into our fellowship those thus ensnared.

6. Surely not in Scripture, for the Lord has but one way of receiving sinners.

7. Is not breaking of bread the outward expression of fellowship among the saints; the one therefore breaking bread is either in fellowship or acting a lie.

8. "If not, why not?" We should find it very hard to answer this. If it is a sin for us to go into sects, and we have judged them as evil by separating from them, surely if those who rule suffer another so to act

without rebuking him, they have failed in their responsibility.

10. Alas! that such questions should need to be asked; but such things are done. If we were asked to give our Scripture, our reply would be, "We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God".

11, 12, and 13. We should answer these three questions together by asking—If there are those in every assembly that the Lord has gathered, who are in some measure gifted by Him to rule, have we any right to set such aside, and give them no opportunity to act for the Lord, by bringing in one that they have had no opportunity of dealing with. What Scripture, we would ask, is there for putting such a one out again, although he may have been brought in by a young brother with little or no discernment?

14. Certainly not, how can we ignore that which is in opposition to the revealed mind of God, any more than Israel could ignore the golden calf?

Those that sought the Lord went outside the camp.

Some of us have separated from and thereby judged the sects around us as evil, but alas, many of our brethren are still ensnared in them.

Can we ignore this fact?

Does not 2 Tim. xi. 25 shew us our responsibility to seek the deliverance of such by using the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, as the Levites used the sword upon their brethren, who although Israelities, had yet rebelled against God and gathered round the works of their own hands. The very existence of sects puts those who profess to be separated, in a position of peculiar responsibility; and may not much of the felt weakness in our midst arise from the very fact that this responsibility is so little felt by many.

15. Is it not that many are received in these days without any repentance or acknowledgment of the truth, and only come amongst us as they would leave one sect to join another.

16. Many, we believe, would never come amongst us if they were not allowed to do so as if they were coming into a sect.

17. The knowledge of sins forgiven is the ground on which we receive a young convert. Should not the acknowledgment of Christ as Lord be required from those coming from that which is in rebellion against Him?

GODLY FELLOWSHIP.

ARE YOU A FELLOW-WORKER WITH CHRIST?

FELLOW-SAINT with harness on,
Do you ever "pull a trace"?
When a Brother lags behind,
Do you urge him in the race?

Yoked beneath the Gospel Car,
Found in many a Meeting Place;
Do you ever spread the News,
Tell me, do you "pull a trace"?

When a Brother strays aside,
Into cold and worldly ways;
Do you try to win him back?
This would be to "pull a trace".

When he faints beneath his load,
Or repines through want of grace,
Do you try to bring him right?
This would be to "pull a trace".

When a Brother is in fault,
And there's danger of disgrace;
Do you secret counsel give?
This would be to "pull a trace".

When some weak, forsaken one,
Wanders far from virtue's ways;
Tell them "Jesus saves the lost".
Thus my Brother, "pull a trace".

When your poor and needy Brethren
Struggle through life's stormy days,
Do you ask them to your table?
Thus by cheering, "pull a trace".

When our Lord, by death or sorrow,
Earthly hopes in ruin lays:
Do you minister for Jesus?
This would be to "pull a trace".

When the world belies our Saviour,
And denies his wondrous grace;
Do you plead His love in dying?
BROTHER, DO YOU PULL A TRACE?

He who, while he works and trusts,
Pleads, and with expectance prays,
His is GODLY FELLOWSHIP!
HE, MY BROTHER, PULLS A TRACE".

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"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. ii. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPI. ii. 8.

No. 18.

JUNE, 1876.

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THE SONS OF GOD WITH THE RISEN SON OF GOD.

THE TWO MODES OF DEPARTURE TO BE WITH HIM.—JOHN xxi.

IN the preceding leaflet (No 3) is a review of the line of teaching in John xx. Therein will be found to be set forth the beautiful way of the risen Son of God with the sons of God, whilst yet they are continued here in this world. But here, conversely, we have the two modes of departure of the sons of God to be with the Son of God. There is evidently a break in the narrative at the close of chap. xx. as if the subject were then, from the former point of view, already completed. Then in xxi. follows a necessary supplement, not only to xx., but to the entire gospel of John. For if we succeed in showing that we have sketched here in symbol, *first*, a believer's departure by death from the ship of the church to be with Christ, and then, *secondly*, what may occur any day, namely, the entire church's disappearance from this earthly scene whilst following her Lord, to be hidden in the same glory with Him at His coming, it will be evident that we have an apt and perfect conclusion to the whole of the narrative. For if the Life was manifested, and we have seen it,—all this grace is in order that our companionship might be for ever with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. So shall our joy too be full. And this grand purpose of God's heart is here seen to be fully achieved. And thus in John the curtain falls. To it we will only now add, "Then, when subsequently Christ *appears* to the world, we shall appear with Him in glory." Col. iii.

And in view of the two branches of this subject, most appropriately is our chapter opened; for instead of speaking of the two modes of departure to be with Him, the whole might be summed up, yea, and is by inspiration, thus: "Himself, how He is seen by His people." For doubtless, whatever discoveries of Himself He now accords to simple faith, these, none of them are to be compared to the glorious vision of Himself enjoyed by the soul at death, and much more by the church at her approaching rapture. Surely 2 Cor. v. 6-8 is decisive as to the Christian's conscious enjoyment and sight of the Lord, even whilst absent from the body. Such an one may not be able to see created things; but cannot the Lord reveal Himself to the disembodied spirit? Can he not cause that His presence may be perceived, even when the soul can behold nought else? Therefore let us take this word "Himself how He is manifested to the disciples," as the key note to our meditation on the chapter.

Altogether there are four instances in the Gospels of Christ's disciples as in the ship. In two of these the Lord is with them. In one of these former two, they are engaged at their work,—fishing; but then their net breaks. For when the Lord was among men on the earth, they would not have Him, and broke away from Him. Then in the other case of His being with the disciples, they are in a storm and terrified. Not so He. Here we may learn that whatever foes were against Him when on earth, He was not perturbed, but trusted in God. Also, more generally, we see how that "with Christ in the vessel," we may "smile at the storm." But then again, on the other hand, there are two further instances when the disciples are in the ship, but He is absent. The account of one of these

times is found in John vi. There He is on the mountain-brow, praying for His faithful few. Why is he so earnest there? He sees them toiling in rowing and the winds contrary, as we all continually find to be the case. (Mark vi. 48.) But presently He will come, and he will trample down all opposition. Then the fourth picture we have here before us. Now in each of these latter two, the disciples are for a while unconscious that He sees them. And here, before they recognize him, they are brought to a sense of weariness and to a confession of their poverty, and in each of these two, the work is all quite done when once they are with the Lord. But in the one of these He draws nigh to them; in the other, the bark itself and all they in it, are seen nearing the peaceful shore, and as if to make the picture exactly correspond with what is of course constantly occurring, one leaves the ship, and plunges into the waves to go to Jesus. Now when we come to look at verses 15-19, we shall perceive to be shown to us what is the best, the happiest way for a servant of the Lord to die, namely, in caring for the flock of God, and thus to follow, though alas, too often faltering, in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd Himself, who laid down His life for the sheep.

Here is the frail bark, the church, with seven, a perfect number, of disciples in it, at any and at every time. At Christ's word, and as morning breaks, their net is full. Apt illustration of what is taking place before our very eyes. So, of old, when the time of Israel's coming up out of Egypt drew nigh, their number rapidly increased. (See Acts vii. 17.) And here, the net is not broken as before, because of the truth taught in John vi. 37-41. Also the fishes are counted, and found to be a hundred and fifty and three. Odd numbers in Scripture represent that each one goes for something. (Luke xii. 6, 7.) He "tasted death for each one of us." (Heb. ii.) Nor is this total so accidental as might appear. It is twelve times twelve with three times three. We are ignorant of the exact number of the elect. He is not. It is a heavenly and a perfect number. And all the labours of His servants, and all the opposition of his foes, will be found to subserve His own Sovereign will. It may be an undesigned coincidence, that when Solomon built the temple, the number of Gentiles in Israel was a hundred and fifty-three thousand. (2 Chron. ii. 17.) God in the earthlies, ranges His people in thousands; in the heavenlies, they are counted, each one of them.

But how encouraging the dioramic view which we have here. Jesus Himself on the shore waiting for us. The shore certainly represents eternity, not only here, but elsewhere, as in Matt. xiii. 48. As for the ship the church itself, it is expressly witnessed, "They were *not far from land.*"

"For even now our feet,
May stand on glory's brink,
It may be that we're nearer home,
Much nearer than we think."

Nor is there any misgiving on the part of Peter, any more than there need be on ours, in leaving all behind to go to Him. Sinned against that gracious Lord, Peter had indeed! But in some private interview before this time, and of which the account is not given except the two hints in Luke xxiv. 34, and 1 Cor. xv. 5, the Lord had, in mercy, righted matters as to Peter's soul. Hence, now there is no desire of Peter to make use of any other disciple as a toil between his Lord and him. He is not in the least afraid to go alone to Jesus first. Nay, more, his desire to depart is intense. Dying Christian, notice this inimitable touch of the Spirit of God here.

But then, further, observe the way of the Lord. He has been pleased to place, in the very closest possible connexion, the picture of a Christian's death, with the verses that follow—of a Christian's highest service. Likewise of the seven faithful sayings in Scripture, the second one runs thus: "This is a faithful saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work." (1 Tim. iii. 1, Greek.) Building up the church of God, feeding and shepherding the flock, is, if scripturally performed, the most arduous, the most thankless, the most heart-breaking work from this world's point of view. But a crown of glory is the prize in prospect. (1 Peter v.) And surely if the flock be worth Christ's blood, it must be worth a shepherd's tears. I say, A shepherd, for Scripture gives no countenance to what so many love, the flock grouped around a one man pastor. Shepherds and teachers, as well as evangelists, He does continue, in faithful love, to give to His church. But for some to say, we want just one, and if He gives six, He must take back five; if none, then we must elect one; any how, it must be one, neither more nor less;—all this is fearfully wrong. It is owing to the unwillingness of souls to depend on the living God alone. It originally springs, not from the arrogance of certain in lording

it over their fellows, though this may quickly ensue. But the desire of the many is to lean on some more gifted one. But this ought to be strenuously resisted, and not upon any account to be yielded to. Where the flock cling to some one mortal, idolatry is the consequence. Where the eye is on the Lord supreme who gives men, as His servants, as He sees good; and therefore, where there is open ministry in the assembly there will be the scriptural and holy worship.

But here we must make three slight, but important emendations of the text. The entire flock is named in its three parts, as consisting of lambs, young sheep, and sheep. This three-fold division is very frequent in the Word, as in 1 John ii.; Mark iv. 28; Matt. xiii. 8. Again, the injunctions are, "feed" them; "shepherd" them; "feed" them. Thus we see, that those who feed the flock, are to assist in the ruling or shepherding it. Such are ever the two parts of pastoral work, (Ezek. xxxiv. 23, see specially ver. 4; and Rev. vii. 17; Heb. xiii. 7.) Still, however, some in the assembly may be better able to rule than to teach, and *vice versa*. (1 Tim. v. 17.) Once more the Lord says to Peter, "Do you love me, Peter?" to which he replies, "Lord, I am fond of you." A second time, "Do you love me?" "Lord, I am fond of you." The third time, "Are you fond of me?" Thus was the erring forgiven one allowed to conquer the Lord, as Jacob had been before him. It must be added that, whilst the Lord's three several charges refer obviously to Peter's three-fold denial, and thus constitute the public restoration of him to his office, which he had lost, so too that clause "more than these," must undoubtedly refer to his former proud boast, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." In this mild and beautiful manner does the Lord prove His disapprobation of Peter's former words, in which he extolled himself over his fellows. The opportunity is afforded him of retracting his insinuation, and he, by his silence in his reply as to this clause, impliedly eats his naughty words. Strikingly, also, in his first epistle, this same Peter, twice uses the word brotherhood, a term that joins all together, the least and the greatest. (See chap. ii. 17, and v. 9, Greek.) And hence, we may learn what is the kind of shepherding required by the Lord of us towards each other: "Treat others as gently as I have treated thee. Wash their feet as I have yours. For, as is well known, the charge to feed the flock of

God is passed on by Peter to other elder brethren, and even all elder and younger are enjoined to be subject unto each other.*

But we must also survey a while the other diorama view which we find at the close of our chapter. As is well known, no account of the Ascension is to be found in John. Nor was this possible in the picture of Christ as the Son of God. In Luke, where we behold Him as the Son of Man, the ascension is recorded in full detail. But here, instead, we rather have suggested the thought of the Lord's disappearance from this earthly scene. But in that disappearance Peter and John representing the two classes—to wit, of those who shall die (ver. 19), and of those whose part it might even be to "tarry till" He Himself come (ver. 22)—both these disappear likewise—whilst engaged in following the Lord. In the view in verses 1-14 of the church absent from the Lord the number is given as seven. But in this second scene two for the other purpose designed serve as well as seven. For when the Lord returns we shall be found either among those who—as to their bodies—sleep; or among those who remain unto His coming. (1 Thess. iv. 15.) And thus it is assumed as if the two thousand years, more or less, which elapse between the Lord's own, and next our departure altogether from this world, where but "a little while," a short moment indeed, and as if again His departure involved ourselves, though at a subsequent period. It is but fitting that the Head should be pre-eminent? Yet it is beautiful to see the life ultimately spreading to every member, and then the whole body raised together. If the entire mystic man-child has not yet been raised into the heavenlies, this is because His members are not yet completed. (Rev. xii.) But the Head is already in heaven. Even in the mystery singular honour must be put upon the Head. (xx. 7.) Also we see that the church once understood the meaning of the words, "Tarry till I come." These they did not interpret of death; but even fancied that John might not have to die at all. What majesty likewise there is in that phrase, "I will." For now in glory He has a "will," in which

* It is asserted by some that the Greek here proves the reference by the Lord to be to the fishes! But there is the same style of language in the original, clearly applying to men, in Luke xxi. 3. And had the glance been to Peter's former occupation, which he was to leave, then *ὑπὲρ ταῦτα* would have been the words used, as we can see from Matt. x. 3, Greek.

not only John, but all who shall believe in Him through the Word, are interested. (John xvii. 24.)

So whilst He is absent, our part, as we see here, is to be daily, hourly engaged in following Him. This may bring us even to die for Him, to die serving Him in serving the church. Or on the other hand, though following Him, it may be His will that we should tarry till His return. Any how, all is well. Let us be content with pleasing Him. Here we behold that the one whose words as to following Christ, were, at any rate, less vehement and much less boastful than Peter's; yet in due time was strengthened to tread the same holy path, the end of which is designedly left untraced in this gospel. It ought to be specially noticed that the name of this disciple is not given. There can be no doubt, of course, that it was John. At the same time, the Spirit must have some object in concealing his name. The humility of the writer is inadequate to account for this. But the full lesson is that on following the Lord; it is enough to live in His bosom, to be conscious of His approving smile, and to be waiting for His return. Then all desire for our names to be heard and well-known on earth will be accounted by us as folly. Lastly, as at the commencement of this gospel there is the account of the Son in the bosom of the Father, so at the close, there is the unknown disciple strengthened for following Him, by first lying on His bosom.

THE PHILISTINES.

1 SAMUEL xiii. 19-23.

NOW there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to shapen the goals. So it came to pass, in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan; but with Saul and with Jonathan his son, was there found. And the garrison of the Philistines went out to the passage of Michmash.

RECOLLECTIONS.

1 PETER I. 1-8.

WE shall go on with these words, "you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation". He had just said the inheritance was kept for us, and we were kept for the inheritance. What a blessed *double* truth that is; the inheritance taken care of for us, and we taken care of for it; it reminds me of the wicked being reserved for Hell, and Hell reserved for the wicked. The allusion in these words, "kept by the power of God," is to Israel, God's triumphant deliverance from Egypt, and escorting them to Canaan; here he is speaking of the *blood* and the *inheritance*, before leading us through the wilderness, keeping us up by His power. When God ministered to Israel in the pillar of cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, it was *more* than He promised them; He never just keeps His promise, He loves to *exceed* it. He adverts again and again in John xvii: to *Keep them*. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them". How truly God is interested in us; how actively on the *alert*; for, oh, to think He does not trust us during our passage in the wilderness to any one else, but guides on to the inheritance—"begotten us". Now, it is implied, we should miss our way, were it not for God. "*Kept* by the power of God." Do we realize that we need to be kept *now*? the inheritance in prospect, and the hope we *have*, should we not relax our hope, if God did not keep us? Now many things drag us down; and when we read "kept," the number of influences, and attractions, on every side, to draw us away are implied; and you may add that word, in Eph. i. 19, "The exceeding *greatness* of his power, to us-ward, who believe;" not a little power, but the exceeding greatness of His power, that keeps us. Well, then, there is our mercy, if we are not yet at home, God will not rest, until He rests in His love, until He joys over us with singing.

God of old, had His tent, and His tabernacle; we read in many places of this power of God, and the ability of God; but then, you observe the way in which the power *acts*, "through faith;" that is to say, the power is not used to fence us in whether we will or no; it is used to keep us, *on believing*. "Holy Father, keep through thine own *name*; I kept them in Thy *name*". John xvii. 11-12. Kept by the name of God; and the *power* of God, keeping us, by

strengthening our faith—exercised by causing us again and again, to have faith in Him. We have been thinking a little of the manifestation of God's name around this table. We never shall understand until we are with Him all that the Son of God sank down into, all that was poured on His head on our account. Now, faith is a thing that *appropriates*, feeds upon that which God reveals more and more. The manna yesterday would not do for to-day; the little knowledge we get to-day of the love of God, will not do for our souls to-morrow. The power of God is not exercised on purpose merely to make us drop on our knees, or to make us sing hymns, but to make us appropriate these things as precious realities.

“Keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given me.” As we have heard God speaking to us through His dear children, even as it comes with *power*, so it feeds us. The Lord keep us from *unoperative* faith! but as we are *rooted*, and *grounded*, so may we put out feelers; like a root in the ground, a fibre here and there, strikes out, wherewith the plant is nourished and strengthened. So beloved, the power of God is put forth on *purpose*, that we may feed, appropriate, live upon, and grow thereby. God does not tell us what He is going to do with us, except through His Word. He is ready to bring us into the inheritance, but it may be His people are not ready; but *He* is ready, salvation is ready; and it is a mistake to say, as I have often heard it, that He is gone to prepare the place, and is *eighteen hundred years preparing it*. Its *ready* now, His salvation is *ready*. “Ready,” is a favourite word of Peter's. “Give account to Him that is *ready* to judge the quick and the dead,” “be *ready* to give an answer to every man that asketh you.” “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations.” I Peter i. 6. *Wherein*—in which salvation; there is the illustration twice; God needs to keep our faith in exercise constantly. So sure as we are His people, we shall be in heaviness, through manifold temptations, but God keeps us. His people are a *tempted* people, but there is a *needs-be*, that we should be in heaviness; our path is not *all*, an easy path to the kingdom, but thorny; and because of the “needs-be,” in heaviness through MANIFOLD temptations, some can weep much more easily than others, and yet, singular contrariety! “ye GREATLY REJOICE;” their joy *underneath* their tears;

sorrow mingled with laughter. Now, if it was not for God, by His power, strengthening our faith, we should be occupied with our trials and circumstances; but God *meets* us to feel them. “If needs-be,” ye are in heaviness; and then there is something underneath, to keep us *cheery*; “ye *greatly rejoice*”. Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; having nothing, yet possessing all things; and here you see how God acts. He would make us live this life of faith, so prone are we to live a life of sense, so prone to go out after things that are seen, and temporal. “Holy Father *keep them* ;” put these two together, heaviness through manifold temptations, and rejoicing through believing in that name. That word in Habbakuk iii. 17-18, occurs to me “Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet, I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” How aptly all this comes in this Epistle of Wilderness experience; I own I like that concurrence, God designs it should be so; I'm not at home *yet*, but I have got a hope, He tells me, and therefore I greatly rejoice. “Ah,” says some down-cast believer, “no one has such troubles and trials as I have;” yet God designs it; if “needs-be,” but kept by the “power of God;” the manner of God's keeping is strengthening our faith; see 2 Cor. i. 24; “By faith ye stand”. Let go faith, and you let go *all*; but God will not let you, let it go. When your eyes are full of tears and you are distracted with care;—for, “the heart knoweth its own bitterness,” God says, “by faith ye stand;” keep on believing in my love, every time you exercise yourself in God, and lay hold of God, then the power of God is in exercise. God is thoroughly in earnest on my side, though we may be in heaviness through manifold temptations; one time, one thing, another time, another. How does He deliver you? He gives you to joy in Him; He is still unchanged; oh, He who sank into death for me, wants me to buoy myself up with this rejoicing in God, notwithstanding my heaviness, but not in removing it. He means us to put these two together; don't they seem contradictory? “greatly rejoice;” yet, “in *heaviness* ;” but perfectly *true*. Which should we have the most of? I'm quite sure there is a deal more of God's love in Christ to be enjoyed if we like; the more you live on this love of God, the more you enjoy. “Keep

yourself *in* the love of God ;” and here, “kept by His power, through faith unto salvation”.

Verse 7. “That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ”. If you have faith, it must be tried. Some persons’ faith is not tried, which shows it is a *dead* faith. God was ever secretly on our side, but now avowedly, openly; “kept”. If the gold in the furnace could speak, it would say, “Dear me, I’m a long time in this fire, twenty or thirty years!” Observe, nothing glorifies God like believing, trusting; but that’s not *all*, He wants us to glorify Him in *everyday life*, now that we believe how *much* He loves us, as the resurrection proves.

Think of the judgment seat of Christ;—that unkind, cutting word from a loved friend;—that bereavement;—this trial in business:—that sorrow;—think of it this way; it’s the day God will clear up all the *wherefore’s*; as if He said, “I’ll show you why I did it all; why I allowed this and that trial”. I was thinking yesterday, I should not be quite happy without the judgement-seat. I should like to hear Him say, “Oh, thou of *little* faith, *wherefore* didst thou doubt? Why did not you trust me!” I should like to hear His little upbraiding, and how He will clear up everything in all His dealings with me, and with you. It is where (I say it reverently), He will judge Himself. And what will be the result? *Praise*. *Think that over*. Everything He will praise us for, that He can, when He comes; every time you trust Him; and He will not stop at *praise*, but “honour,” and “glory”. Oh, what rewards for a life of faith, at the appearing of Jesus Christ!

A WORD FOR SERVANTS.

DEAR BROTHER,—Will you kindly allow me to say to godly servants “That it is dishonest, as well as unscriptural, to take the *Master’s time*, for which they are paid, and apply it to other purposes than that for which they are engaged”. The practice of reading, &c., in the Master’s time ought never to be indulged; but time could be borrowed from one’s own indulgences for this. Why not rise an hour earlier in the morning, or hasten through with the work, and have some time to spare which you could call your own, for purposes of reading, improvement, &c.

Yours truly, —.

TO THE EDITOR OF “NORTHERN WITNESS”.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—I take the liberty of asking if you will kindly allow the following a place in your paper.

To us in this very far north island of the sea, the Lord in His infinite grace sent two evangelists, in June last.

They were entire strangers to us; but the glorious truths they taught proved who had sent them, and that the Lord was with them the result showed.

Report circulated that they were of that “despised race” called “Brethren”. This startled many of the “orthodox” of the place, especially the “ministers” (they had one meeting only in the “kirk”, and “chapel”). No doubt if they (the “ministers”) had condescended to have heard the men themselves, their ill feelings might have passed away. The doors of suitable places being closed against them, they had to proclaim the precious message in private houses or in the open air; and, glory be to God, though thus hindered by those who should have been foremost to help, there was blessing—the fruit of which is still showing itself. Again, a few months ago, we had a visit from one of them; and, though the same coldness was experienced from the same parties, the Lord manifested His power to save and bless.

Now it has grieved much the hearts of the Lord’s people here that, when He in great love had sent His servants to proclaim the glorious gospel, that they should have no suitable place for this purpose, and souls, precious souls, perishing for lack of knowledge. And this is what I desire to bring before the Lord’s dear children, who may have a heart to help the Great Master’s cause.

It would not take a very great sum to build a hall to contain about 100; and I do trust the Lord will open hearts to give—yea, He will do it, I have little doubt now, for when I was seeking of Him regarding this matter, His gracious answer was “He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not *with Him* also FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS.”

Waiting on the Lord in hope, and desiring any way that He may be glorified,

I am, yours faithfully,

THOS. M. C. POLE.

GREEN BANK, NORTH YELL,
SHEILAND ISLES, 22nd April, 1876.

The Editor will gladly receive any help for the North Yell Meeting-House.

QUESTIONS AS TO DISCIPLINE.

1. IF a Brother is charged with a sin, is it right for the Assembly, or those who have oversight, to suspend him from breaking bread whilst enquiry is being made, even though they have strong reasons for thinking it true?

2. Should the matter be brought before the Assembly, or should those who "guide" enquire diligently?

3. If the accused Brother, even though guilty, should take his place at the table, would he hinder the fellowship of the others, or should those who know of the charge, sit back?

4. If any one did sit back, would he not practically be excommunicating himself, and also be judging his Brethren as *less* anxious than himself to maintain the purity of the Assembly?

5. Supposing, on enquiry, "the guides" found there was only *one* Witness, and the accused Brother *denied* the charge, could they then counsel the Church to put him away?

6. Must we not in every case have the testimony of *two* Witnesses?

7. Should not the first endeavour be to restore the Brother, so as to avoid the necessity of "putting away"?

8. Whilst enquiry and effort to restore are being made, should not those in the Assembly who know of such a case, wait fully satisfied that all is being done that can be, and help by their prayers?

9. Should not "guides" feel deep responsibility to the Assembly, and by instant and constant action in such cases, inspire that confidence?

10. If sin on the part of any one has become known to a young Christian, and he feels that, from the nature of it, or from his being young and inexperienced, he is not able to deal with it, would it be evil-speaking for him to tell those who "guide"?

11. Even though guilty of grievous sin, which brings public dishonour, if those who "guide" should judge that the Brother was really repentant and humbled, ought they then to advise "putting away", so as to keep their credit with the world?

12. Or is "putting away" commanded in 1 Cor. v. in order that restoration may be accomplished, and then the Brother brought back again?

13. If so, and there has been real confession and restoration of soul, what would the "putting away" in such a case accomplish?

14. But if discipline has failed after one has been "put away", should any have fellowship with that one by receiving him into their houses, or in any other way?

15. If they do, are they not in so far, nullifying the Church's action, and also hindering that one's restoration?

16. When one has been "put away", should other Assemblies in the same town or immediate district to which that one had occasionally gone, be informed of the fact?

17. If a Brother has run into debt with another, and has been repeatedly asked payment, and fails to pay, what remedy has the one to whom it is owing? Should he tell the guides, and ask them to judge in the matter? Would it not be wrong, in the light of 1 Cor. vi., to go to law to recover it?

18. What action should be taken if a Brother marry an unbeliever, or become unequally yoked in any other way?

19. Where there is no repentance for any act for which there is no Scripture to "put away", should not the sinning one be rebuked before all?

20. In the case of a personal trespass, if "the two or three" or more have failed, should not the Church, as such, when gathered, be heard, and then time given to the trespassing one to listen to the Church, and bow to its judgment?

BELOVED BROTHER,—“A. S.,” in answer to my letter in the March number of the *Northern Witness*, cites the 13th and 16th chapters of Acts as an instruction how a “Brother” may act when outside the Assembly, gathered as such.

The first is, that of Paul at Antioch in Pisidia going into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and while there, being asked by the rulers to exhort the people. Can this circumstance be regarded as a Scriptural answer justifying “Brethren” having fellowship in conferences and union meetings, where all denominational differences are laid aside, by the profession that they (*i.e.*, Christians) meet on one common platform as *one* in Christ, acknowledging only one centre of union—the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church? But where the different gifts mentioned in the 12th chap. of 1 Cor., and full liberty of exercising such gifts are ignored by the *appointment of the speakers*, thereby denying the fact that the Holy Ghost is *present*, and

has a right to use whom He will for the edification of the whole assembly—an important truth, and one which the “Brethren” have sought to maintain from the very commencement. If it would be considered unscriptural, at a “Brethren’s” annual, half-yearly, or quarterly meeting, to appoint a chairman, arrange the speakers, &c., &c., would it not be *unscriptural* to participate in such things elsewhere?

There is a wide difference between the “synagogue” of the Jews and the churches and chapels of the present day. Must we not conclude that Paul and his company were the only Christians in the “synagogue” at Antioch. And 44th ver. to the end of the chap. informs us what the Jews did with Paul and Barnabas, because they declared the whole council of God. If the “Brethren” were as uncompromising as Paul was on this occasion, when asked to take part in a “union meeting”, I expect they would not be asked again, or their fellowship courted.

Does the congregation in the “synagogue” at Antioch resemble a Christian conference of 1876?

The 2nd is that of Paul, when at Philippi, going by the river-side “where prayer was wont to be made”. “A. S.” says, “how these prayer meetings were conducted we are not told”. But was this a prayer meeting composed of Christians? was it not rather at a *place* where a few Jews and proselytes were accustomed to worship? And at the time Paul visited it, women only appears to be present. He seeing they were piously engaged, preached to them, the result is, Lydia and her household are converted, and he baptizes them. What would be said of a “Brother”, if he introduced the truth of baptism when speaking at one of our “union prayer meetings” or “special gospel services”, and then went, forthwith and baptized those who had received his message, and desired to obey the command, as Lydia did?

I refrain from making any comment on the illustration of the “musical band”, as it is a pure “reasoning process”.

The individual believers, as well as the Church of God, should at all times and at all places acknowledge the presence of God, the person of Christ, the power of the Holy Ghost, and the divine authority of the Word of God. Anything that would limit these grand principles of truth contradicts God. B.

“SHADOWS OF CHRIST.”

PART III.

ADAM AND EVE.

“This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”—(Eph. v. 32.)

THERE is another relationship in which we find Adam presented to us in Scripture, viz., that which he bore to Eve, in which without doubt he stands before us as a prominent type of the Lord Jesus. And, indeed, one would hesitate to look at all that is written concerning this unique relationship as typical of Christ and the Church, were it not that we have the fullest Scripture warrant for so doing.

It is noticeable that the proposal to provide a suited help and companion to Adam, such as he failed to find in all the creatures till then created, came from the Lord God Himself. (See Gen. ii. 18.)

He who had created Adam knew the lack that remained unsupplied in all the otherwise perfect creation. It would have been easy for God (with whom nothing is impossible) to have created a companion for the man from the dust of the earth, as the man himself had been made, but this would not have sufficed to shew forth the mystery that was in the heart of God.

Hence the manner of the creation of Eve was so diverse from every other creature, fashioned by God Himself, from a rib taken from the side of Adam during a deep sleep. “Adam was first formed, then Eve.” (1 Tim. ii. 13.) “The man was not of the woman, but the woman of the man, neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.” (1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.) “For we are members of His body.” (Eph. v. 30.) In all these particulars we see without doubt details of the great purpose of God concerning Christ and the Church. The purpose originated in the counsel of God. It was “the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself.” (Eph. i. 9.) It is like “the king that made a marriage for his son”. (Matt. xxii. 2.) God knew the joy that He could thus confer upon the Son of His love, the joy of an eternal companionship, a fellowship in glory, deeper, closer, dearer, than ever had been or could be with all created beings.

But ere it could be provided, there must first be the “deep sleep,” and the opening of the side of the MAN. Surely it is no fancy that herein is prefigured the humiliation and suffering and death of our Lord

Jesus Christ; and not only so, but in the healing of the opened side, his resurrection also.

It may have been accomplished, so far as Adam was concerned, without pain, indeed, from the mention of the *deep* sleep, this may almost be safely inferred; but it was only a shadow of the dread reality, when Calvary's "horror of great darkness" closed in upon the soul of Jesus, when amid the wounds and bruises of the Cross, He poured out His soul unto death—He bowed His head and gave up the ghost, and was laid as one asleep, with the wounded side, in the sepulchre where never man had before been laid. But He who caused the sleep to fall upon Adam, caused also that he should awake therefrom. Happy wakening!—the wounding past, the healing perfected, and a life taken from himself, fashioned and fitted to be a help and companion, to fill the blank that God Himself had seen, now stands before him, brought to him and given to him by God.

Such is the Church to Christ. Every member written long ere it was fashioned in the book of God. Each one deriving its life from the death of Him who in resurrection is the head of the body corporate, the Lord of every individual.

As Adam was first, so Christ is first: "His goings forth have been of old from everlasting." (Micah v. 2.) "All things were created by Him, and for Him," and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist, and He is the Head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.

Christ was not formed for the Church, but the Church is formed for Christ. His death has a higher end, and has accomplished an ultimate purpose far beyond the salvation thereby provided for the sinner—even the joy of Christ, and the infinite glory of God. For, presumptuous as the thought would seem, did not the Word of God fully authorize it; as Eve was, so to speak, the completion of Adam's joy and fitness for the dominion over creation, so the Church is "*the fulness*," or *the completion* (see Greek), "of Him that filleth all in all," and His headship over all things is *to*, or *for the benefit* of the Church which is His body. (Eph. i. 22, 23.)

There is almost a tone of exultation in the words of Adam as Eve is brought to him by the Lord God. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called *WOMAN*, because she was taken out

of *MAN*." He sees in the fact of her having been formed from himself, something that links her closer to him than any other creature, and warrants his bestowal upon her of his own name, he being in Hebrew called *Ish*, he now calls her *Isha*. Surely such is the love wherewith each member is greeted as they are brought to Christ by the drawing of the Father and by His mighty quickening power. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." And again, "I will write upon him *my new name*". And again in 1 Cor. xii. it is said, not of the Lord Jesus alone, but of the head and members together, "so also is Christ". But specially shall this exultant tone of the first man find its fulfilment in that nuptial day, when the Lord shall present to Himself, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, "and with exceeding joy," that Church which he has so loved, and for which He gave *Himself*. He will come again and receive us to Himself, that where He is there we may be also. Two other points are noted in Gen. ii. 24. The man was to *cleave to his wife*, and they were to be *one flesh*. Upon these the Spirit of God most blessedly comments in that wonderful chapter already referred to (Eph. 5.), wherein the deepest mysteries are unfolded in immediate connection with the most ordinary practical exhortations, shewing that all truth divinely applied is practical and sanctifying. Man speculates in his discoveries, and too often they fail of any practical issue. Not so the revelations of God. May our hearts know this more and more. The responsibilities thus laid upon Adam as the husband or head of the woman, are shewn us in Ephesians to be entirely taken up by Christ as the head of the Church. He "loved the Church and gave Himself for it," therefore will He cleave to it as the husband to the wife. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end"; "He will never leave us nor forsake us." And this perfect love which proved itself "stronger than death" secures for the Church the present care that its imperfect and complex condition requires. Hence in Eph. v. there is the "sanctifying and cleansing," and with that the "nourishing and cherishing".

Through the application of the Word by the Holy Spirit to the heart and conscience of His people, He sanctifies and cleanses, as He Himself prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth". (John xvii. 17.) His is the love that will not suffer the erring

thoughts and ways of His people to pass without rebuke. (See Lev. xix. 17.) But the rebukes of perfect love, instead of driving the erring one away, do but draw him the closer. And if the rebukes of the faithful Word be "like the piercings of a sword," if the conscience be stirred or troubled, there is ever the ready and blessed provision of the precious blood that "cleanseth from all sin". The same light that searches and exposes to ourselves the evil within, shews us the blood of sprinkling, so that the heart may not be brought into bondage again, but kept in peace and the conscience continually purged.

Thus the Word is like the water that bore the ashes of the heifer to the person of the defiled one in Israel. (Num. xix.) No new sacrifice was prescribed, but the ashes that told of expiation once made through death, of judgment once executed and past, are applied again and again, old but still new, being conveyed in running or *living*, (*see margin*) waters. Thus is the old old peace-giving story of the precious blood, ever new to the believing heart, conveyed by the Word which liveth and abideth for ever.

The "nourishing and cherishing" is of a somewhat different order. The sanctifying and cleansing might imply much that is painful of rebuke and discipline. Not so the nourishing and cherishing. Here it seems to be the comforting, the protecting and edifying, that love delights to bestow. And surely the people of God of all ages know something experimentally of all this. It is no mere idea, but a great reality. We have to do with a living Lord, with a true sympathetic heart, with one who has voluntarily charged Himself with these great responsibilities towards those whom He has purchased with His blood.

By-and-by there will come the presenting to Himself. No trace of defilement or decay shall be seen on the glorified Church, fitted by the power of God to share the dominion and glory of His own dear Son, for ever and ever. In her shall be shewn throughout the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace. The responsibilities thus are all upon Him who is the head. To the woman, there is only left the part of subjection and reverence.

May the saints have grace to own this mystery, not only that they are "one with Christ," but also that the rightful dominion is His.

In connection with this point of the subjection of the Church to the Lordship of Christ, it is worthy of

note that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression". (1 Tim. ii. 14.) It would appear from this that had the woman maintained her true place of subjection to Adam, she would have been secure from the tempter's wiles. She acted according to her own judgment and her own will, she sought not the mind of him to whom God had made her subject, and she was overcome.

We are scarce left to conjecture that Adam took the fruit from Eve and voluntarily shared her fate from the love he bore to her.

Alas! has not the Church, too, fallen a victim to the wiles of the old Serpent of Eden, because of the same spirit of self-will and insubjection to her Lord? Has she not departed from Christ, to law and ordinances for sanctification and cleansing, and to fleshly gratification and worldly influence, for nourishing and cherishing? The fears of the Apostle have been fully realized—"I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ, but I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. xi. 2-3.)

Long ago has the simplicity of Christ been departed from for human traditions, and fleshly wisdom and expediency. And so shall it be, evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, until the "chaste virgin" of the first five chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, becomes transformed into "the mother of harlots" of Rev. xvii.

Meantime, God has not left Himself without a witness, and some are seeking to return to the original simplicity of the Gospel and of the way of truth. Many are the difficulties, feeble the attempt, failure and shame being marked upon it all. Nevertheless it is well pleasing to Him who says, "I know thy works, behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My name". (Rev. iii. 8.)

J. R. C.

GEORGE MÜLLER, OF BRISTOL,

WHO has been lately so continuously addressing meetings in Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and in other Scotch towns, may not be known, excepting by name to many of our readers; therefore we present the

following extracts, taken from a work written by himself, entitled *THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH GEO. MÜLLER*.

He was born at Halberstadt, in Prussia, on December 27, 1805; and until he was born again, his life seems to have been but chequered. Sinning and suffering, and no doubt from experience he learned the meaning of that truth, "Be sure your sins will find you out." It appears the only redeeming element in his young days was, that notwithstanding all, his education was not neglected.

At page 10, he writes—"The time has now come when God would have mercy upon me. His love had been set upon such a wretch as I was before the world was made. His love had sent His Son to bear the punishment due to me, on account of my sins, and to fulfil the law which I had broken times without number. And now at a time when I was as careless about Him as ever, He sent His Spirit into my heart. I had no Bible, and had not read in it for years. I went to 'church' but seldom, but, from custom, I took the Lord's supper twice a year. I had never heard the gospel preached, up to the beginning of November, 1825. I had never met with a person who told me that he meant, by the help of God, to live according to the Holy Scriptures. In short, I had not the least idea, that there were any persons really different from myself, except in degree."

This change was in November, 1825, through a back-sliding Brother leading him to a Believers' Saturday Evening Meeting:—

"It had pleased God to teach me something of the meaning of that precious truth: 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' I understood something of the reason why the Lord Jesus died on the cross, and suffered such agonies in the Garden of Gethsemane: even that such, bearing the punishment due to us, we might not have to bear it ourselves. And, therefore, apprehending in some measure the love of Jesus for my soul, I was constrained to love Him in return. What all the exhortations and precepts of my father and others could not effect; what all my own resolutions could not bring about, even to renounce a life of sin and profligacy: I was enabled to do, constrained by the love of Jesus."

After this, he most naturally wished to become a missionary, until his affections were turned away from

Christ, at least to some extent, but the Lord set him right again.

In August 1826, he was preaching, and how it was done we are told—"I now set about putting a printed sermon into a suitable form, and committing it to memory. It was hard work. There is no joy in man's own doings and choosings. It took me nearly a whole week to commit to memory such a sermon as would take up nearly an hour in repeating. I got through it, but had no enjoyment in the work. It was on August 27, 1826, at eight in the morning, in a chapel of ease, in connexion with which my friend was schoolmaster.* At eleven I repeated the same sermon verbatim in the parish church. There was one service more in the afternoon, at which I needed not to have done any thing; for the schoolmaster might have read a printed sermon, as he used to do. But having a desire to serve the Lord, though I often knew not how to do it scripturally; and knowing that this aged and unenlightened clergyman had had this living for forty-eight years, and having therefore reason to believe, that the gospel scarcely ever had been preached in that place; I had it in my heart to preach again in the afternoon. But I had no second sermon committed to memory. It came, however, to my mind to read the 5th chapter of Matthew, and to make such remarks as I was able. I did so. Immediately upon beginning to expound 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, &c.' I felt myself greatly assisted; and whereas in the morning my sermon had not been simple enough for the people to understand it, I now was listened to with the greatest attention, and I think was also understood. My own peace and joy were great. I felt this a blessed work, After the service, I left the aged clergyman as soon as possible, lest I should lose my enjoyment.

"On my way to Halle I thought, this is the way I should like always to preach. But then it came immediately to my mind, that such sort of preaching might do for illiterate country people, but that it never would do before a well-educated assembly in town. I thought, the truth ought to be preached at all hazards, but it ought to be given in a different form, suited to the hearers. Thus I remained unsettled in my mind as regards the mode of preaching; and it is not surprising that I did not then see the truth concerning this matter, for I did not understand the work of the

* The Schoolmasters as well as the clergymen in Prussia, are connected with the State.

Spirit, and therefore saw not the powerlessness of human eloquence. Further, I did not keep in mind, that if the most illiterate persons in the congregation can comprehend the discourse, the most educated will understand it too; but that the reverse does not hold true.

“It was not till three years afterwards that I was led, through grace, to see what I now consider the right mode of preparation for the public preaching of the Word. But about this, if God permit, I will say more when I come to that period of my life.

“I now preached frequently, both in the churches of villages and towns, but never had any enjoyment in doing so, except when speaking in a simple way; though the repetition of sermons, which had been committed to memory, brought more praise from my fellow-creatures. But from neither way of preaching did I see any fruit. It may be, that the last day may show the benefit even of these feeble endeavours.”

Converted clergymen were scarce, and when he heard any such preach it was to his great enjoyment. He goes on to say—“As to the other means of grace I would say: I fell into the snare, into which so many young believers fall, the reading of religious books in preference to the Scriptures. I could no longer read French and German novels, as I had formerly done, to feed my carnal mind; but still I did not put into the room of those books the best of all books. I read tracts, missionary papers, sermons, and biographies of godly persons. The last kind of books I found more profitable than others, and had they been well selected, or had I not read too much of such writings, or had any of them tended particularly to endear the Scriptures to me, they might have done me much good. I never had been at any time in my life in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures. When under fifteen years of age, I occasionally read a little of them at school; afterwards God's precious book was entirely laid aside, so that I never read one single chapter of it, as far as I remember, till it pleased God to begin a work of grace in my heart. Now the scriptural way of reasoning would have been: God Himself has condescended to become an author, and I am ignorant of that precious book, which His Holy Spirit has caused to be written through the instrumentality of His servants, and it contains that which I ought to know, and the knowledge of which will lead me to true happiness; therefore I ought to read again and

again this most precious book, this book of books, most earnestly, most prayerfully, and with much meditation; and in this practice I ought to continue all the days of my life. For I was aware, though I read it but little, that I knew scarcely anything of it. But instead of acting thus, and being led by my ignorance of the word of God to study it more, my difficulty in understanding it, and the little enjoyment I had in it, made me careless of reading it (for much prayerful reading of the Word, gives not merely more knowledge, but increases the delight we have in reading it); and thus, like many believers, I practically preferred, for the first four years of my divine life, the works of uninspired men to the oracles of the living God. The consequence was, that I remained a babe, both in knowledge and grace. In knowledge I say; for all *true* knowledge must be derived, by the Spirit, from the Word. And as I neglected the Word, I was for nearly four years so ignorant that I did not *clearly* know even the *fundamental* points of our holy faith. And this lack of knowledge most sadly kept me back from walking steadily in the ways of God. For it is the truth that makes us free, (John viii. 31, 32,) by delivering us from the slavery of the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life. The Word proves it. The experience of the saints proves it; and also my own experience most decidedly proves it. For when it pleased the Lord in Aug. 1829, to bring me really to the Scriptures, my life and walk became very different. And though even since that, I have very much fallen short of what I might and ought to be, yet, by the grace of God, I have been enabled to live much nearer to Him than before.

“If any believers read this, who practically prefer other books to the Holy Scriptures, and who enjoy the writings of men much more than the word of God, may they be warned by my loss. I shall consider this to have been the means of doing much good, should it please the Lord, through its instrumentality, to lead some of His people no longer to neglect the Holy Scriptures, but to give them that preference, which they have hitherto bestowed on the writings of men. My dislike to increase the number of books would have been sufficient to deter me from writing these pages, had I not been convinced, that this is the only way in which the brethren at large may be benefited through my mistakes and errors, and being influenced by the hope that in answer to my prayers, the reading of my

experience may be the means of leading them to value the Scriptures more highly, and to make them the rule of all their actions."

"Before I leave this subject I would only add: If the reader understands very little of the word of God, he ought to read it very much; for the Spirit explains the Word by the Word. And if he enjoys the reading of the Word little, that is just the reason why he should read it much; for the frequent reading of the Scriptures creates a delight in them, so that the more we read them the more we desire to do so.

Learned *commentaries* I have found to store the *head* with other notions, as often as with the truth of God; but when the *Spirit* teaches, through the instrumentality of prayer and meditation, the *heart* is affected. The former kind of knowledge generally puffs up, and is often renounced, when another commentary gives a different opinion, and often also is found good for nothing, when it is to be carried out into practice. The latter kind of knowledge generally humbles, gives joy, leads us nearer to God, and is not easily reasoned away; and having been obtained from God, and thus having entered into the heart, and become our own, is also generally carried out. If the inquirer after truth does not understand the Hebrew and Greek languages, so as to be able to compare the common translation with the original, he may, concerning several passages, get light by an improved rendering, provided he can be sure that the translator was a truly spiritual person."

After various proposals through Professor Tholuck for missionary work in various places, in June, 1828, he received a proposal from a London Society to take him on probation for six months, provided he would go to London, but he could not leave Prussia owing to the military law that every sound citizen is bound to serve three years in the army, and though efforts were made for his exemption, the favour was refused. Subsequently his health gave way, and, though favours failed to procure "exemption" for him, ill health secured it, and he left Berlin for London, Feb. 3, 1829, and arrived March 19.

He writes, "Soon after my arrival in England, I heard one of the brethren in the seminary speak about a Mr. Groves, a dentist in Exeter, who, for the Lord's sake, had given up his profession, which brought him in about fifteen hundred pounds a year, and who intended to go as a missionary to Persia, with his wife

and children, simply trusting in the Lord for temporal supplies. This made such an impression on me, and delighted me so, that I not only marked it down in my Journal, but also wrote about it to my German friends." Then by ill health he was led to Teignmouth, and made the acquaintance of Henry Craik and others.

At page 45, he writes, "I will mention some points which God then began to show me.

"1. That the word of God alone is our standard of judgment in spiritual things; that it can be explained only by the Holy Spirit; and that in our day, as well as in former times, He is the teacher of His people. The office of the Holy Spirit I had not experimentally understood before that time. Indeed, of the office of each of the blessed persons, in what is commonly called the Trinity, I had no experimental apprehension. I had not before seen from the Scriptures that the Father chose us before the foundation of the world; that in Him that wonderful plan of our redemption originated, and that He also appointed all the means by which it was to be brought about. Further, that the Son, to save us, had fulfilled the law, to satisfy its demands, and with it also the holiness of God; that He had borne the punishment due to our sins, and had thus satisfied the justice of God. And further, that the Holy Spirit alone can teach us about our state by nature, show us the need of a Saviour, enable us to believe in Christ, explain to us the Scriptures, help us in preaching, &c. It was my beginning to understand this latter point in particular, which had a great effect on me; for the Lord enabled me to put it to the test of experience, by laying aside commentaries, and almost every other book, and simply reading the word of God and studying it. The result of this was, that the first evening that I shut myself into my room, to give myself to prayer and meditation over the Scriptures, I learned more in a few hours than I had done during a period of several months previously. *But the particular difference was, that I received real strength for my soul in doing so.* I now began to try by the test of the Scriptures the things which I had learned and seen, and found that only those principles, which stood the test, were really of value.

"2. Before this period I had been much opposed to the doctrines of election, particular redemption, and final persevering grace; so much so that, a few days after my arrival at Teignmouth, I called election a devilish doctrine. I did not believe that I had brought

myself to the Lord, for that was too manifestly false ; but yet I held. that I might have resisted finally. And further, I knew nothing about the choice of God's people, and did not believe that the child of God, when once made so, was safe for ever. In my fleshly mind I had repeatedly said, If once I could prove that I am a child of God for ever, I might go back into the world for a year or two, and then return to the Lord, and at last be saved. But now I was brought to examine these precious truths by the word of God. Being made willing to have no glory of my own in the conversion of sinners, but to consider myself merely as an instrument ; and being made willing to receive what the Scriptures said ; I went to the Word, reading the New Testament from the beginning, with a particular reference to these truths. To my great astonishment I found that the passages which speak decidedly for election and persevering grace, were about four times as many as those which speak apparently against these truths ; and even those few, shortly after, when I had examined and understood them, served to confirm me in the above doctrines. As to the effect which my belief in these doctrines had on me, I am constrained to state, for God's glory, that though I am still exceedingly weak, and by no means so dead to the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, as I might and as I ought to be, yet, by the grace of God, I have walked more closely with Him since that period. My life has not been so variable, and I may say that I have lived much more for God than before. And for this have I been strengthened by the Lord, in a great measure, through the instrumentality of these truths. For in the time of temptation, I have been repeatedly led to say : Should I thus sin ? I should only bring misery into my soul for a time, and dishonour God ; for, being a son of God for ever, I should have to be brought back again, though it might be in the way of severe chastisement. Thus, I say, the electing love of God in Christ (when I have been able to realize it) has often been the means of *producing holiness, instead of leading me into sin.* It is only the notional apprehension of such truths, the want of having them in the heart, whilst they are in the head, which is dangerous.

“3. Another truth, into which, in a measure, I was led during my stay in Devonshire, respected the Lord's coming. My views concerning this point, up to that time, had been completely vague and unscriptural. I

had believed what others told me, without trying it by the Word. I thought that things were getting better and better, and that soon the whole world would be converted. But now I found in the Word, that we have not the least Scriptural warrant to look for the conversion of the world before the return of our Lord. I found in the Scriptures, that that which will usher in the glory of the church, and uninterrupted joy to the saints, is the return of the Lord Jesus, and that, till then, things will be more or less in confusion. I found in the Word, that the return of Jesus, and not death, was the hope of the apostolic Christians ; and that it became me, therefore, to look for His appearing. And this truth entered so into my heart, that, though I went into Devonshire exceedingly weak, scarcely expecting that I should return again to London, yet I was immediately, on seeing this truth, brought off from looking for death, and was made to look for the return of the Lord. Having seen this truth, the Lord also graciously enabled me to apply it, in some measure at least, to my own heart, and to put the solemn question to myself—What may I do for the Lord, before He returns, as He may soon come ?

“4. In addition to these truths, it pleased the Lord to lead me to see a higher standard of devotedness than I had seen before. He led me, in a measure, to see what is my true glory in this world, even to be despised, and to be poor and mean with Christ. I saw then, in a measure, though I have seen it more fully since, that it ill becomes the servant to seek to be rich, and great, and honoured in that world, where his Lord was poor, and mean, and despised.”

(To be Concluded in our next.)

TYPES.

I'VE been reading in Nehemiah lately, most of it you no doubt have been blessed from. I just mention one or two things I've been struck with. In the 3rd chapter we have the account of the building of the wall, and the names of the builders. It says nothing about their being masous ; but goldsmiths and goldsmiths' sons, apothecaries' sons, and merchants. Well, but to let that go, there are the three enemies—Sabbat, the Horonite or Horite. In searching, we find he possessed Mount Seir, afterwards the possession of Esau, the child of the flesh, no doubt a type of the devil, from whom the flesh gets its inheritance.

Tobiah, the Ammonite, the seed of the carnal, worldly believer, a type of the world.

Geshen, the Arabian, the descendant of Ishmael, the flesh.

These three tried to hinder God's work and God's labourer, Nehemiah, in every possible way ; but what I was struck most with, was the invitation, in the 6th chapter, to come and meet them (have a conference) in the villages of Ono—we find in the 11th chapter, verse 35, Ono was the *valley of craftsmen* ; but Nehemiah was in the counsel of God. He feared the Lord, and he had the Lord's secret, and knew the devices of Satan, and could say, "But they thought to do me mischief" ; and oh, that noble answer, "I am doing a *great work*, so that I cannot come down (it is upward we go, not down) ; why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you" ?

I'll make no applications, only many a man who has turned his back on Babylon, and begun to build the walls of Jerusalem, has listened to the voice of the seducer, and gone down to Ono to have a conference with the *craftsmen*, and now they are working hand-in-hand together. What is all this ox-and-ass sort of work, this pretensions to being outside, to Jesus' Name and Person, and yet having conferences with the craftsmen, who call Jerusalem the rebellious and the bad city. Oh, my God, however short or feeble our testimony for Thyself may be, let it be real. Amen.

WHAT SHALL WE SEE IN GLORY ?

THE height, the depth, and length of love,
The joy of countless saints above,
And crowns of glory given ;
World upon world in grandeur roll,
The gracious, calm, and wise control,
And harmony of heaven.

Brightness above the brightest sun,
All sign of sin and suffering gone,
No bounds of time or space ;
Secrets unweild, and truth explor'd,
In all the treasures of the Word,
And plenitude of grace.

Rivers of pleasure flowing on,
All hearts and voices joined in song,
The chorus of delight ;
The tree of life unguarded found,
Unfolding beauty all around,
To charm the ravish'd sight.

Angels in all their power seen,
Man's history trac'd in ev'ry scene,
And all God's wisdom shown ;
Martyrs and patriarchs of old,
With all their labours fully told,
As friends and brethren known.

Yet could such blessings satisfy,
Or beauty charm the searching eye,
If Jesus were not there ?
All longing souls have one desire,
With equal love they all aspire
The sight of Him to share.

And there, upon His Father's throne,
Their purposes and glory one,
Behold the Lord of all !
Adoring hosts through ceaseless days
Triumphant sing His endless praise,
While at His feet they fall.

The vision hastens, Lord, I come,
To find at length with Thee my home,
And to go out no more.
As weary travellers reach their rest,
As mariners their anchor cast,
And greet the welcome shore.

Oh ! wondrous love ! all this is mine,
And I eternally shall shine,
With star-like, purest ray ;
Redeemed by blood from death and hell,
The riches of Thy grace to tell,
When earth has passed away.

M. W.

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"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. II. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. II. 2.

No. 19.

JULY, 1876.

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SECOND PART.

(Continued from June "Witness".)

"MY light increased more and more during the months of September, October, and November. At the end of November it became a point of solemn consideration with me, whether I could remain connected with the Society in the usual way. My chief objections were these: 1. If I were sent out by the Society, it was more than probable, yea, almost needful, if I were to leave England, that I should labour on the Continent, as I was unfit to be sent to eastern countries on account of my health, which would probably have suffered, both on account of the climate, and of my having to learn other languages. Now, if I *did* go to the Continent, it was evident, that without ordination I could not have any extensive field of usefulness, as unordained ministers are generally prevented from labouring freely there; but I could not conscientiously submit to be ordained by unconverted* men, professing to have power to set me apart for the ministry, or to communicate something to me for this work which they do not possess themselves. Besides this, I had other objections to being connected with *any* state church or national religious establishment, which arose from the increased light which I had obtained through the reception of this truth, that *the word of God is our only standard, and the Holy Spirit our only teacher*. For as I now began to compare what I knew of the establishment in England and those on the Continent, with this only true standard, the word of God, I found that all establishments, even because they are establishments, *i.e.*, the world and the church mixed up together, not only

*[Converted men are equally impotent in this matter.—En.]

contain in them the principles which necessarily must lead to departure from the word of God; but also, as long as they remain establishments, entirely preclude the acting throughout, according to the Holy Scriptures. Then again, if I were to stay in England, the Society would not allow me to preach in any place indiscriminately, where the Lord might open a door for me; and to the ordination of English bishops I had still greater objections, than to the ordination of a Prussian Consistory. 2. I further had a conscientious objection against being led and directed by *men* in my missionary labours. As a servant of Christ it appeared to me, I ought to be guided by the Spirit, and not by men, as to time and place; and this I would say, with all deference to others, who may be much more taught and much more spiritually minded than myself. A servant of Christ has but one Master. 3. I had love for the Jews, and I had been enabled to give proofs of it; yet I could not conscientiously say, as the committee would expect from me, that I would spend the greater part of my time among them. For the scriptural plan seemed to me, that, in coming to a place, I should seek out the Jews, and commence my labour particularly among them; but that, if they rejected the gospel, I should go to the nominal Christians. The more I weighed these points, the more it appeared to me that I should be acting hypocritically, were I to suffer them to remain in my mind, without making them known to the committee."

After recording his experience of preaching, &c., in various places, he writes at page 64: "About the beginning of April, 1830, I went to preach at Sidmouth. While I was staying there, three sisters in the Lord had, in my presence, a conversation about baptism, one of whom had been baptised after she had

believed. When they had conversed a little on the subject, I was asked to give my opinion concerning it. My reply was, 'I do not think that I need to be baptized again'. I was then asked by the sister who had been baptized, 'But have you been baptized?' I answered, 'Yes, when I was a child'. She then replied, 'Have you ever read the Scriptures and prayed with reference to this subject?' I answered, 'No'. 'Then,' she said, 'I entreat you, never to speak any more about it till you have done so.' It pleased the Lord to show me the importance of this remark; for whilst at that very time I was exhorting every one to receive nothing which could not be proved by the Word of God, I had repeatedly spoken against believers' baptism, without having ever earnestly examined the Scriptures, or prayed concerning it; and now I determined, if God would help me, to examine that subject also, and if infant baptism were found to be scriptural, I would earnestly defend it; and if believers' baptism were right, I would as strenuously defend that, and be baptized.

"As soon as I had time, I set about examining the subject. The mode I adopted was as follows: I repeatedly asked God to teach me concerning it, and I read the New Testament from the beginning, with a particular reference to this point. But now, when I earnestly set about the matter, a number of objections presented themselves to my mind.

"1. Since many holy and enlightened men have been divided in opinion concerning this point, does this not prove, that it is not to be expected we should come to a satisfactory conclusion about this question in the present imperfect state of the Church? This question was thus removed: If this ordinance is revealed in the Bible, why may I not know it, as the Holy Spirit is the teacher in the Church of Christ now as well as formerly? 2. There have been but few of my friends baptized, and the greater part of them are opposed to believers' baptism, and they will turn their backs on me. Answer: Though all men should forsake me, if the Lord Jesus takes me up, I shall be happy. 3. You will be sure to lose one half of your income if you are baptized. Answer: As long as I desire to be faithful to the Lord, He will not suffer me to want. 4. People will call you a Baptist, and you will be reckoned among that body, and you cannot approve of all that is going on among them. Answer: It does not follow that I must in all points go along with all those who hold believers' baptism,

although I should be baptised. 5. You have been preaching for some years, and you will have thus publicly to confess, that you have been in an error, should you be led to see that believers' baptism is right. Answer: It is much better to confess that I have been in error concerning that point than to continue in it. 6. Even if believers' baptism should be right, yet it is now too late to attend to it, as you ought to have been baptized immediately on believing. Answer: It is better to fulfil a commandment of the Lord Jesus ever so late, than to continue in the neglect of it.

"It had pleased God, in his abundant mercy, to bring my mind into such a state, that I was willing to carry out into my life whatever I should find in the Scriptures concerning this ordinance, either the one way or the other, I could say, '*I will do His will*,' and it was on that account, I believe, that I soon saw which '*doctrine is of God*,' whether infant baptism or believers' baptism."

"As soon as I was brought into this state of heart, I saw from the Scriptures that believers ONLY are the proper subjects for baptism, and that immersion is the only true Scriptural mode in which it ought to be attended to. The passage which particularly convinced me of the former, is Acts viii. 36-38, and of the latter, Rom. vi. 3-5. Some time after, I was baptised. I had much peace in doing so, and never have I for one single moment regretted it. Before I leave this point, I would just say a few words concerning the result of this matter, so far as it regards some of the objections which occurred to my mind when I was about to examine the Scriptures concerning baptism. 1. Concerning the first objection, my conviction now is, that of all revealed truths not one is more clearly revealed in the Scriptures, not even the doctrine of justification by faith, and that the subject has only become obscured by men not having been willing to take the *Scriptures alone* to decide the point. 2. Not one of my true friends in the Lord has turned his back on me, as I supposed, and almost all of them have been themselves baptized since. 3. Though in one way I lost money in consequence of being baptized, yet the Lord did not suffer me to be really a loser, even as it regards temporal things; for He made up the loss most bountifully. In conclusion, my example has been the means of leading many to examine the question of baptism, and to submit, from conviction, to this ordinance; and seeing this truth, I have been led to speak on it as

well as on other truths; and during the thirty-six years that I have now resided in Bristol, more than two thousand believers have been baptized among us."

Then we read, page 67: "During this summer also it appeared to me Scriptural, according to the *example* of the Apostles (Acts xx. 7), to break bread every Lord's day, though there is no *commandment* given to do so, either by the Lord, or by the Holy Ghost through the Apostles. And at the same time, it appeared to me Scriptural, according to Eph. iv., Rom. xii., &c., that there should be given room for the Holy Ghost to work through any of the brethren whom He pleased to use; that thus one member might benefit the other with the gift which the Lord has bestowed upon him. Accordingly at certain meetings any of the brethren had an opportunity to exhort or teach the rest, if they considered that they had any thing to say which might be beneficial to the hearers. I observe here, that, as the Lord gave me grace to endeavour at once to carry out the light which He had been pleased to give me on this point, and as the truth was but in part apprehended, there was much infirmity mixed with the manner of carrying it out. Nor was it until several years after that the Lord was pleased to teach me about this point more perfectly. That the disciples of Jesus should meet together, on the first day of the week, for the breaking of bread, and that that should be their principal meeting, and that those, whether one or several, who are truly gifted by the Holy Spirit for service, be it for exhortation, or teaching, or rule, &c., are responsible to the Lord for the exercise of their gifts: these are to me no matters of uncertainty, but points on which my soul, by grace, is established, through the revealed will of God."

At page 68, we read: "About this time I began to have conscientious objections against any longer receiving a stated salary. My reasons against it were these:—

"1. The salary was made up by pew-rents; but pew-rents are, according to James ii. 1-6, against the mind of the Lord, as, in general, the poor brother cannot have so good a seat as the rich. (All pew-rents were therefore given up, and all the seats made free, which was stated at the entrance of the chapel.) 2. A brother may *gladly* do something towards my support if left to his own time; but when the quarter is up, he has perhaps other expenses, and I do not know,

whether he pays his money grudgingly, and of necessity, or cheerfully; but God loveth a cheerful giver. Nay, *I knew it to be a fact*, that sometimes it had not been convenient to individuals to pay the money, when it had been asked for by the brethren who collected it. 3. Though the Lord had been pleased to give me grace to be faithful, so that I had been enabled not to keep back the truth, when He had shown it to me; still I felt that the pew-rents were a snare to the servant of Christ. It was a temptation to me, at least for a few minutes, at the time when the Lord had stirred me up to pray and search the Word respecting the ordinance of baptism, because £30 of my salary was at stake, if I should be baptised.

"For these reasons I stated to the brethren, at the end of October, 1830, that I should for the future give up having any regular salary. After I had given my reasons for doing so, I read Philippians iv., and told the saints, that if they still had a desire to do something towards my support, by voluntary gifts, I had no objection to receive them, though ever so small, either in money or provisions. A few days after it appeared to me, that there was a better way still; for if I received personally every single gift, offered in money, both my own time and that of the donors would be much taken up; and in this way also the poor might, through temptation, be kept from offering their pence, a privilege of which they ought not to be deprived; and some also might in this way give more than if it were not known who was the giver; so that it would still be doubtful whether the gift were given grudgingly or cheerfully. For these reasons especially, there was a box put up in the chapel, over which was written, that "whoever had a desire to do something towards my support, might put his offering into the box".

"At the same time it appeared to me right, that henceforth I should ask no man, not even my beloved brethren and sisters, to help me, as I had done a few times according to their own request, as my expenses, on account of travelling much in the Lord's service, were too great to be met by my usual income. For unconsciously I had thus again been led, in some measure, to trust in an arm of flesh; going to man, instead of going to the Lord at once. *To come to this conclusion before God, required more grace than to give up my salary.*

"About the same time also my wife and I had grace given to us to take the Lord's commandment, 'Sell

that ye have, and give alms,' Luke xii. 33, literally, and to carry it out. Our staff and support in this matter were Matthew vi. 19-34, John xiv. 13, 14. We leaned on the arm of the Lord Jesus. It is now thirty-eight years since we set out in this way, and *we do not in the least regret the step we then took.* Our God also has, in His tender mercy, given us grace to abide in the same mind concerning the above points, both as it regards principle and practice; and this has been the means of letting us see the tender love and care of our God over His children, even in the most minute things, in a way in which we never experimentally knew them before; and it has, in particular, made the Lord known to us more fully than we knew Him before, *as a prayer-hearing God.* As I have written down how the Lord has been pleased to deal with us since, I shall be able to relate some facts concerning this matter, as far as they may tend to edification."

[We make no comment whatever on these Extracts.—Ed.]

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON DISCIPLINE.

1. **WE** are told to put away from among ourselves that wicked person, and, when put away, to have no company with such an one; but we have no case in Scripture of one being asked to sit back till ~~their case~~ has been judged—this is in fact to pre-judge the whole matter.

2. "Ye that are spiritual" (Gal. vi. 1), and such will feel the deep responsibility of acting for God in His Assembly. The saints are told to obey those who have the rule over them (Heb. xiii. 17), while the qualifications of those who have rule are pointed out in 1 Tim. iii. 3, 4. First, they must be able to rule themselves; next, they must be able to rule in their own house, or how will they be able to rule in the House of God.

With such will rest the first responsibility of dealing with sin in the Assembly. This is further brought out in Acts ix. 27, where Paul is first brought to the Apostles and Elders. Also Acts xv. 6, where we find the Apostles first coming together; then the Church having fellowship with them in their action, v. 22.

3. This question is very much answered with the former, for if it is unscriptural to suspend from fellowship whilst a case is being investigated, how much more so for one or two to withdraw themselves, and

thereby judge the matter before those who have rule have had time to come to a decision.

4. For one to sit back while a case is being investigated is really to **JUDGE HIMSELF** as unworthy of being there; for if it is the Lord's table, and He invites His children to meet Him there, we shall be gathering round Himself, and our communion with Him **WILL NOT** be interrupted even though the one whose case is being investigated takes his place with us, although we ought to mourn that such an one may be taken away from among us (1 Cor. v. 2).

5. Deut. xix. 15, with Matt. xviii. 16, and 2 Cor. xiii. 1, would seem to point out our course of action, also 1 Tim. v. 19. If a charge cannot be established in a godly way, let us not act, but bring it specially before the Lord, that He may reveal the truth, as see Deut. xix. 17.

6. The Scriptures referred to in answering the previous question seem to shew that we ought.

7. All the Lord's dealings with His people are for blessing, even though it be to the destruction of the flesh (1 Cor. v. 5). The one put away in Corinth seems to have been restored, by what we read in the second epistle. If there had been repentance previous to putting away, no end would have been served by putting away.

8. "Lay hands suddenly on no man" (1 Tim. v. 22). Let us remember that, till a charge is established, there is no Scripture to act.

9. "Neither be partakers of other men's sins" (1 Tim. v. 22). This latter part of the verse shows there must be no indifference or neglect with regard to evil, with those who guide. Should such be the case, the Assembly would lose all confidence in those who lead.

10. Everything depends on the motive that would prompt the speaking about evil in another. If the honest desire was for God's glory and blessing to the individual, then it would be right; but one would have to be careful to see that this was the case.

11. If a sin is of a public nature, a public rebuke seems needed (1 Tim. v. 20); but to keep our credit with the world, we must be the enemies of God (James iv. 4).

12. All godly discipline has for its object restoration, unless it be in the case of some unconverted ones creeping in unawares.

13. To put away such an one would be very much

like calling in the doctor after the patient had recovered.

14. A most important question. There can be no doubt that the reason many are never restored is, that some of those from whose fellowship they have been put away in public, still keep company with them in private, thus helping to prevent their feeling their position, and often making a party feeling in the Assembly.

The Word says: "Be not mixed up with the one put away" (1 Cor. v. 11).

15. Each one that companies with the one put away, unless with the express purpose of seeking their restoration (and let us remember that there are those in every GOD-GATHERED Assembly whose special responsibility this is), will but hinder the repentance of the erring one. True love would not lead us thus to act.

16. If other Assemblies be so near, and inter-communion so constant that it has not been thought necessary to use a letter of commendation in passing from one to the other, you would surely acquaint such of what had occurred, thus helping them to act in fellowship (1 Cor. i. 10).

17. 1 Cor. vi. shows that going to law with a brother before the unbeliever is unscriptural; but it also shows that we may bring our matters before the Church, see following verses; and one who would not pay if he had the power would be in the position of a covetous man (1 Cor. v. 11).

18. A public rebuke before all, that others also may fear, and that it may be fully understood there is no sympathy on the part of the Assembly with the wrong act. If this be not done, others may be led into the same sin.

19. The rebuking before all would seem to imply there had been no repentance. If there had been, it should be mentioned before all, that full fellowship might be restored.

Hasty action is not of the Lord, and may only lead to confirming one in a wrong course.

Time should always be given for repentance.

20. Keeping in mind that restoration is the end sought, there can be no doubt that some time at least should elapse. If the Brother trespassed against went to his Brother, he would then wait at least awhile before he took two or three more, and they again would allow time before it was mentioned to the Church, surely there when the Church has spoken, time should be given that the Brother might, by making use of it in acknowledging his fault, be restored.

June 7, 1876.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—I am exceedingly sorry to see the letter signed "B.", in reply to "A. S."

So far as I can understand, "A. S." laid down a broad principle for the guidance of God's *servants*, while conserving the truth of being out unto "Jesus only"; and it would be well for us all, if our eye was fixed on *His* service to us, now that He is in the glory, as a pattern of our service to *all Saints*, wherever they be, and when opportunity occurs.

We must seek to distinguish between the line of things in the Word, bearing on us as children of God, and the line of things bearing on us as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ; for our service, as to its sphere, must ever be as broad and wide spread as the *ministry of the Spirit*, and that is, wherever there is an open door, whether it be a synagogue, Free Church, or Roman Catholic Chapel, in all which we *might* minister, provided there was no necessity of endorsing or taking part in what was not according to God's mind.

A conference may not be all one could wish, but still as servants we might go, and, *waiting* on our opportunity, minister as God opened the way. Rules of the kind "B." indicates would limit ministry to where it may be least needed—that is, to nice meetings, where all is ordered aright.

I find the ministry of the Spirit always where it is needed.

"He that hath an ear (in Ephesus, Thyatira, Laodicea, Corinth, Galatia) let him hear."

If the door is open in these places at any time, surely the Spirit would seek some one to give the Word.

I fear there is a sect arising, of the name of Brethren, and we do well to see we in no way belong as *servants* to any sect; for I find in Ephes. iv. the gifts are for the perfecting of the *Saints*, wherever they be, and for the edifying of the *body*, which takes in *all saints*.

Thus we might say, that while Moses would have been wrong as an *Israelite* to have gone back to the camp, after he had judged it, by pitching the tabernacle outside, he was perfectly right as a *servant* to go and visit the camp to do them good; while Joshua, the young servant, was safer, not—"Who art thou that judgest another's *servant*, to his own Master he stands or falls".

In truth, is not separation from evil the great idea

at present, rather than Himself—thus forgetting that it is possible to be separate from ecclesiastical evil, and yet serve God's saints; just as it is possible to be separate from the world and yet serve in it.

Like the Lord Jesus, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, yet, the *friend* of publicans and sinners; we find the Holy Ghost in service in *all* the churches in Rev. ii. 3—"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches"—and yet apart from all the evil.

So Paul could serve Corinth where a fornicator was, and where they were denying the resurrection, and send greetings to the saints there, while no one can say he endorsed the evil—even when he wrote his second epistle, from which we see there was still much to grieve him. Now the tenor of "B.'s" letter is to hinder the Lord's *servants* from being amongst the children of God to *serve*, and by confounding things that differ, puts going to a conference to *serve* or *edify* God's children, *if the opportunity be given*; with such an act as a correspondent at page 95 characterizes as going down to the *valley of the craftsmen, to take counsel with them* (see Nehemiah vi.) surely the two things are as wide apart as the poles—viz., a servant *waiting* on his ministry, and watching for an opportunity; and going down to *seek counsel*, apart from the Word, with those who serve apart from it.

In conclusion, just read Ephes. iv.—"He gave some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the *saints*, for the edifying of *the body*." And note well, the gifts are given to *the Church*, not a church, and to the *saints*; whether in a Corinthian, Galatian, or Ephesian state, and while it is pleasant for a teacher to minister at Ephesus, it is blessed, shall I say *more* blessed, to serve at Galatia, or at Thyatira, if the door should be open, just because *the need is greater*, and that is what ministry is for.

I do feel, that wherever a servant of Christ finds an open door to edify God's saints, he incurs grave responsibility in refusing to avail himself of it.

He may have to look, like our blessed Lord, on much to grieve *everywhere*; but if he is able to go in without having to sacrifice the truth, by all means let him go.

It is one thing to be always giving one kind of truth—viz., separation, and another thing to give it *at the right time*—you must *feed* a babe before you can decently ask it to *walk*; and are not many doors shut, because this order is reversed?

How would Paul have got on at Berea, if he had given full swing to his thoughts on temple, priest, and altar, all at once?

I think the Epistle to the Hebrews was ever a sample of his way—written to *Jews*; it lifts Christ up, and sets priest, sacrifice, and altar aside by the better things.

"*Christ* whom we preach, warning every man (by *Christ*), and beseeching every man (by *Christ—the truth, not a truth*).

I, if I be lifted up, will draw all *unto me*, and if so, will we not be just where He is, and be *unto Him*, outside the camp—whereas, we may be scripturally gathered, scripturally ordered, everything outwardly indicating we are separate, and yet not in *His company*, and therefore not bearing His reproach, and if so, *are we really outside the camp?*

Israel were the outwardly separated ones, but the Samaritan woman, and her co-believers, were the really separated ones, *because they were in the company and fellowship of Jesus*.

Oh that we were really and truly out *unto Him*—having the *same love*, of one accord, of one mind.

Yours ever, T. C.

P.S.—While desirous to contend for liberty of ministry to God's saints, wherever the door is open, I have no sympathy with any servant, however gifted, who goes into a conference, and from his words and acts, seems to *identify* himself with the clergy in their unscriptural position, and appears to all intents one of them—this cannot be pleasing to God.

But if the Lord's servant, however humble in life, or deficient in learning, can edify God's people—all will take note, he received the gift, *not* from man, but from God; and this is the testimony needed in the present day, that men may take knowledge of us, that we have been *with Jesus*.—T. C.

[The unscriptural *Exclusiveness* insisted on by some Brethren to cure the lamentable looseness it is sought to remedy, is as bad, if not worse than the disease, for it hides heart estrangement from God, while it leads attention away from it, and leaves it untouched. What really is needed, is that godliness which always is accompanied by subjection to the Word, because the conscience is tender.—ED.]

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THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY GHOST.

I. **G**OD is three in one and one in three. The name (not names) of the three in one God, is Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost. (Matt. xxviii.)

II. All that is out of God is from the Father; all that can be seen of God is in the Son; all that can be felt of God is by the Holy Ghost.

III. In the covenant of grace it has pleased the Son to become the Servant of God the Father. (Phil. ii.) Now also the Holy Ghost is acting as the Servant of

the Son. (John xvi.) The Spirit draws us to Christ, and through Christ we come to the Father. We are strengthened with might by the Spirit, in order that Christ may dwell in our hearts, and that thus we may be filled unto all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii.)

IV. The Son comes forth from the Father; the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and from the Son. (Rom. viii.)

V. Now that Christ has been rejected here and departed to the Father, the cardinal feature of God's ways with the world throughout this dispensation, is the personal presence of the Holy Ghost. (John xiv. 16, 17.) He did not come down personally unto the world, until the Son of Man had been received up into glory. As in Genesis i. we read of light ere we hear of the sun; so it was of the Spirit of God that a people was led to fear God, even in those times after the fall, but previous to the Word becoming flesh. But as the Light now shines forth from the Sun, so the Holy Ghost is poured out from the ascended Christ. (Acts ii. 17 with 33.)

VI. Now, inasmuch as the presence of the Holy Ghost in person here is only consequent on Christ's rejection by man, and on the reversal of man's sentence by God in His son's resurrection and ascension, it follows that this very presence here convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. But this reproof of the world is not his object in coming;—this only comes to pass incidentally. He is never called a Reprover. He has come down to display in Christ's acceptance the infinite grace and long-suffering of God. He has come down whence Christ has gone up. Therefore, here we have proof of Christ's exaltation by the right hand of God. The bells are sounding whilst the High Priest is in the holiest of all. (Exodus xxviii. 35.)

VII. In the gospel of John the Spirit's work now is set forth in a sevenfold form.

(1.) In chap. iii., through him we are born again, and eternal life we are made partakers of.

(2.) In chap. iv. the Spirit is as a well of water in the new-born soul. Then as this water springs up, worship necessarily follows.

(3.) In chap. vii. the Source of this living water, and of all the rivers thereof flowing out from believers, is traced to be a glorified Christ.

(4.) In chap. xiv. 17 we hear of Him as a Person present with believers, and dwelling in them. Contrast the prepositions *in* and *with* in Is. lvii. 15,

(5.) In chap. xiv. 26 we have this abiding Spirit's testimony of Christ, as to His words and work up to the cross. And hence it follows that the believer has still need to study attentively the lessons of the cross.

(6.) In chaps. xv. 26 and xvi. 13—15, we have the Spirit's testimony as to Christ's *present* glory with the Father. He causes us to perceive how every ray of that glory is further evidence as to how completely all that was against us have been disposed of, and our own complete acceptance in Him. Yea, He guides us "into all the truth," *i.e.*, as to Christ and as to God in Him. There is no truth outside of Christ. (1 John iii. 20-27.) The Spirit does not speak from His own authority, but ever acts in concert and in communion with the Father, and the Son. Hence what He hears about Christ, as souls plead His name and work, that, and all that, He makes known unto them. Certainly we are interested in what the Spirit in communion hears. For otherwise He would not tell us, and tell us all as He does. And thus are our hearts gladdened. For as He glorifies Christ, by taking of that glory and shewing it unto us; so we cling to Christ and eyeing Christ, obtain thereby God's own thoughts of that Christ. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Every time we look at the Lord Jesus, more is told us of His glory. Oh! for the hearing ear and seeing eyes!

(7.) The Spirit announces the things to come. (Chap. xvi. 13.) Beginning with Christ and His glory, the child will understand more of the future than the wisest in this world who acts otherwise. Now we who believe, all have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. ii. 16), in the same way as babes have a human mind. God's will and His purposes in Christ are revealed to us in the word. Then, as we abide in God's light and receive His word, we are shown things, even in the future, as God Himself beholds them.

The above seven operations of the Holy Ghost are presented by the inspired evangelist in a perfect order. Thus worship in chap. iv. is seen to follow life in chap. iii., and not to precede it. Then next, in chap. vii., the life is traced as flowing forth from Christ in glory. Then chaps. xiv. to xvi. are ample evidence that the Holy Ghost is Himself a Person, and from chap. xiv. 26 with chap. xvi. 13, 14, we find that He occupies our quickened spirits with Christ, in the past, on the cross; in the present, in glory; and in the future, with what is to ensue consequent upon the Son of Man being glorified in God. And thus associated, as we who believe are, with Christ in resurrection

standing, our glance is rainbow-like at the cross behind us, at Himself above us, and at His speedy descent for us. Also a result of the Spirit's first lesson as to Christ, I mean, as to the work of the cross, is "peace". And thus intimately are verses 26 and 27 of chap. xiv. connected. (*cf.* Isaiah liv. 13.)

VIII. Again, the Spirit's name in these three chapters is comforter. Thus in His work connected with Christ's own. For Scripture speaks of two Paracletes, or Advocates, or Comforters. (1 John ii.) And the Lord's word about the Holy Ghost is ANOTHER Comforter. Also He is the Spirit of truth, even as Christ is the Truth. As for God, He is never in Scripture called the Truth. For only in Christ can God be truly known. But Christ reveals God objectively, and the Holy Ghost is the power in us, revealing Him subjectively. (1 John v. 6.) And this word truth is ever found used of the Spirit, when He is termed Paraclete. So, likewise, when the Lord Jesus is thus spoken of as Paraclete, or Advocate, it is immediately added that He is righteous. For, however Christ and the Spirit may identify themselves with us, never can there be any lowering of the divine standard. A paraclete is one who takes up one's cause and makes it his own. But These can only act for us in a perfectly upright manner. Nothing maintains righteousness more than grace. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. The process of our rescue must therefore, at the outset, be judicial, and is carried on, as it were, in full open court. Our actual deliverance is commenced by Christ. This, indeed, is implied in the language used of the Spirit, as "*another* Comforter". Therefore He takes our place. He offers himself without spot to God. Now, at length, God, who had ever loved us, can be openly on our side. Then the other Comforter begins His work. For still our nature is corrupt. Nor has the Spirit a good word to say of us or of it. Therefore He leads us from any ground of plea untenable before God, enabling us to trust entirely to God's Son. From Him risen is communicated by the Spirit a new nature, and thus our new life begins with the assurance that all our sins are forgiven. (Col. ii. 13.) Likewise, also, do we now get deliverance from an old nature. Then henceforth He dwells in us. To such an extent is this true, that in three Scriptures His voice with ours seems blended. (Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. iv. 6; Rev. xxii. 17.) But Christ has not ceased his work as Paraclete; only now no longer is He our Advocate with God, but with

the *Father*. The former would assume that His work as our Substitute were unfinished, or that matters between us and God were not quite adjusted. But with the Father He acts for us who, though God's children, are yet erring, stumbling, hesitating ones. And in this way do the two Paracletes graciously co-operate in our behalf. The Spirit is within us for God, who has become our Father: and Christ is for us with that Father. If I may so express myself reverently, these are the two hands of God, whereby we are lifted up unto Himself; or these are the divine compasses. Yonder is Christ at rest, appearing in the presence of God for us; here is the Holy Ghost, one with God and Christ, yet come down to dwell in us, and to unite us to Him above. Within a certain circle hereby made, is the family of God; outside is Satan's own.

IX. Again, the Holy Ghost is at once Himself, both the Seal of the living God and the Earnest of our Inheritance. These two terms are usually in the word combined. For we are God's inheritance, and God is Christ's and ours. As the Seal, the Spirit places His mark upon us as God's own exclusive possession. Thus the divine likeness is being indelibly stamped upon our souls. As the Earnest, this same spirit pours out into our hearts (Romans v. 5, Greek) draughts of divine love, for us to enjoy even here. Of old, the spies brought of the fruits of Canaan into the wilderness; now we must not separate the Bringer from the Blessing in power brought. The two prayers in Ephesians refer to this two-fold operation of the Holy Ghost. In chapter i. the prayer is to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ; in chapter iii. it is to the Father. In the former the Spirit is to conform us to the image of the First begotten from the dead; but in iii. He is gladdening our hearts with the knowledge of divine love, and thus strengthening them with the ultimate object, when those hearts have been filled to the brim and are overflowing, of directing them into the love of God. (2 Thess. iii. 5.) For a vessel must first be filled ere it can be surrounded above on every side. Whilst it is written that the Son of Man Himself was sealed (John vi. 27), we never read that the Spirit was the Earnest unto Him. For never could He, as the Son of God, be ignorant of God's love or its extent. But as it is God Himself who seals us and gives us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, as twice we are emphatically assured, so we perceive how thoroughly

God is working for our blessing. (2 Cor. i. 21 and v. 5.) Now the Spirit—the Seal of God, making use of the Word of God and causing us to grow thereby, increasingly displays unto all that we are the children of God; and as we are filled with Him as the Earnest, we ourselves more and more enjoy God even now. Old Testament saints desisted salvation, and had the promises as their support. We possess a salvation accomplished, and so have life with Christ as a present blessing, that even now are we said to be raised with Him.

X. Further, whilst in the gospel we behold the Lord as the inexhaustible Fountain; in the epistles, the rivers of living water, of which he speaks in John vii., are traced in their several streams. There are they beheld as flowing out and from a glorified Christ unto us, and out from us. Thus in Romans we read of being filled with all joy and peace in believing, and even abounding in the Hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. (xv. 13.) In 1st Corinthians the Spirit fills the entire assembly. In Ephesians, the word is of God giving, that is, filling us with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. In Colossians we have the expression, filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; and again, ye are complete, or rather filled full in Him. In Philippians we have, that God supplies or fills all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. So remote therefore from the will of God is the thought of His Spirit being only here for the quickening of dead sinners. No, indeed; He dwells also in the living saints.

XI. But this is not all. He unites us to Christ. It is written, that by faith we become the sons of God. But it is never said that by faith we are united to Christ. This last result is only by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Moreover, the union effected is to Christ in glory and in God, insomuch that we are in God too. (1 John iv. 16.)

XII. But if we are united to Christ as the Head, then thus are we united to each other. (Eph. ii. 15.) "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." The Spirit therefore is not only with each one member, but dwells in the entire assembly. By Him all of us are being builded together for God's everlasting habitation. Then the first Corinthians (see Leaflet on this epistle) traces the diversity of His operations where He is not quenched, but where He has free scope. At the

same time it is most inaccurate to speak of the presidency of the Holy Ghost. Such language betrays great ignorance of the ways of the Lord. As His presence in person with the individual believer is attended not by bondage and fear, but with the cry of Abba, and followed by the fruit of love, joy, and peace; so in the assembly the accompaniment of His presence is not rule, but liberty. (2 Cor. iii. 17.) The rule is the hands of Christ Himself, as the Head of the body. (See Heb. iii. 6 and x. 21.) And the Spirit maintains the lordship of Jesus. (1 Cor. xii. 3.) Now as the presence of the Spirit marks the liberty of all, so the presence of Christ ("there am I") involves the subjection of all, and especially of the younger to those who are elder, and of the sheep to whatever guides and under shepherds He in His sovereignty may raise up. (1 Peter v. and Heb. xiii.) For whilst the gifts of 1 Cor. xiv. are not pledged unto the end, those of Eph. iv. are. Nevertheless, however weak the assembly may be as to gift, compared with the scene in 1 Cor. xiv., no one but God Himself can set aside or modify God's own order there. On the contrary; the more truly spiritual any one is, the more readily will he acknowledge that therein are given for the assembly, "the commandments of the Lord." Specially a time of weakness is the time when implicit obedience and trust are tested. And these commandments are declared to be for all who "in every place call on the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. i. 2.)

XIII. In like manner the epistle of Jude is closed. For after a solemn descriptive look out at the entire apostasy in the middle verses, the writer in reference to the *common* salvation, the setting aside of which by clerisy had led him on to speak as he had done, in those tones of denunciation thereof; turning to the little flock itself he adds, "But ye, beloved, build up (or edify) YOURSELVES in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Now this latter injunction assumes that however the gifts of 1 Corinthians are withdrawn, the Spirit Himself is with us to the end, according as the Lord promised us should be the case. (John xiv. 16.) And how can the thought of His holy presence be other than delightful, when His work is what it is stated to be in John xvi. 13, 14; or when from 1 Cor. ii. we are informed that His presence in the temple which He is rearing, is to make known to us: (1.) The things which God hath prepared for us

who love Him. (2.) The deep things of God. (3.) The things freely given to us by God. Therefore the introduction of worldly wisdom and the words which such wisdom teaches, can only defile this temple.

Consequently it is evident that as the great feature in this dispensation of the ways of God towards the world, is the presence in person here of God, the Holy Ghost, and of all involved thereby, as stated in John xvi., so the main and ultimate object of the Spirit of God is to form and maintain the church which is the Body of Christ, and to build us together for God's own eternal habitation. And this is His delightful occupation, when, in the assembly of the saints, He works unhindered. Generally speaking, He is hindered in meetings of God's people, but not gathered to the Name of the Lord, by some one called "*the minister*", who acts as if all the gifts were comprised in himself alone. On the other hand, in assemblies which *are* gathered to the Name, He is hindered either (1) by the flesh in some seizing an opportunity to show off itself; or (2) by others mistaking animal impulse for His holy leading; or more rarely, (3) by some continuing silent when the Spirit would have opened their mouths. But "the flesh profiteth nothing" any more in the least than in the greatest. All assembled, therefore, should perceive and demean themselves as in the immediate presence of God.

XIV. Thus and then till the moment the Lord returns, the cry of the Bride will be in the Spirit. For "the Spirit and the Bride say, come." The fuller we are of the Spirit, the more intense will be our desire for the coming of the Lord. We can only abound in the hope of His return speedily through the power of the Holy Ghost. Then, as Isaac went out into the fields to meditate about the time he expected Eliezer's return with his bride, so when Christ at last descends, the Spirit will lift us bodily into His presence (Rom. viii. 11), who will present us to Himself, and through Him and in Him, unto God and His Father. (2 Cor. iv. 14.)

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, nor of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 6, 7).

THE ORDER OF BREAKING BREAD.

AN article appeared in the December number of *Northern Witness* under above heading, which bears the impress of hasty writing, and is most misleading and dangerous in its tendency, so far as I can see.

The writer starts by saying 1 Cor. x. gives us the unbroken Christ. Is this so? I read, verse 16, "the cup which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ," &c. Surely this is enough. He also connects verses 23 and 25 of chapter xi. with 2nd verse of same chapter, 1 Cor xi.

This is very misleading—the connecting verses are clearly verses 21 and 22. The Corinthians were making a common meal of the Lord's Supper, and Paul says, "I praise you *not*"; this gives the key to "For I received," &c., verse 23.

The question is not so much one of form or *manner*, as the integrity of the ordinance itself. Paul's words might read thus, "Do not make a common meal of the Supper, to satisfy natural hunger, but let it be simply breaking bread to call the Lord Jesus to remembrance".

To my mind, Paul simply states the history of the ordinance as he received it from the *Lord*, in order to recall the saints from making a common meal of it.

In effect he says, The Lord Jesus was seated at the passover feast, there was plenty of bread on the table, but He took a piece thereof, setting it aside for the purpose of a *new* ordinance; having done so, He gave thanks, &c.

Now when Christians assemble to remember the Lord Jesus in the breaking of bread, they find a loaf *taken* from *common use* and put on the table to do as the xi. chap. of 1 Cor. and 23rd verse indicates—the bread has been *taken*, just as the Lord took bread from the feast or common meal. All we have to do then, is simply to give thanks and break it.

If we bear in mind first, that Paul is restating from the lips of the Lord a fact *historically*, we shall have no difficulty in understanding what *we are to do*, viz., break the bread and drink the wine to call our blessed Lord to remembrance. And I *do* feel, the simpler we are here the safer. Is it not *so* plain? Paul tells us first what our *Lord did*, then he tells us what *we are to do*, which is just what He told His disciples to do, eat the bread and drink the wine to *remember Me* (Matt. xxvi. 26). Note as they were eating, surely He gave thanks before they began, but having *taken*

from the meal then going on, a loaf, He *again* gives thanks—this is the force of “took bread” in 1 Cor. xi. 23, see also Mark and Luke.

Let us beware of ritualism in any form; and while a brother may *lead* in thanksgiving, let us remember it is the whole who give thanks—the cup which *we* bless; the bread which *we* break (1 Cor. x.), each act an act *of the whole*; but mark, an act of obedience, not a ritual. Hence, while on the one hand, it is wrong not to give thanks for the bread, and after that, thanks for the cup; yet it is equally wrong for any one to assume a place, further than as the mouth-piece of the thanksgiving, which the Spirit would prompt, in which case *all* say amen, and *all* give thanks—the cup which *we* bless; even as, the bread which *we* break, is an act of the whole, so that the brother who gives thanks, breaks the bread and hands it round, fulfils all the conditions of 1 Cor. xi., even though he remains far from the table, and after thanks goes up, breaks the bread and hands it round; for the bread has been *taken* from common use, and set on the table, ere the assembly comes together.

T. C.

FAINT YET PURSUING.
(Judges viii. 4.)

I WOULD not, Lord, recall the past,
And all its wasted days;
Or bring again one hour, in which
I liv'd not to Thy praise.

Yet if I might recall the time
To make it all Thine own,
How sweet to dedicate it then
To Thee and Thee alone!

It cannot be! in vain regrets
I'll vex my soul no more,
But seek for strength to yield to Thee,
The space which lies before.

As yet through all my wayward years,
How few the vict'ries won!
Oh, could I hear Thy voice pronounce
That blessed word, “Well done!”

I still am Thine, my faithful God,
Accepted in Thy Son:—
Oh wondrous everlasting love
Bestow'd on such an one!

Within my heart, responsive love
By grace is shed abroad,
And these desires reveal the life,
Created through Thy Word.

M. W.

TO THE EDITOR OF “NORTHERN WITNESS”

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—I have copied this letter of Luther's, as I think it refreshing in the light of 1 Cor. xiv.; 1 Peter iv. 10, 11; Romans xii. 3 to the end. Justification by faith has been let go on many hands, though gloried in, and *rightly so, by others, who esteem it as the sum and substance of Luther's teaching.*

This letter shows a further ray of light in the darkness, and is well worthy the perusal of all, who honour Luther for his work's sake; and yet how tenaciously many stick to ordination, not even knowing it was set aside in the Church of Scotland for at least 12 years. Oh that we would let God make and qualify His ministers, and *own them* when sent. Luther seems to have studied 2 Tim. iii. 14 to 17.

Yours sincerely, T. C.

**LETTER ADDRESSED BY LUTHER TO THE
BOHEMIAN BRETHERN.**

LET that rock stand to you unshaken—that, in the New Testament, of priests externally anointed there is none, neither can be; but if there be any, they are masks and idols, because they have neither example nor prescription of this their vanity, nor any word in Gospels or Epistles of the Apostles; but they have been erected and introduced by the mere invention of man, as Jeroboam did in Israel. For a priest, in the New Testament, is not made, but born; not ordained, but raised up; and he is born, not by the nativity of the flesh, but of the Spirit—that is, of water and the Spirit in the laver of regeneration.

And all Christians are altogether priests, and all priests are Christians; and let it be anathema to assert that there is any other priest than he who is a Christian; for it will be asserted without the Word of God, on no authority but the sayings of men, or the antiquity of custom, or the multitude of those who think so. . . . Christ was neither shaven nor anointed with oil to be made a priest; wherefore neither is it enough for any follower of Christ to be anointed with oil to become a priest; but he must have something far different; which, when he shall have, he will have no need of oil and shaving.

So that you may see that the bishops err sacrilegiously whilst they make their ordination so necessary that, without these, they deny that anyone can become a priest, although he is most holy, as Christ Himself,

and again, that a priest may be made by them, although he be more wicked than Nero or Sardanapolis.

By which what else do they do than deny that Christ is a priest with his Christians? for while they discharge their abominable office, they make no one a priest, unless he first deny that he is a priest, and so by that very circumstance, while they make a priest, they in truth remove him from the priesthood. . . . The ministry of the Word is common to all Christians; that one passage (1 Peter ii.) establishes it: "Ye are a royal priesthood that ye may shew forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light".

I beseech you; who are they, that are called out of darkness into His marvellous light? are they only anointed and ordained priests? or, are they not *all* Christians? But Peter not only gives them the liberty, but commands them to declare the praises of God, which certainly is nothing else than to preach the Word of God. . . . As there is no other showing forth the praises of God in the ministry of the Word than that common to all, so there is no other priesthood than a spiritual one, also common to all, which Peter hath here described. . . . Therefore, it hath now been sufficiently confirmed most strongly and clearly, that the ministry of the Word is the chief office in the Church, altogether unique, and *yet common to all Christians*, not only by the right, but also of command; wherefore the priesthood also must needs be both excellent and common; so that against these divine lightnings of God's Word, of what avail are infinite fathers, innumerable councils, everlasting usages, and the multitude of the whole world?

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

THE boast of our day is that Christ crucified is preached. But is He, even in this one respect, *fully* preached, or the doctrine of the cross fully apprehended? Let the walk of those who make the boast answer. It is not insinuated that such are chargeable with licentiousness or immorality. But are they, therefore, not chargeable with "walking after the flesh," and "making provision to fulfil its desires?" In the multitude of particulars, it is difficult to make a selection. But what then is the high regard in which blood, and ancestry, and family connection are held by some? What is the regard to personal appearance and dress in others? What the attention to ease and

comfort, and often-times profuse expenditure (not to speak of actual luxuries) in the arrangement of the houses, tables, &c., of almost all. What are the accomplishments, on the acquiring of which so much time and money are spent? What the character of the education which most Christians, in common with the world, give their children? Or to take a wider view still of making "provision for the flesh," apart from what is generally considered evil or sinful, to what are all the discoveries in science, all the improvements in art, directed? What is the end of most of the trades and businesses followed in a professing Christian country, and often by Christians? Is all this and a thousand other things too numerous to particularize, consistent with reckoning ourselves *dead* as to the old or natural man? Is this what the Scriptures intend by *crucifixion of the flesh*? Alas! full well do many of the professing Christians of our day show that they are but half taught the very doctrine in which they make their boast; that they have but half learned the lesson which even the cross teaches. They have learned that Christ was crucified *for them*, but they have not learned that they are to be "*dead with Him*"; or they have found an explanation for this latter expression in the imputation of His death for our justification—a part of the truth but not the whole; for in vain in this explanation of the words, should we seek an answer to the objection which the Apostle anticipated. Yea, rather, that objection is confirmed by it, for it is nothing else than making the cross the reprieve of the flesh from death. And then when death itself comes to give the refutation to this creed, and to show that the Christian is not saved in the flesh, *then* is the effect of this half learned lesson seen. For, instead of welcoming death as that of which his life has been the anticipation, the execution of that sentence on the flesh which, since he has known Christ as crucified for him, he has learned in its desert, and has been continually passing on it in mind and spirit, the dying with Christ daily, the "being planted in the likeness of his death," instead of being enabled in this view actually to glory in his infirmities, in the weakness, yea, and the desolation of the flesh, and like the victim found on the arrival of his executioner to have anticipated the end meditated for him, being found of death dead, he is scarcely resigned to die and impatient of suffering in the flesh. And why? Because that truth which the cross of Christ was designed to teach he never distinctly understood, or rather experienced, namely, that salvation is not in the flesh, but in the spirit; not *from* death, but *out of* it; not the reinstating of the old nature, but the conferring of a new by the dying and rising again with Christ.—*Burgh's Tracts "On Preaching Christ," Christ in His Death, pp. 5, 6.*

QUESTIONS AS TO DISCIPLINE.

DEAR BROTHER,—In the June number of the *Northern Witness*, page 87, a number of questions are asked as to discipline. The questions asked are most important. I confess I have considerable hesitancy in attempting to reply to them, lest I may not have apprehended the mind of the Lord clearly. However, I do not write these replies as a code of laws, but simply as the judgment of one who has obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

I do not know that there is Scripture to tell us definitely what to do or how to act in certain cases, at least as to the *details*. But God's word gives us certain general principles for our guidance, which, if attended to, will keep us straight, though they may not deal with all the *minute* of the case.

1.—In reference to para. 1, I should think it will much depend on the nature of the case. It would surely be unjust to suspend a brother who was simply *charged* with a sin. It is the *extremest action* an Assembly can take, either to suspend or excommunicate. So far as I have been able to discover in the Word of God, those suspended—(I am doubtful as to whether we should use such a word as this)—were such as were clearly proved to have acted wrongly—which acting was the ground or reason of their being “put away.” Acting merely on the ground of suspicion, or gossip, or rumour, may lead an Assembly to act most unjustly towards the accused; and may, after a time, bring judgment from God upon the Assembly so doing.

2.—If it is true—and we surely own it—that the Lord has given gifts to the Church, which is His body, does it not follow that the Brethren in the Assembly, where the supposed case has arisen, whose “senses have been exercised to discern both good and evil,” should see to this. (Heb. v. 14.) If it becomes every body's business, in all likelihood the result would be much confusion, and an abundance of injurious gossip, especially so, if sisters have to do with it. Let me remark that, to bring certain cases before the Assembly, would be anything but conducive to the moral and spiritual well-being of the saints. Another reason I submit why all cases—and some in particular—should not be brought before the whole meeting, is, that there are some who, it may be through no evil intent, are so unwise as even to communicate all they have heard to those outside. The result of which may be judged: and I doubt not but some of your readers experimentally,

and to their grief, know the reproach this has brought on the name of the Lord.

3.—Two things are brought before us here. First, would the presence of a brother accused of sin, or wrong-doing, hinder the fellowship of those he is among? I cannot doubt but it would. Does not our experience, and what is of more importance and higher value, does not the Scripture say that whatsoever is not of faith, is sin? If a brother be present in the fellowship meeting, in regard to whom we have grave suspicions; does it not hinder us from enjoying the Lord's presence? Does it not occasion us uneasiness? Is it not difficult to banish his wrong-doings, or supposed wrong-doings, from the mind, and think only on the Lord Jesus? It surely hinders our fellowship—or I should rather say, our joy. Then, secondly. What is to be done in such a case? It is asked—“Should those who know of the charge sit back?” I answer, no. We do not read in the word, of “sitting back.” It must surely be a strange thought that has possessed any brother who, because another has erred, allows himself to leave the Lord's table in possession, it may be, of one he deems unfit to sit there. And,

4.—He would, practically, be excommunicating himself because another brother had done wrong. Our duty is not to leave the table, but seek grace to deal with the erring one, so as that God's name shall be glorified in all things.

5-6.—Scripture says “two or three witnesses.” But, in the case supposed, would it not be just, seeing there is a parity of evidence that the Brethren who have knowledge of their previous walk and conversation, should receive the statement of the one whose character and spiritual life has been most in harmony with the Word of God? But I do not press this—it is simply a suggestion. I do not know that “the guides” would be justified in “counselling the Church to put him away” on the evidence of only one witness. Perhaps the “more excellent way” would be to wait still farther on the Lord, and very probably things would transpire, clearly shewing who was in the wrong.

7-8-9.—Discipline is not for destruction, but restoration; and as already remarked, putting away should be a last resort. (Para. 8.) Yes: if those who act as guides have the confidence of the Assembly, and are seeking before the Lord to do what is right, the others should keep their place and help by their prayers. Would there was more of this. There is no doubt if “guides” felt their responsibility to the LORD in this

matter, they would act for Him, and of course, likewise for the well-being of the Assembly; and surely those who labour among them and are over them in the Lord, and who watch for their souls, are to be submitted to.

10.—If the *motive* was right in telling the elder brother or brethren of the sin, it would not be evil speaking.

11-12-13.—No: if the brother has really been humbled and judged his sin before the Lord, I do not see the necessity of putting him away for that is already accomplished, which is sought for in putting away. But, let us be aware of “healing slightly,” or “daubing with untempered mortar.” As to keeping credit with the world, a much more important matter is to see that we keep our credit with the Lord.

14-15.—It would surely be wrong for us to have fellowship privately with one whom we could not have fellowship with in the breaking of bread; and there can be no doubt that those who do have fellowship *secretly* with the one put away, in measure nullify the church’s action, hinder the restoration of the erring one, and help him on, in his wrong doing. And,

16.—The same may be said in regard to Assemblies. Apart even from Scripture, it is not respectful to one another as saints, that, when a brother is put away from one meeting, if he applies to another for fellowship, they receive him, and give him a fresh start. It will not effect much, if any, good in the soul of the defaulting one so received, to refuse him a place at one end of the table, and take him in at the other. However, those who are so regardless of the judgment of their Brethren, do undoubtedly bring upon themselves, the responsibility connected with so acting. If the Scriptural and beautiful manner of receiving were observed in giving “letters of commendation,” there would be no necessity of informing other Assemblies of the fact.

17.—In the first place, it is wrong to “run into debt,” either with a brother or with the world. But in the case supposed, 1 Cor. vi. makes it very plain, that for brother to go to law with brother is very wrong; it would be wrong even if the judges before whom the case might be heard were Christians. Let the “wise men” in the Assembly, judge between brother and brother. But the best remedy of all, if we can call it a remedy, is to “owe no man any thing; but to love one another.”

18.—There can be no doubt that if a brother marries

an unbeliever, he is acting contrary to the will of God, and should be made to feel before the Lord, that he has acted wrongly. But I am not aware that the Scriptures authorize “putting away.” In the return from Babylon those who had taken wives of the nations were required to put them away. I do not suppose such a thing would be allowed under our present civil law; nor do I think it would be right. Nevertheless, the “unequal yoke” may bring God’s rod of chastisement upon the disobedient one for many a year after. A brother who can marry an unconverted woman is truly in a miserable state of soul before the Lord.

19.—This paragraph has been partly answered above. One point more here, is that of “Rebuking.” In 1 Tim. v. 20, we read: “Them that sin rebuke before all,” &c. There is another word in the Greek, also translated by the English word “rebuke,” but which conveys a different thought from that used in 1 Tim. v. 20. We read of Peter that he “began to rebuke” the Lord. To quote from the writings of another: in this word used by Peter, “lies simply the notion of rebuking, which word can therefore be used of one unjustly checking or blaming another.” Now, it is one thing to convict of sin and another to convince. Many rebuked the Lord, or laid sin to His charge (Mat. ix. 3; John ix. 16.); but (and here is the force of the word in 1 Tim. v. 20.) He could say: which of you *convinceth* me of sin? No one could. You may charge one with sin—you may convict him—but there is more than that implied in the word used in 1 Tim. v. 20. The Greek word implies not merely the charge, but the *truth* of the charge, and the *manifestation* of the truth of the charge, so as to silence the adversary by convincing him of his error. And the thing that is to be sought by those dealing with the erring one is so to bring the truth of the charge home to him, that he will not only be convicted, but convinced, and that to the knowledge of the whole Assembly, should the case demand that.

20.—We would say yes. And in Mat. v. 23-24 we have a Divine principle laid down, which will serve still further to guide in this matter.

M. K.

June 8, 1876.

IN a previous article in March we saw grounds given for believing that, by the angel in Rev. xi., is meant by the Spirit that part of a gathering that by their obedient dependence and waiting on Christ are able to hear and give His message to their brethren.

In this first Church, then, of Ephesus, what do we see? We see much is found to be commended, both in works and in doctrines, but there is one sad failing pointed out which is threatened with the severest chastisement if not removed. This chastisement seems

to be that the Church of Ephesus will be no longer blessed by God as a Light-bearer.

This failing, we are told, was the loss of their first love. What, then, is this first love? John tells us "We love Him because He first loved us". And again, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us". Is not this what every convert learns and feels in the first moments of his new life? The life may appear a mere spark or the tiniest blade, still the knowledge is there that Christ has loved him and died for him, and he more or less loves Christ for what He has done for him.

Go into the midst of a knot of young converts, we may find wilfulness and ignorance abounding, and the old nature rampant, but the one note on which all are one is how good Jesus has been to me. He has saved me. Follow them on a few years or months, aye, days, and how will it be? Alas! alas! like the Corinthians, some will be taken up with a man, some great teacher, one perhaps God is even then using mightily; some, through not keeping a good conscience, will have made shipwreck; but the mass, by one means or another, will be amongst the number Peter in his second epistle speaks of as having forgotten that they were purged. How, then, can they have the first love John spoke of? What will be the consequence of this loss? Will they own to it, or will they take some other ground on which to glory and meet together? Do we not see one taking the ground of baptism, another even of election, another of sealing, another of consistency or separation from some part of the world and its ways, another of earnestness, or whatever may seem most suitable to them; meanwhile what can he or they do as light-bearers? Their light is become darkness, their salt loses its savour, and the best God can do for them is to let men tread them under foot; so that, put out, trodden down and burned, they can no longer deceive the anxious. What message now does Christ send to His waiting, obedient servants for those thus astray?

First, note what Christ says of Himself. He reminds His servants that He is holding them in His right hand, the place of power (see Hab. iii. 3), and of consolation and joy (see Song of Solomon viii. 3), also that He is walking in the very midst of the Churches, and they can see nothing that He has not seen, therefore they need not be discouraged because of the difficulties they may find before them. He will do with them as He did with Israel (see Deut. i. 30-33). This, then, is the

aspect He gives of Himself to His obedient, waiting servants, to strengthen and encourage them in their work.

Is it not also the aspect specially necessary to be pressed on those who have gone astray? Is not the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ so specially what Peter dwells on in his second epistle?

Dwelling on Christ as One living to watch over us and to keep us, as "the Lord at hand", must ever be what must strengthen us and give peace and courage, and at the same time separate us from the world and from mere professors. We see this Church of Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. Whoever they were, their deeds were what God hated, and probably because Ephesus knew this, they hated them also. Alas! we too often see, both in individuals and assemblies, a thing or a doctrine is not hated because it is known to be wrong. No, it would be judging so many good people, real Christians, if we separated from it, or even spoke against it; so it must be borne with, and indeed cared for and upheld.

Lastly, we see the promise of healing held out, for the tree of life, both in Ezekiel and Revelations, is for the healing of the nations as well as for food.

If, then, we have gone astray, or are with those who have, how sweet to hear our Saviour's voice saying—"Return unto Me for I have redeemed thee". E.

The April number of *Northern Witness* has been re-printed, and may be had direct from the Bible-Houses at Edinburgh or Glasgow. It contains—The late Mr. Soltan's Lecture on "The Principles of Truth, as upheld" by the early Brethren"; "The God of Jacob at Bethel", by J. S.; "The Ways of Grace of the Risen Son of God", by W. Lincoln; "Witness Bearing", by G. A.; and "Questions connected with Fellowship", &c. *Three Copies post free.*

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IS again in the North. The special prayers of the Lord's people are asked for this needy work, after going through parts of Fifeshire with the Tent. It has been pitched for some time back at Ballinluig of Tillymet, Perthshire. John Scott has been with us in the work. The meetings are good on every evening, but specially on Sunday evenings—they are crowded. And the Gracious Presence of our Master makes them profitable for the few scattered saints discovered, and life-giving to dead ones.

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We also ask all our readers to try and secure additional subscribers—a little effort in this direction would help us very much.

All letters for the Editor to be marked "Private," and on Business, addressed to H. Ross, 2 South Clerk Street, Edinburgh, and J. Barn, 40 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.

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THE



NORTHERN



WITNESS.

“For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”—GAL. ii. 16.

“For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”—EPH. ii. 8.

No. 20.

AUGUST, 1876.

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GOSPEL, A. B. C.

- A. APPREHEND YOUR RUIN “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”—Rom. iii., 23.
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- C. CLOSE WITH THE OFFER “Come unto Me, all ye that labour . . . I will give you rest.”—Matt. xi, 28.

BELIEVERS, A. B. C.

- A. ADOPTION “Ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”—Rom. viii., 15.
- B. BAPTISM “He commanded them to be Baptized in the Name of the Lord.”—Acts x., 48.
- C. COMMUNION “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ, the bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ.”—1 Cor. x., 16.

(1) What is the meaning of the word Baptism ?

It is an untranslated Greek word, meaning in the English language *immersion*, or *dipping*. It would be well always to use the English word, as many do not know Greek.

(2) What is the signification of this Immersion ?

It shows forth the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ.

“So many of us as were baptized (*immersed*) unto Jesus Christ, were baptized (*immersed*) unto His death.”

“We are buried with Him by baptism (*immersion*) into death.”

“If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”—Rom. vi., vers 3 to 5.

(3) Is the Will of the Lord binding on believers ?

The Lord Jesus says :—“He that believeth, and is baptized (*immersed*), shall be saved.”—Mark xvi. 16.

He also says :—“If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”—John xiv., 15.

And “He that loveth Me not, keepeth not my sayings.”—John xiv., 24.

THE SEVEN FOLD ORDER

Of ACTS ii., 41, 42.

- I. “Then they that *gladly received the word*”
- II. “*Were baptized (immersed),*”
- III. “And the same day *were added* unto them about 3,000 souls,”
- IV. “And they continued stedfastly in the *Apostle's doctrine*”
- V. “And *fellowship,*”
- VI. “And in *breaking of bread,*”
- VII. “And in *prayers.*”

THREE SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS,

FOR “BABES IN CHRIST.”—1 Cor. iii., 1.

- I. “See, here is water, what doth hinder *me* to be baptized (*immersed*) !”—Acts viii., 36.
- II. “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized (*immersed*).”—Acts x., 47.
- III. “And now, why tarriest thou ? Arise and be baptized (*immersed*).”—Acts xxii., 16.

TWO “WHOLESOME WORDS.”

1 TIMOTHY vi., 3.

- I. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”—John xiii., 17.
- II. “He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”—1 John ii., 4.

H. A. M.

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THE MORNING STAR.

2 PETER i. 19; REV. ii. 28, Rev. xxii. 16.

1. IT is evidently full of design, that whilst to those with Jewish hope, Christ is presented at the end of the Old Testament as the "Sun of Righteousness", here at the close of the New Testament He refers to Himself, in His appeal to the Church, as "the bright and morning Star". If we compare with this the parallel between the same prophet Malachi's address to Israel, and the conclusion of the exhortation in the epistle to the Hebrews to come inside the veil, the contrast is still more vivid. In the prophet we read of those "who feared the Lord, speaking often one to one another". In the epistle the believers are charged to "exhort one another, and so much the more as they see the day approaching". Then follows the allusion in the prophet to the Lord's advent, and to what it will resemble; whilst in the epistle we are told, that after we have "done the will of God, we shall receive THE promise". And what that promise is, the next verse makes plain:—"For yet a little while, as little as may be, and the coming One shall come, and shall not delay". The symbol is varied, with a distinct purpose; because the Church's calling and hope are not identical with Israel's. Wherein they differ, these very symbols declare—that is, to those who have hearing ears.

2. What is the difference of teaching in the final symbolic words of the two Testaments? Clearly that the Church's hope is for her Lord at His coming, *at a period certainly anterior to Israel's*. His first advent was in two stages, to wit, at Bethlehem and Calvary. So His second advent will be first for His heavenly people, to receive them to Himself, and subsequently for the succour of His earthly people, then sorely afflicted. And whilst all may behold the Sun, since there is nothing hid from the heat and light thereof, so in the day of His appearing every eye shall see Him; and before His work is then completed, every human being that has ever lived shall have had to do with Him. But unless you are a watcher during the night, unless, ere the grey of morn arrives, you are on the look out, you behold not this Star arise. They that sleep, sleep in the night. But we, the Church, who believe in our Lord Jesus, are not of the night. We yearn for the day; and to them that are on the tip-toe of expectation (τοῖς ἀπεκδεχομένοι) for Him, as we, His loved ones

all MUST long to see Him, He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation. (Heb. ix. 28.) The others are satisfied with the darkness and coldness of this world.

3. Yet this, His lesser glory at first—Star rather than Sun—is only in reference to this world. The symbol says nothing of what He is up yonder. So, too, when the Lord's majesty is elsewhere spoken of in its relation to this world, *e.g.* of his countenance, then it is as the Sun. (Rev. i. 13.) But when He was once beheld in His heavenly glory, then there is seen "a light from heaven, ABOVE the brightness of the Sun". (Acts xxvi. 13.) The morning Star, in its *heavenly* lustre only will shine for a season, ere the Sun of the millennial kingdom arises. Compare Matt. xvii. 2—, in part, a picture of the future, and Matt. xiii. 43. Specially see 2 Sam. xxiii. 3-4; and Israel's hope, "the day-spring from on high". (Luke i. 18.)

4. Now we, His heavenly people, are all to be associated with Him in His unearthly, I mean His heavenly glory. So, in Rev. ii. 28, He guarantees to the over-comer, "I will give him the morning Star"—that is, He will present Himself to such an one as the morning Star. Such shall be associated with Him, not only in the coming day, but in the glory of bringing it on. A similar sentiment is couched in 1 Thes. v. :—"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief". And why not? "Ye are ALL the children of light, and the children of the day." When the Sun appears, the sunbeams will appear simultaneously. As the sunbeams cannot wake up and find it then mid-day, so neither can we. We, through our union with Him who is the Sun, go to make the day. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii.)

5. But first He arises "in the heart". (2 Pet. i. 19.) As the morning Star is Christ coming for the saint, so the starlight now is the hope of that coming. We have the *lamp* of prophecy, by which we discern the darkness, specially the religious darkness of this world. Heeding that lamp, the day Star will arise in our hearts; for, awe-struck with the gloom deepening all around us, we shall look upwards. We shall perceive that we have nothing to look for by way of amelioration until He come.

6. Now the night is far spent—the day is at hand. Our worship and our feast assume this fact. It is, when scriptural, a supper, "the Lord's Supper". Here

you must not walk by sight, but by faith. That is to say, you must not argue, since it is a supper, therefore it should be celebrated at night; and therefore the hour of worship may be driven into any corner, and the sermon and the preacher be to the front. No, conversely, God gathers His children to a feast, groups them all around Him at His table, and teaches them thus to understand that since He whom they love most they see not, therefore it is night—be the time of day whatever it may, whether cock-crowing, mid-day, afternoon, or even.

7. But the morning Star at one period is the evening Star at another. Read the account of the fourteen generations before Christ in Matt. i., and consider that from Abraham to David was dawn to noon, *typically*; from David to the carrying into Babylon was from noon to midnight; and from the carrying into Babylon unto the birth of Christ was midnight to morn. Then the people that walked in darkness saw a great light. But He was rejected, crucified. This wondrous One set in clouds, and night closed in upon us. The moon, the Church, soon began to wane, and almost ceased to shine. A few stars have been visible here and there—(Phil. ii. 15)—but they serve only somewhat to relieve the darkness. But now again the morn is breaking. Verily the Lord is at hand, and first, too, in this peculiar and blessed and heavenly manner.

8. So twice here the Lord presents Himself in Rev. xxii. to the affections of His people, and twice His Church replies. But first He says, "I am the Root and the Offspring of David". However, Israel is silent, it has no heart for Him. Then He continues, "I am the bright and the morning Star". The instant and glad-some reply by the Church in the Spirit follows:—"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come". Also the individual believer who has heard so as to obey the words of this prophecy—he also gladly cries, "Come". The last two invitations in this verse are by Christ to us, as if to say, "Ere I come to you, come ye to Me". The four clauses of this verse (17), if read beginning with the last up to the first, exhibit, as in a spiritual thermometer, the growth of the souls of those called by the Lord. And the first two clauses are marked as proceeding from a different mouth to the last two, by the word "say" therein. Then, in verse 20, the Lord again presents Himself thus:—"He who testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly". And again His people reply, "Come, Lord Jesus." (The words "even

so" should be omitted. The cry is more reverent without the added words.)

Then why does He yet appear to linger? Especially as His prayer also is yet unanswered that we may be with Him. For three reasons, He yet waits and sits yonder. First: till those given Him have come to Him. (Rom. xi. 25.) Second: till asked to return and implored by His bride. (Rev. xxii. 17, 20.) Third: till His people come out of evil. (Matt. xxv. 6; Rev. iii. 20, 21.) So of old, did He in His compassion wait, that His cloud moved not until all were ceremonially clean, and had all kept the Passover. (Num. ix. 6-11 with x. 11.)

9. Lastly, whereas the angels had looked out on the old creation, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy"—(Job xxxviii. 7)—Christ looks out on the new creation, which shall be stable, because depending not, as the old did, on the goodness of the creature, but on the goodness of God—on redemption. The tyrant of Babylon, and before him Satan, had claimed to be the sun of the morning and LUCIFER; but Christ affirms that He is the Star, the bright and the morning One. (*c.f.* Isa. xiv. 12, and Ezek. xxviii. 14 with Rev. ii. and xxii.)

"THE SON OF MAN."

THIS is an expression which, as we all know, whilst rarely used of the Lord Jesus by any prophet or apostle is yet constantly in His own mouth. The number of times it is recorded that the Lord Jesus so spake of Himself is eighty-four (12 by 7). Probably this very number is not without design. However that be, we find that this term is used in four different senses, in its application to Christ, in the Word of God.

1. It is the name of Christ as respects His deepest shame and sorrow. Thus, in Matt. viii., "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head". So, too, of His crucifixion He thus speaks, "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know," &c. Hence this word looks in part at all His self-emptying condescension throughout His life, and at all His humbling of Himself to suffering and death upon the cross.

2. It is the name of Christ in His very highest glory. In the eighth Psalm, the expression seems used in somewhat of an abstracted sense. The sceptre of creation is in the hands of the Son of Man. But who of the sons of men can grasp this sceptre or wield it

worthily but Christ? Several have sought after this, but God ever has overturned their dominion and shivered their sceptres, and ever *will* until He come.

In this Psalm, this sovereignty appears exercised on the earth alone. But so worthy is He that His sway is seen in the New Testament to be extended throughout the entire creation. Also the words of this Psalm are there taken up and applied to Him in an infinitely more glorious sense than David knew aught of. For thrice by St. Paul the words of this Psalm are quoted in a manner demanding our rapt attention.

They are quoted in Heb. ii. 6-8, in order to show that the rule of this wondrous Son of Man is "not yet". He, in the perfection of His obedience, is sitting patiently at God's right hand until His time has arrived.

Again we meet with these words at the close of Eph. i., where we read that God has raised Christ from the dead, seated Him at His own right hand in the heavens, and "*hath put all things under His feet*, and given Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all". Here we learn in addition, that when this wondrous Son of Man reigns, we, His Church, must be associated with Him as His fulness. As for Adam, though lord of all, it was not good that He should be alone, but he required a help-meet for him. So, from the Christ once slain, there is being taken His partner and future companion in His glory. Her will He present to Himself glorious, the Church, even as God brought Eve to Adam.

Lastly, this same eighth Psalm is again quoted in I Cor. xv. 25, whence we get the heart-cheering instruction that this future reign of Christ is in resurrection, and is to put down all anarchy and disorder. There verse 26 is badly translated. It should be read thus, "The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed", and not that it shall be destroyed last. On the contrary, as we all rejoice to know, He will swallow up death in victory, as soon as He returns to inaugurate His reign. Other enemies will be disposed of subsequently. Then, when all have been destroyed, He will hand up the kingdom unto God. Thus is He obedient to the end. The sceptre is not wrested from His hand, as by death from all others, except Adam, who surrendered his sway to Satan.

Putting these three Scriptures together, we learn from the first that the universal sceptre is indeed to be in the hands of a Man, but that God's time has not yet

arrived. From the second we are taught that it will extend throughout the entire creation, and will not be limited in the last Adam's case to earth alone: but whenever He reigns, we, His bride, His associates, shall reign with Him. And then the great resurrection chapter teaches us to look forward to a new order of things which His power shall introduce, when death and every other foe shall be finally vanquished.

3. The sentiment couched in the phrase "Son of Man" is now of perfect, pure, and full *grace*. This Son of Man is now in God—(John xiii 31, 32), and glorified. But, as we are, (as we have seen already from Eph. i.,) associated with Him, we, too, who are His, are brought nigh to God; we, too, dwell in God, and have God dwelling in us. (1 John iv. 16.) Here, too, note that the book of the Acts of the Apostles—that is the history of the Church at the beginning—is written by the same penman as the third Gospel. Luke wrote the picture of Christ as Son of Man, and then in his second treatise he shows who are, and how they are (even by the Holy Ghost) joined to the ascended Son of Man. God's grand design shall yet be accomplished in bringing many sons, erst sprung from Adam, unto glory through Him who took human nature, and as the great Captain of our salvation, was perfected as a Saviour through sufferings.

4. Finally, this word regards Him as appointed Judge of all, and of human kind. In quickening, the Father and the Son both work; but in judgment, everything is left to the Son, in order that in that nature in which He has been insulted, He may be honoured, even as the Father is honoured. (John v.) The fact that this divine Man is already raised from the dead, is evidence that He is the appointed Judge. (Acts xvii. 31.) No one has such difficulties as He had; no one is so sorely tempted by Satan as was Jesus. Yet has He overcome all. Yet was He obedient, even unto death. How fit that this One should be the Judge. And because He is omniscient, with His eyes as a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass, He is perfectly competent. Also, *He is "ready"*. (1 Pet. iv. 5.)

I add that this word, "Son of Man," is never once in Greek *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, that is, the Son of *man* as distinguished from *woman*; for this would imply that, He had an earthly father, which is wholly untrue. No; the word in the original ever is *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, that is, of man generally, as distinguished from other creatures.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HEAVENLY CALLING.

[The following we have had sent us by a Beloved Brother. It was published we believe some years ago by W. H. Bloom. The writer is not known to us—ED.]

DEAR CHRISTIAN READER,—I trust that the following simple observations may be blessed, leading us seriously to consider whether much of our present conduct is not unworthy of believers in Christ Jesus, and below the walk of those who are partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter i. 4.) There is a great difference between the Jewish and the Christian dispensations; and the difference is not sufficiently marked. Therefore we are too often found greatly dishonouring our blessed Lord in walking more like *earthly* Jews, than saints “raised up together, and made sit together in *heavenly* places in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. ii. 6.) I trust we may see the importance of distinguishing the JEWISH from the CHRISTIAN dispensation; and while learning blessed lessons from all Scripture (2 Tim. iii. 16), yet apply each part to what the Holy Spirit applied it.

As the Lord dealt with the Jews in flesh, so does He deal with us in spirit. He blessed the Jews with *earthly* blessings in the land. (Gen. xv. 18.) He “hath blessed us with all *spiritual* blessings in *heavenly* places in Christ”. (Eph. i. 3.) The occasion of the great change in God’s dealing was this: the Lord Jesus came to the earth as the Messiah of the Jews, but they rejected Him out of the earth, back to the heavens from which he came (Matt. xxi. 38, 39); and now while the Lord is rejected by the Jews, He is gathering a Church out “of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues” (Rev. vii. 9), to bear His reproach, and to follow Him to the heavens. But yet *earthly* blessing has not for ever failed, neither has the Jew been for ever cast away (Rom. xi. 15, 25, 26); for when the Jews shall say, “Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord,” then they shall see Christ again. (Matt. xxiii. 39.) And he shall restore them to their own land (Isa. xi. 11-16), and make them “a praise among all people.” (Zep. iii. 20.) Until that time comes (in the interval between the rejection of Christ and his reception again by the Jews) the Church (which was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4) is called to stand not in any JEWISH *earthly* connection, but as united with the rejected One, the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church; for as He was not received in the world,

so neither will His Church be received (John xv. 18-20); and as He was received into the heavens, so He is gone to prepare a place for His Church, that He may come again and receive her unto Himself; that where he is there she may be also (John xiv. 2, 3), as “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Rev. xxi. 9), made in His own glorious likeness (Phil. iii. 21), and a joint heir with Him, to share His throne. (Rom. viii. 17; Rev. ii. 21.) Therefore should the life of a believer in Jesus be very different from that of a Jew.

The things of the *earth* were given by the Lord to the Jews.* (Josh. i. 11.) But *heavenly* and not *earthly* blessings are given to us: therefore the direction is “Set your affection on *things above*, NOT on things on the *earth*”. (Col. iii. 2.)

The Jews minded *earthly* things, but they “who mind *earthly* things” now have their end, destruction (Phil. iii. 19), because they are not what God gives to fill the hearts of His people now. Let us consider some of the things which were right for the Jews but not right for us.

The Jews were told to fight with the *sword* against an enemy that attacked them in their *land* (Num. x. 9), “BUT the weapons of our warfare are not carnal.” (2 Cor. x. 4.) “For we wrestle . . . against *spiritual wickedness*,” using ONLY “the *sword of the Spirit which is the word of God*”. (Eph. vi. 12-17.)

The Jews had a particular place in their land, and a dedicated building in it, where they worshipped God (1 Kings viii.), BUT we have no one place or building more than another (John iv. 20, 21, 24); but wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, there is He in the midst of them. (Matt. xviii. 20.)

The JEWISH *earthly* temple “was adorned with costly stones and girts” (Luke xxi. 5); BUT there should be no such building and no such adorning for the CHRISTIAN. The Church is a *spiritual* house composed of believers, as *living* stones, “built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. ii. 20, 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5.)

The Jews had persons among them on *earth* holding the special office of *priest*, BUT our only Priest except as every believer is a priest (1 Peter ii. 9), is Jesus the great High Priest, who is set at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.” (Heb. viii. 1.)

* It is important to know that much of the value of the *earthly* circumstances of the Jews lay in their being types and shadows of far more precious things that were to come after them. (See 1 Cor. x 11; Heb. x 1; Col. ii 16, 17.)

In the *JEWISH* kingdom on earth riches were a mark of God's favour (1 Kings iii. 13); but, says Jesus "a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of *heaven*". (Matthew xiv. 23.) The unsearchable riches of Christ are alone of value in the *heavenly* kingdom.

Among the Jews *earthly* rank and kingly power were owned of God, as things with which He would honour His own people. (1 Kings ix. 5)† "But," says Jesus, "ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mark x. 42-45.)

Among the Jews an injured person might take vengeance through the Law (Num. xxxv. 19; Exod. xxi. 24); but the direction for BELIEVERS now standing not under law, but under grace, is, "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath". (Rom. xii. 19.) "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing." (1 Pet. iii. 9.)

And now, "holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling," "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Many a thing which was lawful in a Jew, would to us be the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; and "whosoever loves these, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John ii. 15, 16.) Christ's kingdom is not of this world *now* (John xviii. 36), "but the *whole* world lieth in wickedness." (1 John v. 19.) The devil is "the prince of this world," and "the god of this world," (John xiv. 30; 2 Cor. iv. 4), and to be of the world *now*, is to be of the devil. An awful reflection! Oh that it may be brought to the conscience of some poor worldling! The Lord deals not with the world now, or with any part of it, as He once dealt with the Jews. He bears with the world in long suffering, not that all will be converted by the preaching of the Gospel now, for this is no where promised, but (the word is) to take *out of* the Gentiles a people for His name," (Acts xv. 14); and this people to be only "a *kind of first-fruits* of His creatures." (James i. 18.)

† Little reference is made in this paper to resurrection-glory, as the object is to show that much of the practical conduct of Jews, in their dispensation, should not be an example for Christians in this dispensation.

There is not *one* passage of Scripture that speaks of a universal knowledge of God in the earth during this dispensation; but on the contrary, we are warned that iniquity will abound, until the Lord comes to destroy the Man of Sin, not by the preaching of His word, but by "*the brightness of His coming*," (2 Thess. ii. 8); for "the Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee;" "and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east" (Zech. xiv. 3, 4); and the Jew shall be restored to his own land again; and "at that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart" (Jer. iii. 17); then *living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, and the Lord shall be king over all the earth, and Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*" (Isa. xxvii. 6.) And "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. xi. 9.) Then will the promises to Abraham and the ancient people of God be fulfilled in that land which was once promised to them, but in which Abraham spent his life as in a strange country. The earthly glory shall be heavenly in its character, because heaven shall be open, and "the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (John i. 51.) And therefore, it shall be said, as in the vision of Jacob's ladder, "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." (Gen. xxviii. 17); and the glory will be connected with the earth, for all things, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, shall be gathered together in Christ. (Eph. i. 10.)

This happy time is not yet come; but the children of God are called to look for the coming of the Lord from heaven to bring it about: and how should they be *now* found? They should be *very* separate from an evil world—(2 Cor. vi. 17.)—not walking like Jews, but as *risen* with Christ, seeking the things *above*, where Christ sits *at the right hand of God*—(Col. iii. 1)—not laying up treasure on *earth*, but in *heaven*, with their hearts in *heaven*, where their treasure is (Matt. vi. 19, 21). "For our conversation is in *heaven*; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all

things unto Himself." (Phil. iii. 20. 21.) "For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the *heavens*; for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from *heaven*." (2 Cor. v. 1, 2.) "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the *clouds*, to meet the Lord *in the air*: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. iv. 15-18.)

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." AMEN. (2 Thess. ii, 16, 17.)

THE HEAVENLY PLACES;

OR THE

BELIEVER'S PLACE AND PORTION.

THESE words occur *five* times in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. They occur in the first chapter and twentieth verse, where we are told that when God raised up Christ "from the dead, He set Him at his own right hand *in the heavenly places*".

There, then, Jesus now is, in the perfectness of acceptance, and the fulness of honour. But these are places of reward and blessedness to which He would assuredly never have been raised, if the work for which He visited the earthly places had not been accomplished. The enthronement of Jesus, then, "in the heavenly places," is perfect evidence to the believer of the settlement of the question of His sin. He sees in it God's receipt to the full discharge of His debt, the proof of the judgment of His iniquity, and the pledge of His future glorification. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." "For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." The testimony here is clear. In Jesus as "seated in the heavenly places," we have the evidence of a completed redemption, the memorial of triumphs, the promise of blessings, and the guarantee of the believer's possession of eternal glory—"Where I am, there shall also my servant be".

But then Jesus is not alone "in the heavenly

places". The believer is there in Him. And hence the language of the Apostle in the sixth verse of the second chapter—"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together *in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*". Whilst, then, in actual presence we are still on the earth, there is yet a sublime and blessed sense in which we are seated in Christ in the *heavenlies*. We are in Him there in the purpose and love of the Father, through the union which we have with Him, and by the indwelling of the Spirit.

But, to be so seated in Him is, in many senses, to be as he is—*quickened*, as He is; *raised*, as He is; *accepted*, as He is; and *secure* as He is. We are in Him, and, according to St. Paul, are *one* with Him in the *life* we possess, the *Spirit* by which we are actuated, the *place* that we occupy, and the *honour* of which we partake. "We are members," He says, "of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones". And John says—"As He is, so are we in this world".

But, as thus one with Christ, we have this further privilege—*We enjoy the very exemptions which He enjoys*. *Law* has no further claim upon Him for vindication; but neither has it upon us, for we are in Him. *Judgment* has no further claim upon Him for endurance; but neither has it upon us, for we are as He is. *Guilt* has no further claim upon Him for settlement; but neither has it upon us, for it has been for ever cancelled by the blood-shedding of Calvary. *Death* has no further claim upon Him for dominion; but neither has it upon us, for its power has been for ever broken by the power by which he threw off its fetters, and walked forth in conquering majesty from the darkness of the grave.

But, as seated in Christ in the *heavenlies*, we have more than exemptions from evil, and more than mere elevation and rank; *we have the possession of the highest and largest good*. And hence the language of the Apostle in the third verse of the first chapter—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all *spiritual blessings* in heavenly places in Christ". But what an inheritance is this! How comprehensive a portion; "*All spiritual blessings*:" the new and resurrection *life*; the *grace* which re-produces the Divine image in the soul; the *power* which makes victorious in conflict with evil; the *strength* which sustains under every burden; the *peace* which passeth all understanding; and the *joy* that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Yes, all blessings are theirs who are with Jesus in the heavenly places. *Liberty* is theirs, for the truth has made them free; *Life* is theirs, for they have been quickened together with Christ; *Sonship* is theirs for they have been born from above, and of the will of God; *Heirship* is theirs, for they have been made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; *wisdom* is theirs, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and *redemption*, for Christ has been made of God all these unto them. Yea, all things are theirs,—the Church with all its services of ministry and ordinances, and the world with its discipline—life, and death—things present and things to come. How paltry is the greatest possession of earth when compared with this! Neither the wealth of the rich, nor the crown of kings, is deserving of a moment's comparison with the inheritance of the very humblest saint of God.

But the heavenly places which believers occupy in Christ, are places of *service*, as well as of honour and enjoyment. And hence the language of St. Paul in the eighth and following verses in the third chapter—“Unto me, who am less than least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now: unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”. How wonderful is the truth which is here taught! How dignified the service to which, as believers, we are called! We are in Christ in the heavenly places, to testify for Him not only to men, but to angels as well. Principalities and powers are to learn from us, as well as our companions in the flesh. And they do so when the grace that we have received is allowed to unfold, and to effect within us, and by us, all the purposes of its bestowment. When they see us growing in likeness to Christ, offering to men around us an example of lofty goodness, and bringing forth, in higher devotedness and more perfect obedience, the fruits of righteousness, they learn from us of the wisdom and grace of God, and see in our spiritual progress an exemplification of the moral glory of Christ—a book of wondrous testimony to the power of truth, and the riches of redeeming love.

Is this, dear Reader, the case with you? Are the holy, but unseen intelligences around you, reading in the open volume of your daily life new lessons of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus—of the elevating influence of the Gospel and of the sufficiency of the help of Christ for every time, of man's need? Are you so growing in the knowledge and grace of Christ as to offer, both to angels and men, as spectators of your conduct, new and instructive pages for their study? Oh, forget not that you are a letter from Christ to all around you, and who take knowledge of you. Unless you are such a letter, open and readable to all, and full of Christ in His excellency and beauty, you are failing to fulfil your mission in the heavenly places.

But, once more, the heavenly places are places of conflict, as well as honour and enjoyment. And hence the words of the Apostle in the twelfth verse of the sixth chapter—“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in heavenly (not high) places”. The aim of the devil is to gain the mastery of believers, and dislodge them from that position in the heavenlies which is theirs in Christ Jesus. And hence the frequency with which he assails them, and marshals against them his legions of destruction. And these are assaults which are not to be disregarded. We must fight if our standing is to be retained; and wrestle with energy and perseverance if we are to preserve our position, and wear the crown. We stand by faith—by the faith of a daily looking to Him, communing with Him, and drawing upon Him. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” And yet we must not be content even with faith. It is only when we are clad with the whole armour of God that we are secure against the inflictions of the fiery darts and the deadly blows of our great adversary.

Then, Christian Reader, let us thus invest ourselves—assume the helmet, put on the breast-plate, grasp the sword, and take the shield, and give no place to our foes; and we shall soon see the battle over, and ourselves in actual presence, in the heavenly places, possessed of the mansion that is being prepared for us, walking in the robes that conflict never soils, and enjoying “the inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away

TEMPLE WORSHIP;

OR,
WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH, WHICH?

IT was the Lord's-day morning; and as I lay on my sick-bed, I fell into the following train of thought:—

Loud and noisily ring the bells of Profession; careless multitudes respond to the summons. They throng those stately temples which rear their steeples to the skies, and whose proud turrets are so pleasing to sight and sense. Inside! surely the Jewish tabernacle or temple has been the pattern of what I see before me! The priests—the robes—the altars—all enclosed and fenced off from the people.

The priests perform certain rites and ceremonies, of which the people are spectators. But hark! the high swelling music now breaks upon the ear. The people are listeners, for they take no part in that either.

Everything to please the eye—the stained glass windows, the lofty pillars, the fretted roof. Is the name of Christ professed here; or is the law of Moses their guide?

But listen! I hear something about a “wicked man turning away from his wickedness.” Then I see the priest rise and pronounce absolution.

Is this the worship of *saints*? Is it all, then, an error that believers *have* forgiveness of sins? Is it, after all, a mistake to suppose that *all* our sins were put away on the cross? Or do we need a new forgiveness every week on some other ground? I had thought that Christ was our only priest and intercessor with God. Do I now learn that I ought to return to the types and shadows of the Law? That a human mediator is now required?

But listen farther! They call themselves miserable sinners, and are sending up cries for mercy.

Where am I? What do I hear? I am more and more perplexed. They beseech God to “deliver them in the day of judgment,” and from “everlasting damnation.” I have read in my Bible that believers “*have* everlasting life” not “*everlasting damnation.*” I have read in the same place that they shall not come into judgment, and moreover that they “*have* passed from death unto life.” I am a believer. Then how can I join in this worship? I think I would make God a liar if I did. I think every worshipper under this roof does, though they may not know it. O believer, believer (if there is one here), dost thou know what

thou art about? Has thy God done so much for thee, and is this thy repayment? “He has *had* mercy on thee,” and yet thou criest for it as if thou wert on the brink of hell, instead of being “seated with Christ in heavenly places.”

Thou sayest thou wilt arise and go unto thy Father, and forgettest the hour he fell on thy neck, and kissed away thy fears, and replaced thy rags with the “best robe.” Art thou not still in thy Father's house, the very place he brought thee into—then why forget this and place thyself outside? Why this outcry for deliverance from judgment and everlasting damnation? Turn to the fifth chapter of John, in your Bible, and let the words of the 24th verse for ever silence such utterances as these.

But the priest is speaking again. Can I hear aright? “*Thou shalt,*” “*Thou shalt not.*” It is the “ministration of death written and engraven in tables of stone.” Alas! alas! They are “fallen from grace.” Terrible, terrible, and fatal error. Every syllable of that Law pronounces death to the hearer. God cannot accept such worship, because they have stepped down from their position as saints assigned by grace; and brought themselves in once more as sinners. Christ has become of none effect to them. Poor deluded people! They have withdrawn themselves from under the Cross only to behold the lightnings and hear the thunders of Sinai!

But now my thoughts took a different turn. In silence is gathered a little band to worship God. What denomination? None. No! they bear neither the name of a country, nor that of an individual, nor of a doctrine. This is strange, is it not? Yes, it is strange because it is according to the simple word of God, which sternly rebuked those who would range themselves under the names of even Paul, or Cephas, or Apollos, or even Christ, as a party name. The members of this little flock are simply *Christians gathered together in the name of Jesus.* For the good Shepherd hath said, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.” These “two or three” then, insignificant as they may appear in the eyes of Christendom, are gathered as the “Church of God,” which is His body. Sight and sense may search here in vain for something to feed upon. Attractions are here found only by those who by faith see Jesus in the midst.

Instead of cries for mercy, I now hear praises as-

ceding to God for their deliverance from Death, Hell, and Judgment to come. They thank their Lord that His is a "finished work;" that He has magnified the Law in His death, and abolished it for them. They see its dread curse all laid on the Crucified One, and rejoice that they are risen with Him, and are in Him. Law, curse, death, judgment, here give way to endearing expressions of love to the great Deliverer. He tells them the Church is His Bride, and they rejoice. The Spirit reveals "deep things" to them, and they talk of the future glory. The Spirit shows them "things to come," and the Bride waits for the royal Bridegroom. She now longs to see her Lord face to face.

Patience! Patience! Only a "little while."

F. B. W.

GOD IS LIGHT.

PERHAPS we have no propositions exactly of the same form as those two which we meet in John's first Epistle, "God is light—God is love". They more abstractedly define or describe the Blessed One than perhaps any other Scriptures attempt to do. And I judge that these are two great *parent* truths, out of which all the divine procedure will be found to result. So that we have not only God in the light of those holy words, but His precious, wondrous ways, also. It may be seen, when following the divine revelation from the very beginning down to the close, that these two great truths have formed the whole of it. They have been the warp and the woof, by which the beautiful texture of divine counsels and divine revelations have all been woven. To effect the results of combined light and love, or to produce the fruit of perfect rectitude and perfect benevolence, is the secret of God's counsels and acts as for and towards us. All is light above, Infinite wisdom and power will be indeed to effect these results, and wisdom and power will be seen therefore. But they are serving the display of God Himself, and "God is light" and "God is love". He is perfect in righteousness and perfect in goodness.

I would here rather trace the expression of the first of these Scriptures. "God is light," along the course of the divine revelation—desiring to have the soul humbled and yet raised and gladdened, while following such a path as this. At the very beginning we get the strongest expression of the holiness and

righteousness of God. "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt die". The Lord God can appoint to the very first commission of evil nothing less than full and complete separation from Himself. He is the living God. As such he had just shown Himself. He had just become the great parent source of all that in the power of that threat was around them in earth, air, and seas. He was the living and life-giving One, and therefore a state of death was simple separation from Him. And this state is announced to be the sure and immediate doom of the creature, on the moment of his departing from fullest simplest righteousness. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This is, at the outset, as strong a revelation of the truth that "God is light," as we could listen to. In such an one there was, there could be "no darkness at all"—for the child of evil, the child of darkness, night, at once, be removed from Him. And all this first impression receives constant sealings from the hand of God, as it expresses itself afterwards. Love will have its way, but light will not give way. And therefore the word comes full from Him who is equally "light and love". "He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." In simple terms, God will provide a way whereby "He may be just and the justifier" of sinners. All the claim of light or righteousness shall be honoured, and all the desires of love gratified. This is the interpretation of this earliest promise of God, after sin had entered: clearly, indeed, does it announce, in a way of excellent wisdom that surely passes all thought, that He is both "light and love"—and that both must and shall be maintained—no more can God Himself cease than light or love be disowned in any of His ways. This earliest promise is certainly blessed in thus expressing the divine light and love. Man shall be redeemed, because God is love, but death shall be endured, according to the penalty, because God is light. And just for the same reason, because God is light, from henceforth we find Him a stranger in the place where death has entered. Man's habitation has become defiled. The ground is cursed, because of sin. God cannot be at home here any longer. And thus He becomes a stranger in his own creation. He visits the earth because of His purposes of love to His elect—but otherwise, He and His creation are estranged. "When the Lord had done talking with Abraham, He went His way" (Gen. xviii). The same sanctity in

the Blessed One is thus expressed. God's rest in creation was disturbed, as soon as creation was defiled. And so, in process of time, ere He takes any portion of it for His habitation again, we see what a purifying process such elect portion must pass through. The sword of Joshua rids Canaan of its old corruption—cities are made a curse to the Lord—the fruit of cattle, of trees, and of fields are all circumcised, after their manner, and the new people are baptized in the cloud and in the sea. The land by due ceremonies is thus made “the land of the glory”—the place for the restored and willing feet of the Lord to rest on. And when He and his people are settled there all is sanctity still—all tell still that God is light and that in Him is no darkness at all. Approach to Him is by a path fully and deeply consecrated. He is withdrawn into that which bears the title of “the holiest of all”. And the whole way into that sanctuary is carefully marked by a testimony to the jealous and unmitigated holiness of the Lord. All told of his love in providing a way whereby His banished ones might return to Him; but the character of the way equally told of His sanctity, and that no iniquity could possibly stand before Him, or enter His presence. So, in the provision made for the worshippers themselves that they might be kept clean, or worthy of his presence—we read exactly the same upon that—“God is light”. The least evil must be purged, ere they could meet Him. *Love* provided the constant remedy, but *Light* required it. If there was the least contact with death, or that which savoured of sin, approach to God was made impossible. The touching of a grave or a bone, as we know, though by accident, had to send the worshipper to the ashes of the purifying heifer, ere he could come into God's presence. And thus all was sanctuary. The place, the worshipper, the ordinances, all told with one consent, that “God was light”. The voice of the law which these ordinances accompanied, spoke the same. If man would approach God by the law, and not by the ordinances or shadows of grace—if he would stand on Mount Sinai, instead of at the door of the golden Sanctuary, then he had to hear this—“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them”. God was light. He was perfect in righteousness and holiness, and could not abate one ray of that perfect glory. If man therefore, will stand before Him, he must bring into His presence nothing less than that

light of entire conformity with His law—“holy, just, and good”. As it was—which alone was worthy of His presence. He must continue in all things written in the law—less than this would not—could not, answer the demand of this truth, that “God is light”. Such was the strong testimony of the law, and of that religious order that accompanied it. The voice from the top of Mount Sinai, and the voice from the sanctuary at the foot of it, differently though equally uttered this truth. And as the Blessed One advances in the dispensing of Himself and His counsels to us, it is still “God is light” that we hear. The captivities of Israel become in their turn the witness of this. Israel had not continued in the “all things,” of their holy and righteous covenant. They had not reflected as they were bound to do, the “Light of God,” and they were removed from His presence. The present dispersion of the Tribes clearly tells us that God is light, as the exile of Adam from Eden—what communion has light with darkness? If Israel walk in the darkness of corrupted man, they must walk outside the presence of God, and the ministry of the Baptist addresses them forcibly with all this truth. It finds them in evil, and it summons them to repent. It tells them that nothing else can establish them as Abraham's children. Nothing can be more perfect than this witness to light, all through from the beginning. The threat in Eden, the first promise, the law, the ordinances, the Baptist, each succeeding testimony is as complete as any that preceded it, varying of course, in character according to the growing revelation of God. But whether it be the first threat, or the voice of the law, which came long after—whether it be the terms on which the first promise is made to hang, or the ordinances of the sanctuary which came long after, all are witnesses of the same truth, with the same clearness and decision. But we now reach another witness to this—the most affecting of all—the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus. All He did was a reflection of God; and “love” and “light,” were equally and perfectly seen and read in every path. They were mingling their rays and forming the element in which He lived and moved in this earth. And this was “God manifest in the flesh”. The divine glory shone in the face of Jesus. Here was “the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” and all that emanated was “light and love”. Such was the life of the Son of God here. He acted on the blessed principle of the first promise,

which we have already considered. He consented to be bruised in His own heel, because of righteousness—because “God is light,” but He undertook to bruise the enemy’s head, because of grace—because “God is love”. This was declared eminently in his death, but all His previous actions savoured of it. His life reflected “light and love,” or told of both justice and mercy—He was without home here, that we might get an eternal home in glory—He was covered with shame, that we might shine in robes of beauty and majesty. He was made naked, that we might be clothed—He was exposed, that we might have very walls of salvation around us for ever. He bore all curse and suffered all wrong, and entered fully into all forfeitures, that we might be blest and honoured, and endowed for ever. He vindicated light and dispensed love in all that He did, and eminently and meritoriously so in His cross. But His teaching savoured of the same mind also. In word and deed it was just this. Such was indeed the life and the doctrine of the Blessed Son of God. And so His spirit in His Apostles, when His work of love and witness to light was over, held up exactly the same testimony. The revelation of further mysteries, after the death and resurrection of Christ were accomplished, tells the same. The doctrine of the Apostles, putting the *pardoned sinner into Christ*—what a maintenance of the truth that “God is light,” that is “know ye not,” says the astonished Apostle, “that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death—that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”. The thought of the mystery of Christ admitting the return of any darkness was a stranger to his spirit and he could not but stand amazed at the conception of it. So he assumes that if they have learned Christ—if they have heard Him and been taught by Him, they must put off the former conversation, corrupted by the lusts of the great lie or deceit (Eph. iv.) The grace of God which brings salvation he interprets as surely teaching us to deny all ungodliness and wordly lusts. It is not the law—it is grace or salvation now—but it is as perfect a witness that “God is light” as the other. The “Saviour” is the “Lord”. That is the teaching of the Apostles, and it secures the honour of the same inestimable truth that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” The hand that has rescued us

from captivity, asserts its own dominion over us, and it is a clean and holy hand. And not to multiply testimonies, the Epistle from whence our words are taken seems to weave together the two truths, “God is light and God is love”. All the thoughts of the Apostle seem to pass from one to the other of these truths. They are are made the greatest. Therefore it is written “Whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother”. And why so? Because “God is light and God is love”. And He who doeth not righteousness cannot be of Him who is light, nor can he who loveth not his brother, be of Him who is “love”. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin”. “He that loveth not, knoweth not God”. These are the constant *thoughts of the Spirit, in this beautiful epistle. That “God is light, and that God is love,” quickens and fills the pen of the ready writer throughout. Such then are the teachings of the Holy Ghost. But further we see the same, so to express it, in his person and life for us. The Lord, not only by His teachings, but by His life and acts, was the witness as we have seen to these great truths; so the Holy Ghost is the same witness, not only by His teaching, through the Apostles, but in Himself, as He dwells and acts in the Saints. For He is now the indwelling Spirit. The Saints are His temple. How is He there? As in a Sanctuary. The Holy Spirit is grieved by anything that is contrary to “light,” by anything that in the Saints, is not according to the truth that “God is light”. He is a Spirit in us *grieved* by any contradiction—any practical contradiction of purity or righteousness. So that in His person or life, in this age of His manifestation in the Saints just as well as by His teaching, He testifies to this great truth, as the Son did, in the day when He was manifested in the flesh. How perfect is all this in its season! The Son and the Holy Ghost, each in their day, maintain the same simple testimony, as the threat in Eden—the promise after the fall—the law and the ordinances—the settlement and the scattering of Israel and John Baptist, had also before-time in their several seasons, done. And so far it is the same unbroken voice of God still. The glory by and bye will do the same—the glory which is to come, and close all, will take up the blessed note, and still tell out that “God is love,” and that “God is light,” and strike that note with a hand that shall cause it to vibrate through eternity. For while the rest in glory,*

for the poor sinner, that in spite of all his sin and condemnation, has trusted in Jesus, will tell that "God is love"; the fact that this earth must be purged of its corrupters, ere the glory can return to dwell here, and that there nothing can be allowed to approach that glory, that can in anywise defile, shall equally and surely tell out that "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all". "Without are dogs," beyond the sphere which the glory fills must retire all that is unclean—all that is abominable—all that maketh or worketh a lie—all that is in contradiction of "light". For the darkness is "outer" darkness.

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**EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. BELLET
TO MISS ———.**

MY DEAR SISTER,—It is in my heart again to have a little word with you in your distant corner—trusting, indeed, that the Lord of the wilderness knows the place of your encampment morning by morning. And more intimately was He there because Israel was there, than amid the crowded streets of the cities of the world at that time. It was in the desert places of the wilderness of Sinai the manna fell, and the light of the cloudy pillar arose, and not on the walls or gardens of Pharaoh or of Balak then. And I have been judging, dear sister, that we want to be more *unsatisfied* with everything this side the kingdom. We are not sufficiently in *hope*. We are to have *no* object but the presence and kingdom of the Lord. In the 90th Psalm, all that the man of God sees is the vanity of human life and the "return" of the Lord. He does not anticipate change in the character of human things, but he looks for the "return" of the Lord, and then for the being "made glad and satisfied". So, as another sweetly observes, in the 94th Psalm the heart of the worshipper is in the way unsatisfied till he appears before God in Zion. He may have the "pools" and the "rain," and the "strength of the Lord" also, but he is *unsatisfied* till he reaches Zion. Gideon's chosen three hundred express this. Refreshment had no power to stop them. They took refreshment only for the sake of the journey, or as being a journeying people still. They "lapped" the water as a *travelling* dog lapped it, and did not "kneel" down to it as though they were giving themselves to it. And this is to be our mind, dear sister—nothing to be allowed to interfere with *hope*. We are to hope to the end. (1 Peter i.) We are saved in hope or only up to hope.

(Rom. viii.) We are still to be prisoners of hope till the morning comes. The Holy Ghost is given not to *change* this attitude of the soul, but to *strengthen* it. He does not bring His refreshment in order to provide something that will do instead of the Bridegroom's presence, but by His refreshings He nourishes the hope of that presence, "That ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost". He so sheds abroad the love of God in us as to give warrant to the richest hope. (Rom. v.) But we need to be more like Gideon's men to be using his refreshings, but still to be in the way. And oh, dear sister, if even the Holy Ghost do not usurp the place of the Bridegroom, or purpose to do that for us which the return of Jesus alone can do, and that is to satisfy us, how should we refuse that place or authority to everything else? The Spirit of Comfort does not assume to be the Bridegroom. Nothing that He brings with Him in this age of His presence amounts to the supper of the Lamb. May we be enabled to plead this against every proposal that may be made to our hearts, and to refuse the offers of all to furnish the supper of the kingdom for us. The table of the wilderness is not the marriage feast. Guests are bidden *now*, but the supper is still in prospect. And then, dear sister, if we thus refuse to allow any pleasure or blessings by the way to rival the hope of the marriage supper, shall we not learn also to refuse to allow any pain or vexation, by the way, to cloud that hope? Oh, that we may! That we may be still consciously *in the way*, through evil as well as through good, through the plain or the rough places, having in our eye the hope which *God* Himself has set before us, that our faith, and hope too, may be only in Him. I find that my heart has great need of this, and I look with admiration at the mind of the Apostle in 2 Cor. iv. 5, as standing so separate and so elevated beyond what my soul has ever conceived. Let us consider it together. He knew that he carried a treasure; well, so do you and I. He knew this treasure was in an earthen vessel; so do you and I. But, being in this strange complex, he then shews the experience or working of it. He was troubled, but not distressed. In his course through the world, he was shewing out the "dying" of the Lord Jesus, but also His "life," that is, he was like Jesus, without any resource in man, but his resource was in God, as Jesus' was, who was cast upon God from the womb. (Psalm xxii.; 2 Cor. iv. 9, 10.) Such was the Apostle's *dying* life in this world. Like

Christ, he had no resource in man, but all he had was in God. Of course this was not so perfect in him as in the Lord, but the principle of their lives was the same. But then, I judge, we get a further thing. (Verses 11-14.) It is not only that he was hanging simply on God, as Jesus did, for his life in passing through this world, but he was daily ready to surrender that life in the blessed hope of resurrection, as Jesus was. He was alive, it is true, but ever delivering himself to death in sympathy with the *resurrection* life of Jesus. For the two things are true of the Lord. His life in the body was sustained by God, as we have seen from Psalm xxii. 9, 10. But that body was delivered up at last. Jesus forewent the care of God, though He might have called for legions of angels, and life in the body was surrendered by Him. But this was because He looked for life in *resurrection*. And He got it. He was raised up. And the Apostle is willing to follow his Master in both of these things. He is willing to take God as his resource while life in the body lasts, and then to give up the body, so as to let it become "mortal flesh," in the hope of getting life with Jesus in resurrection. What greatness of faith and hope are here, dear sister. I can discover this in the pages of the book, but not a line of it in the tablet of the poor, weak, and narrow heart. I am too much of a Corinthian, desiring that life should work in me (verse 2) rather than death, loving rather the enjoyments of the gospel than the services and sufferings of the gospel. But, after this, our Apostle goes on to tell them that he is ready to go through all this kind of life, not only as following his Master, but also for their sakes; that they, by his labours, might be taught to join the heavenly company of harpers by-and-by. (Verse 15.) Then I combine verses 16, 17, and 18, and read the Apostle's mind there—that by these labours the bodily man is, of course, decaying and wasting, yet the inner or spiritual man is strengthened. And while the mind of the spiritual man is thus strengthened in this decay of the outer man, his crown is getting brighter and brighter by affliction or suffering. The whole man is thus advanced and blest by this precious twofold operation. His soul is cherished, his dignity is advanced. And all this goes on together, while the looking at the unseen things of heaven is cultivated. For without that communion there would be no profit. Here was an eye fixedly resting on the distant joys. Counting the towers, and marking well

the bulwarks of that city of God which shone before it; surveying the heavenly country which the promises had spread in the prospect. And I would ask, does he not, after this, seem to track the path up to this distant glory. (Chap. v. 1-8.) He knows that there is this eternal building of God in the heavens for him—this body of glory, wherein mortality is to be swallowed up of life. But he intimates also that there is, or may be also, an unclothed condition—a condition of the life or spirit, ere this body of glory is taken up. His desire is after the house itself—after the body of glory. Though the present body, or earthly tabernacle, be a place of groans and burdens to him, yet he does not ask to lay it aside, or to be unclothed, for that would be simply *his own* advantage or rest. He is rather willing to labour still, till mortality be ready to be swallowed up of life. But though thus ready to continue in the present body, with its groans and burdens, yet, if *desire* and *will* were consulted, he is willing rather to be out of the body, willing to be unclothed, that in spirit he may be present with his Lord. Such seems to me to be his mind here. And still it is a precious, lovely mind—as was his mind in the previous verses. (iv. 17, 18.) But, as I was anticipating, he does seem, in them, to track the way to the distant city of glory—that it may possibly be through the place of the unclothed spirits. It is not *necessarily* the way, for some will be *alive* when the Lord descends from Heaven, and from their bodies on earth they will ascend in their bodies of glory to meet Him. But the path may lie through this region of the unclothed spirits, which is called Paradise. And so is he always confident, knowing that if he be unclothed or removed from the body, he should only be present with the Lord in that spirit which he has already received from God as his earnest of the body of glory—the eternal house which he is in addition to get by-and-by. We are happy here through the Lord's constant tendence, but we must live by the day. Watching and prayer are the divinely-appointed securities against temptation; and, if they be not exercised by the soul, God will be true to His own perfect principles, and let the temptation get advantage.

Ever, dear sister,

Yours very affectionately,

G. J. B.

A LITTLE WHILE.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. FOR YET A LITTLE WHILE, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—HEB. x., 25-39.

"A LITTLE while!" What mean these words,

So kindly spoken once for all?
They sound more sweetly than the birds,
Whose echoes on the woods do fall.

"A little while" seems long to some,
Who count the moments as they fly;
But true it is He shall soon come,
For every hour is drawing nigh.

"A little while!" It may be soon,
Far sooner than we now expect;
And then it will have been a boon,
We had such seasons to reflect.

"A little while" the Bride must wait,
Expecting, hoping Him to see,
Who shall come forth in royal gait,
To welcome those He has made free.

"A little while" 'tis to prepare
The church He purchas'd with His blood;
And then to meet Him in the air,
And to escape the fiery flood.

"A little while" before He comes,
Afflictions daily may be given;
To purify and purge our homes,
And fit us for the realms of heaven.

"A little while" shall soon be past,
Each day proclaims the Advent's near;
O! may we gain the prize at last,
When we shall see the Lord appear.

JOHN C. SOMMERS.

SURELY I COME QUICKLY.

(Rev. xxii. 20.)

THE darkness thickens, lo! the twilight comes,
The clouds shall scatter and the sky appear;
The Bright and Morning Star shall soon arise,
When perfect bliss our drooping hearts shall cheer.

O! Thou in whom our heart's affections rest,
We would more fully all Thy virtues scan;
But O! the theme is vast, what mind can trace
The matchless glories of the Heavenly Man.

Thy absence from us, Lord, oft makes us sad,
E'en to Thyself we would more closely press;
And be for ever safe in those dear arms,
Which shall most surely shield us from distress.

But O! what transports fill our longing hearts,
Whilst the blest object of our hope draws nigh;
When He, and us, for whom He gave Himself,
Will fulness have of purest joys on high.

O! faithful Bride, who through the dreary night
Has long been waiting Thy dear Lord to see;
The time of mourning shall ere long be past,
He's on His way, that has great love to Thee.

O! lovely bridegroom, Thy chaste bride take home,
She's faint and lonely now so far from Thee;
O! come and let her see Thee as Thou art,
When like her Lord she shall for ever be.

H. L.

Kilmarnock.

WHERE ART THOU.

CHRISTIAN, where art thou? does thy light
In thine own circle shine?
Or art thou but a stumbling-block
To some poor friend of thine?

Shall it be ever said of thee
By one who knew thee well—
He never really tried to save
My precious soul from hell?

O let none ever say of thee—
I saw in him no light;
And so I madly turned away
And plunged in deeper night.

Prepare thy lamp, the Lord will come,
Await the midnight cry;
The slumbering virgins near thee rouse,
The Bridegroom draweth nigh.

Wanderer, where art thou? thou hast left
Thy loving Father's home,
And in a far off country now
A prodigal dost roam.

Return to Him, who lovingly
Invites you back to-day,
Come to your heavenly Father's arms,
But come without delay.

"Strong, not in the day of battle but in the day of victory.

"WHEN the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait (for the people were distressed), then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits."—(1 Sam. xiii. 6.)

"Likewise all the men of Israel which had hid themselves in mount Ephraim, when they heard that the Philistines fled, even they also followed hard after them in the battle."—xiv. 22

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LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL,

By LEONARD STRONG, 2s.

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“For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”—GAL. II. 16.

“For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”—EPH. II. 1.

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RECOLLECTIONS.

Ephesians v. 22, 33.

THE first great truth that strikes my mind is—“Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” Words *easily* uttered, but how much is contained therein, something *peculiar, special, unique*: there you see He loved it *before* He died—how much, you cannot tell. And as He loved the Church, so He loved *every member* of it. What we *want* is, the Holy Ghost to bring these words *home* to our hearts. We don’t *half* believe Christ loved the Church as He *says* He does. God loved the World, but it is as if all beams of light are being gathered up, and directed right at the Church. All the love of God gathered into a focus and sent right at the Church. Every one here, is aware that the Church is a *unique* thing to reveal the richest, deepest, love of God—the skilfulness of His hands, the love of His heart. “Christ *loved* the Church.” I conjure you to have a peculiar and exceedingly delicate affection for it—have it much on your soul, be peculiarly sensitive for the honour of the Son of God.

There are *seven* particulars here. *Two* past—“He *loved* and *gave*.” *Four* present—“He sanctifies and cleanses, nourishes and cherishes.” And *one* future. “That He *Himself* might present it to Himself.”—*The Church glorious*.” It is very near; in a moment—we know not how soon. These four things He is doing now. The first two are *balanced* by the other two. Sanctifying and cleansing, balanced by nourishing and cherishing. Sanctifying costs us something, a little bit of pain, but He *must* do it. “That He *might* sanctify and *cleanse*; but the nourishing and cherishing, He *loves* to do. The words nourish and cherish imply, to

feed, and nurse: Oh, He *likes* to do that—nursing, rearing; this is as it were, the higher region, and touches Him to the quick.

“For we are members of His Body, *out* of His *flesh* and *out* of His bones.” The first clause denoting *union*; the second, *relationship*. One thing you may say, “Ephesians is the grandest of all the Epistles, and this passage the climax”: and yet it is very striking to see the incidental way it occurs. Of these seven things we have had the first two—“He loved the Church and gave Himself for it,” or for her. Adam had no idea what he was doing when he sinned; he loved his wife too much, but Christ does not love us too much—“He *loved* the Church and gave Himself for it.”

Now we shall look at the other five particulars of the Lord’s work for His Church. “That He *might* sanctify and cleanse.” You see there is something to be done—*Not* “Loved and gave,” and then *present*; but we find in giving Himself for her He had an ultimate object in view—that He might fit her for His presence, His *companion*. When a man selects a wife, he chooses some *suitable*, but this was not God’s way; He chooses an *unsuitable* one, and makes her a *worthy* one, in this sense—*i.e.*, making her to appreciate, to apprehend His love. “That He *might* sanctify,” implies He *had* to do it, and naturally involves pain, according to Hebrews xii.; but He never gives pain *needlessly*. The first thought of sanctification is the washing of regeneration, 1 Pet. i. “Through sanctification of the Spirit.” And then “begotten” sanctified by *blood*, for it has been specially shed for us. There is the first sanctification—“He gave Himself for it,” then “begotten.” There is a difference between sanctifying and cleansing; the

former refers to what Christ has done, is doing, and *will* do. "Cleanse," delivering us from iniquity. The sanctifying looks at the work done, and then by the constant application of the Word makes us walk worthy—separate to God. When I am a Believer, I don't belong to any one else—God owns me—puts His Spirit in my heart, on purpose to call Him "Father"—separated by the Holy Ghost. Cleansing in water as well as in blood; both Scriptural. Water is as much an expression in Scripture as blood. The blood deals with my *sin*, the water with my *nature*.

Blood treated of in Rom. iii. to v. 11. Water, Rom. v. 12 to xvi. 7. And then there is the constant application by the Spirit to make us correct in our walk, and live according to God. "The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin." In a controversy lately, one party argues that we need a fresh application of the blood; thus it is reduced to the level of Jewish sacrifices. God washed me *once* and for *ever*, but when two are contending for the truth, there is generally a measure of truth on both sides. There *is* truth in the thought, that though the blood *has* made us clean once and for ever, yet we have not *done* with it. The Lord Jesus loves to bring the remembrance of it—"Washing by the Word." Very well—Isn't the *Word* very *nuch* about the Blood? The washing is *done*, not over and over; remember the cross and the *blood*. Shall we not in Heaven remember it? Indeed, we shall. "Washing by the Word," not to wash *again*, but to remind me at what a *cost* I have been redeemed—compare Numb xix., John xiii. When one was in contact with the dead, he had to cleanse himself in this way, and in no other Scripture but this particular one was the Heifer *buried with the blood in it*. The water was mingled with the *ashes* and sprinkled on the man. So now, the washing *by* the *Word*, the bringing to the soul the *costliness* of the blood; and again—"By the which will, we were sanctified," and, "By one offering He hath perfected for ever, them that are *being* sanctified." "By the which will we have been sanctified—one *done*, and the other *being* done." That He *might* sanctify and cleanse by the washing of water by the Word. And then I notice, in between the third and fourth, and the fifth and sixth—that as I am sanctified and cleansed, so may I see the end in view—"to *present*" nothing between the man who once believes and Heaven; but its another thing to *apprehend* it. Oh, its a *fact*, those who allow sin, do not long for the coming of the Lord; and the

way to enjoy it is to be sanctified. We are gradually waking to the consciousness of what God is going to do. Sanctify, cleanse, to *present*—painful to the flesh; but something also for the Spirit—*feeds* and *nourishes*. The food is *Christ*, and through *Christ God*. Feed on God, delight in *God*, this is life *eternal*. By and bye in Heaven, God will be fully manifested to the Church, and the Church full of *eyes* to take in. There is a difference between ministry and worship: worship you give to God, ministry God gives to you—you can't *enjoy* before He *gives* to you. Then nurture, or cherish, or nurse—warmth pressure to the *bosom*, *heat*; there's what we may call *Gospel experience*. Its one thing to read the Word, to take it into your mind, another thing to warm and *thrill* the soul. He's to see to that. No Christian should let a day pass without getting something *warm*. Get something warm, that He may feed; it refers to the bosom— in His love, not our mind entertained, but *warm*—"That He might *feed* and *warm*,"—but continually we are prone to allow ourselves in things, and therefore as a man feeds and warms his body, so Christ warms and feeds the members of His Body. Milk,—deep things of God; strong meat—but in these last days, men are "heady," top heavy. Food that does not *warm*, does you no good.

Lastly, the ultimate object. We have got down to the sixth. He has been feeding and warming us, "that He *Himself* might *present* her to *Himself*." On purpose to make the allusion to Genesis very clear. The person who presented the Bride is not the same as the one who *possessed* her, but both converge in Jesus. God gave Adam his wife, brought her to him; but He *Himself* will present her to *Himself*. The One who owns will *keep* us, and the One who *loves* us will *present* us, and isn't that enough? Neither of the washings in John xiii. refer to the blood—plenty others do. First, born of the Spirit; second, to make us *walk* as children of God—the application of the Word—to make me *walk* as a *born child* of God; and the presenting us to *Himself*, "without spot or wrinkle or any *such* thing." Lord cleanse me, fashion me, make me fit for Thy use. —*Amen*.

Redemption by the blood of Christ is the groundwork of a majestic triumphant song of praise in heaven, and a disposition to join in it, our chief capacity for, and actual happiness in time and eternity.

INCIDENTAL LESSONS FROM THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

(I.—DEMAS.)

IN this short Epistle, there is not only a paramount object in the Apostle's eye, but there are incidental truths fitted to spur up, warn, and counsel the Lord's own.

Notice verse 24—"There salute thee, Demas, my fellow labourer." Col. iv. 14—"Demas greet you." 2 Tim. iv. 10—"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica."

To put the matter in as few words as possible, Demas, in this Epistle, is classed as a fellow-labourer of Paul, and equally so with Marcus, Lucas, and Aristarchus. In Col. iv. 14, he is referred to as sending greetings along with Luke, but not as inferior to him. But in 2 Tim., he is said to have forsaken Paul because he loved this present world, and left for Thessalonica—gave up the preaching and companionship of Paul and others, and went where possibly, he believed, greater inducements for money-making presented themselves.

He is frequently referred to now by both preachers and writers as if he had been no Christian at all, only a pretender or a hypocrite. The record concerning him does not warrant this conclusion. That he was a Christian there is not a word to warrant us in doubting. That he was a wandering preacher and a companion of Paul is plainly affirmed, and that he ceased this labour, and gave up this companionship in order to make money is what we are warranted to believe of him.

Why this? Doubtless he would find that the business of being a "wandering preacher" was neither a lucrative nor respectable one; and if ever he should have a comfortable home, and occupy a position to "command respect" in this world, he must shew himself—Not "the man who winneth souls is wise," as God puts it, but he "who makes money is wise".

That a Christian may and does secure the respect of worldly people, by worldly possession cannot be doubted, but what is the use of that? A Christian, whether rich or poor, filled with God, like "Gideon's fleece," is of more use to all concerned, than all other Christians put together. One who can shut heaven by one prayer and open it by another—(James v. 17)—who throws

his mantle at another, and is followed by him—(1 Kings xix. 19-21)—who goes forth in the might of God, and causes all coming in contact with him to feel God is in him and with him. (Acts v. 15.) Yes, these are the persons used by God, but such is the weakness of men that, if they are to retain their freshness and their power, they must give heed to 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16—"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. vi. 3-5.) "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." (2 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 5.) "But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus." (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant, in season out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Tim. iv. 1-5.) "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment; let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced

themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." (1 Tim. vi. 7-11.)

There are christians who have no gifts for this work. These should attend to what they have a gift for. If they cannot build the house, they may be useful in erecting the scaffolding for those who have the building gift, and should heartily and diligently attend to that they can do, for the Lord's sake.

We cannot doubt Demas had some gift, else we should not find him recognized as a fellow-labourer by Paul and others; but, doubtless, worldliness was his *snare*.

He "went wrong in his soul," and thus lost the power to repel the ensnaring temptations to the flesh, of money-making, and as sure as any dear child of God gets "wrong in soul," the old habits (be they what they may) will come back, and, the power of godliness for the time being gone, the backslider is overcome easily. When Samson's locks are gone, he is easily overcome by the Philistines, though he may not think it.

Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom, because of the rich pasturage, and possibly of the ready market for his wife's dairy produce, offered by Sodom. One step in that direction made a second easier, and thus, each step paved the way for a further one, till he was *in* it. What did he gain by this? He lost his wife and some of his family. His two daughters and himself are to this hour a bye-word in the mouths of the infidel, and all his ill-gotten gains were gone for ever. Fellow-believer, what are you about? *Take heed*. There is no safety but in walking with, and leaning on Himself.

The backslidings of saints have often been made the most powerful instruments in Satan's hands, of effecting the ruin of immortal souls. The single solitary lapse of one believer is more injurious to the interests of vital godliness than the profligate lives of ten thousand who know not God.

To the Christian who, under a sense of his manifold failings, is led to believe sometimes that his affections are not alive to God; it is a comforting reflection that as in the eddies of a river, the current is not prevented from running into the sea, so grace in the heart will still struggle through every difficulty and opposition until it is swallowed up in glory.

OBEDIENCE BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

"AND Samuel said, hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams—for rebellion (*i.e.* disobedience), is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."—1 Sam. xv. 22-23. For Ezra had prepared his heart to *seek* the law of the LORD and to *do it* and to *teach* in Israel statutes and judgments.

HOW TO WIN A BATTLE. Eph. vi. 10-18—"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

FOOLISH JEALOUSY. "And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them."—Num. xi. 27-29. "And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us."—Luke ix. 49-50. "What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."—Phil. i. 18.

The silence of a good man is sometimes more prejudicial and of more pernicious consequences than the accusations of a declared enemy.

CONCENTRATION.

A WORD FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL AND OTHER
YOUNG TEACHERS, PREACHERS, OR MINISTRIES.

BY Concentration we mean the vigorous employment of all our powers in one direction. The lines of action and feeling may spring from every source, and radiate in all directions, but they converge to one point. The outward life may be diversified enough, but the spirit within is still intent upon one great result; and while the mere onlooker may not guess the secret, the whole character is clothed with that mysterious power of which the ancient proverb speaks: "Mighty is the man that doeth one thing;" or better still, "This one thing I do." Phil. iii. 13.

We are told in the life of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, that one secret of his accuracy and success in his abundant and multifarious toils was stated by himself to be that he was "*a whole man to one thing at a time.*" This was concentration exemplified in individual details: but above and beyond this, there was a unity of purpose blending these details, in all their vast variety, into one; and it was because every separate act was regarded in its relation to the grand object of his existence, that he was able, without reluctance or reserve, to take his "whole man," and to work with it, everywhere. For want of such purpose, many a life, as richly endowed, has been but a collection of fragments, dazzling, but powerless: the whole soul has never been thoroughly aroused as to a life's work; and the "talents," carelessly lavished in a hundred different directions, have yielded a result little more satisfactory than did that which was "buried in the earth" by cowardice and sloth.

We would fain take for granted, that, to use the common expression, "your hearts are in your work." That is, you have taken *yourselves* into it, with all your attainments and powers. It is *not* with you a mere accident that you are teachers. You do not go on a Sunday because the shops are shut, and you want something to do. The place is not a Lord's day lounge, valued as providing a little pleasant companionship or agreeable excitement. You are not there because some one else thinks you ought to be, or has asked you to go. Your work is deliberately chosen. It is your way of seeking the great aim of your being—to glorify God. It is your selected contribution towards the advancement of your Saviour's kingdom. If the "Well done" is uttered to you at last, it will be mainly, perhaps, in

memory of these hours employed in leading other spirits to Christ. Hence you value your work very highly. No effort for the culture of your own minds, with a view to your labours, can, you feel, be too great; nor can you too laboriously cultivate the art of imparting, with clearness, precision, and power, what you know and feel of God's truth.

But here practical difficulties accumulate—difficulties which every year and month of our feverish age only seem to augment, and which, we know, have often occasioned perplexity to the mind, and distraction to labours. It is not only that the claims of secular business have grown so urgent as well-nigh to cause all men but those of the highest devotedness to give but scanty attention to the work of God; it is not so much that a current of gaiety and worldliness has almost converted the Church, and threatens to sweep away all its simplicity and power; but, in connection with aims that may be themselves commendable, there are calls so incessant, and activities so restless, that the life of all of us, is in danger of being absorbed into a multitude of details, leaving us no ability or leisure to work out for ourselves a consistent and symmetrical whole, in God's line chosen for us, as our ministry.

Take the case of a young Christian in a large town, desirous of self-improvement. At his first step he is "embarrassed". He is invited to become a member of the Mechanics' Institute, and finds upon the table "all the periodicals;" in the library, "the best works on all subjects constantly being added;" every week, "useful and improving lectures". He would like to hear all the lectures—to skim, at least, the best of the books—and to look over the most of the periodicals. The topics in all three are said to be important. What more "sublime," for instance, than Astronomy? what more wonderful, in its revelations of "creative power," than Geology? what more "instructive" than History?—and what nation has not its own "great special lessons"? Then, is it not "ennobling" for him to "soar" at times with the poet—even to "speculate" with the philosopher? Thus every week presents sufficient pursuits for a lifetime. And more than this. There is the "Young Men's Christian Association"; this, too, has "lectures," and means of "further instruction." He is now also connected with a "Mutual Improvement" Society; for what more important than a readiness in "imparting" thought? Then there are "recreations," too, for "it is a characteristic of our age that enjoyment

has been reduced to a system, with a zeal and energy unknown" to simpler times. Our young man, therefore, has his occasional seasons of relaxation; and with a sense of being intellectually overworked, he is now so backsliden as to greatly enjoy at intervals, "the People's Concert," "An Evening with Charles Dickens,"—or a "Penny Reading," at which, amusing but wholly frivolous and worthless "rubbish," seem to be the most prominent characteristic. Not that his leisure is unlimited. Oh no! he is hard at work (to speak moderately) ten hours every day in the warehouse, manufactory, counting-house, or shop. In addition to all this, he is an active teacher. He has persuaded himself that all the above-mentioned pursuits tend, directly or indirectly, to fit him for his work. He learns that he may teach; he seeks exciting recreations that he may be the "fresher" for labour; for in one way or other, connected with his school, assembly, or church, there have sprung up of late years innumerable "movements". He is Treasurer of the Juvenile Mission, and joint Secretary of the Band of Hope. There is a Singing Meeting every fortnight, a Scientific Lecture to the children once a month, and a Magic Lantern Exhibition two or three times in the winter. All these he "must attend," in addition to the Tea Meetings, where his services—as assistant always, as a speaker occasionally—are ever in requisition.

It may be said that there are, surely, few originals of a sketch like this. Perhaps so, taking in every part at once. Yet we will be bold to say that many energetic and Christian young men will recognise themselves in very much of it, and will, by their own avowal, be ready to echo our declared conviction that *such a life must be a failure*. The man is the slave, instead of the master of the current. It is a self-delusion to suppose that any, the very strongest and most elastic intellects can possibly subordinate all these influences to one great purpose, or can be otherwise than entangled and enfeebled among them; one brain cannot fairly include, much less command, the whole. Are these things glorifying to God? (1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17).

What, then, is requisite in order that there may be the real and effective concentration of which we speak?

First, a strong and clear conviction, on the part of the teacher, that, in connection with Christ and His Church, he has *one thing to do*; that God has, in a special manner, committed this to his trust; that his fidelity or carelessness here will be the great question to

which, as a Christian steward he will have to reply at last; and that, therefore, all efforts for the more efficient discharge of this work are not merely desirable, but absolutely and emphatically his duty; whether as a Sunday School Teacher, an Evangelist Pastor or Teacher. "And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."—(2 Tim. ii. 5).

Secondly, a mind ever awake to gather and lay up material for usefulness. It is not only when the man, truly desirous to learn, sits down to study, that he receives instruction. The world around us—the world of our daily life—our ordinary business—our most commonplace routine—is crowded for us with illustrations and exhibitions of the highest truths, if we only understand and observe. All human life is a commentary on great principles for the Christian teacher—the enmity of man, and the word of God, &c., &c. A keen perception and a ready tact have gathered many a precious lesson for the meeting or the class "from dusky lane or wrangling mart." Thus far, at least, the Spiritual teacher can enrich his instructions from the book, of which, indeed, all human writings are, if true, after all, but transcripts or compilations—the book of God. "The wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness."—(Ecc. ii. 14).

For the young specially, and also for the most of other people, the teaching should be somewhat after the formation of the seed of the Scotch Thistle, which, in addition to its germ of life, has its "wings" to fly with, and its anchor to "grip." In this manner it is carried by the winds when ripe into many out-of-the-way places—its anchor takes hold of something somewhere, and the following season another Scotch Thistle is found as the fruit, &c.

Thirdly, a discriminating effort to use all God-given methods of self-culture, with reference to His work. We willingly avow the utility of every branch of knowledge. We acknowledge, moreover, that the teacher, in connection with his calling in life, or from some other cause, may have to prosecute studies without any thought at all, in the first instance, of their bearing upon his Christian labours. Still, it will be his own fault if even these do not in their course, in some way or other, prove helpful to his work for God.

All, however, that we now urge is the prosecution—above and beyond the necessary engagements of life—of self-culture with especial relation to God's work. And in saying this we would call the attention of our friends to two things.

One is, that when a great subject fills the mind, every course of thought or investigation, earnestly pursued, is sure to illustrate it. You have often noted, after your mind had been much occupied about any question, that for some time you could scarcely read through a book—no matter on what subject—but you would find something bearing on the matter. How true is this with regard to the greatest of all questions, and to the holy Word which treats of them! That Word is the teacher's theme. If he pursue, with thoughtfulness and care, even any human study, in proportion as he goes deeply into it, it will be found teeming with Scripture illustrations. Science, history, biography, philosophy,—for everywhere, if he searches wisely, he will trace the presence of the God of the Bible; and “the truth as it is in Jesus” enthrones itself upon them all. A Christian may lay all these under arrestment for illustration, &c. It is another way to be assorted by them, and become their slave, as most who study them are.

Then, secondly, even for the sake of the Bible studies themselves, it is well that they should be prosecuted with a purpose. There is a wonderful difference between the efforts of a man who takes up a subject for the sake merely of its own interest, and those of one who regards it in its relation to a further and more important result. Attention, in the latter case, will be far closer, appreciation more just, remembrance more vivid and lasting. The reader of history, for instance, who has proposed to himself the grand and single aim of tracing the workings of God's love and justice among the nations of mankind, will pursue his studies with an interest and success unknown to one who goes through the story of nation after nation, unconscious of any unity and careless about discerning a God behind the scene. Thus, even apart from the attainment of his ultimate result, the former is likely to become the better historical scholar of the two. It is worth while then, we would say to every teacher, for the sake of proficiency in the particular pursuit, to which the Spirit may lead you, to make them bear upon a specific end, as regards the study of the Word itself it is not said “Read the Scriptures” but it is said “*Search the Scriptures.*” And we repeat, what result can be worthier

than the spiritual understanding of the word of God! Ever, then, keep the Bible in view. If *history* is your theme, compare it with Scripture; and mark, amid the struggles of humanity for light and freedom and power, the unconscious yearnings after Him whose title is “the Desire of all Nations.” Let the revelations and mysteries of *science* alike lead you, with ever-deepening adoration, to Him who has set his throne in the heavens, whose kingdom ruleth over all, but whose noblest oracles—interpreting and completing all others—are uttered in the Bible. In *biography* seek constantly for illustration of Scripture principles, as well as for correspondences with Scripture parallels. And be sure, whatever other themes of inferior moment, may occupy your attention, that you will find in every one of them something to lead you to the holy Word with a clearer intelligence or a profounder love.

Fourthly, it is but necessary to suggest that these principles will regulate the choice of your studies. We have hitherto spoken of general themes. The earnest teacher while extracting all the good he can from these, will of course add to them whatever he may be able in the way of direct proper Scripture helps. This is now so frequently and so well urged in various ways, that we need not here discuss it at a length proportioned to its importance. Only let it be remarked that self-denial will be often requisite. An interesting book must be left unread, an attractive lecture given up. In themselves they would be delightful, perhaps to some extent useful, but they would interfere with the great purpose or at any rate do so little towards its accomplishment, as not to be worth the time that would be expended upon them, and remember there are not many trustworthy *Expositions of Scripture.*

Bear with us, if we add, that in order to effective concentration upon an ultimate purpose, there must be *thoroughness* in each individual pursuit. The great temptation of our time, to those who have little leisure, and great desire for self-improvement, is superficiality. The depth loses what the surface gains. So much is grasped at, that nothing is held securely. Most of us, perhaps, read too much, think too little, and re-read scarcely at all. There is such a thing as intemperance in books, as truly as in food or enjoyment. The best antidote to this is the spirit of Buxton's maxim before quoted. The “man of one book,” like the man of one purpose, is proverbial. Some teachers of the old school,

with their scanty library, where every page was thumbed by repeated perusals, and almost every sentence had been made the topic of careful thought, were wiser and profounder men than many of their widely read and sparkling successors. For in study, as in diet, it is not what we eat, but what we digest, that makes us strong. "I never knew," says one "but one or two fast readers, and readers of many books, whose knowledge was worth anything." Another says of herself that she is the "slowest of readers"—sometimes "a page in an hour"; but then what she reads she makes her own. "Do impress this on E——. Girls read too much and think too little. I will answer for it that there are few girls of eighteen who have not read more books than I have; and as to religious books, I could count upon my fingers in two minutes all I ever read—but they are mine. . . Multifarious reading weakens the mind more than doing nothing, for it becomes a necessity at last, like filthy smoking, and is an excuse for the mind to be dormant, whilst thought is poured in and runs through, a clear stream, over unproductive gravel, on which not even mosses grow. It is the idlest of all idlenesses, and leaves more of impotency than any other."

Would we then have teachers "men of one book"? Assuredly not, in a literal sense. It would be unwise to turn from the banquet which is provided; but it must be wisely used. How much better, oftentimes, would be the second or third reading of an old book than the first of a new one! Not because the old is necessarily better or more adapted to the teacher's purpose, but because the re-perusal would strengthen and deepen the current of thought already flowing, whereas a fresh topic would only open another channel to dissipate and weaken the stream.

To any teacher who may have access to but few books, with scanty means of self-improvement, we would only say, employ them well. After all, your cause for regret is smaller than it seems. For the value to you, just as to those who can command far larger stores, *is not in the abundance, but in the mastery of them.* Nay, you can only be the man of one book, and that book the BIBLE, concentrate your powers upon it, make it the business of your life to understand it; ask, every night, "What have I learned to-day?" and the result will surpass what many have attained with leisure unlimited, and libraries at their command.

It is only needful further, to say that there must be a similar unity in your efforts for usefulness. In self-improvement we have seen the temptation is to become superficial; in practical labour there is a like danger of expending effort over too large a space, and therefore uselessly. There are some good men in the world, who have so learned to regard every opening for Christian effort as a direct summons to themselves, that they are ever attempting some new thing, and thus by the very earnestness of their zeal defeating its own purpose. Recollect, that if God has much work to be done, He has also many labourers. You can occupy the post and do the work of *one*, but of *two* you cannot. Your task is special; do heartily whatever tends to the efficiency of its performance. Withhold not your sympathies from any other form of Christian activity, but abide steadily by your own. You are a religious instructor—a work large enough for the powers of any one—take care never to abandon this. Depend upon it, if you be a good teacher, you cannot at the same time belong to all sorts of religious societies, attend meetings of every kind, and be "foremost," as the phrase is, "in all efforts for doing good". The Apostle's rule is different. "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." (Rom. xii. 6-8).

How often is the church disappointed and saddened, when the energetic Christian youth sinks in middle age into careless inactivity. If we could read the experience of such, we should often find that the change is the result of a reaction. In early life too much was zealously but heedlessly attempted—disappointment was the inevitable result, and in the chagrin of failure, all further effort was abandoned. The Christian labourer who holds on his way, earnest and successful to the end, will generally be found to be one who at the outset has his one thing to do, and persevered with it steadily;—sometimes scorned, it may be, and sometimes reproached, for not engaging in other schemes of usefulness—but through evil, as through good report, calmly working on. Such men we have heard called one-sided—most unjustly, for their sympathies are often truly wide and catholic;

only they remember that mortal life is short, that human powers are limited, and that one task, well performed, will be a far nobler remembrance at last than a thousand eagerly commenced, each in its turn to be despatched in slovenly haste, or soon to be abandoned in fickleness or disappointment for another.

We have not space to touch upon the motives for the concentrated efforts we have urged. These are multiplying every day. It is growingly imperative that our work should be well done. The germs of untold future blessing, especially to the myriads of the working classes, are in it. At the same time difficulties increase. The manifold excitements of our age have reached, and often most banefully, the people. We have to compete (in commercial phrase), with the Sunday excursion train and newspaper, the cheap novel, the casino—and even, in a sense, with the “rational recreation movement,” the Working Men’s Institutes, and the non-religious, penny periodical literature of our times. For these and similar influences, create tastes and cravings, which render it more than ever necessary to the Christian teacher to present God’s truth in its own glory and greatness, and so to make it appear not only the highest and purest, but also the most attractive thing in the universe. Life and energy are stirring everywhere for good or for evil; they must not be absent from us. If with us there is no putting forth of power, we shall be speedily forsaken. The present state of things is indeed formidable to the teacher of feeble qualifications or careless habits; but for those intelligently devoted to their work it is most hopeful. They have still the ear of the people; let them by all wise methods improve the advantage. As they have opportunity, let them show their interest in every worthy object, while by speaking the truth and loving it they show them that there is a path to Calvary, and a resurrection Life on the other side of it. In their instructions let there be a quick and evident sympathy with the aims, the struggles, the sorrows and enjoyments which make up the life of even their youngest hearers, together with the constant exhibition of the word of God as the only light for the troubled pathway. Let the teachings of experience be ever blended with the tenderness of affection and the earnestness of prayer. Such devotedness to “one thing” cannot fail of its result, and even as we read of those mighty ships whose melancholy

mission is “to destroy men’s lives,” that they act by concentrating their whole broadside of metal upon one point, so shall we, whose nobler aim it is “to save them,” find the strongest obstacles give way before an energy of purpose, which God’s own spirit has awakened within us, with the very intent of thus securing the conquests of his love.

Before closing this paper there are three additional matters to be noticed.

1st. That we have known not a few of God’s dear servants who never read any book but the Bible, most useful teachers. The secret was, that they were walking in the Spirit, having yielded themselves to God—and the result that without any help but God’s Spirit and their own *experience*—they had the key to very much of the written word—and generally spoke with more freshness naturalness and power, than many others who had other valuable helps.

2nd. There is on the other hand, nothing more intolerable than to hear a pamphlet repeated—which had been committed to memory perhaps on the previous Saturday evening—this, the writer takes to be the height of vanity—and imposture; with the view of securing human applause. But what must it be in the eyes of God—doubtless an abomination and “walking in a vain show.”

3rd. “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation to doctrine. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (1 Tim. iv. 12-13 and 15-16).

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings. Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.” (1 Tim. vi. 3-5).

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come: For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, dis-

obedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (2 Tim. iii. 1-5).

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. iii. 13-17).

“I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant, in season out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.” (2 Tim. iv. 1-5).

THE MAN IN THE GLORY.

THE MAN CHRIST JESUS —1 Timothy ii. 5.

I WAKE in the morning with thoughts of His love
Who is living for me in the glory above,
Every minute expecting He'll call me away,
And that keeps me bright all the rest of the day;
But the moments speed forward, and on comes the noon,
Yet still I am singing, “He'll come very soon”;
And thus I am watching from morning to night,
And pluming my wings to be ready for flight.

There's a MAN IN THE GLORY I know very well,
I have known Him for years and His goodness can tell;
One day in His mercy He knocked at my door,
And seeking admission, knocked many times o'er
But when I went to Him, and stood face to face

And listened awhile to His story of grace,
How He suffered for sinners and put away sin,
I heartily, thankfully welcomed him in:
We have LIVED ON TOGETHER a number of years,
And that's why I have neither doubtings nor fears,
For my sins are all hid in the depths of the sea,
They were carried down there by the MAN ON THE TREE.

I am often surprised why the lip should be curled,
When I speak of my Lord to the man of the world,
And notice with sorrow his look of disdain,
When I tell him that Jesus is coming again.
He seems so content with his houses and gold,
While despising the ark, as they used to, of old,
And yet at His coming I'm sure he would flee,
Like *the man in the garden* who ate of the tree.

I cannot but think it is foolish of souls
To put all their money in “bags which have holes,”
To find in the day that is coming apace,
How lightly they valued the “riches of grace.”
As fond as I am of HIS WORK in the field,
I would let go the plough, I would lay down the shield,
The weapons of service I would put on the shelf,
And the sword in its scabbard, to be with Himself.
But I'll work on with pleasure, while keeping my eyes
On the end of the field where standeth the prize.
I would work for His glory, that when we shall meet,
I may have a large sheaf to lay down at His feet;
That He, too, with pleasure His fruit may review.

IS THE MAN IN THE GLORY a stranger to YOU?
A stranger to Jesus? what,—do you know
He is washing poor sinners much whiter than snow?
Have you lived in a land where the Bible's unknown.
That you don't know the man who is now on the throne?
Ah, did you but know half His beauty and power!
You would not be a stranger another half-hour.
I have known Him so long that I'm able to say,
The very worst sinner He'll not turn away.
The question of sin I adoringly see,
The MAN IN THE GLORY has settled for me!
And as to my footsteps, whatever the scene,
The MAN IN THE GLORY is keeping me clean;
And therefore I'm singing, from morning to night;
THE MAN IN THE GLORY is all my delight.

The knowledge of our sin and of God's love in the forgiveness of it, is our preparation for loving and obeying Him. Why then should we be afraid to take the measure of our sin, since it is to be the measure of our love and activity?

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

PART IV.

THE SABBATH.

“Let no man therefore judge you . . . in respect of . . . the Sabbaths . . . which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ.” (Col. ii. 16, 17.)

WHEN God had completed the first creation, He rested. It was the seventh day, and on account of God having rested, it is called the “day of rest,” or the Sabbath; and such was His delight in viewing the completeness of His work, and in resting therefrom, that He blessed and hallowed the seventh day.

Soon, however, the entrance of sin so marred the fair creation of God, that He could rest no longer therein. Hence the words of the Lord Jesus in defence of the work He had wrought upon the Sabbath—“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” (John v. 17.) We read nothing more of the Sabbath until Israel was brought out of Egypt into the wilderness. Being a redeemed and separate people, God then gave them this day of rest as a sign between Him and them. (Ezek. xx. 12.) Making known unto them, and to no other nation upon earth, this “His holy rest.” (Neh. ix. 14.)

It is worthy of note that the Sabbath, though having its place among the Ten Commandments given on Sinai, was really instituted as a matter of grace and privilege previously, and that in immediate connexion with the giving of the manna from heaven. The judgment of God upon man when he first sinned was “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” But here is a fore-shadowing of Christ and His glorious redemption work. The bread from heaven is given, a table is furnished in the wilderness, and the people of God’s choice are called to *rest* and not to *labour*. (See Exod. xvi. 29, 30.) And such exactly is the provision that God has made for man in Christ. The “true bread from heaven is given, as He said—“I am the living bread that came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John vi. 5.) Nor is this bread received upon the principle of *working*. When asked as to this, the Jews, laying hold of the word “labour,” the reply at once is given most explicitly—“This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.” (John vi. 29.)

God has wrought once more; not now the creation of a world by His word—a mightier and costlier work, even the work of redemption by the blood of His Son. As it is written—“Behold I *work a work* in your days, a *work* which ye will in nowise believe, though a man declare it unto you.” (Acts xiii. 41.) As the Lord of Glory bowed His head in death, He cried aloud—“It is finished”; and in that finished work, or rather in the person of Him who accomplished it, God has found His REST once more.

Thus, as the first creation shared the rest of God, so now the sinner is called to share the rest of God in Christ. The bread of life is freely given, and the conditions are plain—“To him that worketh not but believeth.” (Rom. iv. 5.)

But, as in the wilderness, Israel was slow to understand God, and would go forth to gather when God commanded them to rest, so man refuses still to cease from his own works and rest in Christ. Labouring and heavy laden, he yet refuses the offered Sabbath, and clings to His fruitless efforts to work out a righteousness of his own. Vain is every attempt to mingle works with grace. The works must be *perfect works*, or the grace must be *perfect grace*. So it is written—“If by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

And in illustration of this, most solemn is the verdict of God upon the breaker of the Sabbath. “While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day.” Upon inquiry, “the Lord said unto Moses; the man shall be surely put to death.” (Num. xvi. 32-35.)

The offence might seem trivial, but it was fatal. It was introducing works into God’s rest. Such is the offence of those who, in ever so small a degree, cling to their own doings as a recommendation to God. Where grace has wrought a perfect work, and provided a perfect rest, it is presumption of the most daring kind to attempt to add to that work, or to refuse to enter into that rest.

In addition to the weekly Sabbath which, as we see, is thus specially associated with the bread from heaven, there were other two great sabbatic occasions. These are enumerated in Nehemiah x. 31. The “Sabbath,” “the Holy Day,” and the “seventh year.” The “Holy Day,” doubtless, refers to the “tenth day of the seventh month,” “the day of atonement.” (See

suiting to the Sabbath. "To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke; to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house. When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." (Isa. lviii. 6, 7.) Such are the works that the Lord Jesus delighted to do upon the Sabbath days. The blind religious zeal of the Pharisee was roused—his indignation knew no bounds—as grace was patiently undoing the heavy burdens, and letting those oppressed by the devil go free. But He who was Lord of the Sabbath understood that, whilst works of law were excluded, works of grace and redemption were fitting accompaniments of the rest of God.

J. R. C.

A SIMPLE CREED.

IN the North of Ireland some time ago, a car-driver waiting to be hired, was found by the person who engaged him, reading a book. When engaged, as they drove along, he was asked:—

"What was that book I saw you reading?"

"The New Testament, Sir."

"Why do you read that book?"

"I love it, Sir; and the Saviour of whom it tells."

"Of what sect or denomination are you?"

"Of none, Sir; I love all who love Christ."

"But haven't you any creed?"

"Yes, Sir," said he. "my creed is very simple, it has only three articles:—1st. Believe *all* that God has said. 2nd. Obey *all* that Christ has commanded; and 3rd. Expect *all* that He has promised." Surely the simpler, briefer, and fuller our creed, the sooner is it learned; the more easily is it remembered; and the more quickly are we at leisure to go and seek grace to conform ourselves to it. In Deut., xxix. 29., Moses shews the law was brief, and secret things were kept back that we might "do all its words."

Christ can enlighten the dark heart: He can purge the defiled heart: He can bend the stubborn heart: He can fix the inconsistent heart: He can quicken the dead heart: He can universalise the selfish heart: He can spiritualize the earthly heart: He can comfort the sorrowful heart:—all cold and icy as it is, He can make it a heart of pure love. Blessed be His name: He can Himself be in the heart.

HOW TO ESCAPE DISAPPOINTMENTS.

"HE that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool."—Prov. xxviii. 25-26. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the rivers, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not cease from yielding fruit."—Jer. xvii. 7-8. "Casting all your burden upon him."—Pet. v. 7. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh on."—Jer. xvii. 5-6.

AS SORROWFUL YET ALWAYS REJOICING.

2 COR. vi. 10.

EACH sickness has a voice to me,
And speaks of failing years,
But 'midst decay sweet hopes arise,
Though not unmixed with tears.

Oh could I carry all with me,
Who to my heart are dear,
And with them taste at once the joy
Which seems at times so near!

What lasting blessing have I found,
In this poor world of woe,
That I should seek for those I love,
A lengthened life below?

Perils and sorrows crowd around,
And evil days must come,
Oh were we shelter'd every one,
Within our heav'nly home!

Before the children of our day,
What dark'ning prospects lour,
The sounds of war, the wiles of sin,
And Satan's growing power!

But still the preaching of the Cross,
Bears witness for the Lord,
And happy tidings prove the force,
Of that transforming Word.

Here 'midst the wreck of earthly hopes,
The fainting heart finds rest,
And joins the sweet thanksgiving song,
Which tells how souls are blest.

M. W.

MY TITLE-DEEDS.

HOW shall I praise the goodness which God in mercy shewed,

Delivering me from Satan, and Satan's dark abode,
To lead me on in triumph, and by His grace to find,
The precious blood of Jesus left not a stain behind?
Not only has He broken the fetters and the chains—
Not only has He cleansed me from sin's defiling stains,
And made my heart the casket of pure and heavenly bliss
But has, in His good pleasure, done something more than this;

He's linked me unto Jesus, the One upon His throne.
In Christ a living member, of *body, flesh, and bone,*
To Him in heaven united, my treasure's there as well.
And *there* no thief can enter, nor flooding ocean swell,
To rob me of my treasure, or cause an anxious care,
For *title-deeds* and *riches* are safe with Him up there.
With Him I have a portion which wealth can never buy,
A portion that endureth, when others' fade and die.
I know my name is written upon the *living's roll,*
No *flaw, no doubtful title,* to agitate my soul.

Earth's glory is a shadow,—its gold becometh dim;
But endless glory circles the treasure found in Him,
A pilgrim and a stranger, I'm left awhile below,
Not seeking worldly honour, which men on men bestow,
But seeking grace and guidance, until I reach the goal,
To search amid the darkness for some poor weary soul;
To lead him unto Jesus—the life, and truth, and way,
From Satan's house of darkness, to scenes of endless day.

Oh? who would live and labour (that's tasted of His grace),

For earthly ease and comfort—or linger in the race,
When souls around are dying, *perhaps* for want of light,
And passing on to regions of yet still darker night?
To me the world is nothing, however grand and fair—
How can there be attractions, when *Jesus* is not there
For *Him* the world had only—a manger, cross and tomb,
And to the *sons of glory* it must be death and gloom,
For Satan has polluted the earth on which *He* trod;
And *faith* has now an *object* upon the throne of God.
And *there* would my affections, throughout each passing

hour,
Be found to rest and centre—from thence comes all the power,
Throughout the pathless desert, to fix the heart and eyes—

Is Jesus in the glory the One you love and prize?
I know not, Christian brother, what He may be to thee,
But 'tis my joy to own it, He's *everything* to me.
My heart is ever joyous—my spirit free from care,
Because I trust my troubles to One I love up there!

His *thoughtfulness* is touching—my confidence it wins:
He wants to bear my *burden*, as once He bare my *sins*.
I can't refuse *His offer*, but this I want to tell,—
Not only does He bear it, but carries *me* as well!
And there I love to nestle, as doth a little child,
Upon its mother's bosom, across the dreary wild;
While from my place of hiding, I hear the sounds of strife,
As from the *powers of darkness* against the *Light of Life*.

From thence come sounds of laughter and tones of deep despair,

O may we shine more brightly, for we have loved ones there;

And live and work for Jesus—and as the moments roll,
To search amid the darkness, for some poor weary soul
But *HE* the blessed object, for ear, and heart, and eyes,
The Lord of life and glory, our *aim, pursuit, and prize*.
And as we onward journey, we'll praise the grace that bears

With weakness and with failures—but carries all our cares.

JOYS TO COME.

OH what transcendent joy will glow,
What wonder, gratitude, and love,
When the full tide of praise shall flow,
From the triumphant Church above!

And I, astonished shall behold,
Such glories as enchant the sight,
While crown of life and harp of gold,
Rank me with blessed "saints in light."

In new found liberty and strength,
In fresh discoveries of truth,
'Tien shall my ransom'd soul at length,
Unceasingly renew its youth.

How poor will seem the loftiest flights,
Of former ecstasy and praise;
When ranging heaven's glorious heights,
I scan the depths of wisdom's ways!

No temple there, but all around
The radiance of a hallowed land,
A sea of glass the holy ground,
Where hosts on hosts in worship stand.

Amidst infinity of space,
The fountains of eternal bliss,
How wonderful to trace His course,
Who came to save a world like this.

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Delivering me from Satan, and Satan's duk abode,
To lead me on in triumph, and by His grace to find,
The precious blood of Jesus left not a stain behind?
Not only has He broken the fetters and the chains—
Not only has He cleansed me from sin's defiling stains,
And made my heart the casket of pure and heavenly bliss
But has, in His good pleasure, done something more than
this;

He's linked me unto Jesus, the One upon His throne,
In Christ a living member, of *body, flesh, and bone*,
To Him in heaven united, my treasure's there as well.
And *there* no thief can enter, nor flooding ocean swell,
To rob me of my treasure, or cause an anxious care,
For *title-deeds* and *riches* are safe with Him up there.
With Him I have a portion which wealth can never buy,
A portion that endureth, when others' fade and die.
I know my name is written upon the *living scroll*,
No *flaw*, no *doubtful title*, to agitate my soul.

Earth's glory is a shadow,—its gold becometh dim;
But endless glory circles the treasure found in Him,
A pilgrim and a stranger, I'm left awhile below,
Not seeking worldly honour, which men on men bestow,
But seeking grace and guidance, until I reach the goal,
To search amid the darkness for some poor weary soul;
To lead him unto Jesus—the life, and truth, and way,
From Satan's house of darkness, to scenes of endless day.

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For earthly ease and comfort—or linger in the race,
When souls around are dying, *perhaps* for want of *light*,
And passing on to regions of yet still *darker night*?
To me the world is nothing, however grand and fair—
How can there be attractions, when *Jesus* is not there
For *Him* the world had only—a *manger, cross and tomb*,
And to the *sons of glory* it must be death and gloom,
For Satan has polluted the earth on which *He* trod;
And *faith* has now an *object* upon the throne of God.

And *there* would my affections, throughout each passing hour,

Be found to rest and centre—from thence comes all the power,

Throughout the pathless desert, to fix the heart and eyes—

Is Jesus in the glory the One you love and prize?
I know not, Christian brother, what He may be to thee,
But 'tis my joy to own it, He's *everything* to me.
My heart is ever joyous—my spirit free from care,
Because I trust my troubles to One I love up there!

His *thoughtfulness* is touching—my confidence it wins:
He wants to bear my *burden*, as once He bare my *sins*.
I can't refuse *His offer*, but this I want to tell,—
Not only does He bear it, but carries *me* as well!
And there I love to nestle, as doth a little child,
Upon its mother's bosom, across the dreary wild;
While from my place of hiding, I hear the sounds of
strife,
As from the *powers of darkness* against the *Light of Life*.

From thence come sounds of laughter and tones of deep despair,

O may we shine more brightly, for we have loved ones there;

And live and work for Jesus—and as the moments roll,
To search amid the darkness, for some poor weary soul
But *HIE* the blessed object, for ear, and heart, and eyes,
The Lord of life and glory, our *aim, pursuit, and prize*.
And as we onward journey, we'll praise the grace that
leads

With weakness and with failures—but carries all our cares.

JOYS TO COME.

OH what transcendent joy will glow,
What wonder, gratitude, and love,
When the full tide of praise shall flow,
From the triumphant Church above!

And I, astonished shall behold,
Such glories as enchant the sight,
While crown of life and harp of gold,
Rank me with blessed "saints in light."

In new found liberty and strength,
In fresh discoveries of truth,
Then shall my ransom'd soul at length,
Unceasingly renew its youth.

How poor will seem the loftiest flights,
Of former ecstasy and praise;
When ranging heaven's glorious heights,
I scan the depths of wisdom's ways!

No temple there, but all around
The radiance of a hallowed land,
A sea of glass the holy ground,
Where hosts on hosts in worship stand.

Amidst infinity of space,
The fountains of eternal bliss,
How wonderful to trace His course,
Who came to save a world like this.

The thought that once He left that place,
 And heaven's sweet security,
 Trod this dark earth in lowly grace,
 To shed His precious blood for me!

O Lord, as I more fully learn,
 My happy soul's security,
 More fervent may my spirit burn,
 With deep adoring love to Thee!

Far beyond other springs of joy,
 This thought supreme should thrill my soul,
 And this shall all my powers employ,
 While ever lasting ages roll.

M. W.

FEEDING ON CHRIST.

Lu v. ii. 7.

THE offerings I behold,
 On which my soul may feed,
 The flesh and blood of Christ they show,
 And this is "meat indeed!"

No beast that is unclean,
 No honey and no leaven,
 No blemish'd off'ring can set forth,
 The Lamb for sinners given.

But finest flour of wheat,
 With purest oil pour'd,
 All crown'd with fragrant frankincense,
 Describ's my perfect Lord.

Thus harmless, undefil'd
 The Holy, Just, and Good,
 A spotless sacrifice to God,
 Becomes my daily food.

And with a heart at rest;
 Beside the altar led,
 What sweet communion I may taste,
 By the peace off'ring fed!

And yet my soul may know
 A higher richer grace,—
 To feed on the sin offering,
 Within the Holy Place.

Oh, Love! that met my need,
 When Jesus bled and died,
 How vast the price of all that fool,
 With which I'm satisfied!

M. W.

SIMPLE TRUTHS FOR CHRISTIANS.

THE scriptures do not teach that any particular amount of conviction of sin is needed previous to believing the gospel. One person may be full of deep distress, another may be very gently drawn. (Acts ii. 37; xvi. 29-31, 14.)

NOR are we told that any length of time must elapse between hearing the gospel and believing it. The early converts seem generally, if not always, to have believed the gospel as soon as they heard it. (Acts iv. 4; x. 44; xi. 19-21; xiii. 48; xiv. 1.)

As those who believe the gospel receive eternal life, so those who do not believe it are condemned, and those who die in the rejection of it go into eternal punishment. (John iii. 18-21, 36; Matthew xxv. 46. In Matthew xxv. 46, everlasting and eternal are the same word in the original.)

WHEN a Christian dies, his spirit goes to be with the Lord, and is very happy. There is not much said in scripture about this state. (Luke xvi. 22. Phil. i. 23. Hebrews xii. 23.)

WHEN an unbeliever dies, his spirit goes into a place of torment. (Luke xvi. 22, 23. Jude 7.)

Hell is truth seen too late.

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There is now a general profession of Christianity, but very little conviction of sin, which prevents the reception of the truth. We cannot know too much of our weakness and depravity; the danger is of knowing too little. We cannot see the depravity of sin till we contrast it with the mercy of God, neither can we appreciate the mercy of God till we in some degree with the evil from which we are saved.

THE NORTHERN GOSPEL TENT is now returned to Edinburgh from the Highlands of Scotland. Let us praise the Lord together for seed left behind. J. SCOTT, who laboured with us, is away among the Saints in the North.

Mr. D. MUNRO, from Canada, is just beginning a series of Meetings in Edinburgh, before he returns. We ask the Lord's people to pray for this special effort.

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WITNESS.

“For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.”—GAL. ii. 16.

“For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”—EPH. ii. 3.

No. 22.

OCTOBER, 1876.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

ON THE ARGUMENT OF PSALM CXIX.

By W. LINCOLN.

IT is one thing to get precious thoughts collected here and there from a given portion of Scripture. It is another to grasp the scope and designed bearing of that Scripture as a whole. Thus with Psalm cxix. What is its exact arrangement? How is the argument gradually developed? It is impossible that a hundred and seventy-six verses contained in this single Scripture should have no special thought brought into a more distinct shape as the Psalm nears its completion. A single verse here or elsewhere, may afford us comfort and instruction. But he obtains much more, who reverently notes the position and bearing of that verse with the passage of which it forms a part. The disjointed reading of Scripture is not the most profitable.

I offer for the consideration of readers, a few thoughts on this Psalm cxix., viewed as a whole—designed to assist some in the prosecution of the search as-to its drift further.

1. Each eighth verse is the sum of the preceding seven verses throughout. It therefore, under each section, contains the key thought to that entire section. N.B.—The first eight verses begin with the letter A; the next eight with the letter B, and so on throughout the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

2. In the twenty-two sections composing this Psalm, there are of course three sevens and one over. The twenty-second part is the epitome of the entire three divisions, each division consisting of seven sections.

3. The last verse (176) in its three parts comprehends

the sentiments of these three sevens. The first clause of this verse looks at the first seven sections; the second clause looks at the second seven sections; and the third clause, likewise, at the third seven sections; or more briefly again, the first clause of 176 looks at the first verses of the twenty-second section; the second clause at the middle verses of that section, and the third clause at the verses last before 176.

4. The grand idea of the Psalm throughout, is that God's word is immutable. All that is according to it, shall stand. What is not according to it, must perish.

5. And the above is set forth under three divisions: the first seven sections may be summed up thus. “The Saint and God's Word.” The second seven sections treat of “God and His Word.” The gist of the third seven sections is “The Sinner and God's Word!”

6. I present now what seems the sum of each section in detail. Some of your readers will probably be able to suggest a more correct view of some of these:—

First seven sections. The Saint and God's Word.

1. Or “Aleph.” Enable me to keep Thy statutes.
2. Or “Beth.” I will *delight* myself therein.
3. Or “Gimel” They *are* my delight and my councillors.
4. “Daleth.” Yea I will run in them as my heart expands in the knowledge of Thee.
5. “He.” My heart craves that I be living in Thy Word.

6. “Vau.” Thy Word shall permeate me through and through.

7. “Zain.” Profit much is mine already, through it. Second seven sections. God and His Word.

8. “Cheth.” Thyself best art!

9. "Teth." Wherefore, better than anything else to me is Thy Word.

10. "Jod." And let Thy Word assimilate me to itself.

11. "Caph." And let Thy Word assimilate me to Thyself.

12. "Lamed." For Thy Word is beyond everything for stability.

13. "Mem." Thus I am delivered from evil.

14. "Nun." And from disobedience to Thee.

Third seven sections. The Sinner and the Word.

15. "Samech." But oh! What of those to whom it is contrary?

16. "Ain." Still, whatever the consequences to them, I see that Thou and Thy Word are right.

17. "Pe." So the wicked must perish, because they are contrary to Thy Word.

18. "Tsaddi." For Thy Word is as Thyself—righteous.

19. "Koph." And it is unchangeable, eternal.

20. "Resh." All of it is so.

21. "Schin." But I being on the same side as Thy Word, have much peace.

Twenty-second section—sum of the whole.

22. "Tau." Often I have failed, still Thou art my God, and I after all, am Thine.

MAN'S "I THINK" FOR GOD'S "I WILL."

IT is easy to understand how the religion of nature should devise for itself modes of approach to God; for the grand aim of natural religion is to keep Him at a distance. Without any convictions of ruin, and consequent need, wrought by the Holy Spirit, an unregenerate man feels that his position and prospects in relation to his end are not satisfactory; and he devises modes of satisfying his conscience and of postponing the consideration of the truth, upon the principle "that God is altogether such a one as himself". (Psa. 1.) All he does, religiously, is contrived and performed with the idea that God can be restrained from vengeance, by what he, the sinner, thinks good enough for Him. But the first characteristic of the redeemed, regenerated, blood-washed soul is obedience; and obedience can only be found in one who ceases to think and act for himself.

The difference between will-worship and obedience is well illustrated in the case of the Apostle of the

Gentiles. Speaking of his former religious career he says, "*I verily thought that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth*". (Acts xxii. 10.) But the instant he found himself in the presence of a risen Christ, the question was no longer what he thought he ought to do, but it was, "*What shall I do, Lord?*" (Acts xxii. 10.) And, henceforth such a one could not be content till the Word of God was known in power, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". (2 Cor. x. 5.) Saul serves and worships in his own way, thinking that he does God service in persecuting Jesus in His Saints, even unto death; but Paul worships God in the Spirit, rejoices in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh, and will have nothing in his religion but that which is according to "*the mind of Christ*".

Scripture affords us many examples of self-will under the guise of religion, suitable for admonition in this time of human self-assertion in the things of God. Of these none is more striking than that of another Saul—Saul the son of Cis, the king after man's heart. Though raised by God's hand to the highest place in Israel, he ever preferred his own way to God's way. His way was indeed religious, but with him the Word of the Lord went for nothing in religion. And so it was that he lost the kingdom almost before he was seated on its throne.

The Word of the Lord by Samuel was, "And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal, and behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do". (1 Sam. x. 8.) Saul waited for Samuel seven days; but when the test of obedience was carried to its utmost limit, Samuel came not, and Saul would wait no longer. The word was not, "Thou shalt tarry seven days, and then, thou shalt offer"; but it was, "Thou shalt tarry till I come, and I will offer, and I will show thee what thou shalt do". Without the prophet, Saul could not know what he should do. No matter; he will act for himself: and "*he offered the burnt-offering*". (1 Sam. xiii. 8, 9.) But he has an excuse that commends itself to reason. He "saw that the people were scattered from him"; and his performance of religious rites might keep the

remnant together, and even draw back the scattered to his camp. But the excuse does not prevent the judgment of the Lord, "Thou hast done foolishly: *Thou hast not kept the commandment* of the Lord thy God which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue". So in the end it will be seen that no excuse will suffice for religion that acts for itself.

Surely these things have a voice for believers now, when religious factions are on every hand vehemently competing for the masses. And indeed, if our aim is to gain large congregations, something must be done to "draw" them. But then it is equally certain that the means to this end must be such as the Word of God does not warrant.

Observe, it is not that carnal plans are unsuccessful. On the contrary, they are successful, and successful just as they combine human ingenuity and religiousness with independence of the Word of God.

There is another part of Saul's history which even more than that already noticed reveals the impious character of self-will in religious guise, and its hatefulness in the sight of the Lord. It is found in 1 Sam. xv. The Lord sends Saul to perform His sworn purpose on Amalek. (See Exodus xvii.) His commission opens in such a way as might well have moved Saul to ready and exact obedience "Samuel said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over His People, over Israel: now therefore hearken unto the voice of the words of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." (1 Sam. xv. 1-3.)

Now, surely, here was every thing suited to draw Saul forth in the full execution of the commandment of the Lord. He was the king of Israel, "the Lord's anointed," and might well be expected to perform the Lord's desire on His and his people's foes. Withal he is an Israelite, and it ought to have touched his heart that the Lord would vindicate his name, "Jehovah-Nissi," by "utterly destroying" their first enemy, and would thus teach all nations that He has identified His own existence with theirs. "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen,

and of the fatlings, and of the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." (1 Sam. xv. 9.) The Lord's oath unto Moses, and the express commandment by Samuel, must both give way to the judgment of Saul and the people as to what was "best" and "good," "vile and refuse". It is this setting up one's own judgment which is the secret of all disobedience. The Lord has testified that "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world"; and He has condemned it all to utter destruction. Man begins to think for himself, and judges that what pleases his eye and suits his desire may be spared. And of course, disobedience follows. There is no safety for us but in renouncing our own judgment in every thing.

These assertions will not appear at all unwarranted to any who have considered will-worship in the light of our union to our risen and exalted Head, as the Holy Spirit has exposed it by Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians. Believers, he shows, have been "translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love". They have "in Him been reconciled," Him they have "received" as head of all things and "Head of His body," in all things "pre-eminent". (Chap. i.) Moreover, they are "complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power". They have been separated by a circumcision which puts between them and all who are "of the world" a distinction as much more marked, a distance as much greater than those which separated Jew and Gentile, as the difference between life and death, and the distance between heaven and earth. Saints in Christ Jesus died and were buried in His death and burial, and have been raised up in His resurrection, through faith of the operation of God in raising Him from the dead. (Chap. ii. 8-12.)

Now Paul's review of Christ's fulness, and of all that we are and have in Him, and His exposure of all the frauds and artifices by which Satan's ministers sought to beguile the saints from their "simplicity in Him," call forth the indignant appeal with which he closes this section of his epistle: "Wherefore, if ye be *dead with Christ*, from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances"? (See Col. ii. 20-23).

Here is what we need to realize, in order to our deliverance from all man-devised worship. "Dead

with Christ," we have been delivered by His death not only from the world's doom and the world's profanity, but also from its religion. The soul realizing this refuses subjection to ordinances after the doctrines and commandments of men. The answer to all attempts to impose these is, "We are *in* the world, but not *of* it, and subjection to its *rudiments*, is virtual rejection of Christ".

We have only a little space to offer a few words of exhortation on the positive side of the subject. Let us not forget that believers not only died with Christ, they have also been quickened and raised up together with Him, and this to the end that they may walk in newness of life. And so, the Apostle, in connection with his exposure of will-worship, exhorts, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth". (Col. iii.) And these exhortations are backed by the summary re-assertion of our life in Christ. Thus, will-worship is wholly antagonistic to obedience. The term "will-worship" designates all worship, or religion, which has its origin in the worshipper. It is what man offers to God when he sets up for himself. Now, it is important to remember that the new life of the believer is not left to the guidance of its own impulses. It has no will but His from whom it receives its being. It recognizes and receives the mind of Christ. Its peculiar characteristic is, that it never sets up for itself.

Besides, it ought to be understood that obedience on the part of exercised souls must draw forth indignation, and often scorn, from those who never were exercised on the points in question, or who have crushed down their convictions of truth. Were they themselves exercised or obedient, they would be in sympathy with such as are so; but from their stand-point, rejection of what they esteem sacred, or at least, submit to as though it were sacred, is either in their view whimsical and self-willed, or a personal rebuke disturbing their peace. What we may expect from such is clearly indicated in the experience of God's saints, as expressed in Psalm cxxiii. "Our soul is exceedingly filled with *the scorning of those that are at ease*, and with the contempt of the proud".

On the other hand, let us not forget that obedience and rest of soul keep pace with each other. "Take my yoke, and *ye shall find* rest to your souls." As already hinted, this is not rest from the burden of sin, from the

toil of "making our peace with God," as men say. We have addressed in this paper those only who have "come" to Jesus, and to whom He who bore our mighty load has "given rest" from all their labour. It were vain to talk of obedience to any others. But he who has *received* rest of conscience, rest from the fear of judgment and wrath, is to *find* hourly rest in wearing Christ's yoke and bearing His burden.

RESURRECTION-LIFE.

THE most prominent doctrines of evangelical preachers are the blood of the Cross, whereby atonement was made *for* us, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, whereby a new life is wrought *in* those that believe. Now whilst these doctrines are undoubted truth, it is but a part of the doctrine of the Cross to tell us that Christ died for us, and but a part of the doctrine of regeneration, to tell us that we must be born again of the Holy Ghost. We find in Scripture the expressions, "dead *with* Christ," and "quickened *with* Christ": and whilst the former gives us something altogether additional to the idea of Christ's dying *for* us, the latter, by connecting the new life with the person of Christ risen, makes the doctrine of regeneration something altogether different from what it is generally supposed to be.

I.—With regard to the doctrine of regeneration. From the expression in the Scriptures already referred to, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace ye are saved" (Ephes. ii. 4, 5),—we learn, that whereas all that believe in Christ possess a new life, that new life is not a mere moral change, but the same thing that Jesus lying dead in the grave received, because the expression is, "hath quickened us *together with* Christ". If it is a mere moral change in them, it was a mere moral change in Him, because it is written, "Hath quickened us *together with* Christ"; but this we know would be altogether contrary to the truth. The life imparted to us is thus seen to be literally a new life, and this new life, *resurrection-life*; so that, as far as the life goes, *we are in the resurrection state already*. The resurrection-body we have not yet, but resurrection-life we have. *Resurrection-life is thus a present possession*, not a thing we have to wait for till

the resurrection of the body. Well may we say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead". (1 Pet. i. 3.)

Next comes this question, On what grounds have we been made partakers of the resurrection-life of Christ? Christ encountered death for us, that is, in man's place. Death was our enemy, not His. "This man hath done nothing amiss." Having, therefore, prevailed over death, that is, having by dying made satisfaction for man's sins (whereby alone death obtained power over man), and having risen in consequence, the life in the power of which He rose from the grave is given to man. Nevertheless, it is only those who believe in Him that obtain this gift.*

Then, there is this to be steadily borne in mind, that the resurrection-life in Jesus, and the resurrection-life in us, are not different lives, but the same life. The life that is in us is the same as the life that is in the risen Jesus; it is one life that is in Him, and in us. "Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear," etc. (Col. iii. 3, 4); "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me". (Gal. ii. 20.) This is most important. This oneness of the life is what constitutes the union between believers and Jesus. From the character of this union, it is evident that it is only with the risen Jesus that believers are united; for it is the resurrection-life that is the bond of union. Thus we see that regeneration is not the mending of the old nature, but the imparting of a new nature, the nature of the risen Jesus, high at God's right hand in heaven, and that in union with Him. (1 Cor. xv. 45, 49; vi. 17.) The new creature will be perfected when it receives its new body; there is a new body, as well as a new life.

Observe, this life is not a new life to Jesus; it is the life that was in Him before His death. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it

* The satisfaction in His shed blood for the sins of men is not to be compared to a *payment of debts*; it is a *vindication* of God's name, as the God of holiness, the sin-hating God. The voice of the cross is, "See how He hates sin"; for the same reason that a *vindication* of God's name is necessary, the knowledge of that vindication, or *faith* in it, is also necessary; for it is quite certain that Christ's death is no vindication of God's name to the person who does not believe in it.

from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John x. 17, 18.) But it is that life in a new condition, and in such a condition that it is communicable to men. We read of Him as the one "who died *for us*, that we should live *together with Him*" (1 Thes. v. 10); and, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit". (John xii. 24.) The new condition of that life, as found in Jesus risen, is, that it is life out of death and judgment endured for the sins of men, and as such it is communicable to men, even to such as believe in His name. He that has it, is alive out of death and judgment: he that has it, can say death and judgment are behind him. Thus we see that what is called Resurrection-life, would be more properly called Life in resurrection, as being not so much a new thing (for, though new to us, it was not new to Christ), as a thing in a new condition.

The Holy Ghost is altogether distinct from the new life; He is a person, not a thing; He is God the Holy Ghost, the Creator, and not a thing created. He is, in the first place, the Creator, whereby the new life is communicated; and, in the second place, He dwells in the person thus made new. First, He quickens, through the Word, those that believe* (John vi. 63, 64; James i. 18); and secondly, he comes to dwell in the person made a new creature, because as such that person is united to Christ. We are, as new creatures, one with the risen Christ,—we are not known apart from the risen Christ; "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me*" (Acts ix. 4)? therefore the Holy Ghost, who is "the Spirit of Christ" (Romans viii. 9), comes to dwell in us. The Holy Ghost's dwelling in us does not make us one with the risen Jesus, but is the proof that we are so, and that, as such, we are the sons of God in Him. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). He dwells in us, as the earnest of the inheritance whereby we are sealed unto the day of deliverance: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, unto the day of redemption". (Eph. i. 13, 14; iv. 30). He comes to dwell in us after we have been made one with the

* It is of the Father's drawing that any one believes. (John vi. 44, 45, 65).

risen Jesus, to *assure* us of this wonderful fact, and of our consequent riches : " At that day (the day of the Holy Ghost's coming to dwell in you) ye shall *know* that ye are in me, and I in you " (John xiv. 20) ; and, " He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you ". (John xvi. 15). Thus He comforts us, and strengthens us for service, giving us, who have the *place* of sons in Christ, the *experience* of sons, teaching us to cry, *Abba*, Father, even as Jesus did. (Mark xiv. 36). *To dishonour the Holy Ghost in any way, is to mar our soul's progress.*

But to return to the subject of our union with Christ. Our union with Christ is a thing which takes place in time, and not from everlasting. It takes place at the moment of quickening, and not before. It is a real thing, although mystical. It is with the *risen* Jesus, and not with Jesus before His death, much less with the Son of God before His incarnation. The Scripture says, " Married to Him *that is raised from the dead* ". (Rom. vii. 4.)*

Again, it is not only union with Jesus, it is *oneness* with Him, so that we are identified with Him who is risen and gone to heaven. We have not only, " I am the vine, and ye are the branches " (John xv. 5), " We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones " (Eph. v. 30) ; but we have also, " In that day ye shall know that ye are in me, and I in you " (John xiv. 20), and, " He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit ". (1 Cor. vi. 17.) And it must needs be that we are one with Him, if, as new creatures, He is our life (Col. iii. 3, 4), if, as new creatures, it is not we that live, but He that lives in us. (Gal. ii. 20.) On this account, we find not only, " hath quickened us together with Christ," but also, " hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus " (Eph. ii. 6) ; and, " as He is, so are we in this world " (1 John iv. 17). Thus, not only is resurrection-life a present possession, but, by reason of union and oneness with Him who is risen and gone to heaven, *we are also now risen and seated in heaven*, even in Him. We are thus associated with Him in all His acceptance, and holiness, and beauty, and riches, and wisdom, and power, and glory. We have fellowship with Him in all He is and has. All His preciousness in the Father's

* The elect were in Christ, *in the purpose of God*, before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4) ; but they have been in Him *as their living Head*, by *real union*, only from the time of their being quickened together with Him.

eyes is ours, " Unto you which believe is the preciousness ". (1 Pet. ii. 7. See Greek). We are near as He is near, being nigh in Him (Eph. ii. 13) ; we are dear as He is dear, being " accepted in the beloved " (Eph. i. 6), and, " thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me ". (John xvii. 23.)

Again, the life and Spirit of Christ in us are, as the sap in the vine, the power of bearing fruit ; and for this reason, even because we have, in union with Him, the same power of bearing fruit that He had, we " *ought* " to walk as He walked (1 John ii. 6) ; and " *can* " do so (Phil. iv. 13) ; and are responsible for not doing so.

II.—With regard to the doctrine of the cross. The doctrine of the cross does not consist solely in this, that Christ has died *for* us ; but, from the moment that we believe, we stand before God as having " died *with* Christ ".

Fallen man cannot approach God except through death. It became the *holy* God to pronounce sentence of death upon sinful man, and this *cannot be reversed*. If I approach Him at all, it must be *through death*. But who is sufficient for that ? Who is able to meet death, so as by his death to answer fully the object for which death as a penalty was ordained, so as to exhaust the penalty, and thus to be entitled to life ? Surely none of our sinful race. If death seize upon any of us we are undone. But God, in His great love, sent His own son " in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin ". *He* has encountered death *for* us. In His person, sin in the flesh has been judged and condemned. (Rom. viii. 3). In His infinitely precious blood, God's infinite abhorrence of sin has been fully declared, and thus God's holiness has been fully vindicated.* In consequence, He has, *through death*, passed into the presence of God, even the Father. Now, then, all that believe in Him, all that believe in His shed blood as the satisfaction for their sins, are saved ; they get pardon, they get life ; but that is not all, from that moment they become partakers of His death, from that moment they are regarded as having " died with Him " ;

* Death, " the wages of sin," was not ordained as the result of vindictive feelings, or ill-will, on the part of God, but simply and solely as a vindication of God's holiness, that is, of His hatred of sin. Hence it may be endured by *another* in the place of, and for the sinner, if thereby that end can be better answered.

and not only so, but as risen with Him, and seated with Him in heavenly places: and thus by Him they have passed *through death* into the presence of God, even the Father.

"Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." (Rom. vi. 8. See Greek.) "In that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. vi. 10, 11. See Greek.) Here we are told to reckon ourselves dead unto sin in the way in which our Lord was. Surely this was not deadness to sin working in Him. He died on account of sin, and we are to reckon that we also have died on account of sin, and to know for our comfort that, "he that has died is justified from sin". (Rom. vi. 7. See Greek.) Again, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also have been put to death to the law by the body of Christ". . . . "Now, we have been delivered from the law, having died to that wherein we were held". (Rom. vii. 4, 6. See Greek.) Again, "I through the law have died to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ". (Gal. ii. 19, 20. See Greek.) "Wherefore, if ye have died with Christ to the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances." (Col. ii. 20. See Greek.)

God's thoughts concerning those who believe in Christ, from the moment they do so believe, namely, that they have died with Christ, and risen with Christ, are shown in baptism. (Rom. vi.) In that ordinance the believer is plunged into water, as the emblem of Christ's death, and raised out of it, and thus in a *visible* manner made partaker of Christ's death and resurrection, and so *visibly* accepted and forgiven. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts xxii. 16). Forgiveness is through death and resurrection. A forgiven man is a man who has died and who has risen. As believers are not in baptism for the first time forgiven, so they are not then for the first time reckoned to have died with Christ, and to have risen, much less are they then made partakers of life. But they are then and there *visibly* forgiven through a *visible* participation in Christ's death and resurrection, and thus *shown* the *standing* before God that was given to them in the hour that they believed, and thereby laid under the responsibility of thinking

concerning themselves as God thinks; and in this there is strength, "Sanctify them through Thy truth". (John xvii. 17).

The thing that has greatly hindered this, our blessed *standing*, from being fully seen, is the imperfect way in which certain expressions in the Scriptures have been translated, in consequence of which those passages are supposed to refer rather to the *character* and *experience* of the believer, than to his *standing*. Thus Rom. vi. 2 ought to be, "How shall we that *have* died to sin live any longer therein?" 6th verse, "Knowing this, that our old man *has* been crucified with Him"; 8th verse, "Now if we *have* died with Christ, we believe that we also shall live with Him". So also Gal. ii. 19, "For I through the law *have* died to the law, that I might live unto God". So also Col. ii. 20, "Wherefore, if ye *have* died with Christ to the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world are ye subject," etc.; chap. iii. 1, "If ye then *have been* raised with Christ, seek those things which are above;" verse 3rd, "For ye *have* died, and your life is hid with Christ in God". These past tenses being generally rendered by present ones, gives all these passages the appearance of referring to the *character* and *experience* of the believer, rather than to his *standing* before God.

III.—As to practical results, the importance of knowing our *standing* in Christ is immense.

If I know that, through Christ, I *stand* before God as one that has died on account of my sins, and not only so, but as having risen in consequence of the fulness of the satisfaction afforded,—what liberty does this give me, what boldness, what power to serve God! Yet this is no more than what we are *commanded* to think concerning ourselves, "In that He died, He died unto sin once, but that He liveth, He liveth unto God; even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord". (Rom. vi. 10, 11.) Again, if I am known as having died and having risen, I am no more known in connection with this old sinful nature (though my need is remembered and supplied), but in all the beauty and perfection of the new creature. "Our old man has been crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." (Rom. vi. 6.) "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin." (Rom. viii. 10.) "Seeing ye have put off the old man, and have put on the new."

(Col. iii. 9, 10.) I am no more known as one that is unholy and unclean, but as one that is holy. even as Jesus is holy. The old thing is dead and buried out of God's sight, as far as *standing* is concerned, although still carried about with us. Here again, what liberty, what happiness, what encouragement to serve God! Again, if I have died and risen, and have been seated in heavenly places, what connexion have I with this present evil world? I have done with it, its fashions and its politics. I do not belong to it. I am not of the world. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John xvii. 16.) "I have been crucified unto the world." (Gal. vi. 14.) The extent of my connexion with this world is a dead man's. By *death and resurrection*, I am *outside* the system called *the world*, whether political or ecclesiastical, although at all times bound to submit myself and to obey "the powers that be," and to seek the good of all without ceasing. By *ascension* with Christ I belong to a city out of sight. "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." (Phil. iii. 20, 21. See Greek.) Thus does it appear that the Christian is separated by *death, resurrection, and ascension*, from things here; and it is just the knowledge of this fact that makes him find this world a *wilderness*, that makes him in his *experience* dead to the world and alive to God, giving him power to seek those things which are above, where Christ sits, and to set his affections or things above, not on things on the earth. (Cor. iii. 1, 2.) He is not to walk as men (1 Cor. iii. 3), but as one alive from the dead (Rom. vi. 13); not, as one of the world, but as a heavenly person (John xvii. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 48); and, by thus walking, he is to be, like his Master, a witness to the truth (John xviii. 37), that thereby others through belief of the truth may be saved. And what is the truth he is to witness to? Why, by separating himself from the world, and the things of the world, and not walking as the world, that "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16), that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John v. 19), and that wrath is coming upon it (1 Thess. v. 3; 2 Thess. i. 8); and by walking in all Christ's goodness and kindness and love, even to enemies, that *the Father is such an one* "Kind unto the unthankful

and to the evil" (Luke vi. 35), "Herein is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins". (1 John iv. 10.) To be such witnesses was just the object of leaving us here after we were converted, seeing that in the day of our conversion we were sanctified, as well as justified, that is, made wholly meet in the risen Saviour to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. (Col. i. 12.) Should such, then, seek after the things of this world? Should they not rather be intent upon the object for which they have been left here, looking for and longing for the time when they shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, when they shall *actually* get rid of the old nature, and be *actually* complete in the new nature, and *actually* enter upon the heavenly inheritance? (1 Thes. iv. 16, 17; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.) This, doubtless, is the Christian's right state of mind; but, alas! how far is this, generally speaking, from being the case. And what is the reason? Why, just this, Christians do *not know* their calling. A person cannot walk as a man that has died and that has risen without knowing that he is such. The whole power of walking as such is in knowing and realising the fact. Knowledge with realization of the thing known is everything to the Christian. (2 Pet. i. 2, 3.) This is just the way in which the Holy Ghost works to make us bring forth fruit, even by extending our knowledge. "He shall take of mine and show it unto you"; and "all things that the Father hath are mine". (John xvi. 15.) He gives us to know and realize our *standing* before God, that our old man has been crucified with Christ, and that as new creatures we are one with the risen Christ. Christians, at the present day, do not know their *standing*, they do not know that they are before God as having died, and that by regeneration they have been made one with the risen Jesus at God's right hand. They do not know the only alternative, that they are either condemned sinners, exposed to coming wrath, or else are sharers in Christ's death, and partakers of Christ's resurrection, and as such have fellowship, that is, partnership with the risen Jesus in all His acceptance, holiness, greatness, nearness, and glory at the right hand of God. And why is there this scantiness of knowledge? *The Holy Ghost is dishonoured*; and this not merely in reference to His operations, as already considered, but also in reference to that further operation of the Holy Ghost known by the name of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, "For

John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence". (Acts i. 5.)

It pleased God, as we have seen, in creating sinners anew, to create them in Christ risen (Eph. ii. 10), thus making them sons (Gal. iii. 26, 27, 28); and, because sons, to send forth the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of His Son, into their hearts, giving them to cry, Abba Father. (Gal. iv. 6). But, besides this, which is of God's dealings with them as *individuals*, we have to contemplate His dealings with them, as *assembled together*. When, at the day of Pentecost, "they were all with one accord in one place, they were suddenly all baptized, at the same moment, with the Holy Ghost; and, as thus all baptized with *one* Spirit, they were all baptized into *one body*; and forasmuch as it was the Spirit of Christ that they were baptized with, they were all baptized into *one body in Christ*. (Rom. xii. 5.) Thus do we find those, who, *individually*, had been made living members of the risen Christ, by a *quicken*ing process, made by His body *collectively*, by that *power-imparting* process, called the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (Acts i. 8.) This was the formation of the Church. Henceforth, His people, when assembled together, are found possessed of *power*, through Christ's Spirit in their midst (whilst, in the godly exercise of their souls, they are found waiting on Christ), to build up one another in their most holy faith. (Jude xx.) But how few, at the present day, are the assemblies of saints where Christ's presence by His Spirit is acknowledged, where His right of speaking by whom He will is acknowledged. (1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24, 25.) The Holy Ghost, in His proper *personality* and *presence*, in the assembly of the saints, is forgotten and out of mind; the saints are found coming together rather to meet a man than to meet the Lord, to wait upon the creature rather than upon the Creator, as though there had been no such doctrine in the church, as that, after Jesus went away, another *Person* came; and this is no small sin. If many of His *gifts* are now wanting, this is only an additional reason for cleaving to Him, seeing that we are assured that, according to the promise in John xiv. 16, His *Person* is still with us. C.

CHARACTER IS EVERYTHING.—"With the pure, thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unsavoury."—2 Sam. xxii. 27.

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—“T. C.” begins his letter to you, which appeared in the July number of *Northern Witness*, by saying—“I am exceedingly sorry to see the letter signed ‘B.’ in reply to ‘A. S.’” Would it not have been much better to have informed your readers why he was so exceedingly sorry. What was there in “B.’s” letter to produce it? He leaves us in ignorance as to that, simply saying—“Rules of the kind ‘B.’ indicates”. But this surely is very vague. In what sentence are they indicated? I have carefully read and re-read the letter, but fail to see any such indication.

His first letter raised an important question as to the Scripturalness of Union Prayer Meetings and Conferences, where only a certain amount of truth can be spoken, and he replied to “A. S.’s” very ambiguous letter, by referring to three special points in it—the Synagogue, the River Side place for prayer, and the Band. The last he dismisses by saying it is an argument, and as to the other two, he asks a question.

Surely such a question does not call for sorrow; far better to give it an answer. Let me ask it again, as I need to learn as much as “B.” the similarity, if there is any, between a synagogue of the Jews and a chapel in which worship, according to their special belief, is carried on; or the similarity between a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made—in which prayer, specially note, Scripture does not say the Apostle joined, but it shews he did not—and a union prayer meeting where a man presides; in which, if there is liberty, it's only apparent, seeing that *he* gives it. That is its liberty for man to take part if he pleases, but not liberty for the Holy Spirit to use whom He pleases.

“T. C.” classes the synagogue with a Free Church and Roman Catholic Chapel. I trust, on consideration, he will see how wrongly, and how it misleads. Was not all the truth known to a Jew allowed to be read in a synagogue. Were they not specially built for that object—the reading of the Old Testament Scriptures. When Paul entered them, was it not to proclaim the Messiah to those who had never heard it before, and did it not result, in every instance, in his being quickly cast out. Was it not so?

Antioch in Pisidia,	-	Acts xiii. 14, 41.
Iconium,	- - -	” xiv. 2.
Thessalonica,	- - -	” xvii. 3.
Berea,	- - -	” 13.
Corinth,	- - -	” xviii. 4, 6.
Ephesus,	- - -	” xix. 8, 19.

These are the places where they entered the synagogue to proclaim the murdered One of Calvary as the Messiah. They were cast out.

Now, does not "T. C." know well enough that if an evangelist promises to preach in a Free Church, that there is a tacit understanding that he will not in that place preach baptism, and many other distinctive truths. Does he not know that there is not a Church into which an evangelist would be allowed to enter, if it was thought that he would preach baptism, or even gather with the few despised ones, sneered at as Plymouth Brethern, and denounced as heretics.

If evangelists are to go into "churches", so-called because Paul went to synagogues, then they should follow him in the next step, namely, preaching needed truth, and then he will soon follow him in the next outside.

But is it not a fact, that in the present days, such results do not follow, because ministers of these places are on the alert, and will only allow those to preach in their places, who first promise not to speak on such a truth, for instance, as "the coming of the Lord," although they have been preaching it elsewhere immediately before?

And I would ask what "T. C." means by "provided there was no necessity of endorsing or taking part in what was not according to God's mind."

Does not silence give consent? Do not the people suppose that the one who thus goes amongst them believes in a stated paid ministry? Does not the minister sit by him, and is he not asked to take some part, simply because he is the minister. In many cases does he not expect to be asked to pronounce the benediction. If the evangelist was honest to the minister in acquainting him beforehand with the fact that he did not believe in his clerical position, would he be allowed in?

Then, again, "T. C." says—"If the door is open in these places at any time, surely the Spirit would seek some one to give the Word". These places being the seven churches, surely He would. He did. But what word was it? That which they needed. Was there any wrong doctrine or action in connection with either? What did He do? Rebuke it. Let any servant do that in regard to a sect, and the result will be as with Paul and the synagogue—they will cast him out.

Again, "T. C." says—"I fear there is a sect arising of the name of Brethren, and we do well to see we in

no way belong, as *servants*, to any sect". Why does he say "as servants"? Does he mean that we can, as *Sons*? That whilst we ought to be as Sons, where the Lord would have us, yet, as *servants*, we have a wider circle in which to move. Do you say—surely not? Then, what is meant by bringing in Moses? "T. C." says that Moses would have been wrong in going back as an Israelite, but right in going back as a servant. How does he know that? The narrative simply shews he did not.

Where does the Word of God warrant this cutting or dividing? If Moses had gone back, what would he have done? Pronounced against the evil; but he had done it, and so effectively, that he needed not to do it again.

Let it be so with us, and let our judgment of sects and sectarian position be so clear that we need not to go back again any more than Moses, and let it be done, even though it be said, another sect is arising. "Going out unto Him" involves separation from evil; and where the latter is not, it is because the former has not been done. As to Corinth, let it be remembered that Scripture was not then complete. Also, that Paul, immediately he became acquainted with the evils existing there, took them up one by one.

If "T. C." wishes to follow Paul, then he will speak out 1 Cor. i. to those who need it. Do sectarian Christians? Are they able to hear it?

There is no analogy between the assembly at Corinth, which began right, and a sect wrong from the commencement of it.

Why bring in Corinth? Could "T. C." have gone there *not* to speak about the resurrection, but about something on which they were agreed. He would be the first to say—No. Then why seem to strengthen the hands of those who now go in and out of sects, *keeping* back the truth of God on many points, because if they preached it, they would be shut out.

For, let not this be forgotten, "B." never raised the question of a servant going in faithfulness and love to warn and help saints out of evil doctrine and ways, but as to whether God would have his servants go in among the sects to preach the Gospel, keeping back baptism, ministry, &c., in order to do it.

Another expression "T. C." uses is "an open door". Is it one the Lord has opened? Then one who enters can take all His Word. Or, is it one a minister has opened? Then he will have to keep back part, and go

prepared to do it, or else not go. Is it not so? Look around. Mark those who thus act, and see if it is not.

Far better if the sorrow of "T. C." were called out by the actions of such ones, than by a letter from "B.", which simply calls on us to see that we do not compromise the truth of God.

"T. C." compares Israel and Samaritans, and by it unwittingly helps those in a wrong position. Now, was it as he says? I fail to see it. Israel was in opposition to Christ. Out of Israel were a few disciples called by Him, and THEY were in the place of separation, and into that same place He brought the Samaritan woman and fellow-believers, leaving the bulk of the Samaritans to boast of their mountain, as the bulk of Israel were doing of theirs. These similies are often dangerous and misleading.

In closing this letter, I would say, as I read "B.'s" letter, it seemed clear to me that he wanted to fetter no one, but simply to bring out the Scriptural action for a servant who wished to be faithful. Whilst the letters of "A. S." and "T. C." are calculated to strengthen the hands of those who work with all and sundry, more anxious about open doors than they are about the truth being spoken by them in its entirety, after they have entered in.

The Lord give us grace, combined with faithfulness. Many have of late been so talked to about "Exclusive" and "Exclusiveness", that it has made some think and act very *loosely*, and divers others into a wrong position. The Lord occupy us with Himself.

Yours affectionately in Christ,

H.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Ephesians vi. 10-13.

YOU observe where these instructions are placed, at the *close* of the Epistle. He has shown us what He has brought us *into*, and then He shows us how we are to *keep* that place.

Every child of God has his place in Christ, in heaven. Not hard work to get there, but hard work to *stay* there, for though, in one sense it is the easiest thing possible to be saved, yet it is by constant fighting we maintain the ground God has placed us in. "Finally, my Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, etc.," for "We *wrestle* not against flesh and blood". In Corinthians we are

weak, in Christ here, strength—Christ on the cross, *weakness*—on the Throne, *power*. While down here we are to take part with Him in His shame and rejection—not up there at home. As regards our home and place *there*, could no one say, "I'm weak" until the power of God Himself is overcome. The allusion here is to Israel, He brought them into their Canaan—so He brings us into ours. We have not got to fight against the *flesh*, we are to count it dead. With the world, not to fight, not to *separate* from it, not with the Devil—a fight. When Christ said He had overcome the world, He meant He had overcome and testified against it. Here, we are fighting against the Devil, who would keep us from our proper place before God, and its only by constant fighting we can stay there,—forewarned is forearmed.

Dosen't the Devil often try to get you out of the presence of God, experimentally? if not, you are different from any body else. I always intend, in future, when speaking of "faith," to mention the words "my heart". "Now much there is now-a-days of *head* faith, it is all rubbish, a mere assent, is it not "with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness". Beloved, it is *hard work* to stay *up there*. I think it would be well to ask ourselves this question, am I in the presence of God consciously this morning, without a cloud to enjoy the love of God? if not, I believe this passage will show us now the way. "Put on the whole armour of God"—all the power of God against the *cunning* of the Devil, and not against the power thereof, he has no power, yet such is his *cunning*, we require all God's power against his *wiles*. Observe the word to keep you by his wiles from communion with God. Mark that word "stand" three times repeated, you cannot get higher than the blood of God's Son has put you. "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." The girdle of the East was a very important part of the dress, which was usually a loose flowing robe, and in walking had to be bound up to the girdle. We are to see our affections and our desires, not to let our hearts go out in any one thing, it is hard work. Is my heart set on a single *thing* that God could not give me with a smile from His own hand? Let us be "girt about with truth".

Then, the breast-plate of righteousness. Now, it is not Christ our righteousness here, it is a battle with the Devil. Nothing can touch the Salvation of God, until something can tarnish the blood of the Lord

Jesus. Oh, am I allowing myself a little licence in *any* thing? is there any thing in my life, or in my walk, *not right*. See to it, beloved friends—then, *put on* the breast-plate of righteousness, Paul had it on, when he could say, “I have lived in all good conscience before God this day”.

Now, the third point, “feet shod”. The idea is, you enjoy peace with God, and through having that peace in your own souls, it *flows out* from you to others, so being full of joy and peace, you have got the peace *with* God, and the peace *of* God. The Devil is not called the accuser of the Brethren for nothing. Not “stand” and you having got God’s power, and if you don’t use God’s power the Devil will get you down from the position you are entitled to, as washed in the blood of Christ. Then—“The shield of faith” and the fiery darts of the wicked. It does not mean He will tempt you to believe you are not a child of God, but He will like to raise up rebellious thoughts, hard thoughts of God, when things would seem to go contrary, bear in mind these are red-hot darts from the Devil’s quiver; *keep them off* by the shield of faith, and say—“I believe in my heavenly Father’s love, though I don’t understand—and am quite sure its all right”. I have been much struck with Jeremiah xxxii., read it at your leisure. Jeremiah is told to buy the field, though the city is given into the hands of the Chaldees, and he *does* it, and then asks the reason. Beloved, let us be obedient, even if we don’t understand, what God tells us to do, let us do it. Satan *whispers*, “He would not let you have all that pain, or take away that child, if he loves you as He *says* He *does*”. Keep them *off*, they are lies from the wicked one. Christ trusted God on the Cross. “Thou art holy,” He even clung to faith in God.

Then, the helmet of a known Salvation, a very important piece of the armour, the way the power of God is to be tried, a *known* Salvation—Paul says, “He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*”—your *own* Salvation—the hope of Salvation for an helmet. “Hope,” in Scripture, ever refers to the coming of the the Lord. I hope that Jesus will come back to-day, and then—I shall have done with fighting and rest. Now then, comes *active* warfare, “The sword of the Spirit” requires *practice*, and, if you want to be *real* before God, take care, how you quote Scripture, else you will cut yourself. What does God give you the sword for? there’s *not* much harm in this or that, the Devil says, “Don’t

do so and so—you don’t understand”. Beloved, let us be *obedient*, and God will make it all clear, do first what God *says*, whether to be baptized or anything else—don’t say you see no harm in so and so, the Devil sees plenty of harm, and you lose your communion with God when you yield. God has put you in a wonderful place of blessing, then use the sword to *cut* things, every *thing* that would mar your progress and interfere with the thoroughness of your walk. Use the sword to cut the knot, and it will *do* it. The moment you say “I stand”—you are near a tumble.

Then, “praying always,” only think the great Apostle Paul stood in need of the prayers of the old women and children in the church at Ephesus, and, the moment their eye got off Christ they were *weak*. “And for *me*,” you would scarcely have thought, if Paul were to preach here to-night he would have called aside the little ones—“pray for me”. Oh, to be cast on the *living* God, and when the gospel is being preached let the Saints have fellowship in prayer. Oh, that *good* God, to let that Apostle be put into bonds. The more *true* the servant of God *is*, the more despised and hated he will surely be. Think, beloved, of the word “stand” so oft repeated. Stand in my presence, and may His word come home with power to our souls.

SCRIPTURE READING.

LORD Jesus! 'tis our highest joy,
To be engaged with Thee:
Led by Thy Spirit, through the Word,
Thy ways of grace to see.

Oh! let Thy glory, more and more,
Our willing hearts engage;
Unfold it to us, blessed Lord,
From out each sacred page.

We prize this treasure Thou hast given—
Thy precious, holy Word,
Next to Thyself, no gift from heaven
Exceeds this, gracious Lord.

'Mid the conflicting words of men,
How blessed to recline
And rest secure upon Thy Word,
Eternal and divine.

Lord, keep us ever at Thy feet,
Hearing Thy voice alone,
Until we see Thee as Thou art,
Exalted, worthy One.

W. C.

PROGRESS AND DECLENSION.

KNOWLEDGE of the truth is not the ultimatum of our spiritual attainment, but it is only a means to the end of obedience. Many who have once learned the truth, but have failed to act up to their knowledge, have found that word fulfilled, "*if the light that is in thee become darkness how great is that darkness*"! If a believer obeys up to the light he has, then shall he have increase of light; but if not, then "*from him shall be taken away even that he hath*". (Matt. xiii. 12.) This is God's principle of giving and taking away, which He so often connects "both with the present awards of His grace in giving more, and with the final rewards of His coming, as well as with loss now, and loss then". "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord *as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*" (1st Samuel xv. 22, 23.)

THE WICKED DESTROYING AND DESTROYED.—"But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place."—2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7.

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Is the FACE OF JESUS.

THE JOY OF HEAVEN
Is the PRESENCE OF JESUS.

THE MELODY OF HEAVEN
Is the NAME OF JESUS.

THE HARMONY OF HEAVEN
Is the PRAISE OF JESUS.

THE THEME OF HEAVEN
Is the WORK OF JESUS.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF HEAVEN
Is the SERVICE OF JESUS.

THE FULNESS OF HEAVEN
Is JESUS HIMSELF.

TRUE GLORY.—He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.—John vii. 18.

THE GOOD TIME COMING.—"Thus saith the Lord I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof."—Zech. viii. 3, 4, 5.

FOUL FLATTERY FOR EVIL PURPOSES.—"Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel."—2 Sam. xv. 4, 5, 6. The flatterer has an ulterior selfish gain in view.

CONDITIONS OF PROSPERITY.—"And the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as He rejoiced over thy fathers: if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."—Deut. xxx. 9-14.

[The following is reprinted from the "Directory for the Public Worship of God," page 331, of the "Confession of Faith". We offer no apology for presenting it to our readers, the majority of whom, probably, know nothing of it. It needs no note or comment of ours. It says or unsays its own sayings in its own way. A more humbling piece of theology could not well be.—*Ed.*]

OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, AND FIRST OF BAPTISM.

BAPTISM, as it is not unnecessarily to be delayed, so it is not to be administered in any case by any private person, but by a minister of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.

Nor is it to be administered in private places, or privately, but in the place of publick worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear; and not in the places where fonts, in the time of Popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed.

The child to be baptized, after notice given to the minister the day before, is to be presented by the father, or (in case of his necessary absence) by some Christian friend in his place, professing his earnest desire that the child may be baptized.

Before baptism, the minister is to use some words of instruction, touching the institution, nature, use, and ends of this sacrament, showing

"That it is instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ: That it is a seal of the covenant of grace, of our ingrafting into Christ, and of our union with Him, of remission of sins, regeneration, adoption, and life eternal: That the water, in baptism, representeth and signifieth both the blood of Christ, which taketh away all guilt of sin, original and actual; and the sanctifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ against the dominion of sin, and the corruption of our sinful nature: That baptising, or sprinkling and washing with water, signifieth the cleansing from sin by the blood and for the merit of Christ, together with the mortification of sin, and rising from sin to newness of life, by virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ: That the promise is made to believers and their seed: and that the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the church, have, by their birth, interest in the covenant, and right to the seal of it, and to the outward privileges of the church, under the gospel, no less than the children of Abraham in the time of the Old Testament: the covenant of grace, for substance, being the same; and the grace of God, and the consolation of believers, more plentiful than before: That the Son of God admitted little children into His presence, embracing and blessing them, saying, *For of such is the kingdom of God*: That children, by baptism, are solemnly received into the bosom of

"the visible church, distinguished from the world, and them that are without, and united with believers; and that all who are baptised in the name of Christ, do renounce, and by their baptism are bound to fight against the devil, the world, and the flesh: That they are Christians, and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptised: That the inward grace and virtue of baptism is not tied to that very moment of time wherein it is administered: and that the fruit and power thereof reacheth to the whole course of our life; and that outward baptism is not so necessary, that, through the want thereof, the infant is in danger of damnation, or the parents guilty, if they do not condemn or neglect the ordinance of Christ, when and where it may be had."

In these or the like instructions, the minister is to use his own liberty and godly wisdom, as the ignorance or errors in the doctrine of baptism, and the edification of the people, shall require.

He is also to admonish all that are present,

"To look back to their baptism: to repent of their sins against their covenant with God; to stir up their faith; to improve and make right use of their baptism, and of the covenant sealed thereby betwixt God and their souls."

He is to exhort the parent,

"To consider the great mercy of God to him and his child; to bring up the child in the knowledge of the grounds of the Christian religion, and in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and to let him know the danger of God's wrath to Himself and child, if he be negligent: requiring his solemn promise for the performance of his duty."

This being done, prayer is also to be joined with the word of institution, for sanctifying the water to this spiritual use; and the minister is to pray to this or the like effect:

"That the Lord, who hath not left us as strangers without the covenant of promise, but called us to the privileges of His ordinances, would graciously vouchsafe to sanctify and bless His own ordinance of baptism at this time: That he would join the inward baptism of his Spirit with the outward baptism of water; make this baptism to the infant a seal of adoption, remission of sin, regeneration, and eternal life, and all other promises of the covenant of grace: That the child may be planted into the likeness of the death and resurrection of Christ; and that, the body of sin being destroyed in him, he may serve God in newness of life all his days."

Then the minister is to demand the name of the child; which being told him, he is to say (calling the child by his name):

I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

As he pronounceth these words, he is to baptize the child with water : which, for the manner of doing of it, is not only lawful but sufficient, and most expedient to be, by pouring or sprinkling of the water on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony.

This done he is to give thanks and pray, to this or the like purpose :

“ Acknowledging with all thankfulness, that the Lord
“ is true and faithful in keeping covenant and mercy :
“ That he is good and gracious, not only in that he number
“ eth us among His saints, but is pleased also to bestow
“ upon our children this singular token and badge of
“ his love in Christ : That, in His truth and special provi-
“ dence, He daily bringeth some into the bosom of His
“ church to be partakers of His inestimable benefits, pur-
“ chased by the blood of His dear Son, for the con-
“ tinuance and increase of His church.”

“ And praying, That the Lord would still continue, and
“ daily confirm more and more this his unspeakable
“ favour : That he would receive the infant now bap-
“ tised, and solemnly entered into the household of faith,
“ into his fatherly tuition and defence, and remember
“ Him with the favour that He showeth to His people ;
“ that, if he shall be taken of this life in his infancy, the
“ Lord, who is rich in mercy, would be pleased to receive
“ him up into glory ; and if he live, and attain the years
“ of discretion, that the Lord would so teach him by His
“ word and Spirit, and make his baptism effectual to him,
“ and so uphold him by His divine power and grace, that
“ by faith he may prevail against the devil, the world,
“ and the flesh, till in the end he obtain a full and final
“ victory, and so be kept by the power of God through
“ faith unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

☞ We intend (D.V.) to visit America this month, and expect to leave on the 13th. Articles, and all communications for the Editor, in our absence, to be addressed to CITY BIBLE-HOUSE, 40 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow.

Would the Lord's people pray for a much larger blessing on these Monthly Papers than ever ; and, that the American Evangelistic Tour may be largely blessed. Mr. D. MUNRO is returning to America. JAS. CAMPBELL, JOHN SMITH, and JAMES SMITH are already gone to Canada. Will the Lord's people remember their brethren in prayer.

EDINBURGH.

Mr. D. MUNRO, Evangelist from Canada, has conducted a series of Meetings in the GOSPEL HALL, BLACKFRIARS' STREET. Several were brought to the Lord, and not a few of God's dear Saints were refreshed.

Bible Readings were conducted by him also for several weeks in BIBLE SOCIETY'S ROOMS, 5 ST. ANDREW'S SQUARE, which, taking every thing into consideration, were fairly attended, and were truly profitable.

GLASGOW.

A number of Converts gathered in through the Tent preaching at CROSSHILL, GLASGOW, have been Baptized, and are begun to gather in the name of the Lord.

The usual FAST-DAY HALF-YEARLY MEETINGS will be held on the 25th, 26th, and 27th of October.

The Tent pitched at CROSSHILL, GLASGOW, has been taken down. Will the Lord's people join in praising Him for all He has done ? Meetings are now transferred to QUEEN'S PARK ROOMS, VICTORIA ROAD, CROSSHILL, as follows :—

LORD'S DAY.

Believers meet for Worship and Breaking of

Bread,	at 11 A.M.
Address to Christians,	at 3 P.M.
Gospel Address,	at 6:30 P.M.
Wednesdays, Address,	at 8 P.M.

GLASGOW

HALF-YEARLY MEETINGS OF CHRISTIANS

OCTOBER, 1876.

WEDNESDAY, 25th,

IN GOSPEL HALL, 34 NELSON STREET,
(OFF TRONGATE.)

7:30 P.M.—Special Meeting for Prayer.

THURSDAY, 26th (“FAST DAY”),

IN ALBION HALL, COLLEGE STREET,
(OFF HIGH STREET.)

10 till 10:45.—Prayer.

11 till 2.—Fellowship and Ministry of the Word of God.

2:30 till 3:30.—Dinner and Tea for those from the Country and Suburbs.

4 till 5:30.—For the Answering of Questions. Questions in writing to be handed in not later than Quarter-past Two o'clock.

6 till 8:30.—Fellowship and Ministry of the Word of God, as in the Forenoon.

FRIDAY, 27th,

IN GOSPEL HALL, 34 NELSON STREET,
(OFF TRONGATE.)

7 o'clock.—Open Meeting for Reports and Conference as to the Lord's Work.

N.B.—It is particularly desired that all who purpose being present will especially endeavour to be in their seats at the intimated hour of Meeting.

PRAYER IS REQUESTED FOR THESE MEETINGS.

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GENTILES.

"For by the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."—GAL. ii. 16.

"For by Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—EPH. ii. 3.

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MADE NIGH

THE BELIEVER'S STANDING IN CHRIST PRACTICALLY
CONSIDERED.

BY J. DENHAM SMITH.

(No. 6 of Papers for the Present Time.)

IN our last we considered the believer as on the earth, in the midst of this present evil age, taken up out of it by grace, that he may live separate from it. We must now look up and see Christ in heaven, and our standing in Christ. God has given us to begin with this in our divine life; for we are as Christ is, and where He is—made nigh, sitting "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus". The epistle to the Hebrews shows us that we are there without a sin. In that epistle the heavens above seem open, with no obstruction between faith and the God-man who, having purged our sins, is now seated at the right hand of God, appearing there for us, and crowned with glory and honour. It shows that we are there with "no more remembrance of sins," and "no more conscience of sins". Dear friends, we are not waiting to be there, we *are* there as He is, one with Him, being "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones".

This is our standing before God, our highest life; ours from the dateless periods in the purposes of God, and ours to know and enjoy the moment we believe. Thus is it written: "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) . . . and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. . . . Remember, that ye being in time past

Gentiles in the flesh, . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. ii. 4-13.)

This then is our standing—"Made nigh by the blood of Christ." The word is passive—"Made nigh;" so that our place thus does not depend on any labour, or merit, or prayer of our own. It is all *in* Christ. We are not to judge of our position there by any experience or attainment of ours, but by what God declares of it. Wonderful places is ours—not here, but there, reaching to where Christ Himself is—*in Heaven*. He came and took us up out of the lowest depths, and hath, along with Himself, put us down on the highest height, far above all principalities and powers. And we are there in the same acceptance—"Accepted in the Beloved;" in the same love—"That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them;" and in the same hope of glory. (John xvii. 22.)

Thus in our standing we can never separate ourselves from Christ. "The moment," said Luther, "I make of Christ and myself two, I am all wrong; but when I see that we are one, all is rest and peace."

It is all wonderful this, that we, who in ourselves are so vile, should be as Christ. It passeth knowledge, the deep love which hath made us thus, so that God never sees us apart from Christ. When He was in death we were, so to speak, with Him. Sweet is His own utterance in the psalm: "My substance" (or, as the word is, "My bone," reminding us of how Eve was first *in* Adam, ere she was raised up *with* him out of

his deep sleep) "was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written." Agreeably with this are those words on the cross which He uttered for us: "Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling" (my only one) "from the power of the dog". Having taken our place, He acknowledged our transgressions, and bore them in His own body on the tree; and making atonement for them there, He put them away by the sacrifice of Himself.

But not only were we thus with Him in His death, we were also buried with Him: "Buried with Him by baptism into death." Glorious deliverance of self, this burial! For what was it that rose from His grave? Not our sins; not the vile Adam-self, which died with Him, and was buried. No; the cross made a clean severance between these and God, and between these and ourselves as a new creation in Christ. If *Christ* be not risen, we are yet in our sins. But He *is* risen, and we are therefore *not* in our sins. Moreover, Paul says of himself, "I live; yet not I" (not *that* I which died), "but Christ liveth in me." What rose from the dead, then, was Christ; and God counts us *as that*. And we who see it are a new creation in Christ Jesus, freed from all our former liabilities as children of Adam; and are children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, being responsible as such before God.

And now lift your thoughts unto heaven! As we were crucified with Him in His death, and buried together with Him, so we are raised together with Him to where He now is—seated "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." We are never more to be separated from Him; for what we have is *eternal*, the three eternal of Heb. ix.: "Eternal redemption," "Eternal inheritance," and "the Eternal Spirit" who raised Him from the dead. Moreover we have life, eternal life, in Him. It is all *in Him*, and nothing can alter it. "I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Now it is where Christ is we are made nigh to God. The legal barrier is gone. Sins and iniquities which separated us from God are no more remembered; there is no vail now, as once, between the holy and the most holy place; and in those who are born again there is no *moral* barrier. A soul born of God likes to be there: as rivers flow to the ocean, so the divine nature

in us seeks to be with God. And we know through the Word that we have not got to be where God is, in Christ—counted by God as He is—holy, righteous, accepted in the Beloved.

Our being made nigh finds its image in Aaron on the great day of atonement. He alone was privileged to go the whole way with the blood. The people could not go with him. Not so with us and our divine Aaron. He hath taken us all the way with Himself *to where God is*. But it was outside the camp the blood was shed, and the victim burnt—sins and iniquities all put away, burnt (shall I say?) to ashes; then the blood in the basin was carried by Aaron into the outer court, on into the holy place, thence through into where he could go no father. Ah! what did he see there? He saw God there. He himself was in his white robe of perfectness; the mercy-seat of gold, beneath which was the law, whose demands were met by the blood, which told that sin had been atoned for, was all before God. He saw God satisfied; sweet tokens of this we have in the cherubim looking in complacent delight on the mercy-seat, and in the glory between their outstretched wings, which shone forth on Aaron, and told of peace and joy and acceptance through the blood. What else do we see in the Holiest? No sins, no self, no death; all is rest before God. This, however, had to be renewed every year; but with us—

"All is rest, and rest *for ever*;
All is perfectness *above*."

Some one has said God could not look at the law in the holiest but His eye must first penetrate through a *heap of mercies*. God, beloved, cannot look at us but through Christ; and seeing Christ, He finds for us all He needs. God rests in Him; and by faith we also rest in Him. We rest where God rests; we are satisfied where God is satisfied. Ah, dear children of God, we are not waiting for this rest, this satisfaction before God, till we get to heaven; we have it now. We *are* nigh; nearer to God than Christ we cannot be. We are, as Christ is, in His very presence. We need not remain in the outer court, or outside, as did Israel; but are privileged as Aaron (shall I say Christ?) to go the whole way with the blood; not to stay, as many do, where the blood *was* (though it is blessed to be there in remembrance); not to remain as an outer-court worshipper, with a kind of trembling fear lest there could be no liberty of access; no! with boldness we

enter into the holiest, where now, because of the blood, because of Christ, nothing is a condemnation, and nothing a separation.

Remember, we could not be there unless *meet for the scene*, and we *are* meet. (Col. i. 12.) Hence Christ is not only our redemption, but He is our sanctification. A million years of growth would never give me the absolute perfectness the place requires. It requires not growth merely, but what is essentially, intrinsically holy. Oh it is in the absolute holiness of Christ that the sinner who believes is meet for the scene! He is there *as* Christ. Wonderful standing! wonderful grace that gave it! And this standing is to be judged of not by any creature frames or experiences. I am not to say I have not this standing because I do not *feel* that I have it, or because I do not deserve it. We deserved hell for our sin; but we get heaven on the desert of another. Christ took all that we deserved, and gives us all that He deserves. And, oh! what does He not deserve? He *as Son* was always there; but He became a *man*, united us to Himself, that He may *as man* take us along with Himself, in the same righteous as Himself. And we are counted this now. "It will be a wonder indeed," as another has said, "when we are conformed to the likeness of Christ in His ascended glory, that we shall never have a thought, a desire, contrary to God; not a stain, not a mark of defilement upon us; not one trace of sin left; that *then* God shall be able to dwell with us, and we with Him, in unceasing joy and peace. But the greater wonder is that *now* we are able to say He neither sees our sinfulness nor our unworthiness. All wrath against us has been appeased. Not one sin remains to be imputed." But does this say we have no sin? Certainly not! We have a nature still which could do nothing *but* sin if allowed. But it was *that* which got condemnation in Christ; nailed to the cross, it has no place in heaven. It is *Himself*, instead of that, which we have in heaven. The *presence* of that nature remains in us; the *condemnation* is gone. Christ took it, and there is now none to take. Oh, what a gospel for the weary and heavy-laden, to whom Christ says, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest."

Dear friends, what a height is this? Well may we say, *What is man?* In himself he was lost, he was a child of Adam, he was an heir of wrath; but in Christ he is not only saved, but lifted above all heights, all principalities and powers. One with Christ, he is

heir of God and joint-heir with Christ. Angels are servants; but *man* is for rule: "Thou madst him to have *dominion* over the works of thy hand; Thou hast put all things under his feet." This is said of Christ; but as one with Him, we are to reign with Him, to have dominion over the works of His hands. "You shall sit with me upon my throne, as I am seated upon my Father's throne." Oh, this is a wondrous and divine theme; unutterable place is ours, kings and priests unto our God; and we shall reign with Him for ever and ever! It is all *in and with Him?* and we should "remember as with unshod feet whose paths they are on which we are treading." But such indeed is our standing, and such the scene of it, made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Now what is the power of the standing? or has it power to give us lives corresponding to itself? Oh, it is a coming down to look at ourselves! But we must look at ourselves, and compare ourselves down here with what we are in heaven. It is in the thought of heaven that we get our power.

But oh, what a difference there is between what we are in Christ *there* and what we are in our conduct here! *There* the church is perfect, undefiled, unblamable in love, united as *one*; but here it is broken, divided, a spectacle of weakness surely, and a source of sorrow to the Spirit of God, who yet dwells in it. The same with individuals. *There*, in the presence of God, each one is holy, blessed, even as Christ; but here, lacking in true holiness. In ourselves we are sinful, and at best only half awake as to divine knowledge, only half separate as to the world. Taking our place by faith there, and seeing what we are and have in Christ, and thence looking down on facts, how different! Yet we are not left without power to lessen this difference. The Spirit *does* dwell in us to show us what Christ is, to the end "that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 17-19.) Elsewhere Paul prays "that ye might *walk worthy of the Lord.*" How? Beautiful rendering by Tregelles: "*In all power, being made powerful, according to the power of the glory.*" (Col. i. 11.) So that there need be no lack of power.

"But I do not feel the power," say some. No; you

must know the glory ere you can have any feeling of the power. Abraham had no feeling of the heavenly city until he had first seen it, and believed the interest he had in it. Paul had no feeling of the glory until he saw it embodied in the glorified One who said, "I am Jesus," and who reached from heaven down to Saul to convert him, as it were, by means of the glory. That glory from the first so dazzled him that he was ever after blind to all else. It formed his life, and was his one hope. "If by any means I might apprehend that for which also I am apprehended." Have we no glory to have power over us? Yes; "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the *same* image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Thus there is the power of the glory.

This was Paul's standing. He saw himself in Christ; to be glorified together with Christ; and it was the secret of his holiness. Oh, it is wonderful what a believer is IN Christ before God! "In" is a word of position. We are IN the Beloved now; and shall be IN His likeness soon. How few realize it, or live in its power! Some say, "We have had too much of our position, and not enough of holiness." But how can we separate them? Can I live as a prince unless I *am* a prince? And if I *am* a prince, and live as a beggar, how am I to get out of the beggar's condition but by coming back to my standing as a prince? Ah, no! We have not enough of standing yet, or Christians would not live as they do; and not enough of holiness. It is those who *are* clean who seek to walk cleanly. Abraham's standing, so to speak, was the God of glory and the heavenly city. They formed his character—made him a pilgrim. Caleb's mountain led him to live as one who looked to come into possession. He wanted no portion in the desert; he had one in the land. It is moral nearness to God, through Christ living in us, that separates from sin. It is in the enjoyment of such nearness that we judge of the vileness of our own nature. There are two sides to a believer. Follow the holiest to his closet, and you will hear the confession of his own vileness; follow him up to where he is made nigh, accepted *in* and as the Beloved, and mark how sweet are his accents of liberty and joy. He is dead to *self*; he is happy *in the Lord*. Now the old nature cannot get up there; so, were we to *keep* there in communion, it could not bring us down. It was when Paul came from the

third heaven that the flesh could act; and so the thorn was given him lest he should sin. We are not obliged to sin. If we abide in Him, we sin not, shall not practise sin, but shall live a life in some degree corresponding to the place given us before God.

Oh what a power is there in this! Power to help us. Our standing not practical! What! you an evil temper, and living as Christ? No; it would soon take that away; also all evil speaking, filthy communication, and jesting. The theatre and the ball-room are not to be named! What would Christ do? where would he go? No, as a child of God I must judge every thing by Him.

It is the same with loving Christians. We have power for love. I often think that it is the *eleventh* commandment which Christians *might* keep. They try to keep the ten, not one of which they can keep. Can they love God with *all* their heart? Can they never covet? No, the ten brings us in guilty, so that every mouth may be *stopped*. But this *new* commandment is what we *could* keep. We *could* love one another. But how are we to do this? Not by looking at Christians merely as they are in themselves, for then we should love some because they are to be loved naturally, and dislike others because they are naturally unlovely. No, to love properly, we must look right up. Then we can love all, even those who act as if they were enemies. It is thus seeing them as *dear to God*, and *in Christ*, that we can truly love. Thus we are to love one another, even as Christ. Thus Toplady and Fletcher might have learned to love, even though they differed. It is there before God we can love all saints; love them as they are all arranged round God by whom they are loved, even as He loves His Son, and who dwells, takes up His abode (His mansion) in them—the Father and the Son—and whose love, the love of Father to His Son, is *in them*. How wonderful!

It is the same with communion. How can believers have true communion one with another, unless they are in the light as He is in the light, and where the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin? We have a life of love, and a life of communion, and a life of glorifying God to live, and we must live it from thence. But I cannot enlarge. It is the same with our conflicts. Living according to our standing gives power for conflict. Oh, when temptation comes, you must say to the enemy, *I am as Christ, I am holy to the Lord!* What a bar to the foe is this! and foes one has. But

I may hide me from them. We war not against flesh and blood, but against wicked spirits in heavenly places. But "heavenly places" must not be taken to mean the "most holy place" to which I can resort; and there is no fighting there. Canaan was not the place for rest, but for battle; heavenly places are for conflict; "made nigh," where Christ is, is our scene of rest. It is there we see we have trodden down strength. Sin, death, hell, and Satan are not there; they are all outside, overcome through the blood of the Lamb. We may have to force our way through to this rest; for truly we feel at times as if wicked spirits withstood us on our way, but they come not there. Even here *in* the conflict it is victory to shout. No fighting yonder! no foe yonder! Oh the peace of the sanctuary where we are more than conquerors! It is there through the blood of Christ that God is our refuge, a very present help in time of trouble. Dear friends, how much they lose, at what an expense of peace, who have never taken their place thus where Christ is, in whose presence is no night, even in the tabernacles of the Most High, the secret place of the Almighty.

Hence, how many have never known true *christian* experience. They have experience as christians, but not *christian* experience. A christian is entitled to an experience according to his place—"made nigh," where we rest, where Christ rests, in God; and where no sin, and no wrath, can ever come—where

"Not a wave of trouble rolls
Across the peaceful breast."

Instead of looking at Christ there, Satan keeps many occupied with themselves. The following I have found to be the experience of not a few: "I was living, or rather dying, on myself," writes a *Genevise* christian. "I was ashamed to confess myself without Christ. But I went out of myself, and believed in Jesus as my Saviour. Then came such bounding joy and peace as I cannot describe." When I saw God had given me such a Christ, my heart was filled with praise and love and wonder at the miracle. 'My Father!' 'Jesus mine!' 'God loving me as He loves His son!' Both taking up their abode in me! Then I am a member of Christ's body; and as the Head cannot be separate from the body, so I am as Christ! I cannot tell what this truth is to me—so sanctifying. It lifts me up above this earth, and in an inexpressible way shields from sin. Sin put away! Complete in Him! Already in heaven! For what Christ is we are before

God. I care for nothing now but to tell sinners of Christ." The experience of all may not be this; but there is an inexpressible power in the truth concerning the standing, which, when first brought into the soul by the Spirit through the Word, floods the soul, not only with peace, but holiness, and power for true service. For service should come of the same—from fellowship with Christ. Christ in heaven, yet *in* me, made known through the truth *by* me, is what ought to characterize every worker. The snare is to get down from Christ into self. "I so lost for a time my power for service," said an eminent worker of the present day, who had been brought very low; "I wanted to see more life, more happiness in *myself*." When he got back to Christ again it was all right. It is a subtle device, that of always looking into self to see the *work* of the Spirit *in* you, instead of being occupied with Christ Himself. No, we must be with Christ where He is to be found in communion. Out of communion, we are like Pharaoh's chariots with their wheels off. The prodigal, occupied with himself on his way back, even, would have made a poor evangelist. No, send him out *after* his return, after he had heard the music and the dancing, and see what a gospel he would preach!

And this leads to another thing—worship. Where do many worship? Truly, inside the four walls where they are. You know what I mean. Where did the disciples worship after they saw the ascended Lord go up from them into heaven? Why, the very thought of Him was worship, and their thought of Him as to place was *heaven*. They saw Him *go* there. Stephen saw Him *there*. The Word says that we *are* there—one with Him. Unbidden, our thoughts of Him is there, as if no sky and no barrier existed between. There is no veil; the holiest *is* made manifest. We worship not so much where *we* are as where *He* is. It is not now this mountain or Jerusalem. We are at liberty to enter into the holiest itself through the blood of Christ, and we are there as *purged worshippers*. The Son of Man seeks sinners. The Father seeks worshippers. He "seeketh such to worship Him;" yea, "*seeks*" them, as if they would fail to avail themselves of the blessedness. Remember Aaron in the holiest, all spotless in attire. The blood and the water, the laver, had removed all barriers to his approach to God. The blood had put away sin. The water had taken away assoulements by the way. We are all as

Aaron. Think of God saying, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more;" and then that other word, "No more conscience of sins." Thus no remembrance and no conscience of sins. The "no more remembrance" is on God's part, for we may well remember. The "no more conscience" is on our part; that is, we have no condemning sense of sin, no punishment for sin. We may grieve that we ever committed sin; we may hate the sin still *in us*. We have the presence of sin. Its thoughts, we know, unbidden rush through the soul; and though not allowed they leave their own darkness behind. But where we worship there is no darkness, no more *conscience* of sin!

That brightest scene in yonder heaven,
The place of God's own throne,
Is where we rest, with sins forgiven,
Made nigh through Christ alone.

No vail, o'ershadowing the Light
That shines efulgent there;
The blood, so precious in God's sight,
Proclaims us spotless, fair.

'Tis always sin and sorrow here;
Yea, warfare great and strong;
But there no conflict can appear
Purged worshippers among.

Oh may our spirits constant be
In full communion there;
Our home, our rest, in Him to see
The Altogether Fair.

But this is a large subject. Am I speaking to any from whom a sense of all this blessedness has faded from the mind? Sweet that word, spoken only to backsliders, "*I am married unto you.*" Unchanging Lover is God! He loves you the same, His presence and His place are just as you once knew them. Who would not welcome back the wife of his youth, whom he had never ceased to love? So will God welcome you, and just as you are, vile in your own eyes, hateful to yourself. And he has nothing for you but grace. He did not call the prodigal, *prodigal*, but *son*; He made no charge against him. The best robe made it right for him to be at the table. That robe was Christ. Take you *Christ*; He is enough. You are a poor sinner, and nothing at all; but Jesus Christ is your all in all. Oh, what results have any of us answering to such grace! Christians ought to be different. Could we have asked to see the returned prodigal in the desert where other wanderers were, what a tone of the place

he would bring out with him! How well-attired? What a robe! What a bright yet chastened soul! How he would contrast with all the prodigals outside! Remember we are not like Aaron. Aaron had two kinds of garments. He had the garments for glory and for beauty—for the holy and most holy place—and he had ordinary garments for the outside desert. We have only one garment. We have nothing but the best robe. We draw all our worth from Christ. And we must *put on Christ* the very Christ of whom we have been speaking. How beautiful! with the rags off first (Col. iii. 8, 9) is the putting on part—I mean practically before men! "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved" (that is our name, *elect, holy, and beloved*), "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." What a garment! garment of a sevenfold perfectness, for the every-day wear of christian life! Christ living in you is that which alone can give such a life—the life which the Spirit of God has shown to be yours up in heaven where Christ is, and where you are as He is. Oh, to say I have the standing there without this life here, is *antinomian*. To imagine I have put on, without the putting off, is a delusion. But to be *christian* is this: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection" (your *mind*) "on things above, not on things on the earth. . . . When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." (Col. iii. 1-4.) Oh, beloved, to live in the power of all this! Believe me, we cannot live one day careless of this heavenly standing without suffering great loss. Our life to be acceptable must be filled with Christ, filled with the Spirit who fills with Him. "Without ME," says Christ, or "Separate from ME," ye can do *nothing*.

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"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us. . . . And if any man obey not our word, by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (2 Thess. iii. 6, 14, 15.)

SUFFERING.

IN Genesis xv. two matters are settled between the Lord and Abram—his getting a son, and his getting an inheritance—in other words, *life* and *glory* are secured to him. His dead body was to be quickened, and the land where he had nothing was to become his. In his getting *life*, he has only to *believe*: by faith he stands in righteousness before God, that is in life—he is a justified accepted sinner, brought into life with God, simply by faith. But in his getting the inheritance, there is something different—he is not called to *faith*, but to *suffering*—the Lord does not again wait, as it were, on him to believe, ere he enters into covenant with him, undertaking to give him the land. Abram is not thus a second time called to faith, but being already a child, a justified, accepted, quickened soul; he is assured of the inheritance, because the divine order is this—“if children then heirs,” but he is told of suffering, “a horror of great darkness” falls on himself, and he is warned that his seed shall be bondsmen in a distant land 400 years; and all this before the inheritance can be made either his or theirs. This is the order and character of this lovely chapter, and all the divine testimony is according to it—“If we believe we shall live with Him—if we suffer we shall reign with Him”. Thus, life hangs simply on faith, but rejoicing is connected with suffering; and in the progress of the glorious 8th of Romans, suffering begins to be mentioned the moment the Apostle says the word “heirs,” but this suffering that thus brings the glory and the inheritance with it, is *with* or *for* Christ, suffering as a Christian or for the gospel.

It is not the ordinary casualties, so to speak, of life—*Such do not link us with Christ and His inheritance in glory, but with the Father as children.* But this again is very blessed and very comforting. Supposing you are called to any of the usual sorrows of this life, such as you suffer in common with even unconverted men—what are to be your thoughts about them? why, they are to lead you into communion with your Father. Such sorrows come, no doubt (as in the case of Job), through the agency of Satan, and are permitted by God for the purpose of exercising His dear child in holiness and patience; and, in the spirit of a child, while subjected to such sorrows, your communion is accordingly to be with your Heavenly Father, who, you are to know, will own your child like submission to Him,

in His own house by and bye. But your suffering as a Christian casts your soul at once upon thoughts of Jesus and glory; for such sufferings will have their appropriate acknowledgment in the presence of the displayed glory and kingdom of Jesus when His throne is set up, and his inheritance of all things is come. Thus suited provision and comfort are made for the dear accepted child of God in all his troubles. But do not judge that our actually being glorified with the Lord, depends on our actual suffering as Christians. No, I am sure, the *moment* the life of the Spirit enters the sinner, that life is the sure pledge to him of a glorious body by and bye, and he will be raised at the coming of Christ, and live with Him in the manifestation of the Son of God. But in the distribution of the glories of the inheritance when the Kingdom is displayed, then the cities and honours will be parcelled out according to Christian service and suffering. This is shown still in the 8th of Romans where the Spirit now in us is declared to be the pledge of the glorious risen body, and yet glory is stated to be connected with suffering (verses 11-17.) The Spirit now in us has its appropriate sorrow also. The new life in the believer has its suffering distinct from what I above called the *ordinary sorrow* of a child, and the *peculiar sorrow* of a *Christian*. And that sorrow of the Spirit, or renewed life in us, expresses itself in a groan after the full adoption or redemption of the body. That sorrow is *necessary* or *essential* to our new life—it is of its very nature—the burden of the flesh, the corruption of the world is necessarily felt, by the new man in Christ Jesus; and in this sorrow the creation has sympathy, for the creation itself, like this new man in Christ, is only a *forced* and not a *willing* subject, to all this present vanity and corruption (verse 20), and the Holy Ghost Himself joins in all this, for He has joined Himself to that *system*, which is thus in unwilling subjection. He has made the renewed man His dwelling place, and enters into the sympathy of all this grief and desire (verse 26.) What a blessed harmony of joys and praises will exist by and bye! Jesus, the Spirit, the Saints—the innocent and yet suffering creation, all will share in both. As to the value and divine purpose of sufferings—Deut. viii. 1-5. gives us as clear, full and simple a view of it as we could find in Scripture. These three purposes seem to be contemplated by the chastisement or discipline to which His Saints are

subjected—1st, to prove the ground of their heart, whether indeed they would obey and love Him—2nd, to prove the fulness of His resources, that He had enough for them, though all else might fail—3rd, to evidence their adoption by Him that they might see Him dealing with them as with children—and thus, more and more, to conform them to Himself. Such is the value—such the purpose of the ordinary sufferings of the children of God. And the special trials of the Christian should be welcomed by Him, as that which leads to larger joy, and praise, and glory, at the appearance of Jesus—(1 Pet. i. 7, iv. 13), and during the sorrow endured by the believer, he is presented with two sources of strength and consolation beyond these purposes of God, by them—1st, There is the direct ministration of the Holy Ghost, or the power of Christ, so that the suffering Saint can say, “When I am weak, then am I strong” and can learn to glory in his infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon him—2nd, There is the assurance given him from Scripture, that in all his sufferings he is remembered of the Lord. No arm is made bare for him for the present. No rescue from the sorrow is accomplished, but during it all he is remembered. It was so with Noah, while in the *Ark*, and the waters—(Gen. viii. 1.) It will be so with the remnant in Israel, in the day of their calamity, the book of remembrance will be open for them before the Lord—(Mal. iii. 16.), and Psl. v. 6, most strikingly and beautifully shows the same, even while the sufferer was still in exile and tears, all his wanderings were told, all his tears were bottled. Not a step in his exile—not a sigh in his mourning escaped notice, in the book of God’s *diligent and faithful remembrance*.

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

PART V.

NOAH AND THE ARK.

THE faith of Lamech was expressed in the name he gave to his son. “He called his name Noah (*i.e.* rest or comfort) saying, this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.”—(Gen. v. 29.)

Possibly, as Eve had counted upon Cain as being the promised Seed—so Lamech looked to this son of his—and though, if it were so, his expectation was not realized—nevertheless in Noah is found a notable

figure of Christ, and in his life a remarkable foreshadowing of the great deliverance of His people.

In his days the development of evil culminated in universal corruption and violence. The Lord’s long-suffering had come to an end, and He at length pronounced the doom of the World and revealed to Noah the secret of His counsels.

“God looked upon the earth and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth—and God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold I will destroy them with the earth.”—(Gen. vi. 12-13.)

“God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Such was the heart of man before the flood—nor did the flood improve it in the sight of God, for again it is written in Gen. viii. 21—“The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth.” Nor did the separation of a chosen nation unto Himself, and the restraints and privileges of law and ordinances do aught to better the corrupt nature of man—for so long after as the days of Jeremiah it is written—“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it.”—(Jer. xvii. 9.) And the verdict of the Lord Jesus Christ in His day is the same, “out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”—(Mat. xv. 19), and the apostles by the Spirit gather up the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures and confirm to the full the universal testimony to the utter ruin of man by nature.

Thus it is evident that what the world was, under the eye of God, in the days of Noah, such is it still, such has it ever been. His dealings with it throughout the various ages may be after different patterns, but the issue of each dispensation has been to prove the necessity of man being born again, or for a new Creation.

One only did God see righteous before Him. To him He reveals His Salvation as well as His purpose of judgment—and with him He establishes His covenant. And the Lord said unto Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the Ark, for **THEE** have I seen righteous before me in this generation.”—(vii. 1.) Thus seven persons were saved in the righteousness of the one man—and not only they, but of every kind of

beast and bird and creeping thing, clean and unclean—either sevens or twos were sharers of the deliverance.

Such is the manner of the Salvation which God has provided in Christ Jesus. “By the obedience of *one* many are made righteous.”—(Rom. v. 19.) “He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”—(2 Cor. v. 21.) “Jesus Christ made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption”—(1 Cor. i. 30.)

The election in Noah's day consisted of *few*—only seven persons—these taken into safety not on the ground of personal character, but on the principle of natural relationship to the righteous *one*. The election of the present day is not on the ground of personal character, any more than it was in Noah's—neither is it on the principle of natural relationship—but on the principle of faith. These are “elect” to whom the Gospel comes “not in word only but in power.”—(1 Thess. i. 4-5)—who, believing the word of coming judgment, believe also the message of Salvation, and fly for refuge to Jesus the Saviour. Such are spiritually related to Him—they are born of God—they are those whom the Father has given Him—because He lives they live also—in Him they are seen righteous before God—in Him they are safe for ever—in Him they passed from death into life—they are Heirs of God and joint-Heirs with Christ.

If it be asked “are there few that be saved”? no answer is given—but when the veil is drawn aside from the future, and we are permitted to look at the delivered company, it is “a great multitude which no man could number.”—(Rev. vii. 9.) And not only so. Whilst the principle of Salvation through union with the righteous One is illustrated in the family of Noah, surely other precious lessons are to be learned from the worthy throng of animals, clean and unclean, that found a refuge also with Him.

Comparing this with the vision given to Peter in Acts x.—it may not be mere conjecture to say, that Jew and Gentile were represented by animals clean and unclean. Some were taken of *Every Kind*. Thus the multitude that no man could number was taken from “all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues”. From Jew and Gentile, moral and immoral, high and low, rich and poor, male and female, from all sorts and conditions of men—are gathered the people that are given to Christ to be with Him in His glory in the World to Come.

And all were alike safe. The bullock of sacrifice and the creeping thing—the dove and the raven—one was as safe as the other—each and all, might have drawn equal comfort from the fact, that because Noah lived they lived also—because Noah was shut in by God, they were shut in also. When God remembered Noah, He remembered *every living thing* in the Ark—(Gen. viii. 1)—none was too insignificant for God to consider it—and every living thing that was WITH HIM of all flesh, of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth—all come forth with Him in due time to inherit the renovated creation.

How impossible for one to have been lost that had entered the Ark—Shut in BY God—Shut in WITH God—for He said to Noah, “come” not “go” into the ark. God almighty had undertaken for them, and His would have been the dishonour had one of these creeping things perished. Such is the safety of those who are “in Christ”. The Word of God is pledged, “they shall never perish”. Within was life—all from the least to the greatest—however feeble—were LIVING things. Without was death and corruption.

Such is the position of all who believe. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son hath not life. We are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

It appears that voluntarily they went into the ark—they *went in unto Noah*—not *driven* but *drawn*—made willing in the day of God's power—wiser than the unsaved who heeded not the voice that warned them for 120 years.

Whilst in the ark they were *safe*, but they were “prisoners of hope”—(Zech. ix. 12.) They were expectantly waiting for the glorious liberation unto which they were preserved—and whether the sending forth of the raven and the dove expressed faith or impatience, it at least was evidence of the desire with which they yearned for the fulfilment of their life. And such is the believer now—groaning and burdened in sympathy with a groaning creation—yet *waiting* and longing for the manifestation of the sons of God.

“Oh, hasten Thy coming—we long for the day,
Bright star of the morning no longer delay;
Let the groaning creation from sorrow be free,
And the purchased possession be gathered to thee.”

But only one aspect of the great Salvation is seen in Noah, and those saved with him in the ark. To complete the type we must look also at the ark and the flood through which it passed.

It was to be made of gopher wood, and to be pitched within and without with pitch. The word used for "pitch" is the same as that used elsewhere for "atonement". The idea is "a covering". The blood that made atonement was a covering to the guilty from the punishment of their sin—so the ark fashioned according to the directions of God, was to be the covering for all within it from the flood of divine wrath that destroyed the world of the ungodly. The waves and the billows might beat upon it, but it was made strong to bear them—the windows of heaven were opened and judgment poured down on the drowned world, but neither from above nor from beneath did a drop penetrate to injure the weakest of the living things within. And is it mere fancy that sees in the terrible prevailings of the flood a figure of the baptism of wrath through which the Lord Jesus passed as our substitute—for it is written that it is "the like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"—(1 Peter iii. 21.) That is to say, that the waters of the flood in which the ark was engulfed and the waters of baptism in which the Christian is immersed both alike figure the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and the believers passing from death to life in Him.

And looked at thus, how deeply significant are the expressions used with reference to the flood—"The waters increased". "The waters prevailed exceedingly." "Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail."

Oh, the weight of wrath that fell on our blessed substitute, when He cried, "Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in the darkness, in the deeps. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and Thou hast afflicted me with all Thy waves."—Ps. lxxxviii. 6-7.)

This was the baptism with which He had to be baptized, and of which He said, "how am I straitened until it be accomplished."—(Luke xii. 50.) As for us, we pass through it safe in Him as safely, as perfectly delivered, as Noah and those with him passed through the flood in the shelter of the ark. Having come forth from the ark, they stood as it were a risen people in a new creation. A creation purged indeed by water, but only to be stained again by sin and reserved unto judgment by fire. Not so when the saved in Christ shall walk forth in the liberty of the glory of the Sons of God, and plant their feet in their fair heavenly inheritance. No sin shall defile it—no death shall enter it—no coming judgment shall overshadow it—but standing secure in the righteousness of God its blessed and holy inhabitants shall eternally enjoy the sunshine of His presence.

J. R. C.

[The following Letter will explain itself. It is from our brother, Cecil Hoyle, now in Spain, to Christians among whom he once laboured in the neighbourhood of Newcastle-on-Tyne.]

SPAIN, VALLIDOLID,
6 Calle de San Blas.

TO THE CHILDREN OF GOD AT KENTON, SLATEYFORD, AND DENINGTON COLLIERY,—The Lord, doubtless, has been pressing upon you all the treasures so freely given, and in keeping with the ever-Faithful Word of our absent Master—the peace that cometh from above and rules the mind, as well as the blessedness of the true service to God without burden or toil, which should give to the servant *here* much of that which *shall be hereafter*.

Dwell on that wondrous word spoken to us—"My servant"—as such we are, and our service is that faith which WORKETH by LOVE (Gal. v.), regarding not the service of others, to which God has not called you, but using that *weapon* which God hath been pleased to use, even "Love". It shall crush stern, cold, unfeeling hearts, and by its "gentleness make many great"; remembering the Master felt too all the cold repulses, but He said also—"Father, *Thy* will not Mine be done". It is only by crushing up the puffed-up heart within, that the sweet savour of holiness is offered up to God. Let us then *seek* to disown in our duties and service that which belongeth unto the Lord, even the praise and glory which may be seen in the Lord's work, and we at times the earthen pitchers to carry it, only earth, that *we* may have nought wherein to boast, lest we should be puffed-up beyond measure.

"But by love serve one another, and as poor use entreaties" (Prov. xviii. 23), that you make each other rich, "for the lips of the *righteous feed many*" (Prov. x.). And also "to the *counsellors of peace there is joy*" (Prov. xii.). Acknowledge also the Lord's hand in all things, for "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and *He addeth no sorrow with it*" (Prov. xi. 22). His ways are pleasantness, His words are precious and full of peace, wherefore "bind them continually upon thine heart and tie them about thy neck" (Prov. vi.); nay, "keep them upon thine imagination" (Is. xxvi. 3); nay, "bind them also upon Thy fingers" (Prov. vii.), that ye may remember your Father's ways, and have a ready answer in the hour of need against the adversary. "Fill well (the ground of your hearts) and you

will be SATISFIED with bread" (Prov. xii. 11); and remember, in reading the Word, "to roast with FIRE what thou takest in hunting" (Prov. xii. 27), "that it may be food for thee and for thy brethren and sisters, so that being much in God's presence, and the countenance changed to a fair one" (Dan. i.), your "soft answer will often turn away wrath" (Prov. xv. 1), and your words shall be "pleasant words as an honey comb, sweet to the soul" (Prov. xvi.), and then *all men* will know that you are His disciples.

I hear of one being taken away from Kenton, but the name is not given. I trust it is at least one who has the crown; remember to let me know. I trust Fairhint and the other one who professed are following well. I hope, too, all who are young as yet are joyfully serving the Lord, keeping out of sight that wicked enemy, Vanity (Gal. iv. 16).; for He giveth grace to the lovely (Prov. iii. 34, Phil. i. 9, iv. 8, iii. 18, iv. 19). Prayer and praise, the former you have had for Spain, and now how quickly God has in his love answered. There have been, the last three weeks, some conversions—more are anxious, and others coming to the meeting. *One* conversion in Spain is *very precious*. Pray that the Lord will greatly assist me to learn the language so as soon to sound forth the silver trumpet in this dark and wicked land. You must, as well as for yourselves, pray for this land for the Master's glory. To be converted here often means to lose work, which is very difficult to obtain; and yesterday, a young man, who was converted, was turned off for refusing to work on Sunday.

If you will look in the map you will see the route I came here by—rail to Barcelona, then to visit the Christians at Madrid; and it will enable you to remember those who are working in the vineyard here in Spain.

I trust Mrs. Pickering has been blessed in the recovery of her husband. A word for Susannah—*Watch much* and pray more: *this I want her ESPECIALLY to remember*. Help her in prayer, and others still as children, that they may be WHOLLY, in days to come and years to come, seeking the Lord's steps in service. Pray for Denington Colliery work, that the testimony may bear fruit; also that in all manner of conversation God's people may be known by the fruit of their lips as the fruit of the Spirit. The Lord will surely bless your labours, so walk with Him and be of one mind, and remember at the Sunday school you

will see the children once more before the "*hereafter*". *Pray much* that the Lord will save them from that awful day. The Lord give to each of you the nourishment needed.

With love to you all, from a servant in Christ,
J. CECIL HOYLE.

THOUGHTS ON EXODUS XXV.

MOSES was now on the Mount with God; "and the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai." "And Moses went into the midst of the clouds." (Chap. xxiv. 17, 18.) And the next chapter opens with directions from God unto Moses, concerning the building of the Tabernacle; and closes with a strict injunction to Moses to "look that thou make them after the pattern which was showed thee on the Mount". Moses had no room left to exercise his ingenuity now in improving on God's plan. God was his own architect then as now, and now as then. He will have no help from human wisdom, and if He was so very particular with that which He Himself calls "a Shadow," how much more jealous must He be of that which He calls "the very image of the things"? How solemn a work it is to proclaim to sinners, or point out to them God's foundation, which is Jesus Christ; and how deeply solemn to be a builder in God's house, see Ezek. xiii. 10-16; 1 Cor. iii. 10-17.

But to commence at the beginning of the chapter. One of the first things that must strike the reader is, that all the offerings towards building the Tabernacle, was to be voluntary; "of every man that giveth it willing with his heart, ye shall take my offering". (Verse 1.) Not only was Moses prohibited from using any *pressure* to induce the Israelites to give, but it is clearly implied that if any pressure had been brought to bear upon them, He was not to take their offerings, he was only to take those offerings that were given with a *willing heart*. We have no liberty to begin to cavil as to how Moses could see into the hearts of those who offered, we have simply to listen to God while He lays down this principle for our guidance; that nothing will be accepted by Him but what is *spontaneous*, the voluntary offerings of willing hearts. It is true there were tithes and offerings under the law that were not voluntary, but there was no *law* in God coming down to "dwell among them". (Verse 8.) That was in itself *grace, perfect grace*; and all the offerings towards the

building of His dwelling-place were to be voluntary out of willing hearts, and not only were the offerings to be out of willing hearts but they were to be given *unto God*, "that they bring *me* an offering," and again He calls it "*my* offering". This is more trying to our hearts still; we need not refer to the various plans and different forms of religious machinery that the sectarian divisions of the professing church have adopted in order to squeeze money out of their adherents, to gratify their growing ambition, and meet the wants of their ever-increasing expenditure. Most of our readers will have judged these things to be of the world, and have ceased to have anything to do with the unclean, accursed thing. It will be much more profitable for us to come nearer home, and ask ourselves how we stand in the light of such truth; are our offerings really voluntary as we pass the collection box, would we *always* give the same did no eye see us but the eye of God; and are we intelligently and conscientiously giving unto God? It is much to be feared that there is comparatively little conscience in this matter, even among those who have learnt much of God's truth.

Before we pass from this truth we may notice three things in connection with giving. 1, That the offering is voluntary with a willing heart; 2, not only according as a man "purposeth in his heart," but also according as "God hath prospered him," and 3, that it be given unto the Lord, not to a *system*, nor to *man*, nor to a *meeting*, nor to any party, but simply unto God Himself. This is a wide and deeply important subject, and one that many saints who profess to have come out unto the Lord himself, would do well to study with prayer and care. And no part of the subject is more striking than the full and rich blessings connected with giving, see 2 Cor. ix. 7, 8; Phil. iv. 19. How often are these precious verses quoted without observing their connection with this matter of giving unto the Lord.

Passing over the nature of the offerings, let us look at their design, verse 8, "and let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them". What a wonder of wonders, that "the high and lofty one that inhabits the eternity," should have ever thought of a dwelling place down in this sin-cursed world, it was a new revelation of the divine character; a discovery of God that had never been made before; when God, the Infinitely Holy One, came down to look after guilty man—God's "power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth," had

all been revealed in the works of His hand, but his mercy had never been revealed before; how mercy could be shown to guilty "creatures by the Lord of infinite holiness"—how mercy could "reign through righteousness," was something that created beings had never conceived of, and this was what God was about to reveal; and not only how His mercy could reach the guilty, but how He Himself could come down, and "dwell among" men—how He could meet and commune with man. This was what the love of the heart of God towards man wanted—a *dwelling place*, and a *meeting place*, and one that could meet all the need of His own immutable righteousness, and man's deep guilt; let it be noticed here that all proceeded from God, all the visits that God had ever made to any of the children of men, were all voluntary on his own part—man not only lost something by the fall, but God lost something as well. Man had lost innocence, and having lost that was unfit for the presence of God, but God had lost man. The reading of Gen. iii. 8, would seem to imply that God had come down to Eden in search of *fellowship* with man. The various visits He paid to the earth during the patriarchal age, teach the same truth, that while man was content to live without God, God was not content to live without man. Wonderous truth, that the everlasting God should have so felt the loss of His creature man, that He must have him redeemed back to Himself at any cost, and not only so, He must have a *dwelling place*, among men.

Let us now look at the directions given to Moses, how different from man's way. Man begins with the outside frame work and then goes on to fill up the interior; but God begins, so to speak, in the very heart. The centre piece of furniture is first described, that which was to be the *basis* of the meeting place between God and man: from verses 10-16, we have the ark made of shittim wood, and overlaid with pure gold—this evidently points to Christ—"A body hast thou prepared me". This would be set forth by the shittim wood—Christ's humanity, "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us". The pure gold might set forth His divine nature. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"; then verse 16, "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony that I shall give thee". A beautiful figure of Christ's own words in Ps. xl. 8, "Thy law is within my heart," or see margin, "In

the midst of my bowels". How blessed to see that the mercy-seat was thus based on perfect righteousness. What a resting place to faith this is to mark and see how divine mercy is based upon divine righteousness. verses 21-22, bring out this so beautifully. God could not come down to meet with man, but on the ground of perfect righteousness.

Will the reader now carefully look at verses 17-20, there we have the Mercy-seat of pure gold, also two Cherubims of pure gold in the two ends of it. May the Lord Himself shew us the real meaning of this type. The key to the meaning may be found in looking at Rom. iii. 25, also 1 John ii. 2—in both of these passages we have Christ spoken of as "the propitiation". Expositors who know the original say, that *propitiation* is a translation of the same word as is mercy-seat in Exo. xxv.; if this is true, and we have never known it questioned, then it is quite clear that the mercy-seat points also to Christ; and not only so, but points to Christ on the cross, as suffering there, for sin and sins—the meaning of the propitiation being literally, "*I suffer instead of*". Look now carefully at the Cherubims, 1st, what they were made of—verse 19, "Of the Mercy-seat"—see margin—"Of the matter of the Mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims"? This entirely sets aside the thought that the cherubims denote angels, for we know that even the highest Archangel is not a partaker of the divine nature; that no created being partakes of the Godhead of Christ; there is another thought on this, and that is that the cherubims prefigure the church growing out or being the fruit of Christ's death—now that is true—it is also true that believers are "partakers of the divine nature".—(2 Pet. i. 4), and "And members of the body of Christ," and according to 1 Cor. xii. 12—literally part of the Christ; but the question for us is—is that the truth taught here? Was it the "mystery of Christ and the church," that was foreshadowed here, or was it some other truth God reveals in this figure? Heb. ix. 5, might be helpful to us; there the cherubims are spoken of as "shadowing the mercy-seat". Is there not something that the heart recoils from in the thought of the church shadowing, or overshadowing Christ in His humiliation and obedience unto death? Whatever difficulty we have in finding out the meaning of this figure, we are persuaded the reverent, humble, soul will at once conclude, whatever be the truth taught, that is not it. From a careful

study of these and corresponding passages we do not believe the cherubims symbolize either Angels or the Church.

Let us seek reverently to find out the truth taught, and 1st, turn to Gen. iii., we learn from that chapter, that man had rendered himself entirely unfit for having intercourse with God; their fellowship was completely destroyed by sin; and if it even were resumed again, it must be on new ground altogether. So after giving man ground for faith to rest in a prediction concerning the seed of the woman, and also in typical clothing, "He drove out the man, and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden, cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life".—(verse 25.) The flaming sword evidently is a type of judgment, and the cherubims seem to us, to present God Himself as judge, coming down to vindicate His righteous government in appearing with a flaming sword in His hand, between a sinner and the tree of life. Now, if we look at Exo. xxv., with this before our mind, that the cherubims there symbolize *God Himself* looking on in *righteousness* to see that in this new meeting place with guilty man, His own holy character and righteous law were fully maintained; notice particularly here, that the cherubims were not only made of the matter of the mercy-seat, but "toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be". And the first aspect of truth on inquiry would be, on what was mercy founded, was it an evasion of law and justice, or was it in harmony with both? Well, as we have already seen the mercy-seat was put above upon the ark, and in the ark was put the testimony or the law clearly teaching that mercy is based on righteousness in this meeting place, provided and revealed by God Himself. Another question arises, and it is this, if the cherubims in Gen. iii. imply the same thing as in Exo. xxv., *i.e.*, God as the righteous Governor and vindicator of His own laws, what has become of the flaming sword that we see in Gen. iii. 24? There is no word of a sword in Exo. xxv. Will the reader turn to Lev. xvi., and mark well in reading that precious chapter, verses 14, 15; where the High Priest was told to sprinkle the blood of the bullock and also of the goat upon the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat seven times? Now, blood is the emblem of death, and while we look at the mercy-seat and see it all stained with blood, and also marks

of blood before it, are we not hereby taught that the sword of judgment has been used—that it has done its work, not on the sinner, but on the Substitute, and having done its work, justice is satisfied, and the sword is laid aside for ever. It is true, awfully true, that that same sword will be lifted with intensified vengeance on those who despise this meeting place, provided by God at such a cost, but there is no sword seen now where God is waiting for the guilty sinner to come and accept of mercy and life on the ground of substitution. Now, let us sum up what we have gathered—here we have the ark, and the law inside it the emblem of perfect and unchangeable righteousness, as the basis on which grace is founded; then we have the mercy-seat besprinkled with blood, the emblem of Christ in death as the propitiation, and then we have the cherubims, the emblems of God's righteous government, or of God Himself, as the vindicator of His own law; and there in the cherubims with their faces looking towards, we see God in holiness and justice looking on and satisfied with the substitution of His own Son in death on behalf of the sinner, and He comes down in grace to commune with man, with His holy eye resting on the substitute. What a sight for our souls to gaze upon—the Infinitely Holy One taking the place of us guilty ones. The eternal Jehovah lifting the sword against His own well-beloved Son—dealing with His own Son on the ground of perfect righteousness, that He might be able to deal with us in grace. “Awake, Oh sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow”. When God's love could reach its object in no other way—such was its “length and breadth, its height and depth,” that God's fellow—the dear Son of His love, was made the victim—“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”; and now He has by the Holy Ghost, “Set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood”. O that our hearts were more fully alive to such real, infinite love. O how the Holy Ghost is hindered by us in our unbelief—by being so much occupied by what we have to say to God, and so little with what He has to say to us. God says, verse 22, “There will I meet with thee, and there will I commune with thee”. How much are we concerned about getting near to God to tell Him our story (all right *in its* place, but all wrong *out of its* place); and how little are we exercised in listening to what God has told us. Man is so prone to reverse God's order.

Man wants to have the *first say*, and God tells him to “Hearken diligently unto Me”. “Hear and your soul shall live”.—(Isa. lv. 2, 3). Do we address a poor unsaved reader? Will you, poor lost one, take a look at this wonderful sight—God dealing with His own Son in judgment, that He might deal with you in Grace—His eye resting in righteousness on His well-beloved in death, that He might get near you to tell out His tale of love to your guilty soul? O will you not listen to such love? Will you not yield to such love, and give such a lover the joy of embracing you? He has waited long, and many a poor lost guilty one has He embraced, and clothed and seated at His own board—and why not you, and why not now? But there is another meeting place revealed in Rev. xx. “The great white throne”; and at either of these meeting places you must appear. God in mercy lead you to the cross now for His names' sake; and teach His own dear people more fully the meaning of this precious portion of His own Word, and to His name be the Glory.

G. A.

“IN WHOM.”

Ephesians i., 7, 11, 13.

“IN whom we have redemption,”
 Oh true and blessed Word!
 Secured to us for ever,
 In Christ our risen Lord.
 His work the firm foundation,
 His name the perfect plea;
 His precious blood the token
 Of purchased liberty.

“In whom,” too, we inherit
 All that His grace can give
 Of boundless joy and glory,
 Because in Him we live.
 Oh, glory everlasting!
 Oh, joy without decay!
 Supplied from Christ, the fountain—
 “The life, the truth, the way”.

“In whom” we have the earnest—
 The promised Spirit given,
 To lead our hearts' affection
 From earthly things to heaven.
 That gracious Spirit tells us
 Of brighter days to come;
 And gives e'en now the foretaste
 Of our Eternal Home.

Through Him alone such blessings
 Can flow to sinful men ;
 His Word the witness to us
 Till He shall come again.
 " In whom " our souls have trusted
 To Him our praise shall be,
 For His is all the glory
 Who set His people free. M. W.

—◆—
" ALL THINGS OF GOD."
 —◆—

"All things come of Thee, and of Thine Own have we given
 Thee."—1 Chron. xxix., 14.

THAT Word which sets our souls at rest
 Is, Lord, from Thee ;
 That calm which fills the thankful breast,
 That robe in which Thy saints are drest,
 That will which says Thy will is best—
 Are all from Thee.

All the sweet peace we have, we owe,
 O Lord, to Thee,
 With every hope and joy below,
 And all the saving truth we know ;
 So let our lives unhindered flow
 Wholly to Thee !

Do we Thy word of patience keep,
 Taught, Lord, by Thee ?
 Can our cold hearts for others weep,
 And labour for Thy helpless sheep,
 Content to sow if others reap ?—
 We learn of Thee !

Have we a place wherein we stand
 As one with Thee ?
 United in a covenant band,
 Held safely in Thy pow'ful hand ?
 We're going to a better land,
 To reign with Thee.

Thus all our full supplies of grace
 Are, Lord, in Thee ;
 The strength to run the heavenly race,
 The promises our souls embrace,
 In Thee, our shield and hiding-place—
 All, all in Thee !
 M. W.

—◆—
A HYMN.
 —◆—

OUR God ! we'd raise to Thee,
 In sweetest harmony,
 A song of praise.
 Thou hast in wondrous love
 Shone on us from above,
 Blessed us and made us prove
 Thy matchless ways.

'Tis now with joy we trace,
 When Thou devised in grace,
 Redemption's plan.
 Thou hadst for us in store,
 Blessings for evermore,
 In Thine own heart before
 The world began.

How wondrous was the way
 Thou didst Thy love display,
 When Jesus came :
 Man's need He then supplied,
 Thy law He satisfied,
 Made good and glorified
 Thy holy Name.

Nought could for sin atone,
 But blood, and that alone,
 Thou didst require :
 This Jesus gave to Thee,
 When suffering on the tree,
 To set us, sinners, free
 From sin's deep mire.

Now in this liberty,
 Wherewith we've been set free,
 We would Thee praise.
 Joy doth our hearts now fill
 Louder and louder still,
 In thankfulness we will
 Our voices raise.

W. C.

EDINBURGH.

Mr. D. MUNRO, Evangelist from Canada, has conducted a series of Meetings in the GOSPEL HALL, BLACKFRIARS' STREET. Several were brought to the Lord, and not a few of God's dear Saints were refreshed.

Bible Readings were conducted by him also for several weeks in BIBLE SOCIETY'S ROOMS, 5 ST. ANDREW'S SQUARE, which were fairly attended, and were truly profitable. They were terminated by a Tea Meeting, on Thursday Evening, 12th October. The Hall was full, and the Meeting was addressed by Messrs. D. MUNRO, D. ROSS, and GEO. ADAMS. The Word was fitly spoken. Towards the end of the meeting, five were baptized.

TO OUR READERS.

It gives us unfeigned pleasure to be able to inform our Readers that, during our intended visit to America (if not for a longer period), J. R. CALDWELL, Esq., 256 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, has undertaken the Editorship of the *Northern Witness* and *Evangelist*.

We wish our Readers to understand this, and respectfully request them to try and secure additional subscribers. As these papers are not a commercial speculation, but undertaken solely for the truth's sake, we count on their aid. D. ROSS.

1 SUMMERHALL SQUARE, EDINBURGH,
 October 12, 1876.

Pray for us.

Note specially that we have ceased business altogether at 2 South Clerk Street, Edinburgh, and that henceforth all communications on business are to be addressed to JOHN BAIN, City Bible-House, 40 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. All Private Letters for D. Ross, to be addressed to 1 Summerhall Square, Edinburgh.

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SHADOWS OF CHRIST.

PART VI.

ISAAC.

"He . . . offered up his only begotten Son."—Heb. xi. 17.

IN looking at Isaac as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, it may be well to consider separately three different periods of his life. First, looking at him as the only begotten son persecuted by him that was born after the flesh; Secondly, as the offered one received again from the dead in a figure; and Thirdly as the Heir of all for whom a wife is sought.

Ishmael being born after the flesh—not the son of promise, of a bond-woman and not of the free-woman—the fruit of human will, and not of faith, is not reckoned by God as a son of Abraham. Hence Isaac is called in the verse quoted above, his "only begotten son"; the intention of the Spirit in thus designating him, being doubtless to call attention to the typical character of his life; and to lead the disciple to expect to find in the Old Testament record, rich foreshadowings of the great anti-type—"The only begotten Son of God".

Named of God before his birth, Isaac (or laughter), he was the joy of his father's house—the one in whom all his hopes centred, and through whom all nations were to be blessed. Such was the only begotten Son of God. "When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him". (Prov. viii. 29, 30.)

He was called the Son of God because of His being conceived by the Holy Ghost, see Luke i. 35: "Therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall

be called the Son of God". He was also called the "first begotten"—not the "only begotten"—"from the dead" (Rev. i. 5); because as risen from the dead and thus "declared to be the Son of God with power" (Rom. i. 4), other sons are associated with Him—he is "the first born among many brethren". So that though it was said to Him on the resurrection morning, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee". (Acts xiii. 33). He is not called in resurrection the *only*, but the *first* begotten. But far back in Eternity—before creation, as He dwelt in the bosom of God—He was the "Only begotten Son," a title that no man, no angel could ever inherit—it belongs to One, and that one, the Man Christ Jesus.

It is marvellous that any professing to believe the Scriptures could contend that our Lord Jesus Christ is but a man, were there no other proof to be found of His being a divine person than this title "the only begotten Son".

But fully do our hearts acknowledge it, when our eyes have been opened to see His glory. "The glory as of the *only begotten* of the Father, full of grace and truth". (John i. 14.)

Being the "Well-beloved" (Mark xii. 6.) as well as the "only begotten," it pleased God, that "in all things He should have the pre-eminence". He therefore became the centre of all the plans and purposes of God—in Creation, "without Him was not anything made that was made"—in Redemption, "Christ is all"—in Judgment, He is the man ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. But if He be the Father's well-beloved, he must also be hated and persecuted by him that is born after the flesh. Hence

the unregenerate Ishmael world, fulfilling the corrupt will of the natural man—mocked and hated, and persecuted, and slew, the Son of God.

We do not read much of the opposition shewn by Ishmael to Isaac, but God knew how deep rooted was the enmity—how impossible for the son of the bond-woman to be heir along with the son of the free-woman, therefore He appointed the casting out for ever of the bond-woman and her son. And so has the flesh been set aside by God. The Heir is the son of the promise—the long expected seed, and those who are joint-heirs with Him are not begotten of the spirit of bondage or of law; but are the seed of Abraham, and the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Little is recorded of Isaac until that memorable occasion when God said to Abraham—“Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of”. (Gen. xxii. 2.)

What a view is here given of the heart of God. It is a son, an only son, a beloved son, a dearly cherished son, that is to be given up to the knife, to the fire, to the death. A picture drawn from human affections to illustrate the love of God. What would Abraham *not* give up to God, when he withheld not his only son, and had not God Himself taught us thus to reason—“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things”.

Isaac has been spoken of as of a weak and unmanly disposition, because of the unresisting obedience yielded to his father. Be this as it may, surely it tells of the “obedience unto death, even the death of the cross” of God’s beloved Son. “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth”. And therefore, was there a love of the Father to Him special and altogether unique. “Therefore, doth my Father love me because I lay down my life for the sheep—no man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself”. (John x. 17, 18.)

It is the voluntary character of obedience that makes it so precious to God. He who gave His own life for us is the “cheerful giver,” whom “the Lord loveth.” And surely He loveth all such as in the same spirit “yield themselves unto God”.

There, on the way to Moriah, is a shadow of heavenly

things. The father, with his heart set on resurrection, accounting that God was able even to raise him from the dead—bearing the fire and the knife—the instruments of judgment. The Son bearing the *Wood*—(same word in Hebrew as *the tree* in Deut. xxi. 23), rose as Jesus Himself went forth bearing His cross—the very cross on which he was to be hung. The son is on the altar, the knife is lifted up, but a well-known voice calls, “Abraham, Abraham, lay not thine hand upon the lad”. He who spared not His own Son, spared Abraham’s son.

And now the type seems to change, and as the offered one is received again from the dead in a figure, the grand central truth of the gospel is perfectly illustrated, viz., SUBSTITUTION. Isaac, with the knife of judgment lifted up above his breast—may be viewed for a moment as the sinner exposed to divine vengeance on account of his sins.

But Jehovah Jireh, faithful to the trust reposed in Him, had provided a substitute. The ram caught in the thicket was at hand—provided by God, it was taken and offered up instead of the lad. Isaac might stand by in perfect peace, receiving back as it were, his life from destruction through the death in his stead of the prepared victim. And thus it is that faith “Beholds the Lamb of God”. It sees Him spotless, and without blemish laid on the altar—slain, consumed, accepted—and rejoices to receive the gift of Righteousness and life, as the result of the finished work of the glorious Substitute provided by God for the sinner.

Thus Isaac unbound and set free and returning again from Moriah, is seen as the only begotten and well-beloved received again from the dead. (See Heb. xi. 19.)

The 23rd chapter of Genesis is occupied with the death and burial of Sarah. The next allusion to Isaac is in chapter xxiv., which is wholly occupied with a detailed account of the sending of Eliezer, the servant of the Father to seek out and bring to Isaac from a far country, an elect stranger to be his wife.

The typical character and position of the narrative is too evident to require proof. Eliezer (meaning God of help), is sent by the Father. Thus, as the mighty divine Helper has the Holy Spirit been sent (not however until the Son of God was glorified—see John vii. 39) to gather out from Jew and Gentile, a people* for His name. To gather them together in one, to

baptize them into one body, to prepare them for the coming hour of long expected glory, when the Lord Himself shall come, and having fashioned them into His own glorious image, shall present them to Himself with exceeding joy. It would far exceed the limits of a paper such as this to enter into the beautiful and touching details of this chapter.

Suffice it to notice first, the servant's way of securing the affections of the bride. It is not by making demands, further than as the Lord Himself did of the woman of Samaria. He only asked a drink of water. He would lay himself under a very little obligation that he might win a reception for the gifts he had to bestow. But soon he is seen by her to be a munificent giver. Not an austere man, gathering where he had not strewed, and reaping where he had not sown, but a giver of golden treasures. Thus is God revealed by the Holy Spirit as the bestower of His "unspeakable gift". "God so loved, that He gave."

This servant spake not of himself, but of his Master's wealth and of his only son, adding—"and unto him hath he given all that he hath". To this correspond exactly the words of the Lord Jesus: "All things that the Father hath are mine"—(John xvi. 15); and again, "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands" (John xiii. 3.)—and so of the Holy Spirit it is written, "He shall not speak of Himself—He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you". (John xvi. 13, 14.)

Thus as one precious gift after another was unfolded to Rebekah by Abraham's servant, each telling of the wealth of the beloved son, and as her heart opened to receive the offer of love; so does the heart of the convicted sinner open to receive Christ—and so does the heart of the believing one embrace Him with deeper and truer love, as His unsearchable riches are made known to him by the Holy Ghost.

By and bye, the gifts bestowed adorned the person of Rebekah, and comely would she be when thus adorned in the eyes of him from whose wealth they were bestowed. They were earnest of treasures yet unknown to be enjoyed when taken to be with Isaac in his father's home.

Such are the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit now. Such is "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price" (1 Peter iii. 4.); it is the meekness and gentleness of Christ imparted through the power of the Spirit of God.

The gifts received, the choice made, the answer of faith to the question, "Wilt thou go with this man?" being given—"I will go," the journey is soon undertaken, the desert way is quickly trodden—many a tale would Eliezer tell of him whom yet she sees not, though believing she could rejoice in hope of being with him. Surely no subject would interest her so much as that which concerned the only son, for whom she gave up kindred and home, that she might be wholly his. Such was the spirit of the apostle, who had suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but dung that he might win Christ.

Then, finally, the journey being ended, Isaac is seen on the way. He goes to meet her before the entrance to the tent and before she becomes his wife. He sends no servant to greet her, but goes himself—and receiving her first to himself, he takes her into his mother's tent, where Abraham, his father, alone remained.

Such will be the coming of our Lord for His own. The bride shall be caught up to meet her Lord. The Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven and receive her to Himself. Escort her to the Father's house where the many mansions are—present her faultless in the presence of His glory with exceeding joy—and so shall we be for ever with the Lord.

What a depth of meaning is in that word, "he loved her". May we be enabled to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge (Eph. iii. 18, 19.)

J. R. C.

SIN IN THE FLESH, AND SIN ON THE CONSCIENCE.

IT is of the utmost importance that we accurately distinguish between sin *in the flesh*, and sin *on the conscience*. If we confound these two, our souls must necessarily be unhinged, and our worship marred. An attentive consideration of 1 John i. 8-10, will throw much light upon this subject, the understanding of which is so essential.

There is no one who will be so conscious of indwelling sin, as the man who walks in the light. "If we say that we have *no sin*, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." In the verse immediately preceding, we read, "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all sin*". Here the distinction between sin *in us*, and sin *on us*, is fully brought out

and established. To say that there is sin on the believer, in the presence of God, is to call in question the purging efficacy of the blood of Jesus, and to deny the truth of the divine record. If the blood of Jesus can perfectly purge, then the believer's conscience is perfectly purged. The word of God thus puts the matter; and we must ever remember that it is from God Himself we are to learn what the true condition of the believer is, in His sight. We are more disposed to be occupied in telling God what we are in ourselves, than to allow Him to tell us what we are in Christ. In other words, we are more taken up with our own self-consciousness, than with God's revelation of Himself. God speaks to us on the ground of what He is in Himself, and of what He has accomplished in Christ. Such is the nature and character of His revelation, of which faith takes hold, and thus fills the soul with perfect peace. God's revelation is one thing; my consciousness is quite another.

But the same word which tells us we have no sin, *on us*, tells us, with equal force and clearness, that we have sin *in us*. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us". Every one who has "truth" in him, will know that he has "*sin*" in him, likewise; for truth reveals everything as it is. What, then, are we to do? It is our privilege so to walk in the power of the new nature (*i.e.*, the Holy Ghost), that the "*sin*" which dwells in us may not manifest itself in the form of "*sins*." The Christian's position is one of victory and liberty. He is not only delivered from the guilt of sin, but also from sin as a ruling principle in his life. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin . . . let not sin therefore *reign* in your mortal body, that ye should *obey* it in the lusts thereof . . . For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace".—(Rom. vi. 6-14). Sin is there in all its native vileness, but the believer is *dead* to it. How? He died in Christ. By nature he was dead *in sin*. By grace he is dead *to it*. What claim can anything or any one have upon a dead man? None whatever. Christ "died unto sin once," and the believer died in Him. "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For

in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God". What is the result of this, in reference to believers? "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*". Such is the believer's unalterable position before God! so that it is his holy privilege to enjoy freedom from sin as a *ruler* over him, though it be a *dweller* in him.

But, then, "if any man sin," what is to be done? The inspired apostle furnishes a full and most blessed answer: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—(1 John i. 9.) Confession is the mode in which the conscience is to be kept free. The apostle does not say, "If we pray for pardon, He is gracious and merciful to forgive us". No doubt, it is ever happy for a child to breath the sense of need into his father's ear,—to tell him of feebleness, to confess folly, infirmity and failure. All this is most true; and, moreover, it is equally true that our Father is most gracious and merciful to meet His children in all their weakness and ignorance; but, while all this is true, the Holy Ghost declares, by the apostle, that, "if we *confess*," God is "*faithful and just to forgive*." Confession, therefore, is the divine mode. A Christian, having erred in thought, word, or deed, might pray for pardon, for days and months together, and not have any assurance, from 1st John i. 9, that he was forgiven; whereas, the moment he truly confesses his sin before God, it is a simple matter of faith to know that he is perfectly forgiven and perfectly cleansed.

There is an immense moral difference between praying for forgiveness, and confessing our sins, whether we look at it in reference to the character of God, the sacrifice of Christ, or the condition of the soul. *It is quite possible that a person's prayer may involve the confession of his sin, whatever it may happen to be, and thus come to the same thing.* But then, it is always well to keep close to scripture, in what we think, and say, and do. It must be evident that when the Holy Ghost speaks of *confession*, He does not mean *praying*. And it is equally evident that He knows there are moral elements in, and practical results flowing out of confession, which do not belong to prayer. In point of fact, one has often found that a habit of importuning God for the forgiveness of sins, displayed ignorance as to the way in which God has revealed Himself in the Person and work of Christ;

as to the relation in which the sacrifice of Christ has set the believer; and as to the divine mode of getting the conscience relieved from the burden, and purified from the evil of sin.

God has been perfectly satisfied, as to all the believer's sins, in the cross of Christ. On that cross, a full atonement was presented for every jot and tittle of sin, in the believer's nature and on his conscience. Hence, therefore, God does not need any further propitiation. He does not need aught to draw His heart toward the believer. We do not require to supplicate Him to be "faithful and just," when His faithfulness and justice have been so gloriously displayed, vindicated and answered, in the death of Christ. Our sins can never come into God's presence, inasmuch as Christ who bore them all, and put them away, is there instead. But, if we sin, conscience will feel it, must feel it; yea, the Holy Ghost will make us feel it. He cannot allow so much as a single light thought to pass unjudged. What then? Has our sin made its way into the presence of God? Has it found its place in the unsullied light of the inner sanctuary? God forbid! The "Advocate" is there—"Jesus Christ the righteous," to maintain in unbroken integrity the relationship in which we stand. But though sin cannot affect God's thoughts in reference to us, it can and does affect our thoughts in reference to Him. Though it cannot make its way into God's presence, it can make its way into ours, in a most distressing and humiliating manner. Though it cannot hide the Advocate from God's view, it can hide Him from ours. It gathers, like a thick dark cloud, on our spiritual horizon, so that our souls cannot bask in the blessed beams of our Father's countenance. It cannot affect our relationship with God, but it can very seriously affect our enjoyment thereof. What, therefore, are we to do? The word answers, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". By confession, we get our conscience cleared; the sweet sense of our relationship restored; the dark cloud dispersed; the chilling withering influence removed; our thoughts of God set straight. Such is the divine method; and we may truly say that the heart that knows what it is to have ever been in the place of confession, will feel the divine power of the apostle's words, "My little children, these things write I unto you, *that ye sin not*".—(1 John ii. 1.)

Then, again, there is a style of praying for forgiveness, which involves a losing sight of the perfect ground of forgiveness, which has been laid in the sacrifice of the cross. If God forgives sins He must be "faithful and just," in so doing. But it is quite clear that our prayers, be they ever so sincere and earnest, could not form the basis of God's faithfulness and justice, in forgiving us our sins. Nought save the work of the cross could do this. There the faithfulness and justice of God have had their fullest establishment, and that, too, in immediate reference to our actual sins, as well as to the root thereof, in our nature. God has already judged our sins, in the Person of our Substitute, "on the tree"; and, in the act of confession, we judge ourselves. This is essential to divine forgiveness and restoration. The very smallest confessed, unjudged sin, on the conscience, will entirely mar our communion with God. Sin *in* us need not do this, but if we suffer sin to remain *on* us we cannot have fellowship with God. He has put away our sins in such a manner that He can have us in His presence; and, so long as we abide in His presence, sin does not trouble us. But, if we get out of His presence, and commit sin in thought, our communion must of necessity be suspended, until, by confession, we have got rid of the sin. All this, I need hardly add, is founded exclusively upon the perfect sacrifice and righteous advocacy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, as to the difference between prayer and confession, as respects the condition of the heart before God, and its moral sense of the hatefulfulness of sin, it cannot possibly be over estimated. It is a much easier thing to ask in a general way for the forgiveness of our sins, than to confess those sins. Confession involves *self-judgment*; asking for forgiveness may not, and in itself does not. This alone would be sufficient to point out the difference. Self-judgment is one of the most valuable and healthful exercises of the Christian life; and, therefore, anything which produces it, must be highly esteemed by every earnest Christian.

The difference between asking for pardon and confessing the sin, is continually exemplified in dealing with children. If a child has done anything wrong, he finds much less difficulty in asking his father to forgive him, than in openly and unreservedly confessing the wrong. In asking for forgiveness, the child may have in his mind a number of things which tend to lessen

the sense of the evil ; he may be secretly thinking that he was not so much to blame after all, though to be sure it is only proper to ask his father to forgive him ; whereas, in confessing the wrong, there is just one thing, and that is self-judgment. Further, in asking for forgiveness, *the child may be influenced mainly by a desire to escape the consequences of his wrong ; whereas a judicious parent will seek to produce a just sense of its moral evil, which can only exist in connection with the full confession of the fault in connection with self-judgment.*

Thus it is, in reference to God's dealings with His children, when they do wrong. He must have the whole thing brought out and thoroughly judged. He will make us not only dread the consequences of sin—which are unutterable—but hate the thing itself, because of its hatefulness in His sight. Were it possible for us, when we commit sin, to be forgiven merely for the asking, our sense of sin, and our shrinking from it, would not be nearly so intense ; and, as a consequence, our estimate of the fellowship with which we are blessed would not be nearly so high. The moral effect of all this upon the general tone of our spiritual constitution, and also upon our whole character and practical career, must be obvious to every experienced Christian.

C. H. M.

THE WORLD.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS TO YOUNG CONVERTS.

IT has been said the Christian has three great enemies, the world, the flesh, and the Devil. To be able to cope with an enemy it is of the utmost importance to know his true character and manner of attack. To the former of these I wish your attention—the world as we have it in the Scriptures, and around us to-day.

What is the World's past History ?

This we learn from the Word of God ; from that word alone we get its true character as seen by God.

Brought into existence and framed by His Word (Heb. xi. 3), He pronounced it "good" (Gen. i.), and man made in His image was placed amid its beauties, to have dominion over all God's other works. Sin entered and ruined all. The world became a scene of confusion, strife, and sin, and man a rebel against his God, increasing in wickedness until God swept the race away by the flood, reserving one family, who,

being brought through the judgment waters, was again placed on the earth. Throughout the pages of the Old Testament we trace the dark and sinful history of the world, one of continued rebellion against God, whether in Jew or Gentile—tried under law, the former waxed worse than the latter, turning their very privileges into an occasion of showing their hatred to God, and insubjection to His will : yet, one trial more, unlike all others, remained. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John iii. 16), the fullest, clearest, proof of His love to the world ; Jesus came not to condemn, but as it is written to "save the world," Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners (1 Tim. i. 15). Did they receive Him, or was it saved ? "He was in the world, and it knew Him not (John i. 10), it hated Him (John vii. 7) ; the light that shone from Him revealed the darkness, and it cast Him out saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us". (Luke xix. 14). The world rejected Christ, giving Him a shameful cross, and desired a murderer in His stead, and in so doing sealed its doom. Gathered together against Him were "Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel" (Acts iv. 27), representatives of the whole world, and all alike guilty of the death of God's beloved Son. Such is the world's history, deepening in guilt as it went on, and the thing that hath been, shall be, and that which is done is that which shall be done, there is no new thing under the sun. (Eccl. i. 9.)

The World's present condition.

"Now is the judgment of this world." (John xii. 25). All the world has been found guilty before God (Rom. iii. 18), having rejected its rightful Lord, and expelled from it Him who came a "light into the world" (John xii. 46), it is left under Satan, who is its "God" (2 Cor. iv. 4), and "Prince" (John xii. 31) ; it lieth in "the wicked one" (1 John v. 19, margin), and is ruled by wicked spirits in heavenly places (Eph. vi. 13) ; and will continue so until the appointed day when God shall judge the world in righteousness by the man Christ Jesus (Acts xvii. 31).

Fair to the natural eye as its charms may be, to the eye of faith it is but a "wilderness wide," an enemy's country, where God's beloved Son was cast out and crucified, and for which awful deed, God will yet visit the world with terrible judgments, and "punish the world for their evil" (Isa. xiii. 11). Such is the world's present condition as shown in the Word of God, and "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh

the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the *world*" (1 John ii. 16.)

The Christian delivered from the World.

Seeing the world to be such as it is, we need not wonder that when God would have a people near Himself, to shew forth His praise on earth, and dwell for ever with Him in heaven, He should separate them from the "world of the ungodly" (2 Pet. ii. 5). Therefore we read, "Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this *present evil world*, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal. i. 4), and again in that wondrous prayer of John xvii., the Lord Jesus' prayer to the Father, for "the men Thou gavest me *out of the world*" (John xvii. 6). The Christian, although *in the world*, is not *of the world* (John xvii. 16), the *world* knoweth him not (1 John iii. 1); he is part of a "chosen generation," a "peculiar people," whose "citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20), on earth "pilgrims," because here they have no continuing city (Heb. xiii. 14), "Strangers," afar from home, they press on to the heavenly city where their possessions are, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. xi. 10); they glory in the cross of Christ, by whom the *world* is crucified to them, and they to the world (Gal. vi. 14). Called into the fellowship of the Son of God, whose kingdom is not of this *world* (John xviii. 36), they are joint-heirs with Him of an everlasting kingdom, an incorruptible inheritance, "as He is so are they in this *world*" (1 John iv. 17). Dear young Christian, let these words sink into your heart and abide there, never cease to remember that the cross of Christ stands between you and the world, as the waters of the Red Sea rolled between the children of Israel and Egypt, the land of their bondage and idolatry, it stood a barrier to hinder their return to the land from which God had delivered them, so the "wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died," forbids the return of the Christian to that world, and all its unhallowed associations, whose religious rulers crucified the Lord of Glory—

The Cross on which my Lord expired,
Has won the crown for me,
All hail then fellowship with Him,
Whose death has made me free.

The Christian's position and work in the World.

In the riches of His grace to the world, God yet lingers in long-suffering over it, not willing that any should perish; and having delivered His people from it,

He yet keeps them for a little while in it, to be His witnesses there. The Lord Jesus says—"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the *world*, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John xvii. 15), and again, "as the Father hath sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John xvii. 18). First delivered from it, then sent back into it, as that blessed One came to save sinners, and reveal the Father, and yet remained holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. vii. 26); standing among men in the consciousness that He was a stranger; continually blessing men, yet never countenancing their sinful ways, the heavenly stranger passed through the world, receiving only cold contempt, hatred and scorn, and at last a shameful cross. His mission here is the pattern of ours, "in the *world*, ye shall have tribulation" (John xvi. 33); the world will hate you as it hated Him (xv. 18), if we are at all like Him, but we are told, "marvel not my brethren if the world hate you" (1 John iii. 13), if the master was so treated so shall the servant, only let us make sure we be not treated for our own crooked ways, our inconsistent walk and testimony, but for being unflinching witnesses for Christ, and against the world's sin, whether immoral or religious. Our work in the world is to preach Christ to it, "Go ye unto all the *world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi. 15); and again, "the sons of God, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the *world*, holding forth the word of life" (Phil. ii. 15, 16). The only channels of blessing to the world are the saints in it, and the only means they are told to use for the blessing of sinners is to preach the Gospel of the grace of God; this is the lever to turn the world upside down. Some have forgotten this, and adopted other plans, such as trades' unions, temperance societies, and hosts of world-reforming agencies, some of which may benefit men for time, but leave the soul unsaved, the sins unpardoned, and the man as unprepared to meet God as ever. If you would be a means of blessing to sinners, keep Christ before them, in season, out of season—say, "Behold the Lamb of God;" and, by the double testimony of lip and life, point the condemned world to the "crucified One". Take good care not to get mixed up with it, or unequally yoked with unbelievers in your endeavours to do it good. Like a diver lowered down into the deep, to search for lost property of his master's in a

sunken ship; the Christian goes into the world to seek lost souls for Christ—to him it is an “ungenial clime,” and as the diver in the deep finds nothing to sustain or entice him there, so the child of God finds nothing in the world to free his heart, or sustain his spiritual life, but much to hurt it, therefore the exhortation—“Love not the *world*, neither the things that are in the *world*—if any man love the *world*, the love of the Father is not in Him.”—(1 John ii. 15). And again, “Know ye not that the friendship of the *world* is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the *world* is the enemy of God.”—(James iv. 4). In the world, and among worldlings, let your testimony be decided—your colours flying, where all can see them—your conversation heavenly—your spirit meek and gentle, as Christ’s was here. “Be not conformed to this *world*” (Rom. xii. 2): in all the detail of your life, let it be seen you are a Christian, from the absurdities of the world’s cross-wearing, so abominable in the sight of God, down to the smallest items of your dress. “Be not conformed to this *world*,” in any of its *unscriptural and unholy ways*; but as Jesus of Nazareth walked, so ought those who are one in life with Him. You are liable to be led into the world’s bye-paths at every stage of your homeward journey, therefore, watch—continually watch your subtle foe. In the Word of God we have solemn examples and warnings given, of those taken in the world’s snare—she hath slain her “ten thousands.” Lot was entrapped in Sodom. Demas forsook Paul “having loved this present *world*” (2 Tim. iv. 10), after he had been his fellow-labourer for years (Phil. 24). The Lord keep you from being so entrapped, and, till He comes to take us to His Father’s house, far from this scene of sin, confusion, and strife, “unspotted from the world.”—(Jas. i. 27.)

This world is a wilderness wide,
I have nothing to seek or to choose,
I’ve no thought in the waste to abide,
I’ve nought to regret or to lose.

’Tis the treasure I’ve found in His love,
That has made me a pilgrim below,
And ’tis there, when I reach Him above,
As I’m known all His fulness I’ll know.

J. R.

NOTES ON THE PARABLE OF THE NOBLEMAN.

BY J. G. B.

Luke xix. 11-27.

IN the progress of these verses, we find the reason of our Lord’s going into a far country. The occasion of this, was the unbelief of Israel. They denied Him His right, they did not own his Lordship, neither did they give Him, as the Messiah, the kingdom which He

sought. It was only as the master of a few disciples, that they knew Him (39th verse), and thus He leaves the world as a rejected Lord. We see the propriety of calling Himself a nobleman, in the beginning of this parable. He was not ruling as a king, for they would not give Him His crown, but he was of noble birth—the son of David—heir to the throne in His own person. This none could disprove, but His right, as such, they did deny, and so He was obliged to leave the world. We know that He left it in many other characters, as the one who had triumphed over sin, death, &c., but now we are looking at Him in connection with Israel. During His absence, His servants have the honour of their master confided to their charge. They are to be occupied in seeking the maintenance of His glory. And it is much to be remembered, that the place of their service is, that from whence the cry has gone forth, “We will not have this man to reign over us.” This tells us that true Christianity will ever meet with persecution from the world; but it is also very sweet to find in the parable, the servants wholly occupied with their talents, though they traded amidst the din of that message, “we will not, &c.”—but they feel that with Him is all their business now, and though knowing in their hearts, the sorrow of such scenes, yet they are not moved from their occupation by the trials to which they are subjected.

There is another in this place, who has learned to think wrongly of His Lord altogether (see verses 20-21). He had not learned God in the gospel, if he had, he would have known Him in the riches of grace—sowing the world, but never reaping, showering down blessings upon it, but never getting any return. And this was the cause of his barrenness. St. Paul and this man were quite at issue. If one asked St. Paul how it was that, he was so fruitful in service to Jesus, he would say, because the Son of God loved him, and gave Himself for him. If one stands under Mount Sinai, and then supposes that he can learn what God is, he cannot thus become acquainted with Him. He can only be learned in the light of the glorious gospel of Christ. When Jesus, or the nobleman shall come again—how shall He come? In the power of the kingdom, with the thunders of judgment, and this is what awaits the world; instead of things getting better, they are only hastening to judgment, for He not only came unto His own, and His own received Him not, but he was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and it knew Him not,

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

I would call the attention of the Saints of God, to the prominent position that instrumental music and singing now occupy, in connection with the preaching of the gospel. The former borrowed from the establishments of Rome and England, where for centuries it has obtained place, and formed part of their sensuous ritual, recently has been adopted by Christians, who teach that believers only can worship, and that the flesh can bring no acceptable offering to God; yet they exhort the Christless and unregenerate to utter words of worship, and praise, provided only they are set to music. The result is, a vast amount of flippant profession, costing the professor nothing, and as readily parted with as received.

Those who speak in song, what is false and untrue, soon learn to do so in word, and frequently without any belief in their hearts unto salvation.

Falsehoods put to music and song, differ not from lies spoken in deliberation. The reader is referred to Prov. xv. 8. and to compare the following scriptures with John iv. 22-24. In Isaiah lxvi. 3, those who offered incense are likened to those who bless idols. See also Isaiah lviii. 2-5, Isaiah i. 11-15, Jer. vii. 4, 8, 9, 10. In Hos. vii. 14, praise from men whose hearts are estranged from God, is called howling; beautiful though it was, with voice and instrument. In Amos v. 21-23. Jehovah calls upon them to cease their noise. Amos iv. 4, 5, and vi. 5., also referring to sinners offering against their own souls. Num. xvi. 38.

It is written, that to obey is better than sacrifice. Study the teachings of I Sam. xv. If right to put words of worship and adoration in the mouths of pious worldlings; it would be equally right to urge them to come to the Lord's table. But such utterances should never proceed from the lips of children of wrath; while those who would seek to sooth them with music, and song, but help the cry of peace, peace, when there is no peace. It is cruel to endeavour to amuse Christless sinners treading a path which, sooner or later, must end in hell; unless, being born again, they enter the kingdom of God. Rather let us not cease to warn them of their danger. The prodigal son of Luke xv, confessing his sin and shame, arose and went to his father; while the 19th century prodigal, instead of obeying the gospel, puts the command to music; and in the words of a recent production, sings "O prodigal child, come home, O come home." And like the son

of the certain man in Matt. xxi., who said, "I go, sir," but never went, considers his obligation fulfilled.

Time was, when God-fearing men, relying on the living God, preached the word in the Holy Ghost; owning the sovereignty of Jehovah, and believing Christ crucified to be the power of God unto salvation. Such sought not to widen the way, by withholding God's truth, so that the preaching of the cross might no longer be an offence, but palatable to the carnal mind; now it is otherwise. The address of the popular evangelist consists generally of a number of anecdotes, pathetic or sentimental, which work on the natural emotions.

Hearers are urged to "believe," "believe," with all haste, then, or at the after meeting; while God's truth concerning the ruin and lost condition of the sinner is withheld, as offensive to men, who naturally fail to see themselves as bad as the Bible declares. Such preaching, especially if the evangelist is a solo singer, and accompanied by a musical wife or choir, with the aid of an American organ, fails not to draw large crowds, who are pleased with the entertainment. The musical world is gratified, at the professed fellowship of the Church; and welcomes, as an addition to its operas and oratorios, "Sacred songs and solos"; the words to them being of little moment, provided the air captivates the senses. Numbers, at these times, profess to receive the word with joy, but comparatively few prove, eventually to have passed from death unto life. This is called by some a revival, and is got up without difficulty, and at little expense almost anywhere. Poor sinners meanwhile, who are not musical, are left uncared for. Frequently a comic vein is indulged in, and funny stories told on the most solemn subjects, so as to elicit from the audience godless laughter, and merriment. We need hardly say, that to find sinners pricked to the heart on such occasions is rare. Evangelists of another type, advertising themselves, as "The preaching burglar," "The converted pugilist," "The singing pickpocket" etc., narrate incidents of sin, and shame, of their past life, *which should never be brought to light, but buried in oblivion.*

Let all such fleshly weapons be laid aside; for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual. Craft and guile are the strength of the world, but God's little flock may not defile themselves by their use, nor have their eyes blinded by the apparent results of the labour of those who, have been beguiled from the simplicity

of Christ, in so doing. The writer would exhort evangelists to preach **THE WORD**, with fear and trembling, and with hearts full of compassion and pity for those who are out of the way. Let your confidence be in the message, and expect the blessing of God in its delivery. *Your responsibility ceases when it is given.* Unreal profession is much due to the over anxiety of preachers to see results, and at times for the gratification of their own pride. Have faith in the preaching of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, and not so much in your own personal efforts, and those of your co-workers in our meetings. Read the following Scriptures. II. Tim. iv. 3. iii. 5-7 Acts. xx. 29. 31. Gal. i. 8. 11 Cor. xi. 4. Mal. i. 6-8. Isa. lvii. 15, and lxxv. 1, 2.

R. H.

MOSES AND HIS HELPERS.

(Num. xiv. 5-10.)

A WORD FOR THE TIMES.

WHO of us can duly estimate the value of the Church's presence on the earth?

It is God's object, His centre here, the fulness of the all-filling One, the delight of full Deity—of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Its importance to the world is, that it is its salt and light, "Ye are the salt of the earth". "Ye are the light of the world". "I am," said the master, "the light (Phōs) of the world," and now believers are the light (Phōs) of the world. Salt to preserve from judgment, and light in testimony.

The Lord Jesus thus estimated, and therefore said, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil"; but added, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me".—(John xvii. 15, 24.)

It would be well if we all, as believers, more fully considered our dignity as before God, and the importance of our presence here. It is possible to think too meanly of ourselves; and that by thinking too highly—too highly as *men*—too meanly as *saints*.

If all true knowledge, love and worship of God, together with true testimony for Him, are confined to the Church, as most assuredly they are, what is there outside it, whether among the professing or the profane, scientific or sordid? Surely nothing but spiritual darkness and corruption; and, if the Church were taken

out, by being taken up, judgment must follow on dark and corrupted Christendom.

Let us, beloved, remember the purpose for which we are left here, and seek to answer it, each helping the other to do his part toward the whole Church of God.

It has occurred to me, that by considering the conduct of the four men of God named in the Scripture above, and seeking to unite their actions, we should answer to the call of God, and meet, in our measure, the need of these days.

Combination of excellencies, we know, is difficult—but is it impossible? No. Perfection in this as in all else that is good, is only found in Him, who weighs mountains in scales as dust in the balance, guides the ants in their movements, and carries the lambs of His flock in His bosom—(Isa. xl. entire). Nevertheless, let us seek to be like Him.

That our days, like those of Moses and his helpers, are difficult and sorrowful, is too manifest to need argument in proof. We were born spiritually into existing circumstances, and did not originate the evils over which we mourn, albeit we may have countenanced them, and that unintentionally. They are the fruit of an unholy alliance of believers and unbelievers, when Christians lost sight of their proper hope, lowered the standard of separation from the world, accepted its favour, and leaned on secular power for success, so that now there is not only the Church of God in contrast with Judaism and Paganism, but also the Church as distinct from Christendom.

What then is the responsibility of that Church, and how shall believers individually and collectively acquit *themselves of the blame before God*? To answer this question, I propose the consideration of the conduct of the men of God named above.

The occasion was a sorrowful one, the sad result of unbelief, the fruitful source of all the present corruption and sorrow. How was it then met? Moses and Aaron on their faces before God, and before the people—Joshua and Caleb on their feet in testimony—Moses and Aaron in humiliation and intercession to God for Israel—Joshua and Caleb in testimony for God to Israel.

Fellow believer, let us seek to combine these. Humiliation, confession, and intercession (with thanksgiving, of course) before God; and simple loving uncompromising *testimony for God and for His truth on all points to one another, and to the world.* So shall

we, whatever may be the results, approve ourselves to Him, even our Master, before whose judgment-seat we must shortly appear to render our account.

Humiliation before God surely becomes us individually, and in assembly; first on account of our own sins, and then for things around us, and the Church's condition in general. In order to this, we must take the perfect standard to judge ourselves by, not what this man or that company may judge, but what the Word of God requires of us. Judging thus ourselves, and all around us, both persons and associations, we shall soon be led to confession, general and particular, personal and relative. General confession of our common low condition, and of universal evils; particular subjects, institutions, and practices immediately surrounding us, from which believers ought to be separate, and to which those who have left them are tempted to return; confessions of personal shortcomings and sins, the lack of power in commending those truths to others which have influenced us in our own actions, and relative confession as being in the same body with those from whose association and ways we are personally free. Confession, in short, after the example of Daniel, whose prayer we know. Out of this would naturally flow intercession for all saints, that they, with ourselves, might stand free from everything that grieves the spirit of God, being contrary to His word; and that we all might stand "perfect and complete in all the will of God".

Such exercises of soul, answering to those of Moses and Aaron, would fit us for, and lead to testimony for God and His truth, taking our place as did Joshua and Caleb for God to others. And mark the order of their testimony—the first testified to the excellence of the land.

These two faithful men with tender sorrowing hearts and rent garments, stood before their faint-hearted, and disobedient brethren—declaring the faithfulness of God and exceeding goodness of the land. That it was proved to be what God had described it. This, the unbelieving spies admitted, but magnified the difficulties, the consequences of obedience, as many now do; they admit the truth of a believer's walk in separation, and the scriptural church position and order, but enumerate difficulties, and shrink back. This unbelief was met by a further testimony to the love of God. "If the Lord delight in us, He will bring us into the land,"

and as for the people, the giants, the difficulties, they are bread for us.

Beloved brethren, what have we to do with consequences of obedience? Let us be obedient and trust the God who loves us and delights in us, to sustain and comfort us; the command is, "Cease to do evil, learn to do well".

But they also warned their brethren, "Only rebel ye not against the Lord". "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Dear fellow believer, this is what we need in these days—tender hearts towards Christ and all saints, and brows like brass in maintenance of truth—a firm hold of God, with intelligence in His word, and a mouth filled with arguments for Him and His truth, and against all that oppose it.

The land is good, yes!—whether we consider our glorious standing before God in Christ, ever the same, or our true place here, that of separation from, and independence of the world, of simple full subjection to God's word, and imitation of New Testament examples, both of individual conduct and of gathering together to the Lord Jesus, and worship—surely the land is good, nothing like it under heaven. There are difficulties of course, giants in the way; such a place is not taken nor maintained without sacrifice, temptation, and sorrow as we know, at least many of us; but what are difficulties to God, and what the trial compared with the blessing? Surely as nothing—our enemies are bread to faith, while rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. "Only, rebel not ye against the Lord"; the Lord make us yet more fully obedient.

In conclusion, let me say that what I have written applies to every believer, and is written with love to all saints, and sorrow that any should be found connected with that which God's word censures, and indeed found where they cannot appeal directly to the word of God for the correction and removal of such. I also pray for them, as one who once so stood, but now by grace delivered from the position; yet, I cannot help thinking that the above remarks will find their place chiefly with those who are seeking to act out the simple word of God, in separation from all that it condemns, and that at all costs.

H. H.

It is but a small thing to see Christ in a book as men see the world in a map: but to come near unto Christ, to love Him and embrace Him, is quite another thing.

**GLASGOW FAST-DAY BELIEVERS' MEETINGS,
OCTOBER, 1876.**

THESSE were held, as intimated in our October Number, in the Albion Halls, and were largely attended both morning and evening; the gathering consisting chiefly of believers from the various assemblies in and around Glasgow; but comprising also some from England, Ireland, and the north of Scotland—and not without a sprinkling of Christians belonging to various denominations.

After some time spent in prayer for present blessing and in spreading numerous requests before the Lord, Mr. H. Dyer of Bath gave an address on Psalm 1.

He spoke of its chief characteristic being Righteousness—whereas the key note of the preceding Psalm (xlix) is *redemption*, and that of the following (li), *cleansing*.

The Psalm, he said, appeared to divide itself into three parts. First, from ver. 1 to 6. The glory of God's righteousness—the universality of its Call—based on the preciousness of the redemption in Ps. xlix. 7-8. Its beauty as revealed in the person of Christ—the “perfection of beauty”. His coming again after a long, long silence to render justice to His people; and the gathering together unto Himself at His coming of those who have made a covenant with Him by Sacrifice, or who, in New Testament language, “have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ—the true Sacrifice, the Lamb of God.”

Second part, from ver. 7 to 15. Righteousness—expostulating with His own people; charging them indeed with their neglect of Him, but shewing them that it was not their sacrifice He desired—right though it was that these should be brought—but the thanksgiving and obedience of their hearts. Concluding with that precious verse which shews that, if trouble be sent to the people of God, it is not that they may be left to sink therein, but that being, in answer to their cry, delivered out of it by the arm of the Lord, they may indeed glorify Him.

“Call upon Me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.”

The third section, from ver. 16, to the end, shows God's righteousness yearning over the wicked, and beseeching them to “*consider*” ere judgment tear them in pieces, *i.e.*, exposes the vileness of their inward parts.

Now, while He speaks, He is ready to be Himself the

deliverer, a just God and yet a Saviour; but when He enters upon the work of judgment there will be “*none to deliver.*”

Then the Psalm ends with that word *whoso*, answering to the word “whosoever” in John iii. 16—as much as to say, “if ANY MAN, however wicked, will accept my gift, my redemption in Christ Jesus, and offer praise, I shall be glorified in him.”

After this Mr. Darling, from Norway spoke shortly on the great deceptions of Satan—first in the garden of Eden, now the false professing Christendom—professing to own the Lord Jesus as her bridegroom and Lord, but really given over to the world, and seen in Rev. xvii. as “the mother of Harlots”. Finally, when the church is removed, the great lie—the man of Sin will be manifested—and all nations deceived.

This was followed by other addresses, by Mr. Cochrane, and Mr. John Brown from Greenock. The latter (Mr. Brown), spoke on the subject of giving to the Lord—observing that whilst the Lord would not “*take*” any bullock out of the house, or he-goat out of the fold (Ps. 1. 9) He would nevertheless, with joy, accept that which grace constrained His people willingly to give.

Reference was made in illustration of this principle to the service of Mary, in John xii. 3.—“A pound of ointment of spikenard, *very costly*”. The amount was small, only one hundredth part of what Nicodemus brought for the embalming of the body of Christ, but it had cost her much. Such were the widow's two mites cast into the treasury—it was all the living she had. David would not give to the Lord of that which cost him nothing—(2 Sam. xxiv. 24). But where is now this costly service among the saints—how many are there who give to the Lord what really costs them anything? How many on the contrary give sparingly even out of their abundance? Instances were given without places or persons being named, of the Lord's poor being uncared for, and the Lord's servants being allowed to suffer want without an enquiry even being made as to their temporal need.

In conclusion, the saints were exhorted earnestly to read prayerfully 2 Cor. chaps. viii. and ix.

This meeting was concluded with prayer, and after dinner—at 4 o'clock—a large number assembled again to consider questions which were handed in, in writing.

This was a particularly interesting meeting—the questions were very numerous and varied, and only a

few of them could be considered in the limited time allotted to this meeting.

Those considered had special reference to Eldership and to Church fellowship, and answers from Scripture were given by Messrs. Dyer, Hopkins, Cochrane, Caldwell, Kerr, and others.

It was felt that this meeting was most practical, the only regret being that the time was so short.

The evening meeting at six o'clock was again largely attended, and addresses were given by Mr. Hopkins on the Epistle to the Ephesians.—“The riches of His grace,” in chap. i. 7. “The exceeding riches of His grace,” in chap. ii. 7. “The unsearchable riches of Christ,” in chap. iii. 8, and the walk that corresponds with such grace, in chap. iv.—especially dwelling on the combination of “truth and love,” in ver. 15. Not truth merely without regard to love, nor love at the expense of truth, but both together as in the ways of the Lord Himself.

The next address was on the subject of the coming of the Lord as the hope of the Church, by Mr. J. R. Caldwell, shewing from various Scriptures how great are the glories that combine to make that event indeed a “blessed” and purifying Hope. Being like Him—seeing Him as He is—being with Him for ever, and beholding His glory. Being gathered together with all saints—one with all that have loved Him—never more to be severed. This was followed by a few words from Mr. R. Kerr, as to the low standard of practical godliness that obtained amongst Christians, who make high profession of separation from the world—one particular dwelt upon was the absence of family worship daily in the homes of the children of God, which he found to be quite a common occurrence, especially in the country.

The day was felt by many to be one of edification and refreshment—and the weather being very fine indeed, was matter for thankfulness, as it added much to the comfort and enjoyment of the brethren, especially of those who came from the country.

The following evening (Friday), a meeting was held in the Gospel Hall, Nelson Street, which was filled, for reports and conference as to the Lord's work. Mr. Darling gave account of the Lord's work in Norway. Mr. Marsh, from Demerara, gave an interesting account of the Lord's work in British Guiana—of the difficulties peculiar to that sphere of labour—yet full of encouragement, as, notwithstanding the peculiar ignor-

ance of the natives—many not even having names—there are fourteen gatherings of Saints meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus, and each having its own meeting room, built for the purpose by their own personal labour.

Mr. R. G. White, from China, gave some account of five years' work there, resulting in a few very decided cases of conversion, and much to encourage, though the Chinese are ready to profess anything for a small temporal advantage, and hence continual disappointment and much of extreme care in baptizing and receiving into fellowship those who profess conversion.

Mr. White begged to be remembered in prayer, and that much prayer might be offered for the perishing millions of China.

Mr. Sloan, from the Faroe Islands, gave some account of the work there. He, having acquired the language, laboured there for six months, and was encouraged by seeing some brought to the Lord.

Mr. Hopkins gave a most interesting and graphic account of the work in Shetland—speaking of it the more freely, as not he, but others—(Mr. A. Boswell and Mr. Sloan) had been chiefly the instruments used. He spoke of one island where there are only two houses; but there they have a building for holding meetings in, to which, without previous intimation, at any hour of almost any day, even in harvest time, a congregation of about sixty can be gathered from the neighbouring islands in an hour or two, to hear the Gospel. He spoke of another district where the work is much hindered through want of a suitable place to meet in. Ground has been taken at a nominal rental for a building to hold 200 persons, and already Mr. H. has received £140 toward the cost, and he expected soon, that, as Moses and Aaron had to restrain the children of Israel from bringing their gifts—so he would have more than enough; however, if so, he thought he knew of another place where a room was equally required, to which the surplus could be applied.

After other short addresses this meeting was concluded—none of the series being more enjoyed. It was truly profitable—as it drew out the sympathies of those present to the regions beyond, an enlargement of heart that is not a little required.

ALL through the Gospel of John we find Christ occupied with putting His disciples in the same place with Himself before God and the world.

THE GREAT WOMAN OF SHUNEM.

2 Kings iv. 8-37.

THE woman whom this passage introduces to us was evidently one of the godly seed in the land. She lived in the distant tribe of Issachar, and does not appear to have personally known this mighty prophet of God. But she quickly apprehends something of the Lord about him. She had been already taught of God; her religion was that which discerned God's mind and way in an evil day, when apostacy was clouding everything.

She accordingly prepares him a place of sojourning in her own house. And her intelligence of him is further and strikingly marked by the preparation she makes for him. It was but a little chamber, with its bed, its table, its stool, and its candlestick. All was in the simplicity of a man of God, who stood apart from the world, a stranger in the midst of its corruptions.

She knew him because she was like him. One spirit was in them both. She understood his pilgrim thoughts and habits, just because she was exercised in them herself. And this is the only way really and divinely to know either the children of God, or God Himself. It is by the union and mind of the same spirit.

She dwelt among her own people, and cared not to be spoken for either to the King or to the Captain of the host. Even as Elisha; who, though he had the ear of the King and of the Captain of the host (as well he might after feeding their armies in the day of battle), yet would be a stranger and pilgrim in the land, and lodge in a little chamber, with a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

This woman had no child, and her husband was now "old." But as the Lord Himself had once said to Abraham, "according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son"; so now, the Lord's prophet says to this Shunamite, "according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son". And so it was—as with Sarah, so with this woman. The quickening power of God entered her house, and, as it was promised her, she embraced a son.

More, however, than even this is to be witnessed in this house; she is to learn, through the hand of Elisha, *resurrection*, as well as *quickenings power*; just as in the house of Abraham, it was learnt from the Lord

Himself. Isaac, who was at the first quickened in the womb of Sarah through the power of God, was afterwards received as from the dead. And so here. The sentence of death is laid in this child of promise, but the same power of God, through Elisha, raises him from the dead.

Faith possesses itself of this. Faith, which apprehends death in ourselves, but life in Jesus. The simpler, the happier. The more unquestioning, the more according to God's mind. It was so in this Shunamite.

Death was in her house again, but she knew of a quickener of the dead. And therefore the ass and the young men are again got ready, and "it is well," is the language of her faith in sure and certain hope of resurrection of the dead. And at the end, *life* is no *amazement* to her. She received her dead brought to life again. (Heb. xi.) She can loose her son by faith, as well as bind him. She falls at the prophet's feet, and bows her head. She owns in thankfulness and humiliation, the precious gift, but she bears it away without amazement. It was no wonder to her. She does not curiously examine the child, whether indeed it were alive again. Faith had counted on such an hour, and already had received her child as in resurrection, and her soul had only to know that her loved one was warm and lively in her bosom again.

Indeed, all this is the pattern of a sinner's faith. Should it be thought a thing incredible with us that God should raise the dead? "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" faith is to say. "With God all things are possible." And we are to go forth from a state of death in trespasses and sins into life and liberty—from the spirit of bondage and of fear, and from under the guilt of an unpurged conscience, without amazement or suspicion, because the Lord has done it. "Once was I blind, but now I see," may be the calm, happy, thankful certainty of the sinner, who has met the Son of God in the healing virtue of His blood.

The thoughts of her husband first, and then the way of Elisha, both rise as tempters of the steadfastness of her soul. "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day?" says her husband to her, "it is neither new moon nor Sabbath;" and Elisha is for Gehazi satisfying her, and would have him go forward and lay his staff on the face of the child. But the woman's faith silences both. And she presses through the hindrance in the same decision and fervency that Elisha himself before

had done, saying, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (ii. 2; iv. 30.)

There is a greatness in the work of the Spirit in her soul, that is indeed blessed. Elisha had been already known to her in the quickening of her dead body. She had learnt him, or God's power through him, in that, and to that she now clings, in the face of every temptation. She holds fast the beginning of her confidence. Elisha, the Lord's witness at that time, was her object at the first, and so shall be to the last. And so with the sinner and Jesus. The sinner who believes has learnt the Son of God in His quickening power. He has understood the mystery of death and resurrection. He has been at Calvary, and at the empty sepulchre. There he has seen things, and known the meaning of them, for the full clearing of the conscience towards God. And no ordinance, as people speak, can take the place of them in the believer's soul. One may talk of new moons and Sabbaths; another of the prophet's staff in the hand of a vicar or delegate; but the faith of a divinely-taught sinner apprehends nothing but the precious, unchanging, imperishable virtue of Him who was dead and is alive again; from whom, as this dear woman did from Elisha, he had learnt where alone quickening, redeeming, saving power is of God to be received and enjoyed.—*Extract.*

SIMPLE TRUTHS FOR CHRISTIANS.

THE Lord Jesus commanded the Apostles to baptize all who should believe the gospel. All who believed the gospel therefore and acted faithfully, in the early days of Christianity, submitted to be baptized. No believer should shrink from baptism on account of the cross, but should rather say, "What doth hinder me?" All the Christian's duties should be counted privileges.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts viii. 36.

With respect to the mode of baptism; there is sufficient on the subject in the New Testament, to satisfy a simple unprejudiced mind that immersion in water is what is intended.

Matthew iii. 16. Mark i. 5, 9, 10. Acts viii.
38, 39. Romans vi. 4.

Of the origin of baptism we are not informed in scripture. It was used by John, called the Baptist, and afterwards used and commanded by the Lord Jesus. Jesus did not personally baptize, nor do the scriptures make it a matter of any importance what individual Christian shall baptize.

Matthew iii. 1-6. Mark i. 4. John iv. 1, 2.

Acts x. 46-48. 1 Cor. i. 13-27.

Baptism is used in scripture as a profession of faith and discipleship. There is deep instruction as to the figurative meaning of baptism, in the Epistles, but believers are not required to know that in order to be baptized. The only qualification needed is belief of the gospel.

Romans vi. Acts viii. 37; x. 47, 48.

A Christian is a person who, through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, really believes the gospel, and as soon as he believes the gospel he becomes a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. A disciple is a learner or follower. O that all Christians would ponder that!

Acts xiii. 52; xx. 7.

TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

It is our desire, if supplied with suitable material, to have in the pages of the *Northern Evangelist*, as frequently as possible; Gospel articles written specially with a view to those occupied in different trades. For instance—to *Weavers*, "Lessons from the Loom." To *Salesmen*, to *Mill Girls*, to *Carters*, &c., &c., drawing the illustrations mainly from objects familiar to each.

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²²⁷ Note specially that we have ceased business altogether at 2 South Clerk Street, Edinburgh, and that henceforth all business communications are to be addressed to JOHN BAIN, City Bible-House, 40 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. All communications for the Editor to be sent there also, or to be addressed J. R. CALDWELL, 256 Renfrew Street, Glasgow. Letters requiring to be forwarded Mr. D. Ross, please address 1 Summerhall Square, Edinburgh.

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