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A Monthly Journal of
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Bible Study, Expository and Practical Notes, with
Questions and Answers on Bible Subjects.

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THE BELIEVER'S MAGAZINE.

CHRIST IS ALL.

CHRIST is the Key to the Holy Scriptures. The Word from end to end unfolds His glories. Its object is to present the Person of Christ: Christ in all His beauty, in all His worth. Christ in the counsels and purposes of God in eternity past: Christ as He appeared on the earth among sinful men: Christ risen and glorified, hid in God, yet revealed to faith *now*: Christ as coming to judge and to reign. Know Christ, give Christ His place, and everything falls into its proper sphere. Displace the centre, and all is confusion. The written Word reveals the Living Word. Through it the Spirit ministers Christ and His worth to our souls. He fills the entire void between God and the soul. Man has no place. Christ is all.

Christ, the PERFECT SACRIFICE, who "offered *Himself* without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14): who "put away sin by the sacrifice of *Himself*" (Heb. ix. 26). By His one perfect oblation He met all the claims of God, of absolute holiness, of outraged justice, of infinite love, and purged for ever the sins of all who believe, so fully, so perfectly that He is now in heaven, on the right hand of God without them; seated there in token that His work is done, glorified there in proof that His work has been accepted. This leaves no room for doubt or fear, no place for popish masses, man's religion, or human righteousness. There is no more sacrifice for sin—Christ is all.

Christ, the GREAT HIGH PRIEST, exalted on the throne, perfect Man, yet mighty

God: touched with the feeling of our infirmities, tender to succour, mighty to save; ever-living, never-changing, bearing us ever on His heart, ever serving in unwearied love, strengthening in hours of weakness, cheering when depressed, warning when uplifted, restoring when fallen. "We have such an High Priest" (Heb. viii. 1). No need then for earthly priests. Christ is all.

Christ is LORD of all. Earth disowned His claim: heaven acknowledged it. "God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). In the world there are lords many, but to the believer there is "one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things" (1 Cor. viii. 6). To own His sovereign claim, to yield implicit, unquestioning obedience to His will, is the path of peace and prosperity to the Christian here below. This alone preserves from self-will on the one hand, and from serfdom to man on the other. The one supreme authority to the Christian, is "the Lord Jesus Christ." He is all.

Christ is HEAD of the Church, which is His body. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9), not for Himself, but for His members. From Him "all the body" is nourished, and increaseth with the increase of God (Col. ii. 1). All life and health, all power and blessing, all gifts and ministries, flow down from the glorious Head to the feeblest member of the body. To "hold the Head," to let nothing come between, to draw upon Him for all, to receive all, and whatsoever He sends is the place and business of the church. This leaves no place for clerisy or democracy, for here as elsewhere, Christ is all.

The Churches of the New Testament.

FIRST PAPER. *By the Editor.*

THE Churches of the New Testament, as they are presented in the various Epistles, afford much valuable instruction to us on whom the ends of the age have come, as to what God's churches are, and ought to be, both in their constitution and condition until the Lord shall come. This is especially so in the seven churches gathered from among the Gentiles, and ministered to, through the Epistles of which the apostle Paul is the inspired penman. In connection with the church, Paul holds a unique and honoured place. Not only was he the chosen vessel to whom the Lord Jesus appeared in heavenly glory, and to whom "the mystery" of the church as the body of Christ, the one new man, gathered alike from Jew and Gentile was revealed, in order that he might make it known, but he was chosen as a "wise master builder" (1 Cor. iii. 10), to lay the foundation, and build up according to a pattern which he had "received from the Lord" and delivered to the saints (see 1 Cor. xi. 2, 23), God's churches, as composed of born again but failing men, gathered together here upon the earth.

In regard to the constitution of these churches, there was no difference. They were all built according to the one pattern, from the one plan given by the great Architect, so that the apostle could write, speaking of "his ways which be in Christ." "As I teach *everywhere*, in every church" (1 Cor. iv. 17). And although times have changed, and God's churches are no longer to be seen in their distinctness, standing out clear and separate from the world, or in their unity, embracing all sound and healthy saints within them, the pattern has

not been revoked, or liberty given to every man to build with materials or according to a pattern right in his own eyes. And so we conclude, that so long as saints are to be together as churches, the abiding pattern to which they are to conform is, that which remains in the Word. We know of no other. But while all the churches were alike as to their constitution, how varied they were in their condition! How vast their differences, both in knowledge and in grace! Some were high in spiritual attainment, full of spiritual power, clear and bright in testimony, and needed little or no reproof. Others had little to commend them; much to cause the apostle grief and sorrow. Yet it is blessed to observe, that the Lord used His servant Paul to deal with them all, and minister to them all, just as their condition required. He did not forsake or give up one of them, but sent the word of reproof, or correction, or instruction (2 Tim. iii. 16), as they had need. And such is His way still. So long as there is room for the Lord's servant and the Lord's Word, in the Spirit's grace and power, there is hope of recovery and restoration. I speak of course of what is on the right foundation. The world's churches can never be set right, their foundations are out of course, they are built with "brick for stone" like Babel of old, the fruit of man's confederacy (Gen. xi. 2-6), and must be judged.

Among the churches of the New Testament, all possible conditions we believe are represented and dealt with, and the manner of the Lord's dealings, in the ministry that He sent through the apostle, is for our learning. To some of the churches it was almost wholly a ministry of reproof and correction, searching the conscience with the Word as a light, judging the ways as with a sharp sword, in order to bring to

repentance, and recover the saints from the snares and errors into which they had fallen. In others He was able to unfold deep and blessed truths, for they were walking in love and grace, and able to receive them. And yet again to others there was a blending of the two; grace and truth, trimming and feeding in due proportions, as they had need. And blessed it is to see, that under the hand of the Spirit, these varied ministries were productive of the desired results, recovering where there had been loss, recuperating where there had been danger, and replenishing with heavenly supplies where all was in order. It is *such* ministry—ministry suited to their need and condition—that assemblies of the Lord's people, few in number and feeble because of many entanglements, in these days, stand in special need of. Not "cut and dry" pre-arranged discourses, much less crude, ill-digested, incoherent declamations from sterile souls that take nothing in and can give nothing out, but ministry be it "five words or five thousand," not only the truth, but the Lord's message—that is, the truth needed at the time—given out wisely and faithfully, in the grace and unction of the Spirit, through men called and fitted to give it, the effects of which will be as a dew from the Lord in the midst of His people.

—○—

POSITION AND POWER.—The call of God separates us, but we need the Spirit of God to occupy the place according to God, and the loving, devoted mind. "Salt is good;" the Divine principle is the good thing. But salt may lose its saltiness. The right position, or the Divine principle, may be understood and avowed, but there may be no power of life in it.

J. G. B.

The Church at Thessalonica.

An Address by Donald Munro, of Toronto.

Read Acts xvii. 1-10; 1 Thessalonians i. 10.

HERE we have an account of the Gospel's first introduction to Thessalonica. Previous to this time, there was a Jewish synagogue, to which the Jews scattered from their land, and located there, resorted every Sabbath day. And being a Gentile city, there was doubtless a heathen temple, or temples, in which they worshipped their gods. But there was no "church of God," no saved people in Thessalonica.

When Paul and his fellow-labourers entered, it was, so to speak, "virgin soil." How did they begin? The Word tells us. "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them" (ver. 2): that is, into the Jewish synagogue, not as a worshipper—he had left Judaism and its worship long ere this, never to return—but he went to preach Christ, according to the liberty there given. His "manner" was to always reach "the Jew first." We are told what he preached. He "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again" (ver. 3). The burden of the prophetic Scriptures is "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter i. 11). Not a palatable theme to the Jew, who expected a Messiah who would reign on the earth, and deliver them from political and physical bondage, restoring to them the kingdom, as in the days of David and Solomon. What was the result of his preaching? "Some of them believed"—this is the first step, and "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." The next is, they "consorted with Paul and Silas." They left the synagogue, and the unconverted Jews with their religion.

They had fellowship, companionship with the saints and servants of God. You see there was no amalgamation, no mixing up of the two. A clean cut from the world; a decided stand with the people of God. This was the result of three sabbath days' preaching, and this may suggest that on the other days he preached, wherever he had opportunity, to the Greeks, for there were also converted "of the devout Greeks, a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few" (ver. 4). Then the trouble began: the Jews opposed, and were joined by "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort," who set the whole city on an uproar. The devil never loses his prey without showing fight: if not in this way, in some other.

Turn now to the Epistle. "Paul and Silvanus, and Timotheus, to the church of the Thessalonians, which is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ" (ver. 1). What was this Church of the Thessalonians? It was the fruit of that three weeks' Gospel preaching, or as it would now be called, "Gospel Campaign." There are not many campaigns such as this now-a-days, alas! It was truly a grand one, with abiding results. Let us see what these were. First, they "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." This is *where* God always begins, and *how* He begins. He saves sinners; He brings them to Himself. And then He separates them from all their old associations, the Jewish synagogue, and the heathen temple, and gathers them unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Name and the only centre to which the Holy Ghost gathers saints. Thus brought to God, and gathered to the Lord Jesus, they became "the church of the Thessalonians, which is *in* God the Father, and *in*

the Lord Jesus Christ"—a beautiful place for a church to have its home. Is it not? The Church was formed of saved people, nobody else. Paul could give thanks to God for them *all*: he knew every one of them, had been at their second birth, and had spiritual discernment to know how they were getting on. I remember, a number of years ago, on a harvest day in a part of Banffshire, a farmer gathered a lot of his harvest workers into the barn to hear the Gospel. God was working in the place, and was in the barn that day. When the meeting was over, we went into the farmer's house, and the farmer, an old man, was weeping bitterly in the presence of his whole household. What was the matter, think you? God had awakened him to see himself a lost sinner, and he made this remark: "I am an elder in our church, but not saved. And with the exception of perhaps one, every one in the Kirk Session is just as I am." His wife was in a rage her pride was cut, and she said in her anger, "Why did they make elders of you, if you are all like that?" To which the farmer quietly replied, "They had to build the dyke, with the stones they had." Men do build up their churches with unconverted members, "with the stones they have," for they must keep up the numbers; but God never does so. He comes to sinners; He awakens them, brings them to His Son, unites them to Christ. They are born again, possessors of eternal life, indwelt by His Spirit. Then He separates them from the ungodly world—from their old religion, from all their former associations, and gathers them to His beloved Son, God's one and only centre, to whom He will yet gather all in heaven, and all on earth.

(To be continued.)

The Fold and the Flock;

OR, JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY CONTRASTED.

BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

THE spiritual nature of the present dispensation, the character of the worship of the Father in Spirit and in truth, characteristic of "the hour that now is," ought to be a matter of earnest, intelligent inquiry to every believer.

In my intercourse with the children of God, I have observed how very feeble is the apprehension of the distinctive features of the present method of Divine wisdom with the children of men. Sure I am, that we are living through grace in the most wonderful and glorious period of the world's history, when believers are called into the enjoyment of the substance and reality of all that which had previously been known only in outward forms and carnal ordinances, or dimly shadowed forth by signs and symbols and mysterious types.

The two parables of the tenth of John, bring before us in strong relief upon the background of a past dispensation, the nature of Christianity. Their teaching, clusters around the presentation of the Son of God in His shepherd character. We observe a development in the truth. In verse 7, He is "the *Door* of the sheep," the way of entrance into the new and better order of Christianity. In verse 11, He wins our confidence, and draws our affections as "the *Good Shepherd*"; while in verse 16, He is "the *One Shepherd*" to the "*One flock*." It is a question of unity—John's way of expressing the Pauline revelation of of the truth of the "ecclesia"—"there is one body and one spirit" (Eph. iv. 4).

In the first parable (verses 1-5), the Lord commends this Messianic character, and wins the confidence of His Jewish sheep.

The "fold" is Judaism, that divine system of ordinances on the earth, by means of which a whole nation was separated from the rest of the world. Both Judaism and Christianity insists on separation. But the separation of the "fold" is by means of an outward wall, while the separation of the "flock" is by means of the power of divine life within, refusing to mingle with anything contrary to the holiness and purity of its heavenly nature.

Now, among that isolated nation the Lord had those whom He called "His own" (verse 3)—peculiarly so—as the nation as such had forfeited its title to be "His own" (John i. 11), by their refusal of the Messiah. The Lord would enter the Jewish fold, in order to bring "His own sheep" out of it. He had no other business with "the fold," as such. He did not enter it to repair its breaches, and improve its state; to make it a more tolerable place of abode for His sheep there. He was not a mere Jewish reformer, as the many moderns style Him. His business was with the sheep alone.

And thus approaching them, He reached them in a legitimate way. He entered in by "the door," and did not, as the pseudo-Messiahs, climb up some other way. How often has the opening sentence of the parable been used as a Gospel text, as if "the sheepfold" were heaven, or salvation, and climbing up "some other way" attempting to reach heaven or gain salvation on the ground of creature merit, and not as a divine gift. But such is clearly not its teaching. The Lord was made of a woman, made under the law (Gal. iv. 4-5), to redeem them that were under the law, that thus the place and the Spirit of sons might be theirs. And thus He submitted to every divine requirement, and expressed publicly how becoming it was to "fulfil all righteous-

ness," as He went beneath the waters of Jordan in the baptismal rite.

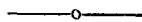
Thus "the porter" opened the door to Him. The porter's business was to guard the sheep during the Shepherd's absence, and to keep every unauthorized person out of the fold as an intruder. This was the special charge committed to "the prophet" in Israel; the prophetic institution finding its last and greatest representative in John the Baptist. Of those born of women, none were greater than he, for of none other was it written that he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.

The prophet was raised up, upon the failure of the priest. The priest was "the regular" and "the official" mouthpiece of Jehovah to the people; but when the dying priestess pronounced "Ichabod" upon the nation in the spirit of prophecy, "the glory is departed," for the guilt of the priests had made the ark a captive of the uncircumcised. God took the child Samuel as the beginning of a regular line of prophets, which, with but brief intervals, continued in Israel until the Baptist announced "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

This explains the almost constant rivalry and jealousy between the two institutions in Israel. "The priest," representing the established and orthodox; "the prophet," the apparently irregular and independent. God's resource in a day of ruin and departure, and God's mouthpiece of the glad tidings of a better and brighter day dawning for both Israel and the whole world, in the advent of their Messiah-King. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" was the scathing accusation of the martyr Stephen—and the priests were often the abettors and ringleaders, as they were at the finish, when the Christ was slain.

When John the Baptist saw *the heavens* opening upon the Son of God, who was he, to keep the door of the sheepfold shut to Him? He pointed Him out as the expected One of prophecy, and was glad to see even his own converts leaving him to follow Jesus, the "Lamb of God."

How, and by what means the sheep came to recognize Him, and to attach themselves to Him, as the new and divine centre of gathering, we hope to look into, if the Lord will, in our next paper.



Notes on the Psalms.

FROM THE BIBLE OF THE LATE WM. LINCOLN.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Book of Psalms" (Acts i. 20) —which is the inspired title of this Book—is in the Hebrew, "The Book of Praises." It consists of five sections, or books, each of which is distinguished by a character and subject of its own. They have also a dispensational application to Israel in the past and the future.

BOOK I. consists of Psalms i. to xli. The *Genesis* book. It treats of Divine counsels and grace in Christ's person and work. Messiah here is seen as earth-rejected, but heaven-honoured; the object of faith to some Israelites in the land, who are yet outwardly associated with the nation, even in worship. The manner in which Divine Names occur, affords much help and instruction. They are in this section as follows: "*Jehovah*," 272 times; "*Elohim*," 32 times; "*Jehovah-Elohim*," 11 times.

BOOK II. — Psalms lxii. - lxxii. The *Exodus* book, shewing man in ruin, responsibility, and as redeemed. Burnt-offering (xl. 6), sin offering (xxii. 1), trespass offering and peace offering (lxix. 5), all appear here.

Dispensationally; Messiah occupied with a remnant rejected from the land; the object of hostility, not only of Gentiles, but of Jews; the abomination set up, and the tribulation come. What God Himself is more deeply learned; hence "*Elohim*" occurs 208 times, "*Jehovah*" 33 times.

BOOK III.—Psalms lxxiii.-lxxxix. The *Leviticus* book. God's way in His sanctuary, mentioned in lxxiii. 17; lxxiv. 3-7; lxxvii. 13; lxxviii. 54. Dispensationally, Christ occupied with the ten tribes who had not actually dipped their hands in His blood (see Ezek. xx. 35). Israel's history from its beginning, to the last great confederacy. "*Elohim*" occurs 80 times, "*Jehovah*" 46 times.

BOOK IV.—Psalms xc. to cvi. The *Numbers* book. Messiah returns to earth, turning the wilderness to a fruitful field. Dispensationally, the First-begotten brought again into the world; Christ reigning over Israel, and the Gentiles in blessing. The name "*Jehovah*" shines out through this book, revealing the various relations which that Name involves. It occurs 107 times; "*Elohim*" 27 times.

BOOK V.—Psalms cvii. to cl. The *Deuteronomy* book, shewing forth the ways of God, and His work in grace and glory. Dispensationally, the millennial reign: Christ regulating everything, Israel in fellowship with Him. All God's dealings reviewed: praises and hallelujahs ascending. "*Jehovah*," 268 times; "*Elohim*," 40 times. The first Psalm in each Book is an epitome of the whole. The first three sections end with a doxology, and a double "Amen"; the last two with Hallelujahs.

Christ is the subject of the Psalms. He Himself said, "It is written in the Psalms concerning ME" (Luke xxiv. 44). The *Gospels* give His life as seen by men; the

Types tell what He was to God; the *Psalms* unfold His inner experiences, the language of His soul. Some are wholly Messianic, altogether applicable to Christ, around which others seem to cluster, like satellites round a planet. The life and service, songs and praises, suffering and death, exaltation and glories of Christ, His coming in grace and in judgment, the glory of His people, the destruction of His foes, are all here set forth. The Spirit of Christ is found uttering prophetically that which accords with each, and with His ways with His earthly people. Their deliverance will not be as that of us, His heavenly people, by death and resurrection, but by the destruction of their foes, for which they wait and pray, as in the language of many of the Psalms.

(Notes on Psalms I.-II. next Month).

What the World Opposes.

WHEN I left the Established Church of Scotland thirty years ago, because I saw from the Word of God that the Church should not be ruled by the State, and because a member of another denomination, very few seemed to take any notice of it. Certainly, nobody found any fault with me for doing so. I suffered no persecution for the step I had taken. It seemed to be quite approved of by my friends and neighbours. I got credit from several, for acting "according to my conscience." But when in the goodness of God I learned from His Word that *all* denominationalism is wrong, that the only Name in which believers are to gather is the peerless Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matth. xviii. 20), and when in obedience to His command I "came out" (2 Cor. vi. 18) from "the mixed multitude," as found in the world's churches, and began to gather with a few simple, godly believers

apart from all denominations, with no creed but God's Word, a perfect hurricane of opposition arose. Not exactly from the openly ungodly—they care little where, or with whom, you worship—but from the religious people, especially from those with whom I had been associated. Many passed me on the street without recognition. My former fellow-workers shunned me. "The minister," preached a special sermon, warning all his flock to beware of "heretics," and such as had "erred from the faith." What brought all this about? Why all this opposition? Just this; a simple child of God, after long years of ignorance of—and I regret to add disobedience to—his Father's will, had begun to obey, by going "outside the camp" of the world's religion, to identify himself with a rejected Christ, and a few of His despised people, whose only crime was that they sought to gather where, and in such a manner, as they could carry out the will of God, as they learned it from His Word. This was the whole offence; but it was an unpardonable sin in the eyes of the religious world. I was amazed, for I had not counted on such a storm arising against me. But on looking back upon it all, I am not surprised, for it is just what I ought to have expected, and what every believer may expect, if he seeks to be guided in his path down here, not by the customs of the world, but by the will of God. You may leave one denomination and join another, without incurring the world's displeasure. You may say many "strong" things, and preach on almost any subject you like; you may even teach "separation" as a general principle, and get the ears and the blessings of the people all the time, so long as you remain even in a nominal "fellowship" with the world's churches. But the moment you learn that,

in the estimation of God, "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel xv. 22), and seek to act out what you see to be the will of God regarding separation from the unconverted, the opposition of the world breaks out. The reason is not far to seek. The world must love its own. A religion that is of the world, and agreeable to its taste, a form of church fellowship that admits and embraces the unconverted, that makes no difference between the children of God, and the children of the devil, is just what the world approves of, and will support. But let one step forth on the path in which God has called all His people to walk in separation from the world, in identification with a rejected Christ "without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. xiii. 13), and he will soon learn what it means to be "made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things" (1 Cor. iv. 13). And whatever the form of opposition may be—whether the open scoff, or what is more common, the secret sneer and the cold look of contempt—the believer will be able, through grace, to rejoice that he is permitted even in a feeble measure thus to shew, that He is a follower of Him who was "despised and rejected of men," just because He always *did* those things that pleased the Father. And let not any who are taking their earliest steps in this path of obedience be deterred from "following on" because of the world's opposition. It is only what the Master promised (John xvi. 33), and what His apostles taught the early disciples to expect (Acts xiv. 22), and is one of the many instruments through which the saint is disciplined and taught to trust and prove His faithful God, whose promise now is as true as in ages long gone by—"Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Samuel ii. 30).

Law and Grace;

PSALMS XC. AND XCI. COMPARED.

By T. NEWBERRY, Editor of "The Englishman's Bible."

IN character and in spirit, Psa. xc. agrees very closely with Rom. vii.; and Psa. xci. with Rom. viii. Psa. xc. is "a prayer of Moses the man of God," and gives the experience of a godly Israelite under *law*; Rom. viii. is the experience of a Christian under *grace*. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John i. 17).

In Psa. xc. 1, the first title of God is "Adonahy," His name as Sovereign, Triune Lord, in His majesty and authority. The dwelling-place of Israel "from everlasting to everlasting," in the unity of His being, as their one and only God is in Hebrew, EL (sing.), ELOHIM (plural). In Psa. xci. 1, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High." The individual believer having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus, in the possession of everlasting life, according to the New Testament.

In Psa. xc., it is God in creation, in providence; in Psa. xci., it is God in grace and redemption.

In Psa. xc., it is God in the perfection of His being, in righteousness and true holiness; One who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. In Psa. xci., it is God *in Christ*, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

In Psa. xc., as in Rom. vii., man is looked at in the flesh, with God's estimate of the evil of his nature, the carnal mind enmity, and not subject to God's law. In Psa. xci., as in Rom. viii., the believer is regarded as no longer in the flesh, but in Christ Jesus, and the righteousness of the law fulfilled in him whilst walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

In a word, on the one hand the believer is looked at as under *law*; on the other, as under *grace*. On the one hand, as in the flesh; and on the other, in the Spirit. In the one, as he is in himself; in the other, as seen in Christ Jesus.

On the one hand, prayer is presented to God *through Jesus Christ*; on the other, every blessing is secured *in Christ Jesus*.

Psa. xci. is threefold. Verse 1, is the language of the Eternal Spirit. From verses 2-13 it is the language of the Messiah from His own experience. The promise, verses 11-13, is not a promise to Christ, but His promise to those who, like Him, trust in Jehovah. Verses 14-16, are the words of the Eternal Father, confirming the previous testimony of the Spirit and the Son. Notice the different use of pronouns, in these three portions.

1900.

"HENCEFORTH UNTO HIM"

(2 CORINTHIANS VI. 15).

Time open's a fresh portal, no halt on the threshold;

The pilgrim may make—no, his feet must press on,
Ne'er looking behind him, nor longing to linger

In the scene whence his Saviour and Master
has gone.

Oh! surely HIS LOVE should constrain those He
died for,

To *live*—"HENCEFORTH LIVE UNTO HIM"—
evermore,

Not seeking to gratify self and its cravings,

We are "*not our own*," but His, whom we adore.

The century's *dawn* we see, but who among us

On earth will be walking when *closeth its hour*?
Let us *buy up the moments* God giveth, and make
them,

By serving our Saviour, *eternally ours*.

LEOMINSTER.

M. M. D.

The Bible Annotator.

Biblical Outlines, Varied Readings, Marginal Notes, Brief Expositions of Difficult Passages, and all Helps to Bible Study will be welcomed for this column.

THINGS TO HOLD FAST.—“The Name” (Rev. ii. 13), “The Faithful Word” (Titus i. 9), “That which is good” (Heb. x. 23). *How?* “In faith and love” (2 Tim. i. 13). “How long? Till I come” (Rev. ii. 25).

SEVEN “BETTER THINGS” IN HEBREWS.—Better Testament (vii. 22), Sacrifices (ix. 23), Promises (viii. 6), Hope (viii. 9), Substance (ix. 23), Country (xi. 16), Resurrection (xi. 35).

SEVEN KINGDOMS.—Of God (John iii. 3), of Heaven (Matth. iii. 2), of His dear Son (Col. i. 13), of the Father (Matth. xiii. 23), of the Son of Man (Matth. xv. 28), Heavenly (2 Tim. iv. 18), Everlasting (Daniel vii. 27).

CORRUPTING GOD'S WORD.—“We are not as many who ‘*corrupt*’ the Word of God” (2 Cor. ii. 17). The word here rendered corrupt (Greek, *kapeleno*) means “to adulterate,” or “to huckster.” It was used for pedlars who, for gain, intermixed and adulterated their goods, and then fraudulently sold them to the unwary. There are many such “hucksters” in the religious world, some of them in high places too, who adulterate the Word, and then give out the corrupt mixture to simple souls as “The Truth.” Let God's people “BEWARE!” (see Luke xii. 1).

THE SCRIPTURES.—They are called “The Oracles of God” (Rom. iii. 2), because of their Divine Authority; “The Holy Scriptures,” or The Sacred Writings (2 Tim. iii. 15), because of their Divine Inspiration; and “The Word of God” (Mark vii. 36), because they are a Divine Revelation—God's voice to the soul of man.

CANDLESTICKS.—The word in Revelation, rendered “candlestick,” is more correctly “lampstand,” and so it is given in the Revised Version—margin. The golden lampstand in the tabernacle upheld the seven lamps, which were trimmed and replenished daily. A candle on the contrary, when once lit, burns till it is quite finished. Neither an individual believer, nor an assembly of saints, can give a clear light, unless they are receiving fresh supplies—“The supply of the Spirit” (Phil. i. 19).

CATCHING MEN.—“From henceforth thou shalt catch men” (Luke v. 10). The word *zograo*, translated “catch,” means to take them captive; to save

them alive, in contrast to taking them for death. It is found only once again in the New Testament. This is in 2 Timothy ii. 26, where it is rendered, “Who are taken captive,” in the A.V., and in the Revised, “Having been *taken alive* by the Lord's servant unto the will of God.” The former passage has undoubted reference to the catching of sinners—the work of the evangelist. And if the Revised rendering of the latter passage be the correct one, it surely points to the work of *those* who “watch for souls” (Heb. xiii. 17), who shepherd and rule the flock, in recovering saints who have fallen into the snare and under the power of the devil. In both the word applies, “He that *winneeth* souls is wise” (Prov. xi. 30).

QUESTION XV. *Will Sacrifices be resumed in Millennial times? If so, where, by whom, and for what purpose?* The pattern of the tabernacle and its altar was given to Moses on the Mount. The pattern of Solomon's temple and its courts was given to David by God. So in like manner the pattern of the Millennial temple and its altar was given to Ezekiel in the visions of God. We have the records of this in Ezek. xl.-xlviii. The temple will be erected on the mountain of Jehovah's house (Isa. ii. 2, 3), and not on Mount Moriah, as the former temples were, whilst the city of Jerusalem will occupy its former site. The directions for the Millennial temple and altar are given with instructions for the sacrifices, in Ezek. xliii. 10-27. This altar will be intermediate in size between the one of the tabernacle, and the one of Solomon's temple. The Millennial temple will be the house of prayer for all nations, all flesh will worship there, and their sacrifices shall be accepted (Isa. lx. 7, lxvi. 23; Psalm li. 18, 19; Zech. xiv. 16, 17). In the ordinances connected with the altar, etc., it will be observed there are significant and striking alterations. There will be the daily morning lamb (Ezek. xlv. 13-15); but no evening sacrifice is mentioned. This type was fulfilled at the crucifixion of Jesus. The feast of the passover will be observed (Ezek. xlv. 21-24); but not the feast of Pentecost, that is being fulfilled in the present dispensation.

Thomas Newberry.

THE NEW COVENANT.—“The *new* covenant,” or testament (Heb. xii. 24).—The word here is *Neos*, in the sense of newly made; but in Heb. ix. 15, the word is *Kainos*, which means new in kind. Both were fulfilled at the Cross.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for general edification should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

What is the difference between "sin" and "transgression" in Psalm xxxii. 1-2?—SIN is the nature, the root, the evil principle within; TRANSGRESSION is the outward act, the fruit, the manifest breach of law. Hence transgression is "forgiven;" sin "covered." See also 1 John iii. 4; Romans iv. 15.

What was the name of David's mother?—From 2 Samuel xviii. 25 (compare with 1 Chron. ii. 16), it seems to have been Nahash.

What do the words "the cup after supper" (1 Cor. xx. 25, R.V.) mean? Is it not partaken of at the Lord's Supper? It is the paschal Supper that is here referred to, "after" which the Lord's Supper was instituted. In Luke xxii. 17-22, they are clearly distinguished.

By whom will the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matth. xxiv. 14) be preached?—By believing Jews (Isa. lvi. 19). They are called by "the King" on the throne of His glory—"My brethren" (Matth. xxv. 40), and the manner in which they are received or rejected, will determine the reception or rejection in "the Kingdom," of those to whom they bear the message.

Will the Church be on earth when the Lord descends in "flaming fire" (2 Thess. i. 9)?—No. There will be neither the true Church nor the false on earth then. The true Church will be caught up to meet the Lord "in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 17) when He comes as He promised to "receive" His own (John xiv. 3, and the false church—"the synagogue of Satan" (Rev. iii. 9), "Babylon the Great"—will have been destroyed by the world's rulers—the ten kings of the Roman Empire (Rom. xvii. 16)—so that nothing bearing the Name of Christ will remain at His Epiphany to earth.

What does 1 Cor. ix. 12 mean? Does it teach that we may join with all sorts of organisations to get sinners saved?—There is nothing in the passage about Paul labouring *with* others, although it is often made to teach this. What it does teach is, that Paul adapted his modes and language to the capacities of those he laboured for. We know from other Scriptures that he neither diluted the doctrine of the Gospel, nor compromised the truth of which he had been made the steward, in so doing (see Gal. i. 9-10; 1 Thess. ii. 5).

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All such Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to the *Editor*, and marked "Private."

A. B., GLASGOW.—The truth of Election holds an honoured place in the Word of God, and is part of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints." That it has been made an evil use of by hyper-Calvinists and others, who set it against the fulness and freedom of the Gospel, is quite true, but that does not alter it. What truth is there, that men have not distorted and abused? We fear, however, that the chief reason in our day, for the neglect or rejection of this great truth is, that the Divine side of salvation is almost entirely lost sight of, and *man's* choice, *man's* will made everything. Need we wonder, that the most of those who profess conversion under such preaching, after struggling to keep up an unsatisfactory testimony for a few weeks or months, go back to the world. What gospel preachers need in our day is, self-effacement, and a hold on God, who can and will do His own work. It is not the number who "profess," and are advertised, but those who "remain," that are fruit to God.

"INQUIRER," LONDONDERRY.—The field for the preaching of the Gospel is the world. Wherever sinners are to be found, the Gospeller, like His Master, must seek them out. But he must be careful *not to compromise himself, by going into places or associations of a religious character in order to attain his object.* If you are asked to go into a sect or mission to preach, it is not simply going into a part of "the world" to preach Christ, but lending your help to support and perpetuate a system, or cause, which is contrary to the Word of God. And you cannot dis sever your "service" from these, in the eyes of those who see you there, no matter what your thoughts may be. Your presence in a sect, whether preaching or hearing, is a tacit acknowledgment of it and all its belongings.

T. B., CARDIFF.—There is no detailed account in any of the Gospels of the first meeting of Simon Peter with the Lord after his fall. It is simply thus recorded—"The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon" (Luke xxiv. 34). The restoration of a backslider's soul must ever be a matter of personal and private dealing. His restoration to public service was in the presence of his brethren (John xxi. 15).

J. B., EDINBURGH.—The teaching of 1 Cor. iii. 5-20 is, that the Church (not as the body of Christ, composed of all saints of this age, but as the "temple of God," the church gathered and builded, as God's dwelling-place on earth), as committed to man's responsibility, is liable to be defiled by the introduction of false materials—both persons and doctrines. That it has been so, is a matter of history. This chapter is a solemn, and ought to be a searching one, to all who bring materials into God's assembly, not to trust their own wisdom.

R. E. M., AYRSHIRE.—The defection of young believers, the intermarriage of others with those in sects, and their ultimate return to the world's churches with their "strange wives," over which you mourn, all come of the results of the "mixed seed" which has been sown among you during recent years. If men who wander in and out of sects are set up as teachers of the saints, and pushed in wherever a place can be found for them, by those who are in league with such, you may expect to hear of "greater abominations than these." A few Nehemiahs are badly needed (Neh. xiii. 35).

J. A. S., DEVON.—The parable of the "talents" (Matth. xxv. 17)—whatever its primary and dispensational application—may be regarded morally as shewing the Divine conditions of Christian *service*, just as the earlier parable of the same chapter portrays the condition of Christian *profession*. Solemn and searching are the lessons both parables teach us, which the enemy would fain deprive us of, by relegating them to "the Jews," or "the coming dispensation." That they may have a special application to God's earthly people in days to come, is fully in keeping with "the Gospel of the Kingdom," as given by Matthew, but the *moral* of the parables as well as "the Sermon on the Mount" is for us now, and we do well to give earnest heed to both.

"A LONELY ONE" writes—"I welcome with joy the enlarged series of *The Believer's Magazine*. I have received much help in the past from its various ministries. There is no gathering of believers here, and no meetings for teaching. It is almost the only channel through which I get any ministry of the Word." [There are many such lonely ones. Saints with greater privileges should remember them, and send what will by God's blessing cheer and help them on in "the ways that be in Christ."—Ed.]

Our Lines.

IF any should ask, on what special lines we intend to conduct this paper in its enlarged form, our reply is—"On the lines of declaring the whole counsel of God." Our text book will be from Genesis to Revelation. We have no "pet" subjects; we do not restrict ourselves to any particular "branch" of ministry: we do not belong to any exclusive "school" of thought. We believe that all God's people need all God's truth, in due proportion. That which bears upon vital and personal godliness, individual life and walk, and that which applies to corporate privilege and responsibility as well. The individual believer has his needs, so has the assembly of God's saints. It shall therefore be our aim, to bring from the treasury of God's most holy Word, as He shall enable us, what shall by His blessing be for the practical help of His beloved people, in leading them to a closer walk with Himself, and a fuller obedience to His Word, individually and collectively, in these last days of abounding corruption in which our lot is cast. And as the needs are varied, so must be the means of supply. An article on one line of truth may be God's message to some, while a word on quite another subject may awake a chord in others, and give the needed cheer to some who are faint and weary. There are hundreds of individual believers, and scores of little assemblies of saints, who seldom hear the teacher's voice, and everywhere there are lambs of the Lord's blood-bought flock, and babes of the Divine family who need the bread of life broken small, and the truth ministered in great simplicity and plainness. We shall therefore gladly make room for, and welcome in these pages, what the Great Shepherd may see fit to send through His servants, to whom He shall give the message, and that message, whether of five words or five hundred, of reproof or encouragement, whether bearing on Christian position, or condition: to pull down or to build up. Our solemn conviction is, that all the people of God need the whole truth of God, well-balanced; simply, graciously and faithfully ministered, by all whom the Lord has called and fitted to do it. Only thus shall saints and assemblies be kept from extremes and bye-paths, and preserved walking in the ways of the Lord, in a dark and evil day. We shall greatly value the prayers of God's people in this service, and their help in making the Magazine known.

The War in South Africa :

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

THE disastrous war which is at present raging in South Africa, has awakened in many of God's people, deep "searchings of heart." Even men of the world speak of it with bated breath. A solemn stillness is abroad. Men are beginning to feel, that the defeats and disasters sustained by the British arms, have not been allowed for nought. That God has a voice in this war, to the British nation, there can be no doubt. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6). Unless we believe that the God of heaven has abandoned the supreme control of affairs on this earth, we cannot doubt that His hand is in these calamities. Neither need we question, that they have been allowed to come upon this nation as a judicial visitation, because of the violation of God's just and righteous laws. How far the nation, as such, may feel and own the hand of God, it is not for us to say. That those in authority will acknowledge God, and bow to His supreme will, we can scarcely hope. In the world of politicians, other counsels prevail. Even among the leaders of the nation's religion, few, as yet, seem disposed to bow in submission to the sovereign decree. But it ought to be otherwise with the children of God in these lands. Of the lowliest and most hidden of them, it may be said, as of Esther of old, in the days of her people's distress, that they have "come to the kingdom for such a time as this" (Esther iv. 14). To them, the royal audience-chamber is open, and the golden sceptre held forth. They may not take the sword to fight; their voices may be silent in the counsels of the nation; yet they

cannot stand by in cold indifference at such a time as this. Their sphere of influence lies in the sanctuary of God. It is their's to enter the holiest, to draw nigh to God; to humble themselves before Him, and, like Daniel, confess their own sins, and the sins of their people. It may be that God awaits the united cries of His people; the fervent, effectual prayers of His remembrancers, ere He put forth His hand to stay the ravages of this sad war. The sooner we learn the lesson our God designs by these calamities to teach us, the sooner will the hour of deliverance come. That He has a controversy with us, must be evident to all. He does not afflict willingly, or allow desolation and sorrow to fill so many homes, without a cause. It is for us to search our hearts in His light, and try our ways by the standard of His Word, and be humbled for our sins and backslidings individually, collectively, nationally. It is not a question of God being *for* our enemies: very far, we believe, from that. But He who used Satan to sift a heady Peter, and to afflict a self-righteous Job, and who made heathen nations to become the scourge in His hand to chastise His people Israel for their sins, can use the engines of war of the South African Republics to teach this highly-privileged, but we fear increasingly God-forgetting British Nation, what He taught by severe chastisements the proud ruler of the first great Gentile empire of old, even that "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," that "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth," and "those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Dan. iv. 32, 37). May the Lord stir up among His people, a spirit of earnest prayer; prayer that will lay hold on God and prevail, not only for the cessation of

war, but that having learnt the lessons our God would thereby teach us, that we may see in a measure we have not hitherto seen, the river of spiritual blessing flow, reviving and refreshing the garden of the Lord and carrying life and salvation to thousands and tens of thousands of the unsaved, both here and in South Africa, whose hearts have been softened and their souls prepared by the ploughshare of sorrow, to receive the tidings of blood-bought peace, as it is proclaimed in the Gospel of Christ. Let the people of God gather in twos and threes, and wherever it can be, in larger numbers, and cry to God until His deliverance be made known.

J. R.

Our Faithful Keeper.

“He will keep the feet of His saints” (1 Sam. ii. 9).

Power over all unto Jesus is given,

He keepeth rule o'er the craft of the foe,
Living to save, and to bring us to heaven,

To strengthen His people in conflict below ;
All who against us in malice arise,
Make His salvation more fair in our eyes.

Are the dark thunder-clouds gathering o'er us ?

Storms but establish the fruit-bearing tree ;
Christ hath passed through all the tempest before us,
Safe in His keeping His people shall be ;
Fear not—He ever remains at our side,
All through the conflict He there will abide.

Vain are the snares that the enemy weaveth,

God ever plucketh our feet from the net ;
Certain fulfilment His purpose receiveth,
Ne'er hath His help been withdrawn from us yet.
Never, O foes, shall ye compass your end ;
Blessing, the steps of the saints shall attend.

What if earth's sages are warily treading,

God doth the wise in their craftiness take,
Full in our sight is the snare they are spreading,
For their own feet is the pit that they make ;
CHRIST keeps us free, by the power of His name,
Trusting in Him, none shall put us to shame.

The Fold and the Flock.

SECOND PAPER. BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

“TO Him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear His voice.” Not by His wonderful miracles was the Messiah recognised, but by the voice of heavenly music heard by the inner ear divinely opened.

The testimony of the miracles was valuable as confirming faith, but was never intended as *the basis* of attachment to Christ. When many believed on His Name at Jerusalem when they saw the miracles which He did, Jesus did not commit Himself to them, for He knew the true state of all by divine omniscience. Thus Nicodemus, who owned Him as a teacher sent from God, because of His miracles, was given to understand that “the Kingdom of God” was beyond his spiritual eyesight so long as he remained a stranger to the greater miracle of the Holy Ghost in the soul of man, *the new birth* (John ii. 23 to iii. 3).

The sheep, called “His own,” heard His voice, found refreshment in His ministry, and abandoned themselves to the safe guidance of that voice. His ministry of teaching might astonish the multitude, for He spake as one having authority and not as the scribes, and it might even gain momentary applause, because of the gracious words which came out of His lips, but the Shepherd's voice is a much deeper thing. That can only be heard by the ear of the soul, and in order to that, a deep work of God is necessary. Without that, the accents of that voice of melody and tenderness will fall in vain upon the sinner's ear. When many apparent disciples stumbled over His “*hard sayings*,” those very difficulties were “*the words of eternal life*” to the true sheep, and they knew they

could hear them nowhere else (compare John vi. 60 with 68). Simon Peter was thus a sample sheep. What flesh and blood could not have shown him, the Father's work in his soul had "revealed." The lowly carpenter from Nazareth, was to His divinely illuminated soul, "the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Conversion is not the result of some clever trick played by "the evangelist," nor is it even the result of believing some "text." The inward knowledge of divine things no man can communicate to another, and even the Scriptures in themselves are not enough. The Jews had the Scriptures and searched them well, yet found not eternal life in them. No one knows the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him. The Scriptures point me to the Son in whom the life is, and who alone knows the Father. The work of God in my soul brings me to the Son, and hearing Him the Father is revealed. God thus becomes known. The light of life has chased out of the soul the darkness of death. When the Shepherd entered His fold, He was recognised only by those divinely wrought upon. There were the Simeons, Elizabeths, Annas, and obscure shepherds on the fields; afterwards those who bowed beneath the solemn messages of the Baptist, and submitted to have all their religious pretences buried beneath the baptismal waters of Jordan. They were the sheep to whom the voice of the Shepherd was clear and distinct, vibrating through their divinely prepared souls. They looked beneath His outward poverty and the lowliness of His manifestation. They had heard "the voice."

And where did that voice lead them to? As they followed it, a step at a time, sure that it would not misdirect them, as the

strange guide they instinctively shrunk from would, they at last found themselves outside their traditional fold. The voice had led them outside the camp.

The voice of the gentle Shepherd had more weight over their consciences than all the learning of the Scribes and Pharisees, and all the authority of a dead priestcraft. The prophet greater than Moses was in the land, and they would hearken to Him alone now. The law was given by the first, but grace and truth came by the second. The "Come and see" of the Lamb of God drew them on and on, until Judaism, with all its time-honoured institutions and its ancient glory, was left behind. That which had captivated their hearts once, had lost its magic spell, because of the wondrous beauty and harmony of the Shepherd's tender voice, heard in the silent depth of their inward souls.

That voice is still heard to-day. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I most bring, and *they shall hear My voice*" (verse 16). It is a "still small voice." But where the heart has learned the secret of becoming still, it will make itself heard. Above the confused noises of martial preparation in the armed camps of Europe, above the bitter wail of our crowded cities, as well as where the unspeakable groan of dark despair is wrung from heathen lands, the gentle Shepherd goes from heart to heart and causes it to hear His voice of peace and love.

Jesus is our Shepherd, wiping every tear,
Folded in His bosom, what have we to fear?
Only let us follow whither He doth lead,
To the thirsty desert, or the dewy mead.

What following that voice brings the sheep into, we shall try and gather up from the 10th of John, in our next paper.

The Church of the Thessalonians.

Second Address by Donald Munro, Toronto.

Read 1 Thessalonians i. ii. 1-13.

THERE are several things which the apostle Paul gives thanks to God for in this Thessalonian church, which are worthy of notice.

First, for their *election*. They had made "their calling and election sure" (2 Peter i. 10), and he could thank God for that.

Next, for their "work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God." That included every one of them "for you all." What an assembly! The most known to us are poor compared with this, as regards practical life and testimony. Thank God, as to our salvation, we are as fully and eternally saved as were those Thessalonians, for what God does He does perfectly. But in regard to godly life and testimony, we have to think and speak rather in this way: "Well, there are a number, more or less, on whose account we can give thanks to God, for since their conversion they have gone on with God, seeking to please Him, growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are making their profiting manifest to all." But of the rest you just have to say—"Well, I hope they are saved," and twelve months later you meet them and have to say the same. There seems to be no difference, no growth. Like the door on its hinges, they come and go, but there is no progress, no growth in grace, no learning of the ways of God. Dear children of God, I would like to come close to our hearts and consciences as to this. How does it stand with each of you? How are you getting on? Are you making progress, growing in the grace of God,

learning and obeying His will? Have you all, like these Thessalonians, been baptized (as I am sure they were according to apostolic command and custom), and taken your place with saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus? If not, then I tell you, you are not getting on with God. You are not making progress in the path of obedience to His Word, for these are the first and earliest steps in that path. And we have been saved, not to do our own will, or to be led by our own views, or by the traditions of men, but to take the Bible, the blessed Word of God, to guide us in everything. Read the Word, and if you are simple and honest, you will see these things for yourselves. If you do not see them, it is because you read the Word of God through the coloured spectacles of prejudice and tradition. The apostle remembered "without ceasing," these Thessalonians, and gave God thanks for them all.

Then he tells, how the Gospel *came* to them. "Not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Notice, this is how the Gospel "came" to them. God had sent His servants to Thessalonica. He had business to do there, and they were in his counsels, and knew they were led by the Holy Ghost, and that the hand of God was with them. They knew what God was about to do, before they began preaching there. The Gospel came with "much assurance"; they had full confidence in the message, and in the power that would go forth with it. This is the kind of thing we want. Talk about revivals! this is the revival we need: the hand of the Lord with us. With Paul, it was no haphazard, uncertain affair, whether there was to be sinners saved or not. He

was sure about it. Then see, how the Word was *received*. Not "as the word of men," not a verse given by this or that one; not believing because Mr. So-and-so says it, but as God's eternal truth. Thus "it wrought effectually in them"; it brought them into contact with the living God Himself. They received it "in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." It was not a popular thing then, to become a Christian. They would have to take the spoiling of their goods; to be cast off by their friends, and to lose all their reputation. It would do us a power of good, to have a little of such persecution now-a-days. And I tell you, it would soon blow away a lot of the chaff. Then they *lived* it. They became "ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achia!" Thus the servants of God could point to them wherever they went, and say—"See, this is the fruit of our Gospel." It is the lack of such lives on the part of many who profess to believe, that causes the greatest hindrance to the Gospel's spread among men in our day. Then they *preached* it. "From you sounded out the Word of the Lord." It was *in* them like a fire in their bones, and they could not keep it. It was not that they had learned to discourse nicely, or to "take the platform"; but the Word of God was *in* them in power, and it had to *come out* in the power of God also. "In every place." Just think of that! One point more. From Acts xx. 1-4, we learn that Paul was not a popular preacher in the world: he was not run after. As our brother, Donald Ross, sometimes says—"He was not run after for his photograph"; the ungodly followed him to kill him." He was continually in an uproar. See what follows in verse 4, "of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus." Not

only did the Thessalonian assembly, as a whole, sound forth the Word of the Lord through Macedonia, but out from that assembly two evangelists were raised up and sent forth, and became companions in travel and labour, fellow-servants and yoke-fellows in the Gospel. All as the result of three weeks' labour in Thessalonica! Dear brethren, out of all the preaching, how few are saved to live such lives as these Thessalonians! How very few are raised up and sent forth to preach! What is the cause? Just this. We think we can preach and teach, because we have learned something, and with our little bit of knowledge we go on preaching whether God is in it or not. And thus God's real business is almost at a standstill. Oh the self-satisfaction; the Laodicean condition, with so few stirred up to take hold on God! It is GOD we need. We must have God. Little preaching will do if God is with us. Without God, there may be lots of preaching, but nothing lasting, nothing to God's glory will come out of it all. O to be like Hannah, stirred up to lay hold on God. Then there will be power, and abiding fruit to the glory of God.

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Notes on the Psalms.

BY THE LATE WM. LINCOLN, OF BERESFORD.

PSALM I.

Subject:—"The Righteous Man,"—"Ish," man of high degree, in contrast to the lawless or wicked, and judgment to come.

NONE but Christ fully answers the description here given, yet these characteristics are found in all His people. God looking out into the world perfectly distinguishes between the righteous and the wicked. Some acquainting themselves with God, are walking in fellowship with Him,

while others are progressing in evil and ripening for hell.

The *First and Second Psalms* are of a fundamental character. Christ as the obedient, dependent Man, delighting in the law of Jehovah; then Christ in resurrection, on the throne ruling, judging. In the Jewish Version they form one Psalm, beginning and ending with a beatitude.

Verse 1.—“O the blessedness,” excellence of joy, is here expressed. “Walketh, standeth, sitteth,” here is the way of the world. The ungodly have their counsels, plans of their own; sinners have their paths; scorners their seat, in which at ease they sit. The godly are kept from all this. They learn to walk in other counsels.

Verse 2, tells how. “But his delight is in the law of Jehovah.” “On the contrary” to the lawless, he finds his joy in Jehovah’s “law,” not His promises merely, but what He commands. “In His law doth He meditate day and night,” not minutes over the Word, and hours over the newspaper, but “day and night” he meditates—“hum, ha!” in God’s word. What surprises the Holy Ghost gives to those who make the Word of God their study thus! Prize the Word. Feed upon it. If you do not delight in it, read it till you do. But you must gather before you feed. “Thy words were *found*, and I did *eat* them” (Jer. xv. 16). “Meditate on these things,” be in them, “that thy profiting may be manifested to all.” Then follows a description of this blessed man as others see him.

Verse 3.—“He shall be like a tree planted.” Of a good stock, transplanted in good soil as all God’s plants are. “By the streams of water”; what God plants He also waters, (see Gen. ii. 8-10). “The trees of the Lord are full of sap” (Psa. civ. 16). A tree sucks

up the water and grows apace. Thus the Holy Spirit takes the Word and applies it, giving strength to the inner man (Eph. iii. 17). “Bringeth forth fruit.” Fruit is the result of union and communion. “He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit” (John xv. 5). “His leaf also shall not wither;” he is an “evergreen” like Caleb (Jos. xiv. 10-11). “Not so the ungodly,” empty, worthless, “like the chaff” are they. They “shall not stand up in the judgment” (see Rev. vi. 17). Their way is even now “an abomination to the Lord” (Prov. xv. 9), and must perish. Solemn end! Verse 6, is a hint that what pleases God is, when His people love and meditate in His Word (see Job. xxiii. 10).

PSALM II.

God's Counsels concerning Christ, announced, but not yet fulfilled.

Verses 1-3.—“Why do the nations rage? the Gentile world: “and the people” (Israel) imagine (meditate) a vain thing?” These words are quoted in Acts iv. 25-27, and applied to the rejection and death of Christ. What a combination, an organized opposition! “Gathered together against Jehovah and against His Messiah; saying—Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.” Such is the spirit of the world, lawless, insubject; it was so at the Cross, it is now, and will be in fuller measure when “The Lawless One” appears and heads up in himself the forces of lawlessness leading on the last great revolt against Jehovah and His Anointed.

Is heaven perturbed by this? Let God answer.

Verses 4-5.—“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord (Adonay)

shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure." His laugh of derision, conjoined with His wrath shew how terribly in earnest God will be. The day of Divine vengeance has come, and short work He will make of it. Such words as those of Isa. lxiii. 1-3, so often wrongly applied to a suffering Christ, tell of this "day of vengeance" (v. 4), when the blood of His foes shall stain all His raiment. But the time is not yet. What intervenes?

Verses 6-7.—"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill." Is there one who delights in God's will and makes His Word the meditation of the heart, in contradistinction to the lawless, who meditate (same word in Psa. i. 2, and ii. 1) vain things? Then God will own it. "I have set my King." Yes, He will declare the decree "Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee." These words refer to resurrection. He was "set up," anointed from everlasting (Prov. viii. 23), the Eternal Son, but it was in resurrection that he was declared to "be the Son of God with power" (Rom. i. 4). His sonship was not manifested until God declared it by raising Him out from among the dead. So shall He yet declare who are His sons. The words of the Psalm are interpreted to us by the Holy Ghost in Acts. xiii. 32-33. He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the *Second* Psalm "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." How singularly accurate is Scripture. The very number of the psalm is here authenticated by the Holy Ghost. What follows? Judgment.

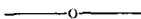
Verses 8-9.—"Ask of Me and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance." Did Christ at His resurrection ask this?

Did He then begin to dash His enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel? We know that He did not. Between verses 7 and 8, a long parenthesis comes in, during which God is dealing with His enemies in GRACE, and Christ is seated not as a King ruling the world, but as a High Priest saving and lifting up His people out of it. These dispensational breaks are common in Scripture. As on a distant prospect two mountain peaks seem close together, yet as you draw near you find them to be miles apart, so the present dispensation of grace and of the church's call, intervenes in many passages of Old Testament Scripture. See Isa. lxi. 1-2, where in the middle of the latter verse, a period of over eighteen centuries comes in, just at the point where the Lord in the synagogue at Nazareth, "closed the book and sat down," (Luke iv. 18-20). He is not yet asking for, or taking possession of His earthly inheritance. What is He asking for? John xvii. 9-24 tells. In the timeless gap between verses 7 and 8, Christ is taking possession of the heavens, and receiving for Himself a people to fill these heavens. Here comes in our place of peculiar blessing, on which the Old Testament is silent. It was a secret "hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9); not a whisper of it was heard in earlier ages. But when the Son of God was raised to heavenly glory, as the First-born from the dead, He began to raise up in association with Himself those whom He is not ashamed to call His "brethren" (see John xx. 17, with Heb. ii. 11), sons of God, and joint-heirs with Himself (Rom. viii. 17). O the dignity, and the wondrous blessing of thus being raised to share with Christ His place and glory above the heavens. Israel's hopes required that He should rise from the dead, but not

that He should be glorified in the highest heaven. This He was, as we know from Heb. v. 5-6, where again the words of this Second Psalm are quoted—when He became our Great High Priest, to minister to and raise us up to where He is. Verse 9, is God's promise to Christ, and in Rev. iii. 26-27, He gives it to His Church, for Christ will share with His heavenly people His dominion and His glory. There is nothing of this revealed in the Psalms.

Verse 12.—“Kiss the Son.” A word to God's enemies—to the unconverted. It is no use opposing Him, He will triumph. It is yet the day of grace. “Kiss the Son,” is God's last voice to the world. Their attitude toward Him settles their eternal destiny. It is not religion, or reformation, but the Son of God. “Reconciled to God by the death of His Son” (Rom. v. 10). “He that hath the Son hath life” (1 John v. 12), “Kiss the Son.” You a leprous sinner; He the Holy Son of God; yet your touch does not defile Him, but makes you clean. “In a little”—O how brief the period of grace—“His wrath will be kindled,” then it will be too late.

“O the blessedness of all that put their trust in Him.”



Swaddling Them with Prayer.

IN a Scotch mining village, there was some years ago a remarkable work of grace. Many were converted, baptized and gathered unto the One Worthy Name of the Lord Jesus. There was a good deal of opposition from the world, but that only served to sever the chaff from the wheat, and to cause the young converts to cleave

closely to the Lord, and to His precious Word. By and by the first love of some began to wax cold, and just about the same time, all outward opposition from the world ceased. To some, this seemed a hopeful sign, and a token of better days at hand. But there were three godly, aged women—real mothers in Israel—in that village, who read these signs in a different light altogether. After their hour of evening prayer—for they met twice or thrice a week in one of their houses to pray—one said to the others, “We'll need to swaddle these bairns with believing prayer, for they are in more danger now, than when the devil was roaring against them. I never saw his opposition cease, without finding that he had got in at some corner, and was doing mischief secretly, which unless the Lord prevent, and rebuke him, we'll have sorrow and trouble.” So the three godly women met to pray every night, especially for the lambs of the flock, who were in danger of being led astray by the wiles and subtleties of the adversary. Well did these simple souls know his devices, and well too what the only means was to prevent them. They will never be reckoned among the wise ones of earth, but they were skilled in the laws of the heavenly kingdom, and their close acquaintance with God, gave them a keen scent of where the dangers lay, and what was needed to meet them. So they prayed and watched, until the hour of temptation had passed by, and the young believers had come safely through. But it came out in after years, that some wonderful deliverances were wrought *the very week* that the three aged women met every night to pray. One had been invited to a ball, and had decided to go: when suddenly the word “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful

works of darkness" flashed across her mind, and she confessed her sin, renounced her purpose, and was restored to God. Another, had got into company with an unconverted young woman, and was on the way that leads to an unequal yoke, when God spoke to him during the silent night, and he was delivered from the snare. There was a general restoration of soul, followed by a time of real refreshing, and a great revival. Everybody rejoiced and shared the blessing, which I doubt not was heaven's answer to the cry of the three aged women who "swaddled these bairns" with their prayers. What a blessing such a few praying souls are in a company of God's people! Their's is a high and honoured service, more effectual than that of the most gifted preacher or the wisest ruler, for it deals directly with the Eternal God. Yet it is within the reach of all—of *you*, reader, if you wish it—and its chief, yea, its only qualification is a heart for God, and for His people.

SERVICE—My business is, with all my might to serve my own generation. In doing so I shall best serve the next generation should the Lord Jesus tarry. The longer I live, the more I am enabled to realize, that I have but a *brief* life for sowing, in comparison with eternity, for reaping.

Geo. Müller.

The Character of the Times.

RITUALISM and Romanising practices, unless promptly checked, will soon land the National Church at the feet of the Pope. Popery is making gigantic strides, and Protestantism is losing ground. Rationalism, too, is gaining a firm foothold, not in

Popery, but in the Protestant bodies generally. No help need be expected from the State to stem these currents. There are too many Papists, and too many semi and avowed Infidels in the Government to deal with these evils. Besides, constitutional Governments, and democratic ones too, cannot afford to offend any section of their supporters. The Governments of the day are drifting away from God, and the Bible.

The Churches are quite equal to the world now in providing amusement for the people. Dramatic entertainments, concerts, raffles, numerous mountebank tricks and performances, kissing (!) and other questionable practices in church, school rooms, and chapel, presided over by the clergyman, and the proceedings opened with prayer, is the run of the day, and all for money! The first characteristic of the Babylon of the Apocalypse (chap. xviii. 12) is *gold*; the last of the twenty-eight features enumerated is the *souls* of men (verse 13). Christian men and ministers, purge yourselves from these vile associations.

The Inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures is held and defended by how many of the clergy? Are those who warmly defend the verbal Inspiration of the Word of God in the minority or the majority?

The Lord's day is being secularised by Church and State alike, while municipal and other local authorities, are doing their best in the same unholy direction.

Vital religion is dying out—dying a slow but sure death. Thank God there are many true hearts for Christ. Men and women there are who are living devoted lives for Him.

W. S.

The Bible Annotator.

Biblical Outlines, Varied Readings, Marginal Notes, Brief Expositions of Difficult Passages, and all Helps to Bible Study will be welcomed for this column.

THREE GIFTS of Christ to His own in John xvii. "Eternal Life" (ver. 4). "Thy Word" (ver. 14). "The Glory" (ver. 22).

CONSECRATION.—There are two Hebrew words rendered "consecrated" in the Authorized Version which are never to be conformed. The one word signifies "set apart" or "SEPARATED as holy to God." It occurs in Exod. xxviii. 3; xxx. 30, &c.; the other signifies "having the HAND FILLED," and occurs in Exod. xxviii. 41; xxix. 9, 29, 33, 35, &c. Both are true of the believer. *In* Christ he is "set apart"—sanctified (1 Cor. i. 2); in Him also he is "complete"—filled full (Col. ii. 10).

QUESTION XV. What is the force of the name "Christian" in Acts xi. 26, and was it given by God, or in derision by man?

QUESTION XVI. To what events do the words "the restitution of all things" (Acts iii. 21) refer? I find they are used by those who advocate "Universalism," and in another form, theorists of "The Larger Hope," or the ultimate salvation of all men, quote the passage to support their doctrine?

Concise, Scriptural answers to the above questions, will be welcomed by the Editor.

"THE BIBLE STUDENTS' CLASS" which numbers over six hundred, chiefly Young Believers, is conducted in "The Sunday School Worker's Magazine and Bible Student's Helper," which we give a hearty invitation to all who love the Word of God to share. There is no "membership" in the ordinary sense of that term, but simply a prayerful and united study of a weekly Bible Subject for soul food and mutual profit. We have received hundreds of letters from children of God in all parts of the world, who have derived much help in the truth of God, and much blessing on their spiritual life through sharing in these studies. Formerly the subject was *monthly*, but in answer to very many requests, we began this year with a *weekly* subject, so that it might form the theme of study and consideration at Weekly Bible Readings, which are held by many Assemblies, as well as for Bible Class

and personal study. The subjects for the whole year are from "The Epistle to the Hebrews"—an epistle full of the glories of Christ and His work, and thus form a soul-enriching theme. A neat card, giving the *fifty-two* subjects for the year, will be sent *free* to any believer who would like to share the studies of the class, and to bring it before fellow-believers. Notes and Expositions on all the subjects appear each month in "The Bible Student's Helper." Price, One Halfpenny Monthly.

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The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

Are "fallen angels" and "demons" the same? If not, wherein do they differ? "The angels that sinned" (2 Pet. ii. 4), "which kept not their own principality" (Jude 6, R.V.), are said to be "in chains," reserved for judgment. They take no part therefore in the affairs of earth. "Demons" do (1 Cor. x. 20-21; 1 Tim. iv. 1; Rev. xvi. 14); far more too than most people think.

What is "the Gospel of the uncircumcision" referred to in Gal. ii. 17? The special revelation committed to Paul to preach to the Gentiles. It was not taught him by the other apostles, but communicated by him to them, years after he received and had been preaching it. He calls it "My Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16). In character and scope it was distinct from anything preached by Peter or any of "the twelve," as recorded in "The Acts." Paul's Gospel had been "kept secret" till revealed to him; it was for "all nations" (see Rom. xvi. 25), and included union with Christ, and with all His members in one Spirit.

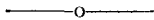
Who are "the Gentiles" mentioned in 3 John 7? Clearly the unconverted, from whom those who had gone forth "for The Name" took nothing. Times have changed, for now some who at least profess to be Christ's servants both "take" and "beg" from the ungodly.

Do the words "in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22) teach, that only the saved shall have a resurrection? No. John v. 28, clearly states that "all who are in their graves" shall be raised, though not all at the same time. 1 Cor. xv. deals only with the resurrection of those "who are

Christ's." The argument of the apostle is, that Christ's resurrection is the pledge of their's. Adam became the cause of death to all his race—to all who are "in Adam." In like manner Christ becomes to all who are related to Him—to all who are "in Christ"—the source of life.

Do the words "cannot sin" 1 John iii. 9, apply to believers now? Yes, viewed as possessors of a Divine nature, in which *standing* John's Epistle regards all who have been born of God. But as a complex being, possessed of two natures, which is his actual *state*, the believer can and often does sin. Hence the provision made for his restoration in 1 John i. 8-10 and ii. 1-2.

A SERVANT MAID writes—"I am a domestic servant, engaged in the house of a Restaurateur. My master asks me to go on Saturdays and serve in his Restaurant, supplying intoxicating drinks. I am very unhappy while there. Would it be insubjection to my earthly master to refuse? Not if the work exceeds the terms of your engagement. No master has any right to ask a domestic servant to serve as a barmaid. You should politely "request"—as Daniel did his master in Babylon (Dan. i. 18)—not to be asked to do what offends your conscience,—at the same time pointing out that it is not what you were engaged to do. If your master has any sense of honour, he will free you from it, but if otherwise, then you must take a decided stand and refuse. Better leave the place, than do what offends your conscience, enlightened by the truth, as it must to serve drink to those who frequent such places. Have no parley with the "drink traffic;" it is a godless, demoralising business from top to bottom, and certainly not a "calling" wherein any Christian can "abide with God" (1 Cor. vii. 22).



Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

A. D., CARLUKE.—The invitation of the Lord Jesus in Matthew xi. 28, is doubtless for the *sinner*, while the word in the following verse is for the *saint*. The former rest is found by *coming unto* Jesus the Saviour: the latter in *taking* the yoke of Jesus the Lord.

C. B., VANCOUVER.—"The tabernacle," or "Tent of appointed meeting," pitched by Moses without the camp (Exod. xxiii. 7), was not the tabernacle afterwards set up and filled with "the glory of Jehovah" (Exodus xl. 38).

"YOUNG BELIEVER," AVR.—We think a prayer meeting for sisters may be carried on with much profit and blessing, but we do not see anything in the Word which would warrant a Christian female to lead in audible prayer, in a mixed gathering of male and female believers.

E. A. L., MANCHESTER.—If God has given one of your number a special gift for the preaching of the Gospel, and grace to use it aright; if when preaching, this brother gets and keeps the people, and God uses his preaching in bringing sinners to Christ, certainly he should have a free hand given him, to go on as long as he feels led of the Spirit of God to do so. To have to give place to another, simply because his time is "up," and another preacher's "turn" come, who may have little or no ability, and less power in his preaching, would be a serious principle to adopt, and is a course clearly not of God. Scripture does teach that all believers are priests, but not that all are public preachers, to have a chance of the platform in turn.

A. S., DUNDEE.—The word "deacon," in Tim. iii. 8 and elsewhere, is a Greek word Englished rather than translated. It simply means "servant" (and is so translated in John ii. 15). It refers to any public service in the assembly, and not only to taking charge of money matters. The qualifications here named, and their being "proved," are required in all who serve the Lord in whatever ministry. If this were made the standard, as God means it should, the *quantity* might be diminished, but the *quality* of service would be vastly improved.

L. E. W., GLOUCESTER.—Every candidate for ordination in the Church of England must openly avow in answer to the question of the ordaining Bishop, that he unfeignedly believes "all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." Without attempting to discuss the figment of "Apostolic succession," or the "virtue" that ordination is supposed to convey, we ought at least to expect that men who so declare themselves before God and the world, would fulfil their vow, and loyally proclaim the Scriptures to be the Word of God." But what do we find? The very men who openly avowed

their "unfeigned belief in the Sacred Scriptures," leading the horde of sceptics who are seeking to discredit and destroy them. So much for their honesty. But what can we say of a "Church" which retains such conspirators within its borders, many of them in high places, too? Would "The Jockey Club," or any other worldly society, do the like? No wonder that you, and other children of God with you, are "deeply exercised" as to your association—"nominal," as you say it is—with such a corrupt and demoralizing system. May God give you increased light from His Word, and courage to act upon what you have already received. A step at a time is God's way. The way opens as we follow what God has shewn. "Cease to do evil: learn to do well" (Isa. i. 16, 17) is the Divine order of things. So, if God has shewn you and other exercised fellow-believers, that it is "evil" to be in association with a corrupt and worldly religious system, even to the extent of having your name inscribed on its "Communion Roll," one step at least ought to be clear, and when you take that step, the Lord will no doubt shew you the next. You do not need to see it, and probably will not, until you follow the light you have got. May the Lord give you grace to do what will be well-pleasing unto Him, and bring blessing to yourselves.

L. L., EXETER.—The best way to exercise fellow-believers as to the evil of association with worldly religious systems is to keep out of them yourself, and thus shew that your separation from the world's religion is not a mere whim, but in obedience to the Word of God. We fail entirely to see how you can expect to "gain their confidence," by going in and making common cause with them in what you profess, in obedience to the call of God, to have come out from. The only real *influence* any Christian can have over saint or sinner, is acquired by walking with God, in obedience to His Word, and then graciously, wisely, and faithfully speaking that Word for the deliverance and blessing of others. It is sometimes forgotten that the deliverance of a saint from a false position, is the work of the Spirit and Word of God, as truly as is the conversion of a sinner, and in order to be in a fit condition for God to use, in either the one or other of these deliverances, the believer must be "sanctified"—separated from all that is not of God. May it be so with all who seek in any sphere to serve the Lord.

Notes on Current Events.

The disastrous war in South Africa has, among other sad effects, scattered most of the companies of God's people, both British and Dutch, who were gathered in the Lord's Name, in happy fellowship one with another. In JOHANNESBURG, where there were about 100, there are now 8 or 9 gathering to "break bread." At KIMBERLEY, VREEDADORP, and KLERKSDORP, there were hearty gatherings of Dutch believers, full of gospel zeal, in which our brethren, Jas. A. Goch and J. Van der Rijst, took much interest, and spent much labour, we fear, are all, for the present, scattered. May God in mercy restore peace to the country, and speed on the Gospel message, where the engines of war now spread death and desolation abroad.

The present is a good opportunity for Christians who have friends on the battlefield, and others going forth, to mail them the Gospel to read. Far from home, facing Eternity, they will read what they little cared for at home. Book post rate to Africa is cheap—4 oz. for 1d.

We are glad to hear of some who have gone forth to tell of Christ to our soldiers, on the field and in the hospital. A Divine call, and fitness for such work, is very specially needed, apart from which there will be an utter breakdown. Men who—like Duncan Mathieson, who went to the Crimea to preach Christ—have qualified at home, and thoroughly commended themselves by their arduous labours, are the men to stand by and support; not mere adventurers, who may wish to be mentioned in religious "dispatches" as "heroes in the war."

The home-call of D. L. Moody removes another prominent Gosseller from the field. No doubt his plain and simple message reached thousands, and eternity will tell the full results. In their panegyrics, several ministers lay special stress on the fact that Mr. Moody was always loyal to, and wrought "in harmony with all the Churches." Perhaps; but during his first visit to Scotland, hundreds of God's people were, by means of his Bible Readings, shaken free from their traditions, and led to search the Word of God for themselves, with the result, that very many were brought out from them altogether, to gather unto the One Name, of which alone God says: "Unto HIM shall the gathering of the people be."

The Lord Reigneth.

WE live in strange and wonderful times. Everything here below seems to be shaking, in some cases ready to crumble into fragments. Strong and mighty nations are on their trial. Governments are trembling in the balance. The forces of disorder gather strength, and increase in audacity. Military and civil authorities cease to be a terror to evil-doers. Lawlessness walks brazen-faced in open day. The very channels of government give it shelter. Little respect is paid to authority of any kind. In things religious, chaos abounds. Old landmarks fast disappear. Creeds no longer dominate faith. The churches are honeycombed with scepticism. The colleges are hot-beds for the production of infidels. True Christians are a feeble and divided band. Little fellowship or godly unity exist among saints. Few ministers of the truth are "fellow-workers" in the kingdom; what one builds up, another seeks to throw down. The Gospel is obscured by philosophy, hindered by inconsistency, crippled by carnal means adopted for its propagation. All things point to the end being near: the filling up of the world's cup of iniquity: the near approach of the great Deceiver, whom the world will welcome as its idol. Before iniquity reaches its climax, the saints of God will be in heaven. Enoch-like, they will pass off the scene, be translated, without tasting death, to their heavenly home. Even now they know that Jehovah reigneth. Far above kings and emperors, governments and parliaments, legislators and rebels, the Eternal God sits in the calm of His holy heaven, the supreme Director of all that concerns His own glory, the blessing of His

people, and the fulfilling of His eternal purposes. Not one jot or tittle of His will shall fail. Not a hair of His saints can perish without His knowledge. True, He may allow the enemy to gain an apparent triumph. The saints may have to suffer. Dark days may come. The faith and patience of the saints may be tried. The chaff may be driven from among the wheat. God may maintain silence, while men blaspheme His Name. But He lives and reigns all the same. "He sitteth above the waterfloods." Silent He may be: unconcerned He cannot be. He loves His people with a perfect love. His people believe in His love, they confide in His wisdom, they know His peace. He is their "strong habitation whereunto they continually resort" (Psa. lxxi. 31). This is the secret of peace, the source of safety, the place of power, and the pavilion of praise for the pilgrim people of God, till these calamities be overpast. All else may fail, but the Eternal God remains, the portion of His people, and while He lives and reigns supreme over all, the safety and blessing of His people are eternally secure. Therefore let the saints of God be joyful in their King, yea, let them shout for joy that—"The Lord reigneth."

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so must dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
In blessings on your head.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain,
GOD is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

J. R.

The Fatherhood of God.

IN writing out some thoughts on this subject, it is not my purpose to discuss what is known as the "universal Fatherhood of God." That question has been settled by the Spirit, so no one needs to be in any doubt on that point, when we have such expressions as this, "In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil" (1 John iii., 10). Again, "We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (the wicked One). The subject heart can be in no difficulty regarding this matter. That God is the author and source of all life no one will question, but His Creatorship and Fatherhood must not be confounded. It is the relation which exists between God as a Father, and all those who are born again, which I purpose to look at in the following remarks.

First, let us look at the reality of this relationship. It is not a figure of speech. It is a vital union. The word "adoption," as it is now understood, does not convey the Divine thought. I see Mr. Newberry substitutes the word "sonship" in every instance where we have adoption in the text, except in Romans viii. 23, and there the subject is the redemption of the body. Believers are not the children of God by adoption as we understand that word in common use. All the saved are children of God by birth. Hence, the Lord Jesus is called the "first begotten" (Heb. i. 6). He is called the "firstborn from the dead" (literally, from among the dead), (Col. i. 18). And He is called "the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29). If He is the *first* born, then it follows that there are more children in the same family, and Romans viii. 29, tells us that there are

"many" more who are children or sons of God in the same sense in which He is spoken of as "the firstborn from among the dead." Before His incarnation, He was the "only begotten in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18). When the angel told to Mary the manner of His birth, he said, "Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). It might almost be said that in that sense He was the only begotten of the Father. But there is a *third* sense in which the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. That is in resurrection. "When He bringeth again the first begotten into the world, He saith: And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. i. 6). It is into this relationship in *resurrection* that all believers are brought. "Quickened together with Christ" (Ephesians ii. 5). "Quickened together with Him" (Col. ii. 5). "Begotten again unto a lively (living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter i. 3).

There are many blessings and responsibilities flowing out of this relationship, but as children of God we will never be able to enjoy the one, or fulfil the other, until we take in the truth in its sweet reality, that all who have received Christ by believing in His name (John i. 12, 13), are the veritable begotten, and born children of the living God. All who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, are also all called unto the fellowship of the Son of God (1 Cor. i. 2-9). All who are thus born again, no more belong to this world than does the Firstborn of the heavenly family, who is now in the presence of God in heaven. We were all born *into* this world by *natural* birth, and all believers have been *taken out* of this world by our *spiritual*

birth. Hence we are not of this world, even as He is not of this world. We will never be able to enjoy or live out this truth, until we are assured of the reality in our hearts; not only in our heads, but in our hearts. And God has given us the most perfect assurance of its truth. We have first, His Word for it. He has also sent forth the Spirit of His Son into the hearts of all who are born into His family, crying, "Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). Again, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). This is something beyond the possession of eternal life, or even the assurance of eternal life. The written Word is the Divine assurance that all believers are in present possession of eternal life (see I John v. 13). We should never confound the "witness," or testimony, spoken of in this chapter from verses 9-11, with the witness of the indwelling Spirit in Romans viii. 16. The one is the written Word, testifying that as believers, we are now in possession of *eternal life*. The other is the Spirit of sonship dwelling in us, testifying with our spirit that we are *children of God*. It is true we have this latter truth made abundantly clear in the written Word, as, for instance, in the message which the Lord sent to His sorrowing disciples by Mary Magdalene—"My Father and your Father, My God and your God" (John xx. 17). Again we read—"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called sons of God" (I John iii. 1). The best authorities add—"and we are such." It is not a mere title given to us: it is the expression of a blessed reality. God is so desirous that all His children should enjoy their sonship: that over and above the written assurance in His Word,

He has given His Spirit to dwell in our hearts to confirm the testimony of the Word, and to enable us to enjoy our sonship. It is one of the sweetest joys which can fill the heart of a believer to be *conscious* of the love and care of God as a Father. To believe the doctrine with one's intellect, or even to teach it to others in a theorizing way, tends to lead to a carelessness in walk; but if this endearing relationship is enjoyed in the soul, it has a most sanctifying and elevating effect over the heart and life of a Christian. I hope to write a few more thoughts on this theme, dwelling mainly on the Father's love to, and His care of, His own beloved children.

G. A.

The Saints at Colosse.

*An Address by John Smith, of Clevelana, Ohio, U.S.A.,
delivered in Aberdeenshire.*

THIS Epistle was written to saved people: it is a letter from God. It was written by Paul, but he was inspired by the Holy Ghost; and so it is part of the "all Scripture" (2 Tim. iii. 16), which is "profitable" to us who are the people of God. The special reference is doubtless to the Old Testament Scriptures, which Timothy had known from his childhood, which were able to make him wise unto salvation, "through faith which is in Christ Jesus." But that word to Timothy, refers to every part of the Book of God, from Genesis to Revelation, and when we open our Bibles, we should remember it is the very Word of God we are going to read. God says—"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word" (Isa. lxvi. 2). There is very little of this trembling at the

Word of God, even among saved people, in these days. Some of us look back on days when we met with believers, who had not been taught very much, but O how hungry they were for the Word of God. They had a great desire to know more of it, in order that they might practise it, and walk in the ways of the Lord. Alas! little of this is to be found now. There is little love for, little trembling at the Word of God. The love of many is waxing cold, love of the world is taking the place of Christ; man's thoughts the place of God's Word.

Paul had not evidently been at Colosse, up to the time of writing this Epistle, but he had a heart for all God's people, whether he had seen them in the flesh or not. He speaks in chap. ii. 1, of his great desire for them, and for the saints in Laodicea, and prays for them all. He had heard of them. Three things are mentioned:—Their "faith in Christ Jesus," their "love to all saints," and "the hope which is laid up for you in heaven" (chap. i. 4-5). There was a day in this people's history, when they heard the blessed Gospel, when they received it, and when they "knew the grace of God *in truth*" (v. 6). Grace in truth! There is nothing more foreign to the natural heart than grace. It rebels against it; it will not take salvation for nothing. Only when every prop, every hope, is taken away, does the sinner receive salvation by grace. It is a very real thing to be saved. To know "the Grace of God in truth" is a thing manifest to all. It brings forth "fruit." The manifest tokens of a new life were there. They made a clean cut from the world; they began to live for God. This is conversion. Before their conversion they were estranged from God, "alienated and enemies" (Col. i. 21). But what a change

now: "Yet now hath he reconciled." Blessed be God! no longer enemies, but "reconciled to God, through the death of His Son" (Rom. v. 10). They had been "dead" in their sins (chap. ii. 13), but were now "quicken together with Christ." A new life was in them: not the old life reformed or extended, but the life of Christ risen; the very life He has on the throne, was in them. And it is in you if you belong to Christ. Is not that wonderful? And then in chap. iii. 7, they had actually "walked" in all the filthy and abominable works of the flesh, as enumerated in verse 5. But these were all to be "put off." The new man was not to walk in the old ways. Such a list of things follows; just what was common to them in their unconverted days, and is still to the ungodly, but not for those "risen with Christ." "Lie not one to another" (v. 9). Is it possible for saved people, risen with Christ, to tell lies? Evidently: else the Holy Ghost would never have caused such a word to be written. In Ephesians iv. 28—"Let him that stole, steal no more." Could one, seated with Christ in the heavenlies, steal? Alas! it is done by many who profess to be saved. Many a half hour is stolen from God, and used for self. Before our conversion, some of us could slip away for fifteen minutes, and "take a smoke," but when we were saved, God put a conscience in us, and taught us not to steal our master's time. A saved person is no longer his own, he belongs to Christ. Whether working in the kitchen, in the field, on the housetop, or in the shop, he belongs to Christ. His business is to "serve the Lord Christ" everywhere, and in everything. Do you all know Jesus Christ as Lord and Master?

(To be Continued.)

The Fold and the Flock.

THIRD PAPER. BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

"I AM the Door of the sheep." In these words does the Shepherd present Himself before His own, as the door of entrance into the new order of things on the earth, which we style "Christianity." This last is not to be confounded with "Christendom." That is, alas! what man has made of Christianity; mixing the heavenly truths of Christianity, with the earthly principles of Judaism and the heathenish practices of Gentilism.

Christ, then, becomes the door into a new and heavenly sphere of blessing on the earth. His Cross closed the old order; His resurrection began the new. Moses and Elias contemplated on the Mount of Transfiguration, the near approach of the dissolution of that religious system, the pillars of which they had been, as they talked with the glorified Man of His decease or "exodus," which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. For by death He finally closed all connection with the "old covenant" order. When He resumes "official" dealings with the Jewish nation, it will be on the ground of the "new" and "everlasting" covenant, ratified in His blood, and witnessed unto in His resurrection from the death (Heb. xiii. 20).

In the meantime, He becomes the way of entrance into blessings surpassing the best the fathers had in "the fold." He speaks of salvation, liberty, satisfaction, life, and that "abundantly"; intimacy of communion, and, in final preservation, the guarantee of the sheep being kept from ultimate apostasy, whatever their backslidings may have been (see verses 9, 10, 14, 28, 29). These are essentially Christian

privileges, impossible under the law, and they are enjoyed on the other side of the Shepherd's death and resurrection. The new order is not an improvement of the old. Not a stick or stone of the former building enters into the new. It is a new creation, where all things are of God, and where never an element of decay can intrude. And what is so wonderful here, is the blessed thought that the door is open for "*any man*" to enter; the far-off Gentile is sure of the same welcome as the Hebrew sheep now liberated from the ancient fold.

But here a word is necessary. The whole company of the ransomed, here regarded as the flock of Christ, is indeed brought into this place of blessing and unspeakably precious privileges, but it is quite another matter whether these privileges are actually enjoyed by the sheep as divine realities. I am now, through grace, in the place where they are reckoned as mine. I can survey the whole range of redemption and resurrection blessings, and call them mine. The youngest and feeblest sheep can. But in order to enjoyment, I must be disciplined and exercised to "lay hold" on them one by one.

Ah! we have talked loudly of our wealth "in Christ," and have taken stock of our heritage, which shall never fade away. But has there not been a danger of looking at Christianity more in the light of a *religious science to be mastered*, than as a *divine experience to be enjoyed*? And is not this the very charge against Laodicea? (see Rev. iii. 17).

And here it is well to pause awhile for still further investigations. I should like to make a remark or two concerning the ministry of the apostle John. Its *inwardness*, if I may use the term, has struck me

much. He writes as one to whose eyes, not only the Jewish nation and the Gentile world, but also the professing Church, is "in ruins." He lived to see it. He never mentions "the Church," except as fallen and still falling into deeper depths; yea, into Babylon filthiness; or as the hotbed of clerical assumptions, with the aged John himself outside, as in his third Epistle.

It is striking to notice the absence of "ordinances" in His teaching. If we had John's writings alone, we would not know there was such a thing as baptism or the memorial supper. He lived to see the rise, and sketched out the progress, and predicted the final doom, of that system of ritual, blossoming into the sacerdotalism of the "catholic" church. In view of the abuse of ordinances, He is silent as to them. But he constantly presses upon believers the importance of having "within" them *the things themselves*, of which the ordinances are objective types. Inward experience is the keynote of his ministry. Look at his first epistle, for instance. The truth is to be *in* us, the word *in* us, no occasion for stumbling *in* us, the anointing abideth *in* us, the seed of God dwelleth *in* us, the life and love of God is to be known as *in* us, etc., etc. He withdraws us from outward things, to know the power of divine things within.

Is not this the unfolding in detail of the Lord's counsel to the listening individual in Laodicea? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, *I will come IN TO him*, and I will sup with him and he with Me" (Rev. iii. 20). As the outward state of things crumbles into pieces, the possibilities of the inward assume more and more importance.

And, thus, it might well be. For if the outward has its importance and place in the dispensational ways of God, dispensations are only for time. That which by divine workmanship is wrought within, abides for ever. It has the stamp of eternity upon it. Thus there is another word of special importance in the writings of John: "ETERNAL LIFE," and this is truly the crowning blessing of Christianity. It is nothing less than Christ imparting Himself. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "I give unto them eternal life." "That eternal life with the Father hath been manifested unto us." "Our hands have handled the Word of Life," etc. But here I stop. We have reached the threshold of another subject, which we must devote a special chapter to, if God permit.

In the Presence of God.

I DARESAY there are few of God's people but have observed, that when consciously in the presence of God, they see sins and inconsistencies as they do at no other time. Practices and habits that they might condone, and even defend in argument with fellow-believers, appear there in all their uncomeliness, and the self-judged believer says, with David—"Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance." Foolish talk, worldly behaviour, carnal conduct, all shine out in their hideous character, in the presence of God. Therefore let us walk in the light, and make the presence of God our home. Thus only shall we be in God's mind about sin, see it in its true character, and be able to deal with it as God directs.

Notes on the Psalms.

BY THE LATE WM. LINCOLN, OF BERESFORD.

PSALM III.

Subject:—A Morning Meditation. The state and feelings of the saints (the Remnant) in consequence of Christ's rejection. Jehovah, the Refuge of the afflicted.

"JEHOVAH, how are they increased that trouble me." The first thought of faith in the midst of trouble is "Jehovah." There it rests, finding in Him its home, looking at all enemies from thence. "If God be *for* us who can be against us" (Rom. viii. 31)?

Verse 2.—"No help," no salvation "for Him in Elohim." The scorner's sneer, quoting his sin as a reason for God forsaking him. The scorner says not "*Thy* God." But even when there is failure, God does not forsake His people. He may chastise, He cannot forsake. Selah—Pause.

Verses 3-4.—"But Thou, Jehovah, art a shield for me." How blessed! Between him and his many foes: none can get at him (see Job i. 10). A shield to cover: "my glory," in brighter days; the "lifter up"—a prophetic glance toward resurrection. Yet his is not listless confidence. The voice is raised to Jehovah, and the response is immediate. "I cried": "He heard."

Verses 5-6.—"I laid me down and slept." All his care cast upon God. "The peace of God" guards his heart and mind (Phil. iv. 7). Tens of thousands set against him cannot disturb his rest and peace. Not that he is insensible to the strength and craft of his foes, but the eye is on God, the heart rests in His love and faithfulness. This sleep and awaking in safety, is, moreover, a sweet pledge of death and resurrec-

tion to the godly, when the opening of the kingdom shall be as a "morning without clouds" (2 Sam. xxiii. 4).

Verses 7-8.—Then the wicked, "mine enemies" shall meet their doom; as wild beasts they shall be crushed and broken, and at their judgment, salvation and blessing come upon the people of God.

PSALM IV.

Subject:—An Evening Prayer. Hope and Joy in Jehovah. The Effect of a Good Conscience.

Here the appeal is to "Elohim of my righteousness;" there is confidence toward God (1 John iii. 21). There has been enlargement through experience of God's care while in distress, and still he prays, still looks to God. "Sons of men;" proud Gentiles in their scorn and lying: in ver. 5, wicked Jews in their sneering unbelief.

Verses 3-4.—"Set apart Him that is godly:" primarily Christ; dispensationally, the true Israel marked off from the nation; true of the saint, sanctified, set apart in Christ, unto God, a peculiar treasure. Here is a contrast to Psalm III, where the cry is from the depths: now walking before God in the light the soul can say—"Jehovah *will* hear me when I call." Verse 4, is quoted from the LXX, in Eph. iv. 26. If God's people would argue less with their enemies and commune more with their own hearts, they would know better the meaning of the words that follow—"Be still." To "be still" and trust God (Isa. xxvi. 3), is the true way of repose.

Verses 5-6.—Here the Lord is seen to be the saint's joy. This is his portion when walking uprightly in the light of Jehovah's countenance. Then the Lord gladdens his heart, the Spirit applies the precious things of the Word, and He has rest and gladness.

Verses 7-8.—“I will lay me down in peace and sleep.” No anxious cares, no inquietude because of evil all around, when God fills the eye. “So He giveth His beloved sleep.” So it was with the Lord Jesus, even when winds and waves tossed the ship. He lay asleep in peace.

PSALM V.

Subject:—A Night Meditation. Appeal to Jehovah. The ungodly all around, in whose Holy presence they cannot stand.

Jehovah addressed as King and Elohim, in the presence of his enemies. His “word,” his “meditation,” and his “cry” are all appealed to Him, who sees and knows all. The morning prayer is ordered before Him in watchful expectation.

Verses 4-8.—El, the Mighty One, in way and character is against the wicked; the proud boaster cannot endure His holy presence, and the vain pretender who acts a lie, will not endure His searching glance. In the sense of this holiness he approaches His house, and worships towards His holy temple. But the soul is not in the same joyful condition as in Psalm IV. To be occupied with our own faith and love, to contrast ourselves even with the ungodly, is dangerous, and may lead to self-righteousness, and the distress of soul which finds its expression in the Psalm that follows.

Verses 9-10.—“Destroy Thou them.” Imperative—“Hold them guilty.” This cry for judgment is in conformity with the Jewish hope; it is the appointed means whereby evil will be removed and righteousness will reign. But it is not the prayer for this age, in which God is bearing with His foes in longsuffering mercy.

Verses 11-12.—Sure defence, yea, joy, is the portion of those who trust in Jehovah,

whose favour compasses them as a shield, even amid sorrow and weakness, with the wicked all around.

The Fixed Heart.

WHERE is your heart anchored, Christian?
Say is it “fixed” on the Lord?—
Bound there by bands everlasting,
Woven throughout from the Word?

What though the wild winds of doctrine—
Breath of Beelzebub’s host—
Scatter and sink barques around us,
CHRIST-ANCHORED hearts ne’er are lost!

Waters that *children* may wade in,
Flow in His wonderful Word;
Up to thy “*knees*” are the waters!
Kneel then in *prayer* to thy Lord.

Up to thy “*loins*!”—strength tested—
Gird thee with truth and press on:
Waters to “*swim*” in (*not drown* in!)
Come ere life’s measure is done.

But by the brink of its waters
Find thou the “*fruit*” for thy “*meat*,”
Fresh for each season it groweth;
Eat, yea, abundantly eat.

Say will you leave such a Centre
Where ye have all and abound?
Peter-like, pause not for answer—
Where could a *better* be found?

Lord, if we leave THEE, we know not
Where, or to whom we could go:
Where in the *world’s* wisest wisdom
Life-giving words do I know?

Deep in my heart Thou hast graven,
Words I can never forget,
Calvary’s LOVE carved each letter
There everlastingly set!

Fixed is my heart to THYSELF, Lord,
Bound there by bands of Thy Word;
“*Ne’er will I leave thee*,” Thou sayest,
Nor will I leave Thee, my Lord!

A Man of Prayer.

AMONG our acquaintances of early years, was one, the savour of whose godly life seems to linger with us. He was a man of prayer. Prayer was his "native air." He lived and moved in the atmosphere of supplication. Not for himself alone, but for the whole household of faith, yea, for the whole world. He prayed for "all saints," just because he loved them all. Servants of Christ in the forefront of the battle, exposed to the shafts of the enemy, had a special remembrance in his petitions, for well he knew they were the targets of Satan. He encompassed them with prayer. Wherever he heard of the work of God, of sinners being saved, of saints being led on in the Word, he carried that work before the throne. He prayed for hundreds whose faces he had never seen. He spent hours and nights in supplication for backsliders, and others who were in danger of being led into the bypaths of Satan. How many owe their preservation and restoration to his prayers, the day of Christ alone will declare. Where we felt the influence and effects of his prayers most, was in the little assembly of saints. He bore us on his heart continually before the throne. When troubles arose, he would say—"Let us take them to the Lord in prayer." If differences of judgment, or anything likely to strain the bonds of fellowship arose, he would gather us together to "tell the Lord" of it. If barrenness in our Gospel efforts, or a blight on any corner of our little field of labour occurred, he groaned and prayed till the blessing came. He spent the whole of the Saturday nights in his own little room spreading out the work of the coming day

before the Lord, and I doubt not, on looking back to the wonderful works of God of these days, that very much of the blessing we enjoyed, was in answer to his fervent believing prayers. Once in a time of trial, when, if the devil had not been defeated, he would have divided and possibly scattered the little company gathered in "The Name," he wept, and prayed, and visited; beseeching, entreating, warning, until the broken bonds were healed. And when his service in the sanctuary was complete, he passed quietly within the veil, to the inner presence-chamber, to which his spirit was no stranger. The world had never known his worth, so never missed him. Few even of those for whom he prayed, ever knew the man of God. But we who did, felt that the world was darker, and that the church was poorer by the removal of that man of prayer. It may not be given to you my fellow-believer to preach the Word to thousands, to feed the flock, or to defend it from the assaults of the foe by your public ministry. But there is a "sphere" in which, if you have the heart for it, you may serve continually, and that is in the secret place, the place of prayer. The streams that rise there, in the inner sanctuary, make glad the city of God, and provide sap and freshness for all manner of service in the house of the Lord within, and in the field of labour without, where the Gospel sowers and the reapers toil.

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NOT RELAXED.—Beloved, I pray your thoughts about separation, or consecration, may not be relaxed, but intensified. Relaxation is the order of the day: "the wiles of the devil." Wiles are quiet, coaxing, attractive things. All their power blinding us to their true character and object.—*C. S. Blackwell's Letters.*

The Bible Annotator.

Biblical Outlines, Varied Readings, Marginal Notes, Brief Expositions of Difficult Passages, and all Helps to Bible Study will be welcomed for this column.

A THREEFOLD WITNESS.—“When the Comforter is come. . . He shall bear witness of Me” (John xv. 26-27)—that is, *Revelation*. “When the Holy Ghost is come upon you. . . ye shall be witnesses unto Me” (Acts i. 8)—that is, *Declaration*. “Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance” (1 Thess. i. 5)—that is, *Attestation*. These three must never be separated: their order cannot be reversed: combined they make a true witness. First, the Spirit witnesses to us of Christ, reveals Him to our souls. We witness to Christ by the Spirit, and to Christ and our testimony the Spirit gives His witness, causing the Word to work effectually.

ANSWERS TO QUESTION XV.—*What is the force of the name “Christian” in Acts xi. 26, and was it given by God, or in derision by man?* The following culled from many lengthy answers give the varied interpretations of the above passage:—

Antioch was famous for the giving of contemptuous nicknames, and doubtless the people gave this name to the converted Gentiles—J. D.

“Nazarenes” was the name given by the world in derision (Acts xxiv. 5), not Christians. Certainly it was not given by the Jews, for they did not believe that the Greeks were followers of the Messiah or Christ—J. S.

The Greek word translated “called,” means “oracularly called” (see Newberry’s Bible), “called of God,” as see the following places where it occurs: Matth. ii. 12, “warned of God”; Heb. viii. 5, “admonished of God.” God thus shewing to whom they belonged. In 2 Cor. i. 21 (see Greek), believers are said to be by God “Christed,” or “christened.” They are of Him (Heb. ii. 11)—C. W. R.

A brief consideration of the names given throughout the book of “The Acts” to the Lord’s redeemed ones, will help to explain the force of the name “Christian.” “Believers” (Acts v. 14)—separated clearly then from unbelievers (2 Cor. vi. 15). *Brethren* (vi. 3)—united in life and love. *Disciples* (ix. 1)—taught ones, following Christ. *Saints* (ix. 13)—separated unto God. *Christians* (xi. 26)—as disciples they followed

Christ, and became known as Christ’s followers. Thus the names follow in perfect order—J. C.

Editor’s Note.—The above interpretations differ.

We believe the name Christian was Divinely given to the disciples, given by God, as the word *kreenatizo*, translated “called,” elsewhere shews (see Matth. ii. 12, 22; Acts x. 22; Rom. vii. 3; Heb. xi. 7). Newberry gives “oracularly called”; Young’s Bible, “divinely called.” “That honourable Name which was called upon you” (James ii. 7, R.V.). “Christian” is the name by which God’s people are to be known in the world, as the term “brethren” marks their relationship to each other in the family of God. Hence we read—“If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God *in this name*” (1 Peter iv. 16). This seems to confirm its Divine origin. How could he glorify God in a name given him in derision by the ungodly?

ANSWER TO QUESTION XVI.—*To what events do the words, “The restitution of all things” (Acts iii. 21) refer?* The words that immediately follow “which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began,” shew how far that restitution extends. There is not a word spoken by any of these prophets, from Moses to Malachi, of a restitution of the lost. Their testimony is concerning a reign of righteousness on earth, which will be introduced by the destruction of those who believe not the Gospel (2 Thess. i. 8). Yet this verse is the chief stronghold of Universalists, Restorationists and Advocates of the so called “Larger Hope,” but it is a complete perversion of the Scripture to so apply it.

An answer to the above Question from Mr. Thomas Newberry, is held over till next month.

The Young Believer’s Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer’s name and address.

What is the meaning of John ii. 14? To what “hour” does the Lord Jesus here refer? Evidently to the hour He elsewhere refers to as being “at hand” (Matt. xxvi. 45), and later as having “come” (John xiii. 1). The hour of untold agony and suffering for which He came (John xii. 27).

What baptism is referred to in Romans vi. 3-4? Baptism in water, the “likeness” of the believer’s

death, burial and resurrection with Christ. Here, as in Col. ii. 11-12, the symbol is referred to, not as a meaningless ordinance, but as it is wherever intelligently obeyed, a means to keep the reality in living power in the heart, and to shew its effects in the life. Need we wonder that the devil hates baptism as thus understood, and seeks by every means to pervert it?

Will there be sin on earth, during the Millennial reign of Christ? Men will have the flesh in them then as now, but Satan will not be at large as he is at present, tempting and inciting men to sin against God. The reign of Christ will be a reign of righteousness (Isa. xxvi. 1), and Israel the earthly people of God will be "all righteous" (Isa. lx. 21). The knowledge of the glory of Jehovah will cover the earth (Isa. xi. 9), idolatry will cease (Isa. ii. 18), but all the world's inhabitants will *not* be converted. Three times in the Psalms, the nations of the world are said to "yield feigned obedience" (see Psalms xliii. 14; lxvi. 3; lxxi. 15, margin) to Christ, but they fear to "exalt themselves" even though "rebellious" because of his power (Isa. lxvi. 7). At the close of the thousand years of such rule, when Satan is again loosed (Rev. xx. 7-8), all his own will flock around him, proving that apart from the new birth, man remains the enemy of Christ, and the tool of Satan.

I am in a place of business where "betting" is carried on. Several professing Christians, Members of Churches and Christian Workers go in for it, and I am often asked. They say there is no harm in it. What do you advise? Keep entirely clear of the whole system of betting, gambling, and what is the same in principle with a grander name—"Stocks." We never knew a child of God begin to dabble in any of these, without going "down" in his spiritual condition, losing all heart for God, His Word and work, and "piercing himself through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. vi. 10). That "professing Christians" and those who take the name of "Christian Workers," engage in gambling, may be too true, but we are perfectly sure that no believer who makes it his aim to walk with God, and "to live soberly, righteously and godly" (Titus ii. 12) in this present world, will ever be found gambling or betting. Honest toil, and personal industry, in what you can expect God to bless, "pays" best in the end. And "godliness with contentment is great gain."

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

A. B., ABERDEEN.—Wigram's Englishman's Greek Concordance is the simplest and best, and may be used by anyone not knowing a letter of Greek.

A. C., GLASGOW.—While the Scriptures give no direction and no hint regarding a federation of assemblies, controlled in their acts of discipline by a central authority, they certainly gave no such hint as that one assembly may disregard the discipline of another, and receive one who has been "put away," or "gone out" to avoid being disciplined. Should doubt exist as to the rightness of the assembly's act, the proper way would be to approach it—not dictatorially—but inquiringly, but never deliberately to set aside its act, by receiving without inquiry, the one it has dealt with.

"YOUNG DOUBTER."—You are on dangerous ground when you begin to make *Scripture* accord with *Reason*, simply because what men call *Reason* is perverted, being part of their fallen being, and has in it an *animus* toward God and all His ways, "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be" (Rom. viii. 7). Scripture is Divine, and therefore perfect in its testimony, in which there is nothing contrary to sound reason, but much far *above* it. To question God's holy, perfect Word, because it will not harmonize with "Science, falsely so called," is to take the first step on the downward path, to the dark depths of scepticism, into which many have fallen. May God preserve you from from such a course, and end. If you make a close and honest examination of yourself, in the light of God's presence, according to the spirit of Psalm cxxxix. 23, 24 and Heb. iv. 12, 13; you will find that the "wrong" is not in the Word of God, but in you. Let this discovery lead you to confess your sin to God, and get restoration of soul to Him, then you will relish and esteem His Word, not kicking at what is beyond your understanding, but feasting on what is a joy to your heart.

F. A. M., MELBOURNE.—Errors in doctrine, and departures from the path in which God has called saints to tread, very often, if not always, have their root and their beginning in defilement of the

conscience by continuance in some form of sin. "Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having thrust from them, made shipwreck concerning the faith" (1 Tim. 1-19, R.V.). "The mystery of the faith" can only be maintained in "a pure conscience" (1 Tim. iii. 9). Hence the need of a continuous ministry dealing with the conscience, as well as instructing the mind, and attracting the the heart. If believers mix themselves up in business adventures of a questionable character, frequent places where worldliness is rampant, or keep company with refined sceptics on week days, you need not wonder if they cease to come to the assembly of saints on the Lord's day.

H. E., STAFFORD.—Such phrases as "Baptism of the Spirit," "The Spirit's Baptism," although much in use among speakers and writers, are not according to the words of Scripture. They are invariably used to describe an *experience* which certain believers are said to *attain*, after, in many cases, years after—their conversion. We do not find such a baptism taught in the Word; the theory must therefore be contrary to it. John the Baptist announced the Lord Jesus as "He that baptizeth *in* the Holy Spirit" (John i. 33 R.V.), the ascended Christ being the Baptizer, the Spirit, the element, so to speak, *in* which they are baptized. This is done once for all, for all believers of the present time, its repetition being unnecessary and impossible. They "were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13 R.V.) also, but all may not always be full of the Holy Spirit (see Acts iv. 31; vii. 3; xi. 24). The privilege and responsibility of all is to be so "filled" (Eph. v. 18), but this is never said to be a fresh "baptism of the Spirit," but rather a *continuous supply* (Phil. i. 19).

A. E., DERBYSHIRE.—Your complaint of ministering brethren monopolising a great part of the time on the Lord's Day morning, when the Assembly has come together to shew forth the Lord's Death, is by no means peculiar to your locality. It is a common evil, which all who are spiritual, and who have learned from the Word of God what the Assembly comes together on that occasion specially for, mourn over. Were it only those uninstructed in the truth who intrude their ministry on subjects irrelevant to the object of such a gathering, it might be borne with, in the hope that further light might be given them, but when

we find that the chief offenders are brethren who have had many years of Christian experience, and are accredited as teachers in the church, it is more difficult to understand. Restless flesh, and an undue estimate of their ability as *speakers*, with little consideration of what is due to the Lord "in the midst," or of what promotes and increases the spirit of worship in the Assembly, are, we think, the chief causes of such obtrusive ministry. A word of ministry, exalting the Person of the Lord Jesus, is frequently found to lead out the Assembly's worship—and this ought always to be its object at such a time—but ministry on general subjects, important as they may be in their place, and seasonable at other times, are entirely out of place before the breaking of bread. It is the continuance of this unseasonable talk that has in certain places reduced the character of the Lord's Day morning gathering to "a preaching," with the Lord's Supper hurriedly pushed through at the close. Need we wonder that there is coldness and dearth of worship in such gatherings. Wherever *man* assumes a place not given him by God, the Spirit is quenched, and everything spiritual withers up.

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Notes on Current Events.

THE WAR.—Much prayer has ascended to the throne, and there is a growing confidence among God's people that His hand will be put forth in bringing this sad war to a close, as soon as its humbling lessons have been taken to heart.

Amid the excitement of soldiers and volunteers going to the field of war, it is pleasing to note that among the gifts lavished upon them, "The Word of God" has not been forgotten. Most of the Scottish Volunteers received a Bible. Copies of "The Marked Testament" have been distributed to many of the Marine Artillery, now in Portsmouth on their way to South Africa, and Gospel Booklets have been distributed to thousands of soldiers embarking for the war. We have sent many parcels of suitable Tracts and Books to earnest workers at "The Front," and to the military hospitals where many of our wounded soldiers lie. God has saved many of them, and not a few who were backsliders have been restored to God. May God own His Word to the salvation of many.

Revival.

THERE are many of the Lord's people praying and longing for a Revival—a revival of spiritual energy and devotedness to God in their own souls; a revival of power and freshness in the church; and a revival of the Lord's work among the unconverted in the world. In all these circles a revival is urgently needed. And we have not the shadow of a doubt, that when the Lord's people are in real earnest about it, and are prepared to receive it in God's appointed way, it will come. There is no lack in God. With Him is "the fountain of life" (Psa. xxxv. 9), and He is ever ready, ever willing to give out the refreshing stream, where there are channels ready to receive it; ever willing to "pour water upon him that is thirsty" (Isa. xlv. 3).

A genuine Revival begins with the individual, it extends to the people of God, and soon the world feels the effects. Properly speaking there can be no revival among the unconverted; they have no life. What the dead need is life, the living alone may be revived. All the saints of God have life: eternal, indestructible life, but not always "life abundantly." The spiritual life—like the natural—has its enemies, and by reason of these gaining access, it may be enfeebled. It is when such languor, and weariness, such lack of vitality and force are felt, by the heaven-born saint, longing to feel as in days gone by the heavenly flame, that he goes to God, the living God, with the cry upon His lips—"Revive me" (Psa. cxxxviii. 7). The history of all true revivals shews, that God's way is first with the individual soul. He does not work wholesale: He begins with the unit. Moses in Midian, Daniel in

Babylon, Nehemiah in Shushan, John in the wilderness of Judea, all bear witness, that God's way is to deal with the individual saint, to restore and revive the soul of one true man, and then to make him a channel of blessing to others. He causes on here, another there, to feel the poverty of their spiritual condition. Then they go to God, generally to find there is a cause; often a hidden cause. It was unobserved before, but now in the sanctuary of God, the light detects it. There is deep searching of heart: severe and thorough self-judgment. The causes of departure from God, lack of heart for Christ, loss of spiritual power, are there laid bare, and if the idols are demolished, hewn in pieces like Agag "before the Lord in Gilgal" (1 Sam. xv. 33), there also the reproach will be rolled away. Then the soul restored and revived by the fresh inflow of the Spirit of God (Phil. i. 19: Eph. iv. 18), who fills the vacuum made by the casting forth of that which had usurped His place, and the place of Christ (Eph. iii. 17) and His Word (Col. iii. 16) in the heart, sings as in the days of youth, in the years of early love. There is no other royal road to a genuine revival of soul, than by honest and thorough heart-searching, as by the lighted candle of the Lord; close and severe self-judgment, confession of all that is contrary to God as He knows it, and renunciation of all that the Word, now acting upon the awakened conscience, shews to be contrary to His sovereign will. There can be no genuine revival apart from this. Therefore let God's people, when they pray for such a revival, hold themselves in readiness to cleanse themselves from all that is not of God in their lives, and to gather out from the kingdom within, all that hinders their spiritual life from being in full vigour.

The Fatherhood of God.

PART II.—THE FATHER'S LOVE.

IT is not my purpose to write a theoretical disquisition on this subject, but rather to seek to help those who are already in possession of eternal life, and who know it, to press "further ben," by unfolding some of the joys, and precious blessings, which belong to all the saved in their relationship to our God as "The Father." This endearing title, and the precious blessings which flow out of it, were not revealed until the Only Begotten Son, who always dwelt in the bosom of the Father, came to declare it, or to tell out the Father's heart (John i. 18). God was known in Patriarchal days as the "Almighty God." He was known to Israel under the last dispensation as "Jehovah." He is now revealed to the Christian as "The Father." The first thought that strikes one regarding a Father, is a Father's love. This special love of God as a Father to His children, must not be confounded with the love of God to a world of lost sinners. The love of God spoken to in John iii. 16, embraces the whole human family. I once heard a teacher express it thus—"God loved the world, Christ loved the churches, and the Father loves the children." These varied aspects of divine love to man do not conflict with each other, just as the love of a man to his parents does not conflict with his love to his wife, or his children. Strictly speaking, the believer does not belong to the world. We were once the objects of God's love to the world, but having believed in that love, and having received Christ as the expression of that love, we then became the children of God. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the

children of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 12). By receiving the Lord Jesus, we passed out of the wide circle of God's love to man, into the narrower circle of the Father's love to those who are His children. Our souls should never get away from the power of God's love to us as lost sinners. We ought always to be able to say—"We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John iv. 19). But when the Lord Jesus is telling out the Father's love, He says—"The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (John xvi. 27). With God there is no past, present, and future, as there is with man, but God speaks to us in language that we can understand, and the words Christ used in John xvi. 27, would imply, that when we were born into the family of God we became the objects of a new love, that is the Father's love to His children as such. I believe this is the aspect of divine love spoken of in 1 John ii. 15—"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It would not be safe to say, that if any man love the world, the "love of God" is not in him. It is to be feared that many who have known and believed in the love of God to lost sinners, have gone back in heart to the world. The divine antidote for keeping the "love of the world" out of the heart of the child of God, is faith in, and enjoyment of the Father's love. I will go into this more fully in next paper. We get a wonderful revelation of the Father's love in John xvii. 23: "I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."

It could not be said that God loves lost sinners as He loves His well beloved Son. This special love might be called the inner circle of love. It takes in all who are within the family circle, and it takes in no one else. Many have believed in the love of God as revealed in John iii. 16, who have never gone on to know His love as revealed in John xvii. 23. We do well also to remember, that the human soul cannot apprehend and take in the love of God by *trying* to do it. We needed a divine illumination by the Holy Spirit to enable us to appropriate God's love to us as lost sinners, and nothing but the same spiritual enlightenment will enable a child of God to take in the marvellous truth, that all the children in the heavenly family are loved as the First-born is loved of the Father. But it is not God's way to impart spiritual blessings to those who have no desire for them. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord" (Hosea vi. 3). That is God's principle in leading His children into clearer light, and a fuller enjoyment of spiritual blessing. "If thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. ii. 4-5). There are mines of spiritual wealth and enjoyment to be found in Christ if we would only go in for them, as the worldlings go in for gold and silver.

One other aspect of this subject we must look at before we close this paper. Will the reader look carefully at John xiv. 21-23. We have the expressions "*shall be* loved of My Father"; and again "and My Father *will* love him." This must be a different aspect of the Father's love from the birth-right, unconditional love which He has

towards all His children. The love here spoken of is *conditional* on our *obedience*. It is not only love to us as His children, but the love of His approval of our ways, including also the manifestation of His love to our hearts (see verse 22). Whilst our God and Father loves all His children as He loves His Son; yet there are those who are so careful to know His will, and to do it, that He can come in to them, and dwell with them, and give them the consciousness of His presence and of His approval. And there are those amongst His children, that neither His own glory nor their good, could admit of His coming to them and abiding with them. The Lord Jesus loves all His disciples as the Father loves Him (see John xv. 9). But there were those in whose company His loving heart was *more at home* than in the society of the rest, such as John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and the Bethany family (see John xi. 5 : xiii. 23). Probably He was more drawn to them because they confided more fully in Him, and drew more largely on His love. May we learn to go and do likewise.

G. A.

The True Standard.

AT a great gathering of Christians, a servant of Christ, speaking of the motives and objects of Christian life, made the following remark:—"When you are alone in your room to-night, with no eye but the eye of your God looking upon you, take a sheet of paper and write upon it, 'For me to live is——.' What? Go on your knees and honestly search your heart before God for the answer."

The Fold and the Flock.

PART IV. BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

THAT the life that was in the Man Christ Jesus, should be in us to-day—centuries after,—is the great miracle of the Holy Ghost, and the criterion of genuine Christianity. To make this possible, was the design of the coming to earth of the Son of God, incarnate in His blessed, holy humanity. “I am come, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John x. 10). “The Father hath life in Himself.” But the Son is the Fountain of that life for men on earth. “He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself” (John v. 26), and “the Son quickeneth whom He will” (v. 21).

This He has always done in His divine rights and sovereign will. “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” (John i. 9). But NOW, since His death and resurrection has removed every obstruction, and met every possible question raised by divine righteousness, He is OFFICIALLY the Life-Giver. “The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam, a quickening spirit (1 Cor. xv. 45). So that grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life now. Now the life of God in man is to practically supersede and supplant the life of the fallen first man in us. We are to know “life more abundantly.” As the Apostle beautifully expresses it: “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall *reign* in life by one Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 17). It is the supremacy of the kingdom of God in man.

If I go to the hospital, I would find plenty of life there, but I could hardly call it “life

more abundantly.” No one there, but is alive. The moment death sets in, the physician leaves and the undertaker takes his place. But while still under treatment, the very pains are evidences of continued life. Dead men do not feel pain. How many believers are content with this sort of existence! They require to be constantly nursed and doctored. The life is there, but under disabilities. It is life indeed; but life stunted, dwarfed, hindered, hampered, and hurt; a life just struggling to maintain its mere existence. It does not resemble the “life more abundantly,” which the Son of God came to impart to His sheep. For “life” implies growth, development, and expansion, and in this case, as divine life is in question, an infinite expanse of blessed possibilities stretch themselves out before the soul, laid hold of by the quickening power of the good Shepherd.

In John iii., the kingdom is seen and entered into, through the life beginning in the soul, however feeble the experience of the start. In chap. iv., there is evident growth. The life is in the believer “A WELL of water springing up into everlasting life.” The soul is in a state of divine satisfaction and liberty. In chap. vii. 37, there is more yet—“He that believeth in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow RIVERS of living water.”

You might keep your well to yourself, but you can’t monopolise A RIVER, much less RIVERS. The believer’s body, having become the temple of the Holy Ghost, is to be the vessel of divine life, until streams of love, joy, peace, power, blessing and goodness, overflow into all directions.

“As the Scripture has said.” Is it the Ezekiel passage about a river of living water proceeding out of the holiest, in the

millennial temple, when the glory of God has filled it? (Ezek. xlvii.). I strongly yield to the thought, especially in the light of Rev. xxii. 1, which is a spiritual application of Ezekiel's vision, to the day of the Holy Ghost, the glorifier on earth of the Man glorified in heaven.

And there we see that there is constant advance. "Life more abundantly" has no limit. Ankle deep becomes knee deep, knee deep becomes loin deep, and eventually there are depths to swim in: *the man is lost to sight in the river of divine life.* O that this were true among us, beloved brethren! O that the life that was before the fall, before sin and death invaded the inheritance of the first Adam, might reign supreme over all, in the power of His resurrection, who is the Second Man, the Lord from heaven!

Following Christ, the Light of the world, we have the light of life. The life makes room for itself, by its light discovering to our inward sight the tendencies of the flesh, rebuking, exposing, and reproving them, so that we become still before God, and "all flesh" becomes silent within us. As we listen to its holy teaching to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, it will, as we follow it, bring us out from under the captivity of the sins it has made manifest to our consciences. This is a life-long discipline, and it means "death" to the cravings of the Adam nature. "The Cross" becomes thus "the power of God" to slay our lusts. Of all the wonderful sayings of the Divine Teacher, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only one that I remember being quoted by all the four Evangelists, and that twice by Matthew and Luke, is—"He that loveth his life

loseth it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John xii. 25, R.V.; Matt. x. 39; xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24; xvii. 33). We are not to glory in a Cross which leaves us uncrucified.

Children of a King.

"Each one resembled the children of a King" (Judges viii. 18).

"Changed into the same image" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

THEY come from the uttermost parts of the
We meet them in every land, [earth,
A mighty and glorious company,
A holy and happy band;
They walk in the crowded city,
By the lonely mountain-side,
They are known in the trackless desert,
And borne on the ocean-tide.

And a few are "born in the purple,"
Their clothing is rich and rare,
But many are poor, and their garments
Have never been costly or fair;
And some of them live in luxury,
In palace or stately hall,
And some of them dwell under lowly roofs,
And some have no home at all.

But in all who are called by the name of a
A kingly likeness grows— [King,
Be they high or low, or rich or poor,
Ever the kinship shows;
For the love that flows from a Father's
Is shining in every face, [heart
And their lives become more like His life,
Who was full of "truth and grace."

So day by day on the upward path,
Made bright by His wondrous love,
They pass through the world a witnessing
On their way to the Home above; [band,
And many shall swell the gathering hosts
As onward they march and sing,
And the angels of Heaven join in the shout—
Of the children of a King!

The Saints at Colosse.

An Address by John Smith, of Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

PART II.—CONDITION AND CONDUCT.

(Chap. iii. 13 : iv. 1).

NEXT, God speaks of what should characterize the saints. "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." Do you carry a forgiving spirit in your bosom, or do you harbour hard thoughts against some whom you imagine have done you wrong, it may be thinking in you self-righteousness that it is for the glory of God and their own good not to forgive them? You will find out your mistake some day. We read of a man (Matt. xviii. 23) who had been forgiven a tremendous debt of ten thousand talents. What do you think he did? He went out and laid hands on a poor fellow who owed him about three pounds, and said "pay me what thou owest." No mercy, no grace, no patience would he shew his fellow-servant, but thrust him into prison. O brethren, if we but keep our eyes on Calvary, and see there how much it cost God to forgive us, how rich was His grace upon which we had no claim, in saying—"Thy sins are forgiven," we shall not be found grasping our fellows by the throat, but we shall carry a forgiving spirit with us. "If any man have a quarrel against any, as Christ forgave you, so do ye." God means what He says. Nothing makes a child of God more unhappy than carrying a grudge against his brother. You will have no power in preaching, no liberty in praying, if you carry an uncharitable feeling in your bosom. Make up your mind for that.

Then follow three things that we *are* to have. 1. "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (v. 15, R.V.). Just think of "the

peace of Christ." "My peace I give unto you" (John xiv. 27) was His last legacy to His people. Do you enjoy it? Is it ruling in your heart? If there is a single unjudged, unconfessed, unforsaken sin, or "the old" man pleased and pampered, the peace of Christ will not rule there. "And be ye thankful." Notwithstanding all that God has given, there are many of God's people unthankful. "Wherefore should a living man complain?"—a man that is not in hell. Have you thanked God for anything to-day? Many of us have been taking our mercies, health and strength, as if we had a right to them, and when God withdrew them we began to grumble. 2. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." Not in the head, but in the heart. A good memory will not do, it must be dwelling in the heart. As Jeremiah says "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my *heart*" (Jer. xv. 16). If you neglect the Word of God, your soul will become barren, and in the day of temptation you will be at the devil's mercy. It is not so much to learn new things, but to learn of God and Christ, and to feed upon the Word of God. One sometimes meets saints who never see a book or a periodical from one year's end to another, but they are feeding on Christ in the Word, and it would do you good to see them.

"In all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another." We are not all evangelists and preachers; but if the Word of Christ is dwelling in us, we can all teach and help one another in a wise and godly way. And what a blessed ministry that would be. "Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." There may be lots of singing. with little grace in the heart: grand

music to please the flesh, with nothing "to the Lord." But when Christ is filling the heart, praise will come out; in the barn, the hay loft, or anywhere. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks." If this were obeyed, it would stop God's people from doing many things. Can I do this in the Name of the Lord Jesus? If not, then it should not be done at all. Can you give God thanks while you do it! There are hundreds of things done, bargains made, business transactions in which God's people engage, that they dare not look up to heaven and thank God for. He has no connection with them at all. They are not of Him. Ah! brethren, these are the things that eat the spiritual life out of God's people, and bring them down to the level of the world. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." When the heart is right, the words will be right too. We will have the right word for every one we meet, and there will be in it a penetrating, preserving, powerful element like salt, making sore yet healing. God grant that these solemn, searching truths may reach our conscience, and bring us into the presence of God. Soon our day of life and service will be gone, and the result made known at the judgment seat of Christ.

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Thy Will and Thy Way.

AN EPIGRAM.

IN worldly ambition,
Men constantly say
That "Where there's a will,
There is surely a way."
O Lord! be our maxim
More excellent still,
"There is surely *Thy* way,
Where there is *not* a will."

E. L. B.

"Inter-Denominational."

SUCH is the new name now being given to associations and efforts which for the past decade, have borne the more attractive title of "Undenominational Unions." It is of considerable interest, as shewing the direction in which things in the religious sphere are tending, to inquire what has caused this change to be made.

Fully a quarter of a century ago, there was a great stir throughout the British Isles, and no doubt many were truly born of God, through the preaching of evangelists, who, while they wrought in nominal connection with the various denominations, or in some measure received the patronage and assistance of the ministers of these denominations in their work, wisely kept the reins in their own hands. They saw enough of the evils of denominationalism, which in Scotland especially was then very rigid—to make it clear to them, that the progress of the gospel, and more especially the development of spiritual life in their converts, would be swamped by the inflow of denominational differences immediately their backs were turned, and their personal influence withdrawn. In order to counteract this evil, the leaders of the movement initiated a new departure, which although not altogether to the liking of many of the ministers and workers who had associated with them, they were obliged to fall in with, lest something still worse might happen. For it had been openly declared, that if the ministers objected or stood apart, many of the best of their members, the very cream of their congregations, would go on without them. Possibly, more with the view of controlling and correcting this movement, than from any

real sympathy with it, many of the evangelical ministers cast in their lot with it. "Unions" sprang up all over the country, ostensibly for spreading the gospel, composed of workers from all the churches, and in order to save friction, it was agreed that there should be no "denominational" matters introduced, absolutely nothing but the great fundamentals of the Gospel, or what of it concerns the sinner's salvation. The name which the Christians who were the leaders of this movement adopted, and in which they gloried, which some branded as a crest, on their note paper and magazines, and exhibited on sign boards on the halls where their work was carried on, was "*Undenominational.*" It was a word much made use of, and much gloried in, in these days, and was undoubtedly a satisfaction to many who were sick and tired of the weary round of sectarian religion, and glad to get an outlet for their energies in a sphere where there was more liberty, and less clerical control. These were, undoubtedly, better times for many of the Lord's people, and the Word of God became to some of them a new Book. It is always a precursor of genuine progress in Divine things, when God's people betake themselves to the Word of God. Feeding upon that Word, they go from strength to strength inwardly, and guided by that Word in outward walk and life, they progress in the ways of the Lord. The sweets of "undenominationalism" thus tasted, when believers as such came together to pray, to read the Scriptures, and to spread the Gospel, caused many of the more spiritual to inquire, why they could not always and altogether have it thus. They all acknowledged that the power and blessing was outside their respective churches; that the

transition from a "Union meeting" say on the Lord's Day morning at nine o'clock, where they had sweet converse on the things of God as fellow-believers over an open Bible, to the worldly gathering called "public worship" at eleven, followed by the dry sermon, was like a passage from balmy isles to Arctic zones, a change which their spiritual instincts resented, not without cause. Many were led step by step to see from the Word, that denominationalism was wrong; that it was fundamentally opposed to the precepts of the Word that God's people should be split up into sects, in most of which the unconverted formed the majority, and held the reins of power. And more: the very objects in which they delighted and which formed their highest bliss were sneered at, or held in contempt by most of their fellow-communicants. The two sections continually jostled against each other. The minister, endeavouring to please both and keep peace, had in many cases to play a double part: often presiding at the Bazaar, or social gathering and dance, which was "run" by the worldly part of his flock, and later the same week, was in the chair at the Convention for "Deeping of Spiritual Life," in which the few had an interest. Some exercised by one thing, some by another, many have been brought out from denominations altogether during the intervening years, to own no name save that which God has called upon all His people, as distinguishing them from the world, and no church position save that which is given in the Word, for the guidance of believers all through the present age till the Lord shall come, and which—however feeble the few who may conform to it—is the only church position which God has ever, or will ever own. The effect of all this in the denom-

inations has been, that hundreds of the best and most spiritual of their members and workers have been lost; that they, and especially the ministers, have begun to look with grave suspicion on all "undenominational" movements, knowing their danger, and have in many cases absolutely refused to have anything to do with movements which endanger "the peace of the congregation," or have a tendency to draw members away from "the ordinary means of grace." Hence the change of name from "Undenominational" to "Inter-denominational"—a change which indicates that the sectarian barriers have again been erected, if indeed they ever were demolished, and are to be unitedly defended, with somewhat of the desperation that is at present shewn by the governments of the two Republics in South Africa, in order to prevent the "law of liberty" from entering the sphere of their dominion. But the Word of the Lord is not bound, and all who seek to know the Lord's ways shall know "the truth, and the truth shall set them free." In return for the patronage thus given, the evangelists are expected to bring grist to the clerical mill, by directing all the new converts gained, and stragglers coming about them, to apply for "membership" in one of the sects under whose affiliation they exist and by which they are supported.

The steps that have led up to this change and its probable results, we will notice at another time, but would meanwhile ask—"On what ground will those who have hitherto gone out and in preaching in such circles, defend their position now?" Formerly it was because they were "undenominational"—*outside of all sects*. Will they continue to go now, that they have proclaimed themselves as "inter-denominational."

The Balance of Truth.

HOW careful all who minister the Word of God among their fellow-believers ought to be, that they do not slight one part of the truth of God in order to exalt another. What the saints need is all the truth of God, duly proportioned, ministered in grace and faithfulness. Nothing kept back that is profitable, nothing unduly exalted beyond its measure. This alone will save individual believers from being one-sided, and assemblies from being divided: or, as is frequently the case, broken into parties, each holding to one extreme, and not unfrequently resulting in an open division. By pressing one particular truth, or aspect of truth, you may unconsciously be dividing the Lord's people into two parties, with all the miseries of a divided house, where love and unity once reigned.

Biblical Notes and Annotations.

THREE PERFECT THINGS. God's *work* (Deut. xxxiii. 4); God's *way* (Psa. xviii. 30); God's *will* (Rom. xii. 2).

DISCIPLINE. Psalm lxxi. 17—"Thou hast taught (literally, 'disciplined') me from my youth." The Hebrew word for "taught" is the same as that used for a "goad" for breaking in oxen. "Teach (discipline) me to do Thy will" (Psa. cxliii. 10), is the response of the saint that has learned to yield to the unwearyed training of the Lord.

ENDURE HARDNESS. Four times these words occur in the last epistle written by Paul, before his martyrdom, the Second Epistle to Timothy, although not always so rendered in the A.V. The Greek word is the same throughout. They are as follows:—"Endure hardness with me in the Gospel" (1-8); "Endure hardness as a good soldier" (11-3); "I endure hardness, even unto bonds" (11-9). "Watch thou in all things, endure hardness" (iv. 5). We thus learn what the Lord's servants need amid the perils of the last days. To serve the Lord as His Word appoints in no child's play.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

"INQUIRER," DURHAM.—*Do the two sons of the parable in Luke xv. 11, both represent children of God? If not, why are they both called "sons"?* Nationally, Israel is God's son (see Exod. iv. 22: Hosea xi. 1). The two sons represent the whole house of Israel—the "elder son" the Pharisees: the "younger son," the publicans and sinners (see also Matth. xxi. 28-31). But while this is the dispensational teaching of the parable, it may be used, as it often has, to illustrate the grace of God to the sinner, but certainly not to teach the "universal Fatherhood of God," as your ministerial friend—who seems to be a Unitarian in disguise—would make it teach. How men do pervert God's truth, to their own destruction! If you deal honestly with this man about his own state as a sinner before God, you will more likely benefit him, or get rid of him, than by arguing and discussing points. The latter may feed his vanity: the former will pierce his conscience, which is what he most needs.

J. S., BIRMINGHAM.—*Do the words, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 1), refer to believing parents only?* The words are addressed to believing children, and the commandment of the Lord to them is just the same, whether their parents are believers or not. The words, "in the Lord," do not refer to the spiritual condition of the parents, but to the character of the obedience to be rendered. If a parent ask a Christian child to do what the Lord forbids, it would not be "in the Lord" to obey in doing that. The Lord must ever have the paramount claim.

E. L., GLASGOW.—*Please explain the difference between 1st Cor. x. 8, and Numbers xxv. 9? Both refer to the same event, yet the numbers differ. It is one of the Scriptures which critics call a "discrepancy."* In 1st Cor. x. 8, we are told that in one day three and twenty thousand fell. In Numbers xxv. 9, those who died in the plague—possibly extending over many days—were twenty and four thousand. There is no discrepancy whatever. The larger number gives the total of the slain: the smaller, the number that fell in one day.

ALEX. L., SPRINGBURN.—*What law is referred*

to in Romans vii., and is it the same throughout the chapter? There are four "laws" mentioned in Romans vii.-viii. 1. "The law of God" (verses 12, 16, 22), which is "holy, just, and good," the demands of which even a born again man finds himself powerless to fulfil. 2. "The law of my mind" (ver. 23), the desire and bent of the born again man to obey God. 3. "The law of sin" (verses 23, 25), the principle of the old nature, which, before conversion, ruled, but being now dethroned, wages war against the new. 4. "The law of the Spirit of life" (chapter viii. 3)—not mentioned in chapter vii., hence the lack of liberty and victory—the principle of the new life in the power of the Holy Spirit, who indwells the believer, giving him practical deliverance from, and victory over, "the law of sin and death." These are great subjects, the very backbone of spiritual life.

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Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

G. O., MANCHESTER.—Old Testament history ends with Nehemiah, the last historical book. The next link is Luke i. 5.

A. B., CUMBERLAND.—No age can be fixed for the baptism of one who in early life has been truly converted. Each case must be taken on its own merits. Some are so manifestly the Lord's, even in tender years, that it would be wrong to hinder them. At the same time there is need for caution, especially in the case of believers' children, who, it is to be feared in many cases, make a profession of faith, followed by baptism, to get where their parents are. In no case should Christian parents press their children on in this step, but allow the Lord to lead them on as they learn and obey the truth.

LIZZIE E., MONTREAL.—The creation of *man*, is the point from which God begins to reckon human history. Thus is very clearly shewn from Genesis v. 3, the *first date recorded* in Scripture, where it is written, "and Adam lived an *hundred and thirty years*, and begat a son in his own image." If you are simple enough to be taught by God, and leave alone the critics, who think they know better than God about these things—you will walk securely:

A. B., GLASGOW.—The best possible help you can give to the young believers, you have a heart to care for, is to lead them to the green pastures of the Word of God, to feed on the riches of Christ, for the nourishment and upbuilding of their spiritual life. It is a common mistake, but, we believe, a very disastrous one, to occupy young Christians, almost exclusively with service, which they have neither ability nor wisdom to continue in. The Divine way is—"They shall take root *downward* and bear fruit *upward*." (2 Kings xix. 30) If the outward life of service for Christ, exceeds the inner life of communion with Christ, a collapse will result sooner or later.

W. L., FIFE.—Shares in a Joint-stock Company, or Limited Liability Company, in which certain of the partners are unconverted, is clearly forbidden in 2 Cor. vi. 14-18. It is a co-partnership with unbelievers; there is in it the principle of an "unequal yoke." It is wonderful how many of God's people are beguiled into such snares, by the bait of great profits and large dividends. Some are in concerns of a character which they would be ashamed to own as their individual business, or to have their names openly associated with. Yet they are partners all the same, sharing the spoils of the ungodly traffic, and responsible in the sight of God for it. It is no excuse whatever, to say, that they are ignorant of the practical workings of the concern, and therefore not responsible. A man is morally bound to enquire whether the money he puts into his purse, is made by just and godly means, and not to leave the direction of his concerns to unprincipled men, with liberty to do as they please, so long as they bring high dividends to the shareholders. It is this and the like of it, that is withering up the spiritual lives of thousands, and rendering them utterly unfit to walk with God, or to live for Him.

J. B., NEW ZEALAND.—There were two Newmans, both of whom made shipwreck of their faith. One became a Romish Cardinal, and wrote a book entitled—"Apologia," giving reasons for his perversion. The other, while once professedly a Christian, became an infidel, and made an attack on Christianity and the Bible, in a book entitled "Phases of Faith," which is answered ably by J. N. Darby, in his book, "The Irrationalism of Infidelity." We never advise young Christians to

read controversial books, as they are usually very dry and soul-withering, but if you have been upset by reading books like Newman's, this work may help you, as it has helped others, by leading them back to God and His holy Word.

J. E. S., LONDON.—There is no official class in the Church of God, on whom the duty of receiving to, and putting away from the fellowship of the church is laid, to the exclusion of others. No doubt those who have spiritual discernment and wisdom, who "guide" the saints (Heb. xiii. 17), and are over them in the Lord (1 Thess. v. 12) will in this as in all else, take the initiatory steps and so lay the evidence they have gathered before the assembly, that it will—due time being given, and all being of one mind—act in receiving (Rom. xv. 7; xvi. 2) or in putting away (1 Cor. v. 3-5; 11-13) as the Lord has commanded. The theory that the overseers act for the assembly in either case, is not found in Scripture. Nor is there any hint or Divine warrant for the practice of ONE bringing in a believer he knows, or has picked up, and introducing him to the assembly, on his own testimony, his knowledge amounting in many cases to no more than a casual meeting with the individual he seeks to commend, without any opportunity of investigation by others, and with no opportunity for dissent by those who may know well-founded reasons for his rejection. It is claimed by those who thus act that it is "grace and large heartedness," whereas, any who dare to question, or bring Scripture authority to bear on their practice, are at once branded as "narrow" and "exclusive." It is somewhat remarkable that this "grace" is all on one side, little consideration being shown to any who, however, honestly, and perhaps Scripturally differ from them on this matter. If there is not oneness of mind among the saints, as to the fitness of one seeking fellowship, it is a clear indication that the assembly should be exercised before God about the matter, but on no account should the majority, or those who may have more influence, act apart from, or in defiance of the rest. Such action, can only lead to division and disruption of the assembly, as, indeed, it has done wherever adopted.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Many letters and queries still await replies. We hope to deal with all as space permits. Our esteemed correspondents will kindly exercise patience.

The Restitution of All Things.

(ACTS III. 19-21.)

The following reply to last month's question, sent by our aged brother, Mr. Thomas Newberry, will be read with interest.

IT would appear that, humanly speaking, if Israel had accepted the testimony of the Holy Ghost, given at Pentecost to their Messiah, that God would have sent Him and established the kingdom in His hands, according to previous prophecies. There are seven particulars, in which the restitution of all things is predicted in Scripture.

First: The return or second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the dead, and the taking up or removal of the true Church of God from the earth (1 Thess. iv. 17).

Second: The corruption of the false and carnal church, becoming Babylon the Great, and its utter destruction by the ten horns or ten kings of the Roman Empire (Rev. xvii. 15-16).

Third: The manifestation of the Lawless One, who becomes the Antichrist, as the head of the kingdom of the beast, and his overthrow at the appearing of the Son of Man (2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xvii. 14).

Fourth: The restoration of Israel, and the establishment of the millennial kingdom of the Son of Man (Matt. xxv. 21; Acts xv. 13-18).

Fifth: The taking out of all things that offend, and them that do iniquity in Messiah's kingdom; the manifestation of the righteous (Matt. xiii. 41-43); and the deliverance of creation from bondage (Rom. viii. 19-23).

Sixth: Jerusalem rebuilt and inhabited (Zech. viii. 1-8; Ezek. xlvi. 35).

Seventh: The Temple of God set up on the mountain of Jehovah's house, as the centre of the whole earth (Isa. ii.; Ezek. xlvi. 8).

During the millennial kingdom, Satan is bound, and afterwards released for a little period, before his final overthrow (Rev. xx.).

Subsequently, there will be the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Pet. iii. 13).

THE HANDS OF THE LORD JESUS. *Pierced* for our sins (Psa. xxii. 16); *Filled* for our acceptance (Lev. xvi. 12); *Uplifted* for our blessing (Luke xxiv. 50); *Beneath* for our support (Song ii. 6); *Opened* for our supply (Psa. cxlv. 6).

fallen Asleep.

"With Christ, . . . very far better" (Phil. i. 23, R.V.).

Adam Milligan, for over twenty years in fellowship with saints gathered to the Name, in Kilmarnock. Our departed brother was a valued servant of the church, and a diligent helper of the Lord's people. He was not a public speaker, but was ever ready to stand by those who told the story, and to lead the singing. Converted in early life, he had his eyes opened to see the hollowness of worldly pleasures, and the "Babylon"—as he often named it—of worldly religion, and took his place outside both, joyfully sharing the reproach of Christ, and holding fast with a firm grasp the truths he had learned from the Word. Never happier than when, on the summer Sunday evenings, he stood "in the circle," under the trees in Howard Park, while hundreds listened to "the old, old story." "This is grand: we'll hear of it in Eternity," he said, one autumn Sunday evening, as the people hung upon the message, and seemed unwilling to disperse, even when darkness fell. He was ever "ready to serve," knew his sphere, and never went beyond it. Whatever was needed, "Adam"—as he was familiarly called—was ready to do it. Over two years ago, signs of lung disease showed themselves. A voyage to, with a short sojourn in Australia, did not benefit. He returned to Kilmarnock, and after months of great weakness and much suffering, submissively borne, he was peacefully put to sleep on the morning of 1st March. We shall all miss him. Personally we feel the loss of a brother beloved, a true fellow-helper, with whom we had much in common in the Lord. It would be pleasing to write much more, and to extol our departed brother and his service, but we are sure it is more in harmony with his desire, that the day of the judgment-seat should tell the rest. The church will miss him, and so may the world, but most of all his family and kindred. We commend his sorrowing wife and three children to the prayerful sympathy of the Lord's people.

Saint after saint on earth,
Has lived and loved and died;
And as they left us one by one,
We laid them side by side:
We laid them down to sleep,
But not in hope forlorn,
We laid them but to ripen there,
Till that triumphant morn.

The First Epistle of Peter.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES. BY THE EDITOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE life, the labours, and the letters of Simon Peter, have always been in much favour among the saints of God. His life, so full of striking incidents and stirring events; his labours, so marked by zeal and intense earnestness for the Lord, have been, and still are, an inspiration to all who seek to serve the same gracious Master: and his letters, so full of wilderness fare and holy cheer, have been the solace and the strength of God's pilgrim people all through the ages.

Peter had a duplex ministry committed to his trust by the Lord Jesus. On that memorable day, after the Lord had preached from his fishing boat to the crowd on the shore of the Lake of Galilee, and then filled his net with fish, and his heart with a fresh knowledge of Himself, he said to Peter: "From henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke v. 10). This was Peter's commission to go forth as an evangelist to the world. He was to launch forth into the deep waters, and from thence in the Gospel net gather men to Christ. We know how he enclosed and safely landed three thousand sinners in it on the day of Pentecost, the first day of his ministry, from among the Jews, and later, how he won the first converts from among the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, at Cæsarea. And, no doubt, Peter continued casting his net, and catching men right on to the end. But there was another service given him by the Lord after His own death and resurrection, and after Peter's fall and restoration, a service very near to the Lord's heart, which He was able to entrust to a

sifted, humbled, and restored Peter, on the shore of the same lake, and in the presence of his brethren. After questioning Peter thrice as to his love, the Lord said: "Feed My lambs," "Tend My sheep." It was in fulfilment of this ministry that his Epistles were written, and through them he still feeds and tends the "few sheep in the wilderness," who are the objects of the Chief Shepherd's heart, and the subjects of His care. May our souls be fed, and ourselves shepherded, as we meditate a little together on these pastoral letters, which still abide for us, to help us onward along the road that leads to the inheritance and the rest that lie beyond.

THE WRITER AND THE THEME.

The inspired penman begins by giving his name, "Peter," and his commission, "an apostle"—one sent of Jesus Christ. He opens his Second Epistle with "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle" (2 Peter i. 1). His name as a man, before his conversion, was Simon, but when he was brought to Jesus by Andrew, his brother, on that memorable day (John i. 40-41), he got a new nature and a new name. He became a "Rock" man, a living stone. He had the life of Him whom he confessed as the Son of the living God (Matthew xvi. 20). But, alas! like ourselves, he did not always act according to his new nature, or walk worthy of his new calling. On more than one occasion, he had to be addressed as "Simon" (see Luke xxii. 31; John xxi. 15), either to warn him of his ways being still according to the old man, or to remind him of what he had been in the near past. In his First Epistle, the subjects are God's *Grace, Guardianship, and Government* of His people, while in the Second Epistle

their failure, and the apostacy and judgment of professors, largely occupy the apostle's pen. In writing both he was equally inspired by the Spirit, yet for some wise reason, he begins one with "Peter an Apostle," and the other with "Simon Peter a Servant." Did the Holy Spirit foresee that an Apostate Church would give Peter a place and a name far above that which his Master had given him, or which he had claimed for himself, and cause him, inspired apostle though he was, and as such able to give the mind of the Lord perfectly, to remind us that as a man and a "servant" he was only "Simon Peter"—a complex being, neither inspired nor infallible, but a man of like passions with his fellow-saints, liable to err, and capable of leading others astray, as he did (see Gal. ii. 11-13)?

Rome has been very flattering to Peter, in giving him the chief place on the list of her "Infallible Popes," as Mary, the mother of our Lord, has been graced with the title of "Queen of Heaven," and has received homage and honour far above the Son of God Himself. An allwise God who knew the wicked devices which man in apostacy from His Word would conceive, caused Peter's hand to write: "Not as being *lords* over God's heritage" (or clergy)—a death-knell to Popery and all its pretensions; while Mary sang of herself as possessed of a "Saviour" (Luke i. 47), which only *sinners* need, and gave the pre-eminence to Him who was her Son and yet her Sovereign Lord, in the memorable words spoken by her at the Cana marriage: "Whatsoever He saith unto you do it" (John ii. 5).

Thus God writes confusion on all man's pride and assumption.

"To the strangers scattered" (v. 3)—or "sojourners of the dispersion" (R.V.)

Primarily, doubtless, to those who had been "scattered abroad" by the blast of persecution that arose after the death of Stephen, and sent like leaves before the tempest—Peter's own children in the faith, "the church which was at Jerusalem," strangers now dispersed abroad, or pilgrims as the word is, "here having no continuing city," but "passing on to "the city which hath foundations" beyond. But the full scope of the Epistle is wider. It still speaks to the people of God, and addresses them in their pilgrim character, as "the flock of God" (chap. v. 3) not now within the precincts of a Jewish fold, or located in some spot on earth more sacred than the rest, but as a redeemed and heaven-born people, called with a heavenly calling, filled with a heavenly hope, and looking for a heavenly inheritance.

Peter's line of teaching is different from Paul's, yet in full agreement with it, as Peter himself claims (see 2 Peter iii. 17). The chief points of contrast between the men and their message may be briefly stated thus: Peter was "a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory" (1 Peter v. 1); Paul was a witness of the glory (Acts xxvi. 13-16), and a partaker of the sufferings (Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 15). Peter had looked upon a suffering Saviour, had seen His face, and heard His voice in the days of His sorrow; in the garden, the judgment hall, and it may be on the Cross.

Paul had seen and heard the Lord in heavenly glory, but was a stranger to Him on earth. Paul introduces the saints to their place and portion in heaven, and tells them they are no more strangers or foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints up there (Eph. ii. 18-20). Peter tells them they are in the wilderness, "strangers and pilgrims."

The Joys of Our Home in Heaven.

THE *air* of a place is more important to us than the *scenery*. If we can get both, the *refined* and tasteful sensibilities will be gratified, and our condition will be the more perfect; but if we must part with either, and do with only one of these, the *air* of the place we dwell in, will be far more important to our good and comfort than the *scenery*. So, not only in our converse with places, but with persons also. Their *spirit* will be of greater importance to us than their *attainments*. As brethren, dwelling together, we find this continually. There is more real refreshment from the gracious, humble, and fervent spirit of another, than from any communications of intelligent ones, who are not adorned and filled with that mind and spirit.

In like manner, heaven will have both its *atmosphere* and its *scenery*. The place will be instinct and alive with a moral element, as well as furnished with glories; and the former (I speak as a man) will be of greater amount in the aggregate and history of our joy than the latter. There will be a heaven for every sense and faculty—a heaven for the eye, for the ear, and for the heart, through all its pulses—a heaven of light for the intelligent powers, and a heaven for the ardour of love for the affections. I have found it well to ponder this a little—to gather some notices here and there in the Scriptures of this precious secret—to put, not before the eye, the *glories* of the place (a very blessed thing at times), but before the heart its moral characteristics. Certain passages have just occurred to me, and I will follow them briefly.

EXODUS xviii.—This meeting between

Jethro and Moses, and their several companies at the mount of God, was, as we know, a type of the correspondence between the heavenly and earthly families in the days of the kingdom. But what are the moral features impressed upon it? Most willing subjection on the part of Moses—the most hearty sympathy in the joy of Israel on the part of Jethro, with, at the same time an assumption of the place of dignity, without the least reserve, but in full, easy, and conscious title. And how sweet a social scene must be, animated by such principles and affections as these!

2 CHRONICLES ix.—The visit of the Queen of the South to King Solomon is properly known to be a type of the intercourse of the royal Jerusalem and the tributary nations in the days of the kingdom. But how unselfish, and how ungrudging, how generous and free-hearted was it! How unlike a state of society where we are hateful, and hating one another! Solomon tells her all her questions, and even exceeds her desires; and she takes the place of a debtor and an inferior, with the praises on her lips of the God of Israel, who had given His people such a sovereign; she goes back to *spread* his fame, instead of to envy it.

ISAIAH lx.—This chapter is a prophecy of the state of the millennial earth. But, again, it exhibits the fine moral features of that day. The nations *delight* to do honour to Zion; their treasures are sent up to minister to her joy and her glory, with all the readiness and the glow of a free-will offering; they fly to Zion with their choicest blessings, as doves fly to their windows. How precious will it be to breathe an atmosphere of such glowing, unselfish love, after the foul and noxious air of this present state of social life, where principles of envy

and malice give such strong characters to all that is around us!

MATTHEW xvii.—The holy hill was expressive of the earthly and heavenly families in the days of the glory. And what says Peter, breathing the air of the place? “It is good for us to be here: let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias.” He was happy, divinely happy; and that cured his heart of selfishness. He was willing to labour, and let others even enter into his labours.

REV. xxi. xxii.—And so in the holy city, the Jerusalem of the heavens. What is the commerce there between the families of God? All is most blessed. The kings bring their glory and honour up to the light of the city. As it were, they delight to do it reverence—to hold it in honour. They do not lightly approach it, but bring their glory *only* up to it. And the city, she dispenses her treasures with an unsparing hand. The leaves of her tree—the shining of her glory—the streams of her river, are at the full and welcome disposal of the nations. What an atmosphere all these Scriptures tell us the atmosphere of heaven and of the millennium will be! If we are wearied with our own selfish hearts, and with the spirit that animates the scene around us every day, we may well *long* for such a change of air as these Scriptures promise us. For what refreshment will it be, the repose of the heart in regions and dwellings of love? If the glories of the place be judged desirable and attractive, what, I ask, will this element, this sweet atmosphere of it be? All the low and miserable workings of selfish nature will be gone. It is not that they will be triumphed over, but they will be gone; for “the mind of Christ” will be there to perfection.

The Fatherhood of God.

PART III.—THE FATHER'S CARE.

THERE is no part of the inspired Word where this blessed truth is so fully revealed as in the sixth chapter of Matthew. It is also well to notice that when the Lord is unfolding the minute care of our God for the temporal wants of His children, He always speaks of Him as “your Father.” In speaking of the necessities of this life, such as food and clothing, the Lord says: “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things” (Matth. vi. 32). The Lord also pledges His word, that, if believers give the things of God the first place, He will look after their temporal needs.

There is no truth which the children of God are more slow to take in, than the special care which God has for the physical, and circumstantial well-being of His children, whilst they sojourn on earth. One who knows the Lord well, and also knows well the human heart, has said: “That there are many believers who have trusted their souls to the Lord Jesus for eternity, who would not trust ‘the Father’ for their breakfast if they did not *see* where it was to come from.” Did we, who are born into the family of God, see the truth of the Father's care as it is revealed in the Scriptures, we would be astounded at the amount of practical atheism which lurks in our hearts. We delight to often sing, “It is well, it is well with my soul.” But if I have trusted the Father with my body as I have trusted the Son with my soul, it is well with my body, as it is with my soul. The body is redeemed as well as the soul. “For we are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. vi. 20).

“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ.” Again, “What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?” (verses 15-19). Man is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. v. 23). The spirit is the knowing part of man. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” (1 Cor. ii. 11). The soul is the loving, and longing part of the man. “My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God” (Psa. xlii. 2). Again, “Tell me O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest” (Songs of Sol. i. 7). The body is the tabernacle, or dwelling-place of the spirit, and the soul. I have heard it taught that the Holy Spirit takes charge of a believer's spirit. The Lord Jesus is the object which meets the need of the soul. And “the Father” has charged Himself with the care of the bodies of His children. It would not be safe to press this distinction too far, yet there is truth in it, for as already noticed, it is the FATHER who is specially spoken of, when God's care for His children in this life is the subject in hand. What a world of anxiety, and unbelieving fears, the children of God would be saved from, did they but believe in the Father's love and care for His own. The Lord said to His disciples: “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten of God. But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke xii. 6-7).

If Christians would accept such precious assurances regarding God's care of them for this life, as they have rested on the Word of the Lord for eternity, what a different life many of them would live. The way in

which many—if not most Christians—believe in God's providential care of them in this life, is very much akin to the way in which some unsaved sinners believe in the Lord Jesus as the Saviour. They believe in Him as “our Saviour” in a general way, but they have never come to the end of their own *self effort*, and consequently they have never taken the vital step of the “*committal of faith*,” so as to give the Saviour an opportunity of saving them on His own terms, and saving them completely without their own hand being at it at all. So the children of God believe in their heavenly Father's providential care in a general way, but they so fail to take the all-important step of the “*committal of faith*,” so as to *give God a free hand* in ordering all their circumstances as to their bodily needs, and everything else concerning their temporal well-being. And God never acts fully according to the fulness of His grace, until there is the complete surrender of a broken will on the part of His child. Trusting Christ for eternal salvation might be said to be an act of faith that never needs to be repeated.

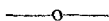
Many allow the blessed joyful sense of safety for eternity which they felt “when first they knew the Lord,” to degenerate into a *carnal security* sense of safety; but a Christian's circumstances in the journey of life are so continually changing, that there is not the same danger of one's faith becoming inactive, so as to degenerate into a carnal confidence. To trust God for “time's things” requires a fresh exercise of faith to meet each fresh emergency. Also to trust in “the Father” for time involves other conditions which nature shrinks from. It involves being satisfied with His ordering. And in bringing out the moral image of

of His Son in a believer's daily life according to Rom. viii. 28-29; our Father may have to use painful means to accomplish His precious purpose, and it needs much grace for a believer who is passing through the fire to say "Not my will but Thine be done."

This trust in the Father also involves heart and life separation from the world, and from all worldly fellowships. That passage in 2 Cor. vi. 14-18, has a direct reference to the Fatherhood of God; and it is those who had been "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "called saints" to whom (1 Cor. i. 2), He says "I will receive you," "and will be a Father unto you" (verse 17-18). He was their Father already, but He would *act a Father's part* if they would take the place of separation in following the Lord Jesus in His rejection, and also in following Him in His trustful confidence in, and dependence upon, His Father for all His daily needs, as well as for daily strength for service.

To sum up what we have gone over on this subject; we have first, the reality of the relationship between God as a Father, and all believers as His children. Second: we noticed that all the children in the heavenly family are loved as the the First Begotten is loved by the Father. Third: there is as much warrant in Scripture to trust in God as a Father for time, as there is to trust in Christ for eternity, and those who do so are as safe for time as they are for eternity.

G. A.



A BAD SIGN.—The perfect ease with which almost everybody takes for granted their own spiritual well-being, is, I think, one of the most astounding features of our time.

John Dickie.

Notes on the Psalms.

BY THE LATE WM. LINCOLN, OF BERESFORD.

Subject:—A Cry in Distress in the Wilderness.—The Prayer heard.—Enemies Ashamed.

O JEHOVAH, rebuke me not in Thine anger." A Psalm of the Cross. "The strong crying and tears" (Heb. v. 7), of the Holy One, prospective of the hour when He would feel Jehovah's anger and hot displeasure, on account of the sin of His people, when He, as their substitute, would take their load. Here we are called to listen to the heart-breathings of the Son of God, during "the days of His flesh," which found no expression in the hearing of men, but which "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 11), has here "beforehand" recorded. To be saved "out of death" (Verse 5, with Heb. v. 7).

Verses 6-7, shew the circumstances in which these cries were uttered. "Mine eye is consumed with grief: it waxeth old because of mine enemies." The Man of Sorrows had to continuously endure "the contradiction of sinners" (Heb. xii. 2), and all thereproaches wherewith they reproached Jehovah fell on Him.

Verses 8-10.—His cry was heard: Resurrection was the answer: God had vindicated His Name, and His foes have already, in part, received retribution (1 Thess. ii. 15-16). But the manifestation of His glory, and the vexation of *all* His enemies, will yet be seen in fuller measure, when He comes again (Rev. xix. 15-16). The psalm has a dispensational application to the remnant of God's earthly people, in days to come, who amid their national chastisements, see the hand of Jehovah, whom they know, and to whom they look for deliverance. In its

application to the believer, it shews a soul under divine discipline, owning the righteous actings of God as a Father, yet confiding in His mercy and faithfulness, and crying: "How long?"

PSALM VII.

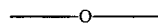
Subject:—Dawn. The Eye upon Jehovah. His Salvation and Deliverance, through Judgment upon the Wicked.

The heading of this Psalm—Shaggaion: "an ode of wandering"—sung to Jehovah concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite, tells the application of it to David the outcast king, in the day of his distress, enduring the cursing of the wicked, yet refusing to smite, pleading for judgment that righteousness may compass him about. Prophetically, it is the language of the Messiah, amid those who watch for His words, seeing and hating Him, because of His righteousness.

Verses 1-5.—The cry of the Righteous One, whose presence amid the godless, drew out their hate and scorn. He appeals to Jehovah, trusting Him in His distress. It is not the prayer of the Christian, to seek judgment on his enemies. Yet he knows it will come (Rom. xii. 19), and commits himself when reviled, like his Master, to Him that judgeth righteously (1 Pet. ii. 23).

Verses 6-10.—"Arise, O Jehovah!" Now the Lord Jesus sits at the right hand of God, waiting till His foes be made His footstool (Heb. x. 13). All judgment has been committed to Him (John v. 22), and when the time appointed has come, He will deal with His foes in retributive judgment unsparingly (Rev. ii. 27). Meanwhile He is on a throne of grace, not slack, but is long-suffering (2 Pet. iii. 9). We, His saints and followers, are to be like Him, overcoming evil with good (Acts vii. 60).

Verses 11-17.—The Antichrist, the last great enemy of Jehovah's earthly people, will meet his doom at the hands of the Lord, when in the zenith of His power. The downtrodden earthly people, captives in his grasp (Zech. xiv. 2), will be delivered through judgment. Then righteousness will have its way (Acts xvii. 31), and praise shall ascend to the Most High, through the great Melchisedec, King of righteousness and peace, and priest of the Most High God (Heb. vii. 7). Thus comes the day-break of millennial bliss, after the long night of sorrow and weeping.



Ministry in the Power of the Spirit.

WHETHER it be in the preaching of the Gospel to the lost, or the ministry of the Word to the Lord's people, it is well for all who preach and teach to ever remember, that no *real* work can be done for eternity apart from *the power of God*. There may be orthodox and earnest preaching; sinners may be plainly told of their ruin, and pointed in all faithfulness to the Divine remedy, and yet after all has been said and done, the deliverance of a sinner from Satan's kingdom waits on the putting forth of the Divine Arm. It is the work of God alone. This by no means does away with the preacher's responsibility; on the contrary, it increases it. It may be asked, in what way? Simply because, if the preacher is a clean vessel, that power will be manifested through him, acting on the conscience and the heart of sinners. "The power of God" (2 Cor. vi. 7), is part of the outfit of every true minister of Christ. Without it, his preaching will be flat and fruitless; with it, his very weakness will be made strong, and his word as arrows driven

home. It was thus with Stephen in his ministry. He was "full of faith and power" (Acts vi. 8), and his words "cut to the heart" (Acts vii. 54). It does not always follow that such a ministry will produce what men call "success." But it must produce great results. If accepted—as it was in Peter's case at Pentecost—there will be many turned to the Lord. If rejected—as Stephen's was—it will bring down the judgment of God. The preacher's responsibility, the chief part of his business is, to see that there is nothing in him that will hinder God's power from operating through him on the unconverted.

The same principle applies to those who minister to their fellow-saints the Word of Truth. Truth ministered in the power of Spirit will feed and edify the Lord's people. Such ministry must lift them nearer to God, to search their ways before Him, and to live in communion with Him. Even if it be the ministry of "correction and reproof," it must be in the power of God to have any effect for good. Alas? how much there is, that lacks the genuine ring, when tested thus. The words may be true but they lack moisture. The soul of God's saints are not refreshed: the conscience is not searched: the feeble hands are not uplifted. There is a lack of Divine power, and consequently there is a lack of abiding results. We are convinced that ministry in the power of God, is the only real remedy for many existing evils among the saints. The voice of God must be heard, and when His voice is heard, there is power, and evil hides its head. Let beloved brethren who preach and teach, make it their chief concern, to present themselves to God in such a condition, that He will be able to fill them with His power, and thus filled, lead them forth

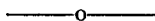
in their ministry, to win sinners from the grasp of the devil, and to lead saints to a closer walk with God, and a holier life in the world.

Among the Villages.

IT is written of the Lord Jesus that, in the course of His ministry, He "went about all the cities and *villages* teaching" (Matt. ix. 35). And of some of His early followers we read, "They preached the Gospel in many *villages* (Acts viii. 25). There is a tendency in modern evangelistic efforts to concentrate effort in the cities, with their thousands of perishing souls, and to neglect the villages. No doubt there is greater difficulty in reaching the latter. In many cases, there is no open door; no hall or room that can be hired, and not even a lodging for the Lord's servant.

But there is one way still left open, by which sinners can be reached with God's gospel, and the present season seems a suitable one to call the attention of fellow-saints to their privileges and responsibility in sharing it. The gospel can be preached *in the open air*, and it can be taken to the people in printed messages *in their own houses*. Long summer evenings, half-holidays and such opportunities, should be diligently used in going forth with the gospel among the villages. There are usually quite a number of such, within walking distance of almost every assembly of Christians in the provinces, and there is railway means of access to those further off. What more blessed employment for the younger ones of any assembly, guided by some of larger experience in gospel work, and sustained by the prayers of all, than going forth to evangelise the villages!

Cast your eyes around. See the spiritual death; the dark ritualism; the utter indifference. One generation after another passing into eternity. Can *you* not reach at least *one* of these villages with the gospel during the summer months. It would bring fresh life to many a fagging assembly, and infuse fresh energy to many a dying gospel work to go forth into untouched fields, from which in the mercy of God golden harvests will yet be gathered.



The Song of the Lord Jesus.

"In the midst of the Church will I sing praise" Heb. ii. 12.

THERE sounds a glorious music
As though all the Heavens rejoice;
There is One who singeth, and wondrous
Is the gladness of His voice.

A joy of surpassing sweetness,
Of love no speech can tell;
I hear, and my heart is broken,
For the Voice I know full well.

That Voice that has called me ever,
Called through the years of sin;
At my door beseeching and knocking
"Let ME, even ME, come in."

And now in His joy He singeth,
In His joy He singeth of me,
And all the Heavens make music
That the gladness of Christ they see—

"He was dead—he was dead, and he liveth,
He was lost, was lost, and is found!"
This is the song He singeth,
The marvellous joyful sound.

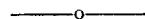
Through the open doors of Heaven
Afar through the starless night,
Is borne that hymn of rejoicing,
The music of God's delight.

The Converted Milkman.

WHAT a wonderful change genuine conversion makes in a man's life and habits. It affects everything, down to the least detail, in business life. Everything is done as under God's eye and unto Him, as the following story shews.

A milkman who was in the habit of adulterating his milk, was converted to God. His changed life proved that his heart had been really turned to God, and everybody took notice of it. Not only so, but soon his customers began to see a change in the quality of the milk. One woman who was an old customer, congratulated him on the change, and asked if he had got new cows, or better pasture. "Just the old cows, and the same pasture as before," said the milkman. "But when I was converted some weeks ago now, the milk was converted too."

That was just as it ought to be. A man's conversion to God must tell upon every part of his life, and if it does not, we may well question its reality. The unconverted cannot see a man's faith, but they do see his conduct, and when they hear of one being converted, they expect a very different life from their own. And in this they are perfectly right, for, as the converted milkman said, when a man is converted to God so also ought his "milk," or whatever else he handles or trades in, to be. A "converted" man with an "unconverted" trade is an anomaly.



BENEATH GOD'S EYE.—There is no piety so deep or real as the reference of the heart to God in everything, and all day long. This is living in God's presence—beneath the glance of His eye.

The Bible Annotator.

Biblical Outlines, Varied Readings, Marginal Notes, Brief Expositions of Difficult Passages, and all Helps to Bible Study will be welcomed for this column.

BURDENS.—In Galatians vi. 2, we read “Bear ye one another’s *burdens*.” Then in verse 5—“Every man shall bear his own *burden*.” There is no contradiction here; the two words are different. The word *Baros* in verse 2, implies *oppression*, a burden pressing one down. Love will find many ways in which it may “bear” these, and thus ease the overburdened one. In verse 5, the word is *Phortion* and implies *responsibility*, responsibility to Christ as Lord. “My yoke is easy, and my *burden* is light” (Matt. xi. 30).

Three Attitudes of GOD TOWARD HIS PEOPLE :

God *for* His people (Rom. viii. 31).

God *with* His people (Phil. iv. 9).

God *in* His people (2 Cor. vi. 16).

FIVE ASPECTS of the sinner’s attitude to God, in connection with salvation :—

PERMITTED—“Whosoever will let him take” (Rev. xxii. 17).

INVITED—“Come, for all things are now ready” (Luke xvi. 11).

ENTREATED—“As though God did beseech you” (2 Cor. v. 20).

COMMANDED—“This is His commandment that ye believe” (1 John iii. 23).

COMPELLED—“Compel them to come in” (Luke xiv. 23).

EDENS.—Gen. ii. 8, xlix. 20; Psa. xxvi. 8; Rev. xxix. 17. The word “Eden” means “delight or pleasure.” It is used in the Hebrew in all the above passages, from which we learn the different “Edens” in which God now has, or will yet have His pleasure.

THE LAMB.—The word used in the Gospel (John i. 29) in speaking of “the Lamb of God” as Sin-bearer, is the Greek word *arnos*, commonly used. But in the Book of Revelation, where the glories of the Lamb are unveiled the word used throughout is *arnion*, which means “a little lamb,” and is used by the Lord to Peter, “Feed my lambs.” Thus the name given to the feeblest of His flock below, is borne by the “Lamb in all His glory” up there above.

THE LORD’S SUPPER.—The Greek word used in the New Testament for “supper” means a sub-

stantial and satisfying meal, such as the huntsman partook of with relish after toil. Such shall be the Lord’s Supper to the hungry soul, yielding satisfaction and strength.

The Young Believer’s Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer’s name and address.

In what sense was Job a perfect man? The Lord says to Satan regarding him, that he was a *perfect* and an *upright* man, fearing God and eschewing evil. The word rendered “*perfect*” means “plain or complete;” *upright*, “straight or even.” He was *true* to the light he had; perfect in intention, upright in conduct, but not sinless (see Job xl. 4).

It is said that Christ’s kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom (Psa. cxiv. 13) *What does this mean?* That it will not, like all other kingdoms be transferred to another. He will reign while earth endures. And when He delivers up His kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24), from whose hand He received it, it is not to make room for another, but that “God may be all in all.” In the eternal state, there will be no kingdoms. God will dwell with men, and be their God (Rev. xxi. 3)

What do the words “Saviour of all men,” Tim. iv. 10, mean? That God has set forth Christ as “the Saviour of the world” (John iii. 17; iv. 42). There is in Him salvation for all men, but it is only in “Those that believe” that this salvation becomes actual and personal. All unbelievers “shall be damned” (Mark xvi. 16).

Do the words “Let both grow together” in the parable of the wheat and tares (Matth. xiii. 30) warrant the presence of unsaved communicants at the Lord’s Table, and unconverted members in the Church? This is what is being taught from it here. The Lord Jesus plainly says “The field is the *world*”—not the Church. The passage shews that the tares sown by the devil, will continue in the *world* till the end of the age, when they will be gathered in bundles for the fire. But this lends no support to the reception or retention of “the children of the wicked one” (v. 38) in the Church. They must be very dark who accept such an extraordinary exposition. But some are glad to get hold of anything—even a distorted Scripture—to justify their ways, when contrary to God and

especially if their consciences are smarting under a sense of guilt. Church discipline, although not found in this parable, is elsewhere taught in the Word of God (see 1 Cor. v. 11-13), and goes a good deal further than excluding "the tares," for it shows that "one who is called a brother," and who may be truly converted, if guilty of such conduct, or defiled by such error as Scripture designates, has to be excluded from the fellowship of saints until he has repented of the evil and been cleansed from it (1 Cor. v. 4-5, with 2 Cor. ii. 6-11). How men do turn God's truth upside down by their traditions!

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

R. B., BRADFORD.—The desire to give yourself more fully to the Lord's service, may either be the Lord calling you, or it may be the restlessness of your flesh desiring some other sphere than the one God has placed you in. You need to wait upon God to discover which. No doubt, many have given up their work and gone out to preach, both at home and abroad, who had no other call than a restless will, coupled with no great desire or ability for honest daily toil. Need we wonder if they break down, or turn out unsatisfactory?

E. L.—It requires one who is familiar with the deceivings of those who hold the doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment in any of its forms, to bring them to their true bearings, and convict them of it. To give such answers as "I believe what God's Word teaches," or "I believe in the punishment or destruction of the wicked," is no answer to the question at all, because they attach their own meaning to these terms. Few teach non-eternity publicly, but we never knew one who held it, who did not seek by words and books to propagate it privately: hence the danger of having them in a circle where they have access to simple souls. If you wish to preserve your soul in the simplicity of Christ, and to keep yourself free from the fowler's snare, keep entirely out of the reach of those who are even suspected of being unsound on this solemn subject. Do not argue or reason about it, but receive with fear and trembling the statements of

God's inspired Word, which are as silver purified seven times (Psa. xii. 6).

A. C., CLYDEBANK.—We know of no Scriptural reason for the rejection of the line of the well-known hymn:

"The veil is rent, lo! Jesus *stands*."

The fact that Heb. x. 12 says the Lord Jesus "sat down" after having offered His one sacrifice, does not imply that He has never risen since. It is a figure of speech expressing the completeness of His work, the abiding efficacy of His sacrifice, in contrast to the Jewish priest who "standeth daily" ever offering, an ineffectual and consequently oft-repeated sacrifice. His service as High Priest (Heb. ii. 17), Advocate (1 John ii. 2), and Shepherd (Heb. xii. 20) all tell of activity (Heb. iv. 15, vii. 25). Twice at least He is thus seen; once by Stephen, "*standing* on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56), ready to welcome His martyred disciple, and once by John in Patmos *walking* in the midst of the the churches (Rev. ii. 1). Personally, we accept the hymn exactly as it stands, and delight in singing it with fellow-saints around the Lord's table. Given by the Spirit, it makes a grand key note for the assembly's worship.

W. E. B., LONDON.—It is truly sad to hear of the children of believing parents, who have taken their place with a rejected Christ. "without the camp," going into worldly society, and even taking part in religious entertainments in churches and chapels. But you need not wonder at it, dear friend, for unless their faith stand in the power of God, and they have a personal knowledge of the truth learned from God, a theory or family religion handed down from sire to son, will not keep anybody out of that which their flesh seeks after. The only remedy for this, and much else like it, is, "Preach the Word" (2 Tim. iv. 2), and "Be *thou* an example" (1 Tim. iv. 12). The Word graciously and faithfully ministered, by one whose life is godly, has a wonderful power, and will either restore and recover, or cause them to kick against it, and ultimately go where their hearts already are.

A. D. STEVENSTON.—The Gospel work of an assembly should be carried on practically by those who have ability to preach, in fellowship of course with other brethren who guide in the assembly. They may not always preach themselves, but will see that the platform is filled by those who can

"tell the story" acceptably, and are otherwise fit. The help of brethren from neighbouring assemblies, who are known to be "Gospellers," should be welcomed and invited. This leaves them free as the Lord's servants to be guided by Him in the matter, and is quite a different thing from "engaging" preachers weeks and months ahead, a different one for every Sunday, which is a rag of "Methodism" with its circuit of local preachers. If God is manifestly with His servant, blessing the Word, he should have a free hand to go on as long as he sees fit, and not have to quit the place where God is using him, to make room for the next on the list, who may be out of touch with God altogether. You will no doubt have seen and felt the effects of such a system. Godly order leaves room for the Spirit's guidance, while man's arrangements, as well as his confusions, hinder His blessed operations.

W. B., GLASGOW.—A hymn book for Gospel work carried on by an assembly of believers, should not only be sound in the doctrine of its hymns—for wrong doctrine sung, or within reach of being sung, is not less hurtful than when it is preached—but it should consist of such hymns as the most of the saints can sing. Many popular hymn books of the present time, are not only unsound in their teaching, but are largely composed of hymns suitable only for choirs, quartettes, solos, and other forms of part singing, which none but the initiated can sing, with the dire result that the "common people," the rank and file of God's saints, who do not aspire to professional singing, but who can, and would if permitted, "make a joyful sound" to the Lord, and "sing forth the honour of His Name" to sinners, are doomed to silence, to make way for the "choir," with or without that name, possibly the least spiritual of the company, who are supposed to "attract the people" by their performances. Such is the world's way. Let them have it. But do not let God's saints copy it, or allow worldly-minded men who sigh after such things, to bring them in among those who have gone out from the world's religion in all its belongings, to a rejected Christ without the camp. Music is the chief attraction of present day evangelism. Preaching, what there is of it, is thin and pithless. Let us be content with the old time weapon—"We *preach* Christ crucified." If you sing the Gospel, let it be in the words of sound doctrine, not so manipulated to suit operatic music,

that only a few can share it, but such as the whole circle of saints who surround the preacher can join in, thus shewing their fellowship in the Gospel. Words, in which a sinner passing or standing by, may hear the way of life and salvation.

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Fallen Asleep.

"*With Christ, . . . very far better*" (Phil. i. 23, R.V.).

John Varnham of Haydock, Lancashire, passed away to be with Christ on 1st March. Our brother has for thirty-two years testified for Christ, and will be greatly missed among those who knew him.

William Murray of Melbourne, Australia, was suddenly called to be with the Lord on Saturday 24th February. Our brother was well known in various parts of Scotland as an earnest gospeller over 25 years ago, and there are fruits of his labours still to be found in many of the places where he preached. He laboured in Aberdeenshire and Morayshire in 1872-3, came to Ayrshire and was much used in leading sinners to Christ in Dalry, Galston, Dalmellington, and Ayr, where many still remember his earnest appeals and warnings. He went to Australia some twenty years ago, and we believe was used of God in Ballarat, and in Melbourne, from which he has been called to his rest with Christ. He leaves a widow, and three of a family, who are all grown up.

George Hunter of New Bedford Mass, U.S.A., fell asleep on April 5th, after an illness of several years. His latter end was peace. Our brother was well-known and much beloved among the Lord's people, not only in New Bedford where he resided and gathered with saints assembling in the Name, but all over the States. The Lord's servants found in his house an ever open door, with much love and fellowship. He was born in Kilwinning, and born again in Annbank, Ayrshire. At the age of 21 he went to America, and has borne a bright consistent testimony for Christ ever since. He leaves a widow and five children.

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Notes on Current Events.

In the SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, the British losses—mildly named casualties—by deaths, wounds and imprisonments, are said to exceed 25,000, and still the roll increases. What suffering, sorrow and desolation this means to thousands of homes! And then the eternal issues! These are well-nigh forgotten.

Giving to God.

An Address by the late Henry Heath.

THIS is a subject for much meditation and much prayer. I have found that it is a great help to contentment, and then to faithfulness, to remember my entire forfeiture of all good in the first man, and to ask myself the question, What could I, as a child of the first Adam, claim at the hand of God? Could I claim heaven? Could I claim pity? Could I claim a mite or a crumb, a draught of water or a breath out of hell? No, brethren; so terrible is our ruin in the first Adam, that to breathe out of hell is a mercy and a favour. We deserved nothing but judgment in the first Adam. We obtain eternal glory in the last Adam.

We are, then, simply recipients and stewards, not proprietors. God gave from His bosom His best gift, and presented it to us. With the mighty hand of faith we took it; and then we waved Christ in the presence of God, saying, "*Of Thine own have we given Thee.*" He gave His Spirit that we might know our need, that we might see the sufficiency of the provision, and take it, and rejoice in it. And when we thank God, and offer praise to Him for the indwelling Spirit of God, what are we doing? "*Of Thine own have we given Thee.*"

Then, in the question of gold and silver, if a man should give up everything he had in the bank, in the stocks, or in land, turn it all into gold, and then distribute it until he had nothing left, would he have anything to boast of or glory in? Nay, "*Of Thine own have we given Thee.*"

We are therefore but stewards. And this tells me I am accountable to God for the use of every breath I draw, and every moment

of time; for the exercise of every mental power, for the use and turn of every limb, and for the use of every fraction of gold, silver, or copper, with which I have been entrusted; and the judgment-seat of Christ will soon be set up, when we must give account of the expenditure of every farthing.

Every farthing uselessly spent on myself, is capital and interest sunk for ever; but every sixpence given to a poor saint, or in the service of Christ, will bring a thousand-fold interest at the day of Christ; and if we sow our money into this grave, shall I say, Christ will give it a resurrection at His judgment-seat, and then we shall marvel at the accumulated interest. We are thus stewards; we are not proprietors.

"*Ye are not your own.*" I do not belong to myself; I do not belong to Satan, praise God; I do not belong to the world; I do not belong to the Gentiles. I am bought out and out for Christ, as a member of His body—indwelt by the Spirit. I am His steward, and accountable therefore to Him, for all I am and have.

"*Ye are bought with a price.*" If I have sixpence in my pocket, I can say, between me and my fellow-man, "That is mine;" but can I say that to God? Oh, no! I cannot say of anything that it is mine, or that I am my own. I wish to learn this truth better, to be a more apt scholar. I think sometimes I have been so many years in God's school, and yet I am but as a dunce when I hold up this mirror—this mirror of *giving*, which the Spirit holds up before you and me. Let us look into it and try our ways, and see if we have adjusted ourselves by this heavenly standard.

But what a mercy we have a heart to do it at all! What a mercy that there is blood

before the throne—that the living Christ is in heaven to meet every description of imperfection!

I would add this, dear brethren: God's *goodness* is world-wide; His *fellowship* is restricted to those who have received Christ. Let His *unbounded kindness* be our pattern; let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith. Our *fellowship* is to be restricted to those who are members of Christ's Church; but as the kindness of God is universal, let *us* not forget the poor and needy in the world outside. "*Be ye imitators of God, as dear children.*"

Fellowship.

FELLOWSHIP with the fulness of Christ, most of all helps us to fellowship with others. The gushing fountain-springs of mighty rivers come not originally from the basin where they are first visible. They have a secret connection, unseen but constant, with a hidden, unfailing, exhaustless reservoir, in unknown distance and depth. By continual supplies thence received, the fountain overflows; and the stream flows on, and comes into fellowship with other streams, having a similar reservoir; and at last they all unite in the mighty ocean. So let us all draw from the hidden, unsearchable fulness of Christ, the exhaustless reservoir, hid from the eye of flesh, but known to the eye of faith, and we shall come in due time, after refreshing many a thirsty land in our way thither, into the full ocean of joy prepared for the whole Church of Christ.

Thy fulness, Lord, is mine, for oh!
That fulness is a fount as free
As it is inexhaustible!
Jehovah's boundless gift to me.

The First Epistle of Peter.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES. BY THE EDITOR.

II.—ELECTION AND SANCTIFICATION.

ELECTION by the Father, sanctification by the Spirit, and atonement by the Son, are introduced here. The Godhead is thus seen to be occupied in the salvation of the sinner, as in the work of redemption at the Cross (Heb. ix. 10). What a lofty conception this gives us of God's salvation! Election comes first. "*Elect* according to the foreknowledge of God." Election is not for the world. It is no part of the Gospel. The sinner's word is "Whosoever will," written in bold letters above God's door. No sinner will ever blame God for his damnation. God has made the door wide, and keeps it wide open for all. But election is a most blessed truth for the saint. Once inside the door, and saved (see John x. 9), I look up and read "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 3). "Elect" is a favourite word with Peter. He tells us that Christ was God's "elect" (ii. 4): "elect and precious" (ii. 6), and His people are a "*chosen* generation"—the same word.

Long before the world was, before Adam's clay was fashioned by the Creator's hand, God had "fore-ordained" a Saviour for His people, and "fore-known" (the two words are the same), a people for that Saviour: all ere time began. What a thought! Election tells us what we were taken out from—"the men whom Thou gavest me *out of the world*" (John xvii. 3). Predestination looks at what we have been called to, "predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. viii. 29).

Sanctification here, is that setting apart

which takes place when the sinner is quickened into new life by the Spirit ; not to the progression and practical setting apart that goes on all through our Christian life by the Spirit working in us obedience to the Word (see Eph. v. 26 : 1 Thess. v. 17 : John xvii.).

Election was away in eternity : sanctification is in time. The setting apart of the Spirit. His first operations in the soul begin sometimes very early ; in some they progress slowly, in others the work is sudden. We cannot limit the Eternal Spirit : we need not try to grasp the Infinite. His work of conviction, and of self-emptying is to lead to Christ—"Unto *obedience* and sprinkling of the blood of Christ."

Obedience is another favourite word with Peter. "Ye have purified your souls in *obeying* the truth" (v. 22) : "As *obedient* children (v. 14) : "What shall the end be of them that *obey* not the gospel? (iv. 17). The Spirit leads to Christ, to rest in His atoning work, to bow in obedience to Him as Lord. Paul was thus made to own Him as "Lord" before he knew peace through His blood. "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" was His first utterance. "The *Lord* stood with me," one of his last words to Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 17). Like the stricken deer who leaves the herd, the Spirit-convicted one seeks the separate place, like Nathaniel under the fig tree. The sprinkled blood gave shelter to the Israelite's first-born : the blood of Christ gives security and peace to all who trust it.

THE SALUTATION : "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." Grace is the free favour of God. Peace is through the work of Christ. Grace brings salvation (Titus ii. 11), to us as sinners, and "in grace we stand" as

saints (Rom. v. 3). In that grace we are exhorted to "continue," to abide. There is nothing in God's heart but favour towards us. He has "made us accepted"—literally, graced us—"in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6). He is able to make all grace "abound toward you" (2 Cor. ix. 8), so that it is no impossible thing to have it "multiplied" in us. What a shame if it should diminish, and if like the Galatians those who watch for souls should have to say they "stand in doubt" of us. Peter begins by wishing for the saints that grace may be "multiplied," and ends with the words "grow in grace" (2 Pet. iii. 17), so it is grace all through.

"Grace all the work shall crown

Through everlasting days ;

It lays in heaven the topmost stone,

And well deserves the praise."

Peace flows from the Cross. There Christ made peace (Col. i. 20). We have it through faith (Rom v. 1), and it is multiplied, as we become acquainted with God (Job xxii. 21). As we learn to cast our burdens upon Him, His own peace garrisons the heart (Phil. iv. 7). "Perfect peace" is the holy heritage of all who implicitly trust Jehovah. "Great peace" the portion of all who keep His law (Psa. cxix. 97). Here is peace in progression and in blessed increase. Who among us does not long for its multiplication after such a manner in our souls? Need we wonder that a song of praise comes next? Acceptance with God, through Christ, known and enjoyed ; grace the atmosphere of the soul, and abundance of peace, the happy portion of the heart, always lead to worship.

If believers walked in communion with God, they would find little difficulty in walking in communion with one another.

Worship and Worshippers.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE WM. LINCOLN.

"THE Father seeketh worshippers." Oh, I think that such a grand thought—the *Father* seeking worshippers! Once He did not; they had to seek Him. "And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart." He was walled off. They dared not come too near. But now the veil is rent, Jesus has come forth as the expression of the Father; and God seeks worshippers. God is coming close to us, saying, as it were, "Come to My bosom, to My heart, My children." Just as a father coming home at night, has his heart gladdened at the sight of his children dancing around Him, so is God seeking worshippers; that is *His* joy.

To worship, we must be *consciously* in His presence, and it is only children who can be so; only the saved, only those who know they are saved, and no one else; only those who have received the Holy Ghost to identify Himself with us, to urge us to say, 'Father.' "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Observe, *He* first came close to us.

I would call your attention to a little expression, the full meaning of which is not always understood; it is this, "*In the midst.*" "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst."

Observe, there is a difference between "meeting" and "gathering." When we *meet*, it may be *accidental*; when *gathered*, it is by the Holy Ghost.

The expression "in the midst" is never used in the narrative of our Lord's life

before the crucifixion, except where He was found in the midst of the doctors. On the cross itself we find Him thus spoken of (John xix. 18). But after He was risen, we read of it over and over again as if He had got to us at last. Once in Luke, and twice in John, on two successive *first days*, Jesus came and stood "*in the midst.*" There must be some meaning in this.

We find it is still His way. "There *am* I in the midst." Oh, I think it is like as a hen would gather her chickens under her wings, making us *feel at home*. And so when the Lord is seen in the Revelation, it is walking *in the midst* of the churches. When we are gathered in the glory-cloud, that will be the position He will take. "I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren: *in the midst* of the church I will praise Thee." Compare Ezekiel's vision, where the Lord is seen appearing to Ezekiel. There were the cherubim seen, and a human form *in the midst*. The cherubim in glory are the church of God. Again, look at the position of the Shekinah on the mercy-seat—two cherubim with the cloud of glory between: "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are *all of one.*" The cherubim and mercy-seat are *all one lump*.

These little words, "in the midst," show us the Lord's place in the assembly, and do away with the thought of one being nearer than another. He seeks worship from all. This brings us to the question—

What is worship? Prayer is *not* worship. Praise is *not* worship. Worship is much beyond either of these. It might be stated thus:

Prayer is being occupied with our *wants*.

Praise is being occupied with our *blessings*.

Worship is being occupied with our *God*.

His blessings have endeared *Him* so to us, that we look beyond them. Suppose Jesus were to come personally into our midst this evening, I believe He would do just as He did before. He would set our minds at ease as He did Peter's by granting him a private interview (Luke xxiv. 34). Were one of you to say, "Lord, I am not quite happy, I have got no bread," He would say, "According to your faith be it unto you," and you would be sure to find a loaf when you got home, if you trusted Him.

Ah, we are so terribly selfish; we forget that the Lord wants something as well as we. The Father is *seeking* worshippers. One has said that we use the Lord oftentimes like an umbrella, as a shelter from the storm, but folded and put away in sunshine. But the Lord is not satisfied till He brings from us this utterance, "My Lord, and my God!"

Look at the eighteenth chapter of Genesis. It is divided into two parts. (1) Abraham is told he is to have a son; and (2) The history of Sodom. The second part as you know sets forth *communion*. "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do?" That is *fellowship*—God making *us* His confidants.

But what connection can there possibly be, you say, between the first and second of these parts? Just this: God knew that there was something on Abraham's heart, and He wanted Abraham to be easy, to have the care that was on his heart rolled away. So He promises him a son; and having thus removed his cares, Abraham could have communion with God.

Oh, don't drag the assembly down, if you are not in a worshipping frame; don't lead the worship, then; leave it to others who

are, and may-be the fire will afterwards get kindled in your own soul.

A friend of mine having expressed considerable surprise at my saying prayer was not worship, I asked him whether there would be prayer in heaven? He answered in the negative. I said, then will there be worship in heaven? "Oh, yes," he said; and he was satisfied that the two were quite distinct.

Since I have been in Ireland several have reminded me of a passage I mentioned when here five years ago. It is from the Song of Solomon. "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock . . . let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." We must get into His presence *first*, and *then* hear His voice. Observe the order—first, SEE; second, HEAR.

"*In My Name*" means unto My presence (2 Chron. vii. 16 proves this), and whether we speak or are silent, let us realise *His* presence, and we shall need no man-president. Who ever saw the stars at noonday? *No one*; and so, if we are in the presence of the Son of God we shall not see man. "Oh, but A. B. was the means of my conversion." "Yes, but Jesus Christ was the means of your salvation, and He is in the midst."

Observe, it is not a *promise* as many take it; that where two or three are gathered together He *will be* in the midst. No; He does not say, there *will I be*, but "*there AM I.*" *He is there*, seeking worship from those gathered to *enjoy* His love. So in Luke xv. the fatted calf is killed, and "let us eat and be *merry.*" For those of you who like commandments here is one. "*Be merry,*" or as in 1 Cor v. "Keep the feast;" and this dovetails with the fifteenth of Luke. We are to be merry before God.

So it was with Israel in God's dealings with them. He brought them, not first to the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, but said, "Let my people go that they may hold a *feast* to me in the wilderness." *Feasting* indicates *joy*. Oh, how slow God's children are to rise up to His goodness! Worship is just the overflowing of the heart—*My good God*. "Be merry;" God wants us to anticipate heaven. We see not all things yet, *but we see Jesus*.

Worship in its highest thought implies *assembling*. The present dispensation is the gathering out of a body, and the idea of worship is, that of the heart being so full that we want others to help. *Come and help us* is the idea. A young lady once asked her musical instructor, how she might attain *perfection* in playing. The reply was, "You must feel it." That is, she was to throw her entire energy, her whole soul into it. Oh, what a burst will escape that assembled throng, as they ponder o'er life's finished story with Him in the midst!

God and Mammon.

MAMMON means the selfish enjoyment of this world, and we cannot serve both God and Mammon: neither can we abstain from serving one or the other. All that is left us is, to make a deliberate choice which we shall serve, to which we shall give our heart, and then we shall serve that one wholly, yea so entirely shall the object of our choice control our affections and absorb our strength that the Lord says we "shall *hate* and *despise* the other." He who loves the world and cleaves to its good things, by necessity of nature hates God, and despises grace: and he who loves God in his heart, hates the world and counts its best things to be as dross.

John Dickie.

Acceptable Service.

Notes of an Address given at a Conference.

TO serve the Lord acceptably, we must serve Him as He has commanded. There are few things in which so much of self-will and self-pleasing exist, as in what is known as the service of the Lord. I will ask you very briefly to consider three of the Lord's calls to service, with His commands in connection therewith.

1. "Serve the Lord with *all thine heart*" (Deut. x. 12). God has given to us all His heart, in giving us His only begotten Son, and the Lord Jesus has served us and suffered for us according to the love that was in His heart for us—"Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Now He claims from us—and it is His due—whole-hearted love, and whole-hearted service. He puts up with our weaknesses: He deals kindly with our faults: He forgives our blunders and restores us from our backslidings, but He will not have the service of a divided heart, the mere waste and refuse that is left after the world and self have had their full portion. Is there not a great deal of such service? What a number of professed disciples and servants of Christ, are nearly always ailing on the Lord's Day! Absent from their places in the Christian assembly and the prayer meeting, because of some supposed or trifling ailment, which did not prevent them from being at their business on Saturday, nor will it hinder them from returning to it on Monday. *Heart disease* of a spiritual sort is their trouble, the result of trying to serve God and Mammon. This has left no heart for God, or for His work. He wants not our's but us: our hearts first, our energies after. "My son give Me thine heart" first. "Son,

go work to-day in My vineyard" next. "Serve the Lord with all thine heart"—this is what He seeks.

2. "Serve Him with a perfect heart and with a *willing mind*" (1 Chron. xxviii. 9). It is written concerning the workers of Nehemiah's time, who helped in the building of the wall, "the people had a mind to work" (Neh. iv. 6). When this is lacking, the wheels of service drag heavily. When people have to be goaded on in their service, it is evident they have neither heart nor mind for it. Either they have got into a cold condition of heart, or attempted work for which they had no call from God, and no fitness. What a miserable affair it is for one to *have* to preach or teach their class in the Sunday School, as a matter of duty, when they have no mind for it, no pleasure in it. Far better give up the form, and get out of a wrong position, or get into a better condition of soul. "Not by constraint, but *willingly*," is God's principle of service. "Serve Him with a willing mind."

3. "Serving the Lord with all *humility* of mind" (Acts xx. 19). Pride in the service of Christ is an anomaly. He was meek and lowly in heart. He made Himself of no reputation. The Mighty God, the Creator of heaven and earth, became the girded Servant, and stooped down to wash His disciples' feet. This is our example, the pattern for all His servants to copy. How often is it otherwise. A little success puffs up and makes the instrument boast. Reports issued for "the glory of God" are more frequently for "the praise of men." Under the guise of giving God His due, self acts the robber, and steals the glory. The frequent use of the capital "I," too clearly shews what is working in the

mind. Jealousy at the success of others, shews there is a proud mind. Evil speaking, and attempts to depreciate their work, are the results of pride. These things greatly mar the service of God. Seek then to serve the Lord "with all humility of mind." These three calls to service, heard and obeyed, will keep the lowly servant in close touch with his Lord and Master. They involve the daily waiting at His gates: the absolute submission to His Word, which is the mark of a true servant. O how little of such service there is in our day! How the spirit of "the age" has entered into what professes to be the service of the Lord! See the gushing reports, the flaming advertisements, the appeals for money to make things "go" in worldly style. Did Paul or Peter or any other of Christ's honoured servants, act after such a manner? I trow not? And if *we* would get back to where they stood, reckoned to be the "offscouring of all things," we would no doubt know "the power of God," and see the results following that we so often pray and long for. Learn then, dear fellow-saints, to regulate your service by the only proper standard—The Word of God. Follow not the crowd. Copy no longer the methods of the world, but seek only to please God, and to do that which is acceptable in His sight. Search the heart well before God as to your motives. Others cannot, you must.

What a revelation such a searching would make to many a child of God! What a surprise many an active, earnest Christian would get, if he acted after this manner. As the light shines in and reveals the motives and objects of our life and service, things appear so different from what they do as seen by man.

Stillness.

The Favourite Hymn of an aged suffering saint, who has just gone to be "with Christ."

THEY lesson art thou learning,
O tried and weary soul,
His way art thou discerning,
Who works to make thee whole;

In the haven of submission,
Art thou satisfied and still;
Art thou clinging to the Father,
'Neath the shadow of His will?
Now, while His arms enfold thee,
Think well, He loveth best;
Be still, and He will mould thee,
For His heritage of rest.

The vessel must be shapen
For the joys of paradise;
The soul must have her training
For the service of the skies;

And if the great Refiner,
In furnaces of pain,
Would do His work more truly,
Count all His dealings gain,
For He Himself hath told thee
Of tribulation here;
Be still, and let Him mould thee,
For the changeless glory there.

From vintages of sorrow
Are deepest joys distilled,
And the cup outstretched for healing
Is oft at Marah filled;

God leads to joy through weeping,
To quietness through strife,
Through yielding, into conquest,
Through death, to endless life.

Be still, He hath enrolled thee
For the kingdom and the crown,
Be silent, let Him mould thee
Who calleth thee His own.

Such silence is communion,
Such stillness is a shrine,
The fellowship of suffering
An ordinance divine;

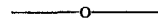
And the secrets of abiding
Most fully are declared,
To those who, with the Master,
Gethsemanæ have shared.

Then trust Him to uphold thee,
'Mid the shadows and the gloom,
Be still, and He shall mould thee,
For His presence and for home.

For resurrection stillness,
There is resurrection power.
The prayer and praise of trusting,
May glorify each hour;

And common days are holy,
And years an Eastertide,
For those who with the risen One
In risen life abide.

Then let His true love fold thee,
Keep silence at His Word,
Be still, and He will mould thee;
O REST THEE in the Lord.



Delivered Ourselves First.

The first step toward delivering fellow-saints from an evil position, is to be thoroughly out of such a position ourselves. We cannot pull others out of a ditch if we are half into it ourselves. There is no moral power in telling others to be separate from the world in any of its forms, if we are more or less mixed up with it ourselves. The first thing is to get a complete and thorough deliverance; the next, in the spirit to true brotherly love, to seek the deliverance of all who bear the Name of the Lord Jesus, by lending them a helping hand.

Hid Behind the Picture.

A CHRISTIAN worker passing along a busy street in Glasgow, noticed a crowd around a shop door, and pausing, found that it was a sale of pictures that was going on. The auctioneer raised a valuable picture so that all could see it, and when he got it into proper position, he began to describe it to his audience, engaging their attention with all its beauties. And so highly did he extol the worth of that picture that every eye was fixed upon it. "And yet," added the Christian worker, in telling the story, "I never saw the speaker: he was hid behind the picture he was showing." And that's just how it ought to be with all who speak of Christ. They must be content to hide themselves, if they want to attract the souls of their hearers to Christ Himself." Very true. And that is just what every true servant of the Lord Jesus ought to be always aiming at. One who served the Lord, and testified well of Him, could say—"He must increase, but I must decrease." Another was able to say—"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants, for Jesus sake." This is the spirit of true service. To hold up Christ, to exalt the Lamb of God, is the sort of preaching and teaching that God honours in the salvation of the lost. Many a wise and gifted preacher is passed by, and the lowly servant is made the chosen instrument, because he makes everything of Christ, and hides himself behind the Cross. But it is not in *preaching* that the habit of hiding self has to be acquired: it cannot be "put on." It has to be learned before the Cross, and by the study of Him who "made Himself of no reputation." We need "the mind of Christ."

Purposeth in His Heart.

HOW wonderful that the commonplace act of giving of our pence or pounds, should have the same high motive connected with it, as the most exalted service. "Daniel *purposed in his heart* that he would not defile himself" (Daniel i. 8.) Barnabas exhorted them that "with *purpose of heart* they should cleave unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 20). And here, the money given to the Lord, is to be fixed according to the purpose of the heart. Only thus, when it has exercised the heart, is it a sweet savour unto Him. Very often the shilling or half-crown is given as a matter of course, without the least exercise of heart, either to relieve a pressing need, or be in line with others. But to give after such a fashion has no "sweet savour" in it to God, and little blessing to the soul of the giver.

In a collection for some charitable object, a man dropped a half-sovereign into the box instead of a sixpence. When he found out his mistake, he went to the treasurer intimating his loss, but finding the collection had been sent away, he meekly submitted to the inevitable, saying—"Well, it is not lost after all, it will be so much more treasure laid up in heaven." "Not a bit," said the treasurer, "It will just be counted as a sixpence up there, for that was all that you had *purposed* in your heart to give." Just so. His "liberality" was accidental; it had no value in the reckoning and heaven. Neither has the post-mortem legacies that are bequeathed to this or that, simply because their owners cannot take them whither they go. If you want to have treasure laid up to await you in heaven, lay it out heartily for God here, and as He directs in His holy Word.

The Bible Annotator.

A THREEFOLD CONFESSION OF CHRIST :

The sinner's—"My Saviour" (Luke i. 47).
 The saint's—"My Shepherd" (Psa. xxiii. 1).
 The servant's—"My Lord" (Phil. iii. 8).

THREEFOLD GLORY OF GOD :

Creation Glory (Psa. xli. 1)—In the Heavens.
 Redemption Glory (2 Cor. iv. 4)—In Christ.
 Eternal Glory (1 Pet. v. 10)—In the Saints.

"UNTO HIMSELF."

"Reconciled to Himself (Col. i. 20)—The Cross.
 "Purified unto Himself (Phil. iii. 21)—The Word.
 "Subdued unto Himself (Titus ii. 14)—The Power.
 "Presented to Himself (Eph. v. 27)—The Glory.

BLESSING.—"The Lord *bles*s thee and keep thee" (Num. vi. 24). The root from which the word "bles" is derived, signifies to "kneel down" in all tenderness and affection and to do all that is possible for the person on whom the blessing is bestowed.

THE VALLEY OF BACA (Psa. lxxiv. 5).—"Baca" in its primary meaning is the name given to a valley so full of a prickly shrub called *Baca*, that one can with difficulty and scarcely without pain force a passage through it. If you pluck a leaf from the shrub, a dew drop like a tear starts forth, hence it is called "the valley of tears." Such is the world to the believer He passes through "much tribulation" and "many tears" to the Kingdom.

GOD'S POEM.—The Greek of Eph. iii. 9 rendered—"For we are His workmanship," might be more literally "We are His poem." The expression of the grand and worthy thoughts of God, enunciated not in words only, but in a vestment which sets the thoughts forth far more impressively than any words could do, even in a life which is worthy to be ascribed to God as the Thinker and Doer (1 Thess. ii. 12; Heb. xiii. 21).

THE OPENED EAR.—In Isa. lv. 5, we read, "The Lord God hath *opened* mine ear," and in Psa. xl. 6, "Mine ears hast Thou opened"—margin, "digged." In Isaiah, the expression used refers to enlarging the capacity of the ear for instruction, which is the preparation for the opening, or digging, of Psalm xl., which was the piercing through the ear with an awl (Exod. xxi. 5, 6). Both were true of the Lord Jesus. The former in life, the latter in death.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

What is the sin unto death in 1 John v. 16?
 Death here is bodily death, such as overtook Ananias and Sapphira for their sin, and such as some of the Corinthians (1 Cor. xi. 30) also suffered, because of sin unjudged and unrepented of in their lives. It is not the eternal judgment of a sinner that is the subject here, but the Divine chastisement of a saint.

What is the import of the words—"That the day of Christ is at hand, 2 Thess. ii. 1?" The Revised Version gives "that the day of the Lord is present." It is not the coming of the Lord for His people that is here under consideration, but the day of the Lord which will follow on the ungodly world (see 2 Pet. iii. 10), and which the Thessalonian believers had been told by some false teacher was then present, and that the persecutions they suffered were judgments such as the ungodly will then endure. But Paul shews that there can be no "day of the Lord," until the saints are gathered together unto Christ in heaven, and the Antichrist revealed on the earth.

When Paul says he has "no commandment of the Lord," 1 Cor. vii. 25, are we to understand that what he says is not inspired? All the Word is inspired; there is no difference as to this. But we must distinguish between *inspiration* and *revelation*. When a thing is revealed of God, it is absolutely new, and is, of course, "the commandment of the Lord." The apostle here gives what he had learned from the Lord as well as what he could speak of as a commandment of the Lord. The one was his own matured spiritual judgment; the other a Divine revelation, but both were equally inspired. The inspired Word contains the language of Balaam, Judas, and even the devil himself. The Holy Ghost inspired the writers to give us exactly what each of these said, whether truth or falsehood, not as approving of it, but recording it for our instruction or warning. All the Book of Job is equally inspired, but few of the speakers, had the mind of God.

Is "the heavenly Jerusalem" in Heb. xii. 22, and "the holy Jerusalem," Rev. xxi. 10, the same? The city, the heavenly Jerusalem whose Builder and

Maker is God, is clearly distinguished from "the church of the first born" (v. 23). The city for which Abraham looked was a scene of heavenly bliss, the home of all the glorified saints. "The holy Jerusalem" seen by John as descending from God out of heaven, a golden city, to take up a place above the millennial earth, is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." The former shows *where* the saints are to be, the latter *what* the glorified Church is to be earthward, as a channel for the display of the glory through which it will radiate on the nations below.

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Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

A. B., ROSS.—A Cruden's Concordance will no doubt be a great help to you in tracing out Bible Subjects; but, if you desire to follow the subjects critically, you would get the help you seek in "Young's Analytical Concordance," which gives the Hebrew and Greek words, with their varied translations into English. Any ordinary reader of English may use it.

M. R., MANCHESTER.—If you are slandered and misrepresented, it is no more than your Lord and Master was before you. If by fellow-believers, it is all the harder to bear, but even then *bear* it. God will give you grace to bend your head before the storm, and if your cause is just, when all is over, your "righteousness shall shine forth as the noonday." It may be that God sees a "needs be," for allowing you to be the victim of misrepresentation to bring you low, and to draw you closer to Himself, and when His good and gracious purpose has been accomplished, He will bring you forth "purified, made white, and tried," and then turn His hand upon those who have so cruelly wronged you. You may safely leave them with Him, who has said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." You are quite right in giving your accusers a full and truthful statement of the facts, as you know them; but, having done so, leave the defence of your character with God. He will look after it better far, than any "legal adviser."

E. G. B., LONDON.—The very best way to develop the abilities of, and engage the Christian

Young Men in the Assemblies, is to guide them in such service as they have grace and ability to share. Paul would have Timothy "go forth *with* him, and *took* him" (Acts xvi. 3). If elder brethren who are gossellers, instead of always doing the preaching themselves, would take a couple of zealous, godly young men with them, giving them a share of the meeting, there would be far more helpers in many places than there are. If we had more Pauls, there would be more Timothys.

T. L., BELFAST.—We do not read in the Word of such an official as "the chairman," although there are gatherings of all kinds mentioned there, for prayer, ministry, and worship. When saints come together to wait upon God to supply the ministry, which He sees and knows they need, He never fails them, as thousands can testify, who, in years gone by, came hungering and thirsting after God, many travelling long distances to the Believers' Meetings and Conferences of these days. There may have occasionally been unprofitable talk, for the flesh will ever seek to obtrude itself and take undue advantage, but godly rule is the Divine remedy for this, not the election of a chairman, or the selection of speakers to fill up the time one after another, each having his appointed limit, and probably neither having a message from God suited to the present needs of the gathered saints. For it is one thing to give a correctly-worded address, quite another to be the Lord's messenger, bearing the Lord's message for that people at that time. If one or more of the Lord's servants call the saints together for ministry of the Word, this is quite a different form of meeting (Acts xiv. 27), for which they would be responsible; but when the whole assembly, or as at our Conferences, saints from many assemblies come together to wait upon God to give the ministry He has prepared through the ministers of own choice, it is surely well to leave Him room for the exercise of His constraining and restraining power. To have everything cut and dry is certainly much easier, and will be sure to commend itself to the natural mind; but ministry thus arranged usually lacks the sap and the freshness of that which is given by the Spirit of God, when waiting souls are found before the throne, conscious of their dependence upon the living God.

E. A. G., LONDON.—There is no direct Scripture to say whether the collection box should be passed

round or set in a convenient place where all in the assembly may reach it. Either way we think is according to the principle of fellowship taught in the Word. But if you begin to pass round the box with the object of getting *more money*, that is an unworthy motive which God will not own. There can be no "sweet savour" (Phil. iv) ascending to God, from contributions raised after such a manner, and little joy to the saints who give, not willingly or cheerfully, but of constraint. We have never seen any lack of money to meet all expenses in carrying out all godly work, and have something to give to him who needeth, where hearts are right with God, and fellowship *heartily* among saints. When these are gone or failing, any subterfuge may be resorted to.

J. D., BEDFORD.—There is nothing in the things of God, concerning which so much spiritual discernment, Divine wisdom, and godly care are needed, as in dealing with a brother who has imbibed wrong doctrine, or is in danger of so doing. To deal harshly or ungraciously, will almost certainly confirm him in it, for it must be remembered that one whose spiritual condition is such that the enemy has access to him with the leaven of evil teaching, is ill able to bear what another in a good condition of soul would carry to the Lord in prayer. On the other hand, it would be entirely wrong to allow one whose mind is shaken on fundamental truths, to teach or have access to fellow-believers, whom he might lead further wrong than he is himself. The Word in Titus ii. 7, "in doctrine uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity," shews what God requires of those who teach others. And while the stage of departure may not be such as to warrant exclusion from the assembly's fellowship—which is the last resource, after every form of dealing for his recovery has failed—it would be quite according to God, for those guiding the saints, to make known to the suspected one that, until confidence has been fully restored, he ought not to force his ministry upon the assembly, and, if this fails, to warn the saints to be on their guard. If these steps are taken in a gracious, godly, and uncompromising manner, they will either lead to his recovery or—if he will persist in holding to his unsound teaching—to his withdrawal.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—We have several important questions requiring answers, which we hope to insert next month, and shall be glad to have the help of others in dealing with them.

Notes on Current Events.

THE INDIAN FAMINE threatens to exceed in its severity that of 1896-7. It affects over 80 millions. The Western Provinces suffer most, notably Gujerat, famed for its fertility. Owing to the failure of the monsoon's rains, all is barren, and already thousands are starving. The plague continues to spread. These are solemn voices to the British nation, whose sinful traffic in opium is a scandal in the eyes of the whole world, and the chief hindrance to the Gospel in India. This ought to cause deep searchings of heart among God's people, and draw forth practical sympathy and help for the suffering thousands in India.

THE GREAT CANADIAN FIRE has rendered many homeless. But it is pleasing to observe, how quick and full the response has been from all parts in giving aid to the sufferers. This is a great mercy.

THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Through God's mercy, and we believe in answer to much prayer, the later stages of this sad war have not been so filled with bloodshed as the former were. We long to hear of peace restored, and the Gospel spreading from shore to shore. It is a matter for much thanksgiving that godly Scripture Readers, and thousands of printed Gospel messages, have been freely allowed among the British soldiers.

Reviews.

Under this head, we hope occasionally to take notice of new and recent books and publications, which we think will be helpful to the Lord's people, and lead to increased love of God's Word.

THE SILENCE OF GOD.—By Robert Anderson, C.B. *New and Cheaper Edition.* A book of great interest on God's dispensational dealings, especially in this age. *Cloth Boards, 2s 6d.*

THIRTY YEARS' GOSPEL WORK and Revival Times. By the late Samuel Blow, Evangelist. A stirring book, which every Gospeller should read. It gives a graphic account of Gospel pioneering and persecution in days gone by, with stirring records of the Great Revival of 1859-60 in Scotland, England and Ireland, with the principal speakers and soul winners. *Cloth Boards, 1s 6d; Limp, 1s.*

SONGS OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE.—By John Dickie. Spiritual verses, full of the riches of Christ. Very suitable for suffering and bereaved saints. *Cloth Boards, 6d; Leatherette, 4d.*

Ministry and Oversight in the Church.

Addresses delivered in Grosvenor Hall, Dublin.

I.—BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

BELOVED brethren, I feel a great deal of diffidence in standing here this evening before you, but as I was so affectionately asked to speak to you on this occasion, upon this subject, I thought the humblest thing to do would be to accept the invitation.

Now, the theme for the evening is:—“What is Scripture Teaching as to Ministry and Oversight in the Church to-day?”

There are four questions suggested by the subject—

First—What is the Church?

Second—What is the Church to-day?

Third—What is Scripture teaching as to ministry in the Church?

Fourth—What is Scripture teaching as to oversight in the Church?

Now, we will try to take up the subject as nearly as possible in this order:—

FIRST—What is the Church? I am not going to take up very much time over this point, as we want to get more particularly to ministry and oversight in the Church; but we still want to know what the Church is, in which ministry and oversight is required.

The Church is variously spoken of in Scripture. It might help us to remember that the Apostle Paul speaks of himself *par excellence* as a minister of the Church in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians: “The Church in which I”—and I believe in the original it is an emphatic “I”—“in which I became a minister.” I do not think the definite article is in it. It is what characterised his ministry, the truth of the Church was specially committed to

him. Now, the Apostle Paul speaks of the Church mainly in two ways—as “Christ’s body” and as “God’s house.” I do not want to multiply passages of Scripture. We are, no doubt, more or less familiar with these thoughts. I am not stating anything that is new; we have known these things many years and enjoyed them, so I do not pretend to bring out anything like a novelty.

In the last verse of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the Church is spoken of as Christ’s body; in the concluding verses of the second chapter of that epistle the Church is regarded in the light of a building. In the Epistle to the Corinthians the order is reversed; in the third chapter we get the thought of the building, while in the twelfth chapter we get the thought of the body. In the Epistle to the Colossians, the body is mentioned in three successive chapters, while nothing is said about the building. In the first Epistle to Timothy, the building is mentioned, while nothing is said about the body. Nevertheless these two aspects of the Church do not cover everything that might be said on the subject. We find the Church spoken of as “the flock of God,” and as the fulfilment of the type of Eve taken out of Adam to be his wife. Again, as “fellow-citizens,” the saints are spoken of as sharers in common of a heavenly polity. But all these things are to be spiritually discerned—they are not material ideas. How important, then, that we have divine intelligence, that these spiritual thoughts might produce divine impressions on our souls. These things cannot be explained like the principles of mathematics; the divine nature of the Church can only be discerned in the Spirit. Now, confining

our attention to the two main thoughts of the Church, "the body" and "the house"—there are various aspects of "the body," and there are various aspects of "the house." "The body" is spoken of as comprising all the redeemed of the dispensation in the closing verses of chapter i. of the Epistle to the Ephesians; and also as including, as a complete circle of membership, all the redeemed on the earth at any given time. That is the way it is spoken of in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, and also in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where the body of Christ, as far as I apprehend it, is never spoken of, as including all the redeemed of past, present, and future dispensations, but as being on the earth now, a distinct circle on the earth in which every ransomed soul under the canopy of heaven, north and south, east and west, is a member. I think you will find that wherever the thought of membership is introduced, we get "the body" now on the earth as a distinct entity on the earth. When the idea of "the body" is, as including all the redeemed from the day of Pentecost right on to "the rapture," I do not think the thought of membership is introduced at all. Then when we come to "the house" aspect of the Church, you find in the concluding verses of the second Epistle of the Ephesians that all the building is growing up into an holy temple in the Lord, that is, the temple is in the course of erection. Then you find in the first Epistle to Timothy the house aspect of the saints (as far as I apprehend it—I speak as a learner, willing to be instructed further), all the saints on the earth at any given time; but the truth of the house is to be locally realised; that is, the assembly *actually gathered* gets the good of the priv-

ileges of the house. It is the character stamped upon it, it is the place where God dwells. The local realisation of this truth comes out in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 3rd chapter: "Know ye not that ye are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwelleth in you," or, among you—that is, God had His first temple once in Jerusalem; He vacated that, and has now His temple among the Gentiles. Now, wherever the saints are gathered together in Ecclesia, or assembly, *there* God has a temple on the earth, and as far as we gather up from that epistle, it includes all the redeemed in that place, or any other, though the redeemed need to *come together* to get the good of this truth, to be in the enjoyment of it.

Now, I submit that ministry has to do with the truth of the Church as the body of Christ; oversight has to do with the truth of the Church as God's house. There is an evident difference between the two thoughts. Ministry comes from the Head on the Throne; oversight is the result of the sovereign action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly on the earth. Scripture for the first thought is found in the 4th chapter of Ephesians, for the second thought in the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: "Over which the Holy Ghost has made you (Episkopoi, bishops, or) overseers." The Holy Ghost is the only one capable of making any man a true overseer. Now, as to ministry, it is universal in its scope, "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, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the

stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine . . . but may grow up into Him, the Head, in all things." Ministry, I said, comes from the Head in heaven, and I submit as a principle, though we need wisdom to apply it, that, as ministry is the exercise of a spiritual gift, it not only flows from the glorified Head on the throne, but it is subject to the control and guidance of the Head, as to *time when*, as to *place where*, as to *manner how*. I want these three thoughts to be specially considered. Ministry being the exercise of a spiritual gift, flowing from the glorified Head in heaven to the body on earth, and subject to His control and guidance, This is the principle, but the application of the principle needs wisdom and discernment from God.

(To be continued.)

The Barnstaple Conference.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY MR R. C. CHAPMAN.

THE Barnstaple Annual Meetings have a widespread interest. They were held this year on June 13th, and largely attended by Christians from all parts of the West of England. The following notes, sent by a friend, will be read with interest, as the latest public utterances of our venerable and esteemed brother, Mr. R. C. Chapman, who is now in his 98th year. The meetings were begun by Mr. Chapman giving out the hymn—

"O Love Divine, what hast Thou done?"

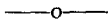
He then prayed, and spoke from Psalm cxix. The substance of his remarks were an earnest exhortation that God's people

to-day should more reverently and diligently study the Sacred Scriptures, and emulate the Lord Jesus Christ, who had all God's law "hidden in his heart." It is as we do this that we derive power for service and testimony, and shall love the law of the Lord above silver, gold, and rubies. We shall find in it "great spoil"—joy, peace, and understanding—which will lead us to hate every false way of human expediency. He pointed out the difference between the common habit of Christians "continually begging from God" for the supply of their supposed wants, and the experience of calmly resting in the promise, "My God shall supply *all* your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus," and making it their chief business to "glorify God" and "bear much fruit." thus "*giving to God*" the praise, love, and obedience that is due to Him. The words are still true—

"Make you His business your delight,
He'll make your wants His care."

He reminded us that "with the lowly wisdom"; and our attitude in reading the Holy Scriptures should ever be that suggested by the prayer, "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," remembering that the Holy Spirit teaches us through the Scriptures, and *thus* we become "thoroughly furnished unto 'all good works'"—wiser than the ancients, and richer than the princes of this world. He drew attention to the testimony in this Psalm, to the exceeding preciousness and profit of the Holy Scriptures; and then testified how that he himself had, during the past *eighty years* found God's Word increasingly sweet and invigorating to his soul; so that he commended the prayerful study of it to all as needful to instruct us in the knowledge of God's will,

and to furnish us thoroughly unto all good works. That God desired to treat us as His *friends*, taking us into His confidence with regard to his purposes of grace, government, and glory, in respect of Israel, the nations, and the Church; and knowing these, we should the better be able to please Him by our intercession for the world, our testimony concerning "the Gospel of His grace," and our shepherd-care of the saints of God. Thus "walking in the fear of the Lord and comfort of the Holy Ghost," we shall make it our chief aim to be "about our Father's business," remembering the words of our Lord, who said, "As the Father hath sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them (His disciples) into the world." The time is short," and it will be our shame and loss if we do not *redeem it* by diligent study of the Holy Scriptures and conformity to all their precepts in our daily lives. These great and blessed truths, spoken by one who has known their value and power to sustain him in the heavenly path during a very long pilgrimage and life of blessed service for the Lord, were felt by all to be a word in season, well fitted to strengthen faith in the ever-precious Word of the living God, which so many in our day are themselves forsaking, and seeking to slacken the confidence of others in. But the Word of the Lord for ever settled in heaven abides as our guide for ever.



THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS.—In a world like ours, unless we walk by faith, recognising the presence of God, we shall be unhappy enough, but if we walk WITH GOD, leaning on Him, we shall be happy as our faith is strong.

John Dickie.

The First Epistle of Peter.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES. BY THE EDITOR.

III.—THE INHERITANCE AND THE HEIRS.

APPROPRIATE to the theme of his Epistle, the Apostle next tells us that God has "begotten us again" (v. 3). He praises the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," for this "abundant mercy," and such it surely is. Had He made us *servants* in His courts, it would have been much. Had He made us *adopted* sons within His house, it would have been more. But love was not satisfied with anything short of making us actually and really *children*—begotten ones, with the very life and nature of God in us. "Born of God" (John i. 13), is a glorious word. On your second birthday—which is by far the most important day in a believer's history—you became a child in the family of God, and if a child, then an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ (Rom. viii. 17). Do you delight to go into God's presence and say, "Abba, Father"? (Galatians iv. 6). Nothing pleases Him more than to have His children near to Him, in His presence, looking into His face, listening to His voice. Notice too, how this new relationship was secured. "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"—from *among* the dead. Before the Cross, He was the "only-begotten Son" (John iii. 16); as the "corn of wheat" He abode alone (John xii. 24). A great deal is said by theologians and preachers, about "the elevation of humanity," by the Son of God taking flesh and blood. But this is all nonsense. He did not raise the human race to the place of God's children by His incarnation: on the contrary, He told some in the days of His ministry on earth, that they were of

their "father the devil" (John viii. 44). His presence, His perfectness, brought out their hatred as it had never been before. He exposed man; He did not flatter him. But after He had died and risen, His first message to the disciples was—"Go, tell My brethren I ascend to My Father and *your* Father, to My God and *your* God" (John xx. 17). As the "First-born from the dead," "the First-born among many brethren" (Rom. viii. 29), He has risen and ascended, and all His people are brought into the same relationship as He is in, His Godhead, of course, excepted. O how grand it is to know that "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" is *our* God and our Father. Well may we sing—

"So dear, so very dear to God,
More dear I cannot be;
The love wherewith He loves the Son,
Such is His love to me."

"Begotten again," made the children of God—to what? "To a living hope," and "an inheritance." The hope is present, the inheritance to come. Already we have the life, and "the earnest of the inheritance" (Eph. i. 13), "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 22). Like the big bunch of grapes, borne from Canaan across the Jordan, to the camp of wilderness pilgrims, we have got a foretaste of heaven before we get there. Those grapes were grown in Canaan, and when the pilgrims squeezed them between their teeth, it was a little bit of Canaan enjoyed—just enough to whet their appetite for the rest. And we have heaven begun below—the peace, the joy, the love, the communion, brought to us in earnest by the indwelling Spirit, whose home is in that heaven, and who knows it well. When we go "up higher," it will be the same Christ, the same

God, the same kind of communion, but *more* of each, and nothing to hinder or mar as now. Is it any wonder, that when wilderness saints are tasting the grapes of the better Eschol, sipping the joys of their home and Fatherland, they burst into

"O how I thirst the chains to burst,
That weigh my spirit downward."

They fain would plume their wings as a dove, and flee away. Meanwhile "the hope" cheers them on, and together with "the sharpness of the cross" here, makes them sit loosely to earthly things. And what an inheritance it is! "Incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Everything here is corruptible; even our own bodies, if He come not soon, will become "corruptible." But in the day of His coming, the saints will be raised incorruptible, in bodies suited to their spirits, and to the inheritance on which they will then enter. How grand it will be to have a body which will be in every way a meet companion to the spirit, fitted to share and bear the glory, and in all its powers capable of enjoying and serving God. Our present bodies are often a drag, and always a clog, but thank God, they are only our travelling companions in the wilderness. We shall get new bodies fitted for our new home, and like the Lord of the place—"fashioned like unto the body of His glory" (Phil. iii. 21). "Undefiled" too. Everything here becomes defiled by sin. Eden, the new earth, Canaan, Shiloh, the temple, Jerusalem, the church—all have been defiled. But up there,

"The charms that woo the senses,
Shall be as pure and fair,
And all while stealing o'er us,
Shall tell of Jesus there."

"Fadeth not away." Earth's best things

fade. The flowers of Spring, the freshness of youth, the beauty of the bride, the victor's crown of laurel—all fade away. The world is strewn with faded hopes, faded beauty, faded honour, faded inheritances. But yonder "the bright inheritance of saints" remains in freshness and beauty. So, too, do the heirs. In that last grand glimpse we get of the celestial city, Jerusalem the Golden, in Rev. xxi., after her reign of a thousand years, she is still as "a bride adorned for her husband." No grey hairs, no wrinkles on her brow, no old age creeping o'er her, but still in the unfading beauty and freshness of the resurrection morning. And best of all—"Reserved in heaven for you." No one can take it from you, or cheat you out of it. Nor can any deprive the inheritance of its heirs, for they are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation" (verse 5). The inheritance is reserved for the heirs, the heirs are kept for the inheritance. Thus you see all is secure, at both ends, so that we can, as the Apostle tells us, "greatly rejoice." Yes, if these grand and glorious truths were but received to the heart by faith, and cherished as God desires them to be, "Doubting Castle" would be vacant in an hour. None who "greatly rejoice" in what God has done for them lodge there. Even amid the thorns of the wilderness, the heirs, "kept by the power of God," press on to the "inheritance reserved," with singing, while "faith" keeps them cleaving to God, and watching for the coming of the Lord Jesus, bringing with Him "salvation" (Heb. ix. 28; Rom. xiii. 12) in its fulness and finality. This is how "Salvation" is regarded in Peter's epistles, as the "end" of faith, which though often tried, endures and purifies as the gold in the fire.

The Grace of the Lord Jesus.

WE are aware by how many different ways our fellow-disciples try us, and grieve us; and, no doubt, we do them. We see, or fancy we see, some bad quality in them, and find it hard to bear it, or to go on in further company with them. It has occurred to me that we may observe, that just in those same ways the mind and heart of Jesus were tried and grieved by His disciples in the days of His flesh, and yet He went on with them, we know, as I need not add, "*not overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good*"—the evil that was in *them*, with the good that was in *Himself*. I would mention some of these wrong things in them that must have grieved Him, and the influence of which, upon our own thoughts and feelings towards others, we well understand and continually experience.

Vanity in another tries us—an air of self-satisfaction, or the esteeming of ourselves, and the putting of ourselves forth to admiration. The Lord was tried by this spirit in His disciples. The mother betrayed it, and His kinsfolk (John ii.-vii). Peter was thus self-confident, when he said, "Though all should be offended, yet he would not." And all of them were guilty of this, when they contended who should be the greatest; and also when they *forbade* those who followed not with them.

Ill-temper is a very fretful thing; it so interferes with us. Martha tried the Lord with it, when she complained to Him of her sister; and so did the apostles when they urged Him to send away the multitude, just because their privacy and repast had been intruded upon (Mark vi). Any show of a *covetous*, grudging spirit is very hateful to us. Jesus must have discerned this (and

therefore have had to bear with it) on such occasions as Matt. xiv. 17 : xv. 33.

Unkindness, whether towards ourselves or others, is very irritating. Peter's enquiry in Matt. xviii. 21, covered, I believe, what the Lord must have seen to be workings of an unkind and malevolent temper ; as also we see it in Matt. xv. 23.

Indifference to others, and carefulness about oneself, is very vexing to us also—it is so selfish and cold-hearted. Jesus was tried by enough of it in His disciples. He asked them to watch with Him, but He found them sleeping ; He spake of His death, but they were thinking of their place and honours in the kingdom ; He spake of leaving them, but none of them asked, "Whither goest thou?" and in the ship it was their *own* safety they thought of. These were instances of cold indifference.

Ignorance is apt to try us, and make us impatient. Whoever found more of it in those He was continually teaching than the Lord? Some of the plainest lessons they had not learned ; and when He spake *spiritually* or mystically to them, they listened to Him as *in the letter*—they were asking explanations of the simplest parables.

Unspirituality of mind in fellow-disciples is a trial to us. How much of this amongst His people was the Lord continually suffering ! and He was always light in discovering it. We often, through vanity or self-esteem, mistake mere nonconformity with ourselves for it.

These are among the ways in which the disciples must have tried the mind of their Divine Master ; and these are some of the tempers and characteristics which to this hour try and fret us in our brethren. It may be thought that the instances here adduced are but faint and minute expres-

sions of these different wrong tempers. That may be. But we must remember how pure and perfect the mind of Jesus was, and then we shall know that though the instance was faint, and the occasion a small one, yet *His finer sensibility gave it more than the importance of the greatest occasion.*

And comforting, let me say it is, to see the Lord going before us in such trials as these. But if He have gone before us in the *trials themselves*, He has also left us an example of a *series of victories* over them, and in these victories He has told us to "follow His steps;" for not only in His ways with His *adversaries*, but in His ways with His *disciples*, is He our pattern. If, in not answering reviling with reviling, nor wrongs with threatenings, He is an example to us, so also in His *going on* still with His disciples, in spite of naughty outbreaks and many shortcomings among them. For we have returned to Him as "the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls," in *all* things as the One who is a Pattern to us—how we should carry ourselves to all, adversaries or brethren (1 Pet. ii. 21-25). And He, as I said, was never overcome of evil that was in another, but ever overcame it by the good that was in Himself (Rom. xii. 21).

Thus did He suffer from His disciples, and thus did He conquer. How ready are our selfish hearts to plead our right to part company, if another do not please us. But this was not Jesus. The pride, the indifference, the ill-tempers, and the low unspiritual mind, which the disciples were continually betraying, did not tempt HIM to take distance from them.

For at the END of their walk together, He is *nearer to them than ever* (John xiv.-xvi). He did not *part company* with them because they gave Him much exercise of

heart, and were continually drawing upon Him. He warned and instructed them; He rebuked and condemned them; but NEVER GAVE THEM UP. Blessed, perfect Master! lover of our souls at all cost! (1 John ii. 6).
J. G. B.

Worship and Worshippers.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE WM. LINCOLN.

(Continued from page 66.)

AGAIN, I think the "one loaf" sets forth the true character of worship—"We being many are one loaf."

Now if we would worship God, it must be according to His Word. When the Queen holds a drawing-room, everything is done according to some prescribed order and arrangement, and when we come before God, are we to do as we like? *Do as we like!* Who am I? Who are you? that we should talk of doing as we like. It is His instructions that we must follow. First Corinthians is a whole book about it. If we worship as we like, it is *will-worship*.

Real worship is this: on the *Lord's Day* the *Lord's people* gather round the *Lord Jesus*, to worship the *Lord*; and that is not to be mixed up with a mass of the unconverted. Oh, let us remember in the midst of much that is of human invention, that God's words as to *how* He is to be worshipped are unrepealed! See His instructions to Moses: were they not exact, down to the knops on the candlestick? It depends not on our vote or likes, but, *What saith the Word?*

And when we gather, it is Christ who presides. Surely if the Holy Ghost is actually here, it must be of very great importance. As the wind speaks through the Æolian harp, so does the Holy Ghost

in the *Church of God* (seven times it is so called; *not once* the Church of Christ).

Again, it is only *children* that can worship God. In John i. it is Christ the *Lamb*; in chap. iii. Christ the eternal life; but it is only in chap. iv. that worship is brought in. It is only His children that can worship the Father. He gives us His own nature. God never can be worshipped except as He is known; and God was not fully known till the cross. The angels could worship, but we know Him better than the angels.

The church will not *learn* or *lead* the angels' song. Our song is a new song, a *redemption* song, which the angels *cannot* sing. The *church* leads the worship in Revelation. The church *sings*; the angels *say*.

Our stand is as it were between two points. "Ye do show the Lord's *death* till He *come*." We are on the resurrection side of the cross, and we are just waiting *till He come*.

No matter what time of the day this Supper is celebrated. Some say that because it is a supper it should be held in the evening; that does not follow, because I find that the whole dispensation is reckoned a *night*. We must begin with God, and argue downwards. Because it *is* a supper, therefore it *must be night*, and we are just looking for the Morning Star to arise; and then what a meeting will that be! the same, only on a larger scale, as our gathering together unto Him every Lord's Day morning.

CHAFF AND WHEAT.

Men's books with worthless chaff are stored,
God's Scriptures golden grains afford;
Reject the chaff, and spend thy pains,
In gathering up the golden grains

Gospel Preaching in Byegone Days.

IN our early days of spiritual life, it was the habit of those who went out preaching the Gospel to the ungodly, to pray together before going forth to preach. Indeed, these "preliminary prayer meetings," as they were called, were considered of so great importance that it was very unusual for any of the saints to be absent from them. The whole company of the Lord's people would bow the knee before the throne, as one man, pouring forth their hearts in brief, earnest petitions, for the presence and power of God to be manifest at the meeting. Very often special cases were mentioned, and relatives or others who were a burden on the hearts of believers prayed for by name. The remembrance of those seasons spent before the throne, is very blessed. Not only the preachers, but the whole rank and file of the saints were brought into touch with God, and went out to the meeting in the spirit of prayer, to hang upon Him while the Word was being spoken. The circle around the preacher "upheld" him by their prayers, while he gave out the message. If he had not much "gift," they felt the necessity of bearing him up all the more. So that very frequently the simplest word, through a very commonplace vessel, was "mighty through God" to the pulling down of Satan's kingdom. There were some remarkable awakenings and conversions in those days, such as we seldom hear of now. Many of them the direct answers to prayer. Immediately the preaching was over, the preachers, and frequently a number of those who had stood by them, would return to the hall, or go to one of the believer's houses to "harrow in the seed" by earnest prayer. These "after

meetings" were often the birthplace of souls, for wounded and anxious ones followed instinctively without much pressing, to be prayed for and pointed to the Saviour.

I notice that there is little of this line of things now. A few hurried words of prayer, from a mere handful who gather ten minutes or so before the preaching; a small and frequently a listless circle of Christians around the preacher, sometimes chatting on other subjects while the Word is spoken, as if they had no share and no responsibility, are more in evidence than the praying band. Then immediately the preaching is finished, the circle breaks up and all is over. We have even seen the preachers behaving very lightly, showing how little heart or conscience they had in the solemn work they had engaged in. Young men walking off and flirting with those of the other sex, in the presence of those who had listened to their message. A common practice is to go to some house and gossip, varied by as much hymn-singing as gives it a religious colour. Need we wonder that abiding results, deep conviction, and genuine conversions are few and far between, and that "stony-ground" converts are the main crop. The lack of prayerfulness, real dealing with God about His own business, and vital godliness on the part of those who preach, is the greatest want of our time. Neither smart speaking, clever or witty illustrations, nor what is called "good singing," make up for the want of GOD in the preaching of the Gospel. And God must be sought, and His presence honoured, ere He make bare His mighty arm unto salvation as in the days of old. May He exercise His people's consciences in these things, and cause all to search their ways as with a lighted candle before Him.

The Bible Annotator.

Marginal Notes, Biblical Studies, and Outlines of Bible Subjects for this page, will be welcome.

IN THE BELIEVER'S HEART :

God's love is shed abroad (Rom. v. 5).
Christ's peace is ruling (Col. iii. 15) R.V.
The Holy Spirit is dwelling (Gal. iv. 6).

FOUR POSITIONS OF THE BELIEVER :

"In Christ's Hand" (John x. 27)—Security.
"On His Shoulder" (Luke xv. 5)—Salvation.
"At His Feet" (Luke x. 35), Discipleship.
"In His Bosom" (John xiii. 13)—Communion.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES" (John v. 39) is rather indicative than imperative. It might be rendered—"Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." Yet they would not come to *Him*, of whom they testified. To interpret the text as a command to "Search the Scriptures" misses the force of the whole passage.

"WASHED THEIR ROBES, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. vii. 14), are words often construed with Rev. i. 5, as it stands in the A.V., to refer to the sinner's cleansing from sin and his title to heaven. But the context shews that the passage (as also Rev. xxii. 14, R.V.) has reference to the practical purification of their lives from the defilements through which they passed, during the period of the great tribulation (Matthew xxiv. 21), when the seductions of the Antichrist had led others astray. They, as we elsewhere read, overcame "by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. xii. 13).

"CHRIST FORMED IN YOU" (Gal. iv. 19). *Morphoo* is a word which implies manifestation. The meaning is, till the image of Christ be again seen in their ways.

"OUR GATHERING TOGETHER unto Him" (2 Thess. ii. 1), a word occurring only twice in the New Testament; here, regarding the final gathering or leading together of all the saints around the person of the Lord Jesus at His coming, and in Heb. x. 25, "Not forsaking the assembling of *ourselves together*," which speaks of our present gathering together unto Him in the assembly, according to Matthew xviii. 20. The centre and magnet now, as then, is the Person of Christ.

"CALLED TO BE SAINTS" (1 Cor. i. 2) should be read "Called saints." They were constituted saints by the call of God. Then they were to walk as "becometh saints" (Eph. v. 3).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

Who are the elders in Rev. iv. 4? Glorified saints in resurrection bodies in heaven. The term "elders," is frequently applied to saints of Old Testament time (Heb. xi. 2.).

What does Paul mean by being offered" in Phil. ii. 17? "Poured forth" (see margin), as a drink-offering over the sacrifice. And see what grace shines in the words. Their's was the sacrifice, large and costly. His, the drink-offering, small and mean. Surely Paul here, follows close in His Master's steps, making himself "of no reputation" (verse 7.).

Is the condition called "spiritual" in 1 Cor. iii. 1. an attainment, or what? It is the normal condition of the man who is born of God, in whom the Spirit of God dwells (1 Cor. ii. 12). But while all live in the Spirit, all do not walk according to the Spirit (Gal. v. 25) or yield to His power (Rom. viii. 13), hence some are "carnal" and "mind earthly things" (Phil. iii. 19). To be "spiritual," is the normal and proper state of the believer—not a condition attained by growth or knowledge.

What is meant by "let us go forth unto Him without the camp" (Heb. xiii. 13)? Does it mean separation from the world's churches? To the Hebrews, it meant the leaving of Judaism, as a religious system, which was no longer owned by God, to be identified with a Christ whom the Jews still rejected. This brought "reproach," which they were not to shirk, but to "bear." What Judaism was then, Christendom—the outward profession of Christianity, is to a great extent now. The believer who takes the Word of God as his guide, and follows where it leads, will have to go "without the camp" of worldly Christianity, simply because he will not be able to obey the Lord's commands, or do His will inside. There is no room to carry out the Lord's instructions there. Take for example what we have regarding worship as given in 1 Cor. xiii. and xiv. You could not practice these, in any church or chapel in Christendom. Nor is there room for the exercise of such gifts given by the Risen Christ to men as are mentioned in Eph. iv. 11-12. To reform the world's churches is hopeless. The only path open

to you is to "go forth." There you will find "Him," and other saints around a rejected Christ, who have reached Him before you.

SPECIAL QUESTIONS.

As mentioned last month, we have several questions sent us which are of so important a nature, that we think it well to invite the help of brethren in Christ having knowledge of the Word, and experience in the things of God, to deal with them.

Brief and definite answers are invited to the following questions. It is not our desire to provoke controversy, or to fill our pages with conflicting views, which are only calculated to perplex and stumble young believers. But where more than one meaning is possible, we will, in order to give both sides of the truth, give part, or the whole of the replies dealing with different aspects of the subjects. Let all replies be short, simple, and to the point.

Is there any Scripture to guide as to how a new Assembly ought to be formed, so as to have the confidence and fellowship of already existing Assemblies in the neighbourhood?

How may a believer know when he is guided by the Spirit in the Assembly to give out a certain hymn, lead in thanksgiving, or minister the Word. There seems to be much need of definite, Scriptural instruction on this subject, as the incoherent character of many of our gatherings shews?

What is the Divine method for the suppression of irrelevant and unprofitable ministry, of which there is a great deal in many places, much to the hurt of spiritual minds, and the stumbling of those seeking after the truth regarding the gathering, fellowship and worship of saints?

Is there any Scriptural authority for the election of elders, or overseers, in the local assembly? If not, ought such to be formally recognised, or is any one at liberty to begin to take part in such work, and to associate himself with those who are doing it, apart from any reception, recognition, or fellowship with others regarding his qualifications or acceptability? This is a matter which is exercising very many of the Lord's people. A simple, clear, statement of the teaching of God's Word on the subject would, no doubt, be helpful to many.

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

GEO. T., ABERDEENSHIRE.—Although there is no "Sabbath" to be kept by Christians, as was enjoined on Jehovah's ancient people, "the first day of the week"—significantly named by the Spirit "The Lord's Day" (Rev. i. 10), is to be specially observed by Christians as a day devoted to the worship and service of the Lord Jesus. Mercifully, in this land, it is in great measure a day of release from worldly toil, and thus gives precious opportunity to the Lord's people to assemble together, and the unsaved to hear the Gospel. No godly man will use the day for pleasure, or spend it in travelling, or lend his influence to help infidels and godless worldlings to get theatres, picture galleries, and places of recreation opened on the Lord's Day. Nor will any in a right condition occupy the day in furthering business, or engaging in unnecessary worldly occupations. If such a course is habitually pursued by any professing godliness, it indicates a covetous spirit, and a relaxed conscience, and is usually, if not always, the precursor of a collapse into utter worldliness.

A. D., GLASGOW.—The passage in Zech. ii. 5, so often quoted by preachers and writers to show that there will be no need for order and rule in the church, if the Lord is in the midst as "the glory" and as "a wall of fire round about," is a prophecy regarding the Jerusalem of days to come, when the Lord shall be manifestly in power and glory amid His earthly people, when evil must hide its head because righteousness reigns. It betrays great ignorance of God's dispensational dealings, to apply it to a time like the present when evil reigns, and "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse" (2 Tim. iii. 13). In Nehemiah's days, there were walls and gates, with bolts and bars (Neh. iii. 3), to exclude the unclean, and give "freedom with control" to the true Israelite. He will be a bold man, who accuses the builders of the wall of "narrowness," or lack of "power." Yet this is what any who seek to maintain godly rule among the Lord's people in these remnant times must needs be charged with, often by those too, who have never been conspicuous for their orderly conduct in either the church or the world.

A. B., GREENWICH.—“The kingdom of the heavens” in Matt. xiii. includes all who own the Name and authority of the King, true and false, and is not to be confounded with the Church, or the family of God. The kingdom extends beyond the coming of the Lord for His saints, and embraces all who will then own the rule of the heavens. This is why the mingled field of wheat and tares is said to continue until “the harvest” (verse 30), which is not at the rapture of the church, but at the coming of the Son of Man to earth.

E. A., CROYDON.—That there are ministers of Christ, men who have received gifts from the Head of the Church in the various denominations, no one will deny. But they had these gifts apart from what is known as their “call and ordination to the ministry.” That event added nothing to their gift or grace. Neither the holding up of the people’s hands perpendicularly, nor the putting down of the bishop’s hands horizontally can make a man the minister of Christ. If, in spite of all the sectarian embracements, the theological dead weights, and rampant worldliness in the churches, there is a measure of “blessing” as you say through their ministry, how much more would there be if these gifted men were free from the trammels that surround them, and where the Spirit of God could lead them into all the truth, and use them to teach it to others. And it is well to remember, that a good man in a wrong position does not sanctify or make that position right, neither does a converted and gifted minister, in a worldly and unscriptural church, make that church system according to God. His presence there may attract to, or keep believers in it, as you evidently are, but the right man does not sanction your presence in the wrong place.

C. A. S., ONTARIO.—There are, thank God, many assemblies of saints which have never known what it is to be divided with divergent “theories of the fellowship question.” The saints in these assemblies learned what they have from the Word of God, and there are no “divergent theories” there. The result is, that they are of one mind. It is when one with a stock of “views,” which he may have picked up outside “The Book” altogether, and which he desires to distinguish himself by pushing in on every possible occasion turns up, that cleavage begins, for, as a rule, such adventurers can always gain the ears of a few to their “theories,”

however far they may be from God’s truth. Sides are taken, parties are formed, and frequently, after a long period of wrangling, a division takes place. We believe it is the responsibility of those who have shepherd-care in the assembly, to grip the sower of discord firmly *at the beginning*, and not allow him to proceed with his evil work. No doubt, if they do, they will have the vials of his wrath poured upon them, and be blamed for “usurping authority,” and much else, but never mind about that. If the truth of God and the welfare of His saints are safeguarded, you may safely leave, your personal defence in God’s hand. Sooner or later, according to a fixed “law of the kingdom,” the Absaloms must fall and the true ruler be owned, but it may be after many a trial of faith, which, to the man of God is invaluable, as it is always needful.

Fallen Asleep.

“With Christ, . . . very far better” (Phil. i. 23; R. V.).

William Hobbs, of Hereford, for over forty years an earnest evangelist and soul-winner, passed away on 2nd June, after a week’s illness.

John Jeffrey, of Motherwell, for long in fellowship with saints in Roman Road Hall, was suddenly called home on 7th June, leaving a widow and five children. Our departed brother was a worker rather than a speaker, and had a real interest in the Lord’s people and work, with an open and hospitable home for His servants; a man of a well-balanced mind, whose wise counsel will be missed.

Mrs. M’Laughlin, wife of W. H. M’Laughlin, of Belfast, has been suddenly called home to be with Christ. Their second son died soon after in South Africa. Many of the Lord’s servants when visiting Belfast, have shared the hospitality of their home, and will remember the family in this the day of their sorrow.

Mrs. B. C. Hill, at Ootacamund, India, a daughter of the late Howard Johnstone, evangelist, fell asleep on 30th May, leaving four boys, one a babe six days old. Our sister was a diligent worker before she went to India, and has left a good testimony in the land where her life has been laid down.

Mrs. D. C. Joseph, of Halfa, Mount Carmel, fell asleep in England after a short illness. Mr. Joseph, who is in Liverpool, is in very feeble health. May God, who loves His ancient people, raise up helpers for the work in “the land of Israel.”

The Inner Life.

THE excessive rush and bustle of commercial life in our day, leaves very little time to the average business man, or daily toiler, for the cultivation and care of his spiritual life. Yet in order to maintain a healthy condition of soul, to sustain a godly life and walk, and have spiritual strength and vigour in service for Christ, the inner life must be cared for and cherished. It is the lack of this that is thinning the ranks of true gossellers in the world, making godly pastors and reliable teachers scarce in the church, and reducing the spiritual temperature in many assemblies of the Lord's people. There may be, and doubtless are, other causes, but in so far as we are able to discern, the seat of all the diseases that are eating away the life and energy, and sapping the spiritual freshness and beauty of many once-bright and powerful companies of saints, lies deeper than the second causes to which they are generally attributed. Worldly ways, lawless conduct, unscriptural action, are all, more or less, the result of a feeble or diseased condition of the inner life, which has suffered from neglect. If men neglect the natural life, and fail to give the proper care and attention to their bodies that they need, enfeebled powers will very soon be the result, and an easy access to every disease that is abroad, will be found in their "run down" condition. The "life of God" within the believer, is more sensitive and tender still, and if not supplied with the proper nourishment which its Giver has provided for it (1 Pet. ii. 2; Col. iii. 16), it must become feeble, while "the old man," having provision made for his sustenance (Rom. xiii. 14), will excel in strength.

It is not always from want of desire, that God's saints are sluggish in their obedience, or laggard in their work, but having "run their souls thin" through neglect, they have no strength to do what they know to be right. The restored and well-fed soul (Psa. xxiii. 2), alone will be led on "in the paths of righteousness"; all others, will sooner or later have feeble knees and feet so lame, that they are easily turned out of the way (Heb. xiii. 12-13). A genuine revival in the aggregate, can only be reached by individual believers returning to God, and to the care of their inner life individually, and thus only can a godly testimony, either in the saint or the assembly be sustained. It is wasted time to cleanse the cup and platter; to prescribe for a better appearance without, if the real seat of the trouble, which is *within*, remains unreached. To maintain a healthy condition of soul, the believer *must* have daily dealings with the living God, time for heart-searching, prayer, reading, and meditation on the Word, and as a saint of long ago, who knew well the strong temptations of a busy man in the world to neglect the care of the inner life said, to one who asked him when he got the time to read the Word and pray—"I never *get* it, I have to *take it by force* every day." This is the only way in which it can be secured. The world, the family, the church, all press their claims, but the saint who desires his soul to be like "a well-watered garden," will, through grace, "take" the time he needs, and must have, to deal with God, and to feed and cherish the new and heaven-born life that God has committed to his care. Apart from this, service will be a drag, worship a weariness, and life itself a disappointment.

Ministry and Oversight in the Church.

Addresses delivered in Grosvenor Hall, Dublin.

I.—BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

(Continued from Page 75.)

OVERSIGHT, as I apprehend it, has for its end and aim the keeping of the house in order, to see that nothing is permitted that would hinder the presence and power of God from being manifested. Overseeing brethren are the temple-wardens, to see that the ministry is exercised within proper limits, to graciously check those who go beyond their measure, to encourage the diffident, to restrain the forward, and to guide the saints in their deliberations in matters pertaining to discipline. Now, when we come to Scripture, we see that the apostles, and other men associated with the apostles, men like Timothy and Titus, had discernment as to those who were particularly fitted to exercise such functions in the house of God; they laid their hands on them, or, if you like, they appointed them, that is, they pointed them out. The word "ordained" has no place in the New Testament. The Revised Version does not contain it once from Matthew to Revelation, and I believe it is right in leaving the word out every time. Appointing or pointing out, yes: ordination, never; laying on of hands, if you like, but laying on of hands means many things in Scripture. Now, the Apostles did the appointing, but they did not do it right away. Churches were in existence before men were "officially" set apart to watch over the order of the Churches. Oversight exists for the Church, not the Church for the oversight. The Church is all important, the oversight is the servant of the Church; if you like, a guide to the Church, but to minister to the

Church. The apostles and their fellow-labourers, like Timothy and Titus, took it upon them (they were divinely empowered to do it) to lay their hands on certain individuals who had come into prominence through the Holy Ghost working in them, in that direction, in the interval between the planting of the Church, and the second visit which they, the fathers of the Church, paid to it. In my humble judgment I do not think we ought to go so far as to lay on hands in that fashion in imitation of the apostles to-day, because none of us here are fathers of the Church in Dublin. I can understand spiritual fathers exercising spiritual authority which others would shrink from, and rightly so. The apostles and their fellow-labourers had spiritual, moral power in doing so. If anyone else had attempted it, I should not wonder, but that their action would have been very much resented. Nor do we ever find that the apostles left any teaching on record to perpetuate "official" appointment. Indeed, in the 20th chapter of the Acts, Paul predicted the ruin of the elderhood:—"After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you," etc., and in view of that he cast the faithful, not on apostolic succession, not on the transmission of apostolic authority, but on "*God and the Word of His Grace.*" Now, we need not say, therefore, that because of that it is impossible to have order. Beloved brethren, oversight was exercised in the Church before the apostles "appointed" elders. In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, the last chapter, you read of those who were actually labouring among the saints there, and whom the saints were to know, make room for, and submit to, of whom we do not read that apostles had appointed them. They

were not "elders" in the proper sense of the term, for the title "elders" implies, aged men and brethren with a riper Christian experience. There could not have been such in Thessalonica, as that was an assembly of young converts; yet were there those labouring among them whom the Holy Ghost had evidently made "overseers." The apostles and their co-operators, such as Timothy and Titus (some will call them "apostolic delegates," I am not anxious about the term), were simply acting in fellowship with the Holy Ghost, and when in our day the Holy Ghost has made a man an overseer, I do not think it would be difficult for that man's labour to be, sooner or later, accepted, though we have no apostles among us, or men in immediate fellowship with apostles, to give them an "official" recognition.

Now, as to ministry, a word or two. In the 14th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we have the assembly actually convened, and the various gifts of ministry in exercise; it is the only chapter in the Scriptures in which you get the details of the Church coming together, and acting out its various functions of ministry. If in that chapter there is the absence of a human leader, you would say there was confusion; would they not be better with a human leader and not have that dreadful disorder? . . . No doubt human arrangement does keep confusion outside, but that was not the way in which the apostle met the difficulty. He did not propose that they should ask a number of gifted brethren from other assemblies to come and preach trial sermons, and select their candidates, and appoint a pastor in order to be kept in order. No, he did not do that. The apostle struck at the root of the ecclesi-

astical malady, the Spirit of God was there to lead them, but the Spirit did not and could not lead—their own spirits led. They were carnal, and the Spirit only leads the spiritual, the Spirit never leads the flesh. He seeks to turn the Corinthians from carnality to spirituality in order that they might know among them the reality of the holy leading of the Spirit of God.

Our proper path to-day is to meet without pretension in dependence on the unseen presence of the Holy Spirit, in keeping with *the unrepealed principles of "the assembly of God,"* even if only "two or three" have faith and courage to gather thus. And such shall not be disappointed or confounded, if kept lowly.

The Glory of God.

Notes of an Address by Thomas Newberry.

GOD created man for His own glory, and fitted him for intercourse with Himself. This is intimated by His visiting our first parents in the cool of the day. He doubtless taught them to hallow the beginning and end of each day with worship.

When man fell, his heart became alienated from God, and the link formed between God and His creatures was sundered. Consequently, though after man had sinned, God walked as usual in the garden in the cool of the day, He missed the one who should have been looking out for His presence. Therefore He called unto Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou?"

Instead of casting man off, God, in His condescending kindness, proceeded to renew the intercourse that had been broken, and to establish it upon a firmer basis. A very

clear intimation of this gracious purpose is given in His word through Moses to Israel: "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Ex. xxv. 8). And after the tabernacle was made according to the given pattern, and the sacrifices had been offered and accepted, "the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle." God fulfilled His promise, "There will I meet with the children of Israel."

Some centuries later, when Israel dwelt in the land, Solomon built a temple for God. Here again sacrifices were offered and accepted, their acceptance being shown by the fire descending to consume them. And then, "as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking Jehovah," "the house was filled with a cloud," and "the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of God" (2 Chron. v. 13-14).

So also on the day of Pentecost. The all-atoning sacrifice had been offered on Calvary, and its acceptance shown by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Living stones were being builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, for the disciples were assembled according to the command of the Lord Jesus. And then the Spirit descended, and the house was shaken, and filled with the glory of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Thus also will it be in the Millennium, when "the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills," and the temple as described by Ezekiel, shall be erected. When all is complete, God will take possession, and it is this that is described in the verses before us: "Behold the glory of the God of Israel

came from the way of the east: and His voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory." This glory corresponds with that described in chapters i. and ii. The prophet had seen it depart from the temple (chapters x., xi.), and now he sees it return.

In the tabernacle there was the ark of shittim wood, *one* table of shewbread, and *one* lampstand. In Solomon's temple the ark was placed under the wings of the larger cherubim; and there were *ten* lampstands and *ten* tables. In the description of Ezekiel's temple, no mention is made of any vessels except the altar of wood, which is called "the table that is before Jehovah." The ark will be no more mentioned in that day; and there will no longer any need for the lamps to shine, for the noontide light of the Divine presence will make all other light unnecessary, while it will set aside all shadows, and take the place of every type.

So also will it be when the spiritual and heavenly temple shall be completed, that temple which comprises all the redeemed, being composed of living stones—souls redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. When they are clothed in bodies of resurrection incorruptibility, partaking of Divine glory, conformed to the image of their glorified Redeemer, and resplendent with every grace and perfection of the eternal Spirit, there will be no need of any lamp, or of the sun to shine in that temple; for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light-giver thereof (Rev. xxi. 23).

"You may be comforted by fellowship, and your heart refreshed; but you must work by your own individual faith and energy, without leaning on any one."

The First Epistle of Peter.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES. BY THE EDITOR.

IN Peter's epistles "precious" is a favourite word. Precious blood, precious faith, precious promises, precious stone, precious trial of faith, and last of all, "He is precious." Faith's trial comes first. It is often a humiliating thing, a despised thing in the eyes of the world to see a man chastened, tried, broken down like Job, losing everything in which the natural man glories, stripped bare like a tree in the wintry blast, yet clinging to God, saying in the midst of the trial, "Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him." Such faith is "precious" in the estimation of heaven, just because it is so rare. Pebbles may be gathered anywhere, but pearls are rare, therefore precious. The faith that endures silently, submissively bearing up under great pressure, possibly without a smile or a word of cheer from friend or brother, yet confiding implicitly in God, is greater than the faith that removes mountains, and is of high value in heaven, because it approximates to that of the Perfect Exemplar, the Lord Jesus—

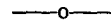
"Whose path uncheered by earthly smiles,
Led only to the Cross."

Two things are said about faith's trial. First, it is only "for a season," it will not always last. Next, there is a "need be" for it. God may either send it, or permit men or the devil to bring it, but be assured there is a "need be." Instead of perplexing yourself as to the trial, or who brought it, or how it came, seek to learn the lesson God has in it for you, the "need be" for it. There should be no such words as "accident," or "*dis*-appointment," in the vocabulary of a child of God. As our aged

brother Mr Robert Chapman has said, change the letter "D" to "H" and read it "*His* appointment." And God appoints these trials to test His people's faith, as gold is tried in the fire. It bulks less when it comes out, but has lost nothing of real value: only the dross is gone. The three Hebrew youths who were cast into the fiery furnace in Babylon lost nothing in the fire, except their bonds. They were cast in "bound;" they were seen walking in the fire "loose," and they had gained a companion—one like unto the Son of God. Many a child of God knows that in the fiery trial, an experimental knowledge of God is gained, and a sense of the presence of Christ enjoyed as nowhere else. Thus it is, that although "in heaviness" yet the tried saints "greatly rejoice"—a strange combination truly. Mark it is not sometimes "in heaviness," and at other times "rejoicing," but both at once; "sorrowful, yet *always* rejoicing" (2 Cor. vi. 10). This fiery trial of faith is going on now: the fiery trial of works is yet to come (1 Cor. iii. 13: 1 Cor. iv. 5). Yet they are closely connected: for the full result of the present trial will only be seen in the future. There may be no present recompense, other than the testimony that you are pleasing God (see Heb. xi. 5), but the Lord will not fail to reward all that has pleased Him, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (trial), for *when he is tried* he shall receive the crown of life" (James i. 12). Or, as we have it here in verse 7, "Found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." At His coming to the air *for* His saints, He will receive them unto Himself, and conduct them to the Father's home without distinction, to fill the children's place, which sovereign grace

alone has given them. But at His appearing, or manifestation *with* His saints, those who have served Him well and suffered for Him, will be manifested with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4), wearing the crowns they have received as the reward of faithfulness to God and Christ down here. This is why "the appearing of Jesus Christ" is the time in which the full results of service and suffering will be known. And just see what will be "found" on that day. Three things are mentioned. First, "praise." He will *praise* His faithful ones, not secretly, but before everybody, even those who misunderstood them, laughed at them, and gave them the cold shoulder. A vast recompense for it all will be to hear from His lips—"Well done, good and faithful servant." This is praise worth having. But in order to get it you must go on *with* Him and *for* Him here, without catering for the praise of men. You cannot get both. The second word is "honour." He will not only praise in words; He will give crowns, and places of honour in His kingdom to those who have been true to Him here. You remember David's three mighty men, who broke through the Philistine host to get him a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, of which he had drunk when he was a shepherd lad. In the haste of battle that act passed unrewarded, and with all save David, it may have been forgotten. But when he reached the throne, and began to order his kingdom, one of his first acts was to call these three men before him, and give them places of honour in the kingdom. O to so live and act, as to be honoured by the Lord Jesus in the coming day of His kingdom! Faithful is the promise—"Them that honour Me, I will honour." The last word is "glory." All

the saints will be glorified (Rom viii. 30), as surely as they are now saved (2 Tim. ii. 10); but just as the Lord Himself in return for the humiliation and shame of the Cross, and the perfect obedience that He rendered to God here, has received glories as well as honours in resurrection, He had not before, so those who suffer with Him here, shall be glorified together with Him" (Rom. viii. 17) and "reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 11) there. And the motive for all such faithfulness is *love*, "Whom having not seen ye love." Love here is active love: love that stands true even in the fire, love that suffers, love that endures. Much that passes as love is only sentiment: it breaks down under trial, it does not stand the fire; but the genuine article endures. It refuses all the blandishments held out by the world to steal the heart and divert the affections from Him who is in love's estimation "the chiefest among ten thousand and the Altogether Lovely."



The Darkest Hour.

THE darkest and the coldest hour of night, is that which precedes the dawn. So the last stage of the Church's history here, will be characterised by darkness—dense darkness in the world, which, ever since the Lord, the true light, was shut out, has had its night. But not only is there gross darkness in the world at the darkest hour of night, but there is extreme coldness, the very chill of death, even among those who profess to be the friends and lovers of the absent Lord. But to the lone watcher, this darkest, coldest hour, is the token of the coming dawn. Quietly, the Morning Star will steal into these lower heavens, and the saints will be gone.

The Home of The Saints.

"A city which hath foundations" (Heb. xi. 10).

ONE with Christ—within the golden City
Welcomed long ago,
When for me He passed within the glory
From the depths below.

Still the gladness of that blessed welcome,
Mystery of that kiss,
Meeting of the Son and of the Father,
Floods my soul with bliss.

That sweet welcome mine—and mine for
ever

That eternal Home,
Whereunto when all these wanderings over,
I shall surely come—

There my heart is resting, and is joyful,
With a joy untold—
Earth's dark ways lit up with that fair glory,
Gleam as streets of gold.

Words of blessed greeting as I wander
Fall upon my ear ;
As a song aloft in palace towers,
Deep, and sweet, and clear,

In the midnight steals o'er him that saileth
On a lonely sea,
Then I know I near the blessed country
Where He waits for me.

God, my Father, waiteth there to greet me,
Child of His delight ;
In the well-beloved Son presented
Faultless in His sight.

Loved with all the love that fills the heavens
With eternal song—
Weep not, weary soul, how short the sorrow,
And the love how long !

Union and Communion.

AS soon as a lost sinner casts himself on the free mercy of God, through the blood of Jesus, he is like the prodigal of old clasped to the bosom of God, and kissed into the place of full forgiveness. And not only so, but the believing sinner is brought into abiding union with Christ. This union is effected by an absolute surrender on the part of the sinner, and by a most free and loving acceptance on the part of the Saviour. And this union is not only to be maintained through life, but to lead to a blessed communion which is to grow and extend by abiding in Christ. And what is abiding, but a constant coming, a constant trusting, a repetition of the first coming—not, indeed, in its circumstantial details, but in its spirit. And faith in each exercise acquires new strength, and comes at length to be delightful and easy—not, indeed, to nature, but to the spiritual man, according to which the saint in communion walks. And so far from finding such a life distressing, it may be confidently affirmed that no two lovers upon earth, ever found such delight in each other's company, or sought each other's face so often, as the saint in communion seeks the face of the Lord Jesus. Such are to Him as the very apple of His eye, His jewel. And Jesus is to such a soul, his everything, his all. And as the intimacy grows, so the communion increases in its depth and intensity.

None but the Omnipotent can rescue a soul from the thralldom of the "strong man armed," but to Him it is easy to do it. All that is needed is, that He enter into the soul as its Lord, then Satan will hurry out, for he abhors the near presence of the Holy One.

John Dickie.

A Church that "Melted" Away.

IT was considered a model church. The people were nice, the place was neat, the order was perfect. They seemed to have generally only one gathering on the Lord's Day, or at most two, but I have seen the place lit up on a week night when they had "a stranger." The little church was gathered, I believe, many years ago, as the result of a revival in the village, and for a time the villagers say they were hooted on the streets, called "Revivals," "Dippers," and a lot of other names. The windows of the place in which they met were frequently smashed, and the parish minister preached several special sermons warning the people against the "New Lights" as he designated them. But in spite of all the opposition they had to bear their numbers increased, and for years they were a "power" in the place. That generation had almost passed away, and this little church, when first I knew it, numbered about forty, and was gradually decreasing. They did not seem to grieve over their reduced numbers. I rather think they gloried in it, for I have heard them sing with evident zest and satisfaction the hymn which says—

"We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground ;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness."

And that other one, one line of which says—

"Though we cannot boast of numbers,"

as if they had some notion that to be small was a virtue, and to seek to increase their number a sign of "conformity to the world." At any rate they seemed to make no aggressive effort, and there was no attempt to reach the people by preaching in the open air as their fathers had done. So they

melted away. Some removed to other parts, some went home to heaven, and I fear a few became "like the world," and lost "taste" for the simple and unattractive little meeting. So I was not altogether surprised to see a "TO LET" on the building one day as I passed, and to hear that the church there had "ceased"—had literally *melted away*. I do not know all the causes of their decline, but one thing seems clear that is they made no effort to reach sinners around them with the Gospel, or to help-fellow believers in the truth that they had learned from the Word. They seemed to think their mission was to "build up" one another, to keep each other "right," and to leave outsiders severely alone. They had forgot, or failed to learn, that the church is to be an aggressive force in the world, ever penetrating into the enemy's dominion, holding forth the Word of life to sinners everywhere and always, seeking to win them to the Saviour, and that those to whom the Lord has revealed His truth, are not proprietors, but only "stewards," responsible to pass it on to others, preaching the Word, "instant in season out of season." If a company of Christians simply aim at being "self supporting," and spend their whole time and energies on "garrison duty," keeping what they have got, but making little or no aggressive effort, they fail to apprehend the main reason for their existence on the earth, and will either become moribund, or "melt" away.

—o—
"LET US NOT SLEEP."

Sleep not, soldier of the Cross,
Foes are lurking all around,
Look not where to find repose,
This is but a battle-ground.

God's Word the only True Standard.

IT is a good habit for the believer to acquire, to accustom himself to test all his motives within, as well as his actions without by the Word of God. This is the only perfect standard. Lack of acquaintance with the Word as a standard to regulate everything in the lives of believers, individual and corporate, is the chief cause of the laxity and indolence in spiritual things, so apparent everywhere in our days. If we fail to use the Word to test and regulate our own ways, we are not likely to be much concerned as to what it may say regarding the doings of others. When the conscience is dull, and the senses unexercised, it is wonderful how toleration of things which have no Scriptural warrant, yea, even things and practices that Scripture condemns, are allowed to pass, under the guise of a false charity, or because we have no responsibility toward or interest in them. But when the Word arouses the conscience from its sluggish condition, and sets its edge afresh, how differently things appear then. The Word in its living activity, dwelling in the believer, exercising his conscience and strengthening his soul, is the arbitrator and standard by which everything is tried and regulated then. And thus the Lord desires it to be with us, everywhere and always.

A GODLY MOTHER.—I once said to a Christian physician—"Doctor, I hear you have a large family: I hope they are well." "Yes," he said, "I have a large family, and the best thing I can tell you of them is, that they are blest with a *godly mother*. An ounce of mother, is better than a pound of parson."

Henry Dyer.

The True Gospeller.

WHEN Cæsar beheld, from the coast of Gaul, the white cliffs of Britain, he earnestly longed to carry his arms thither. The evangelist, on the other hand, whose heart beats in unison with the heart of Jesus, as he casts his eye over the map of the world, longs to carry the gospel of peace into regions which have heretofore been wrapped in midnight gloom, covered with the dark mantle of superstition, or blasted beneath the withering influences of "a form of godliness without the power."

It would, I believe, be a profitable question for many of us to put to ourselves, how far we are discharging our holy responsibilities to "the regions beyond." I believe the Christian who is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit, is in a truly deplorable condition. I believe, too, that the assembly which is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit is in a dead state. One of the truest marks of spiritual growth and prosperity, whether in an individual or in an assembly, is earnest anxiety after the conversion of souls. This anxiety will swell the bosom with most generous emotions; yea, it will break forth in copious streams of benevolent exertion, ever flowing toward "the regions beyond." It is hard to believe that "the Word of Christ" is "dwelling richly" in any one who is not making some effort to impart that word to his fellow-sinners. It matters not what may be the amount of the effort; it may be to drop a few words in the ear of a friend, to give a tract, to pen a note, to breathe a prayer. But one thing is certain, namely, that a healthy, vigorous Christian will be an evangelistic Christian, a teller of good news.

The Bible Annotator.

THREE CONDITIONS OF SOUL IN PSA. LXIII.

- "My soul thirsteth for Thee" (v. 1).
- "My soul shall be satisfied" (v. 5).
- "My soul followeth hard after Thee" (v. 8).

THINGS IT PLEASSED GOD TO DO.

- "To bruise His Son" (Isa. liii. 10).
- "To make all fulness dwell in Him" (Col. i. 19).
- "To save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21).

FOR THE NAME.

- "Forsaking all for the Name" (Matth. xix. 29).
- "Going forth for the Name" (3 John 8).
- "Labouring for the Name" (Rev. ii. 3).

NOTES ON TEXTS.

ABIDING IN CHRIST.—The Greek word *Meno* is translated in the A.V.—tarry, remain, abide, continue, dwell. This helps us to understand the significance of the figure in John xv., and the meaning of the words, "abide in Me."

SIMPLE CONCERNING EVIL (Rom. xvi. 19).—The word "simple" here, means—pure, unmixed. This hint as to the defiling nature of evil, ought to warn all against unnecessary occupation with it, especially the young believer.

GOD FORBID (Rom. vi. 2).—Literally, "Let it not be," a familiar form of negation used chiefly by the Apostle Paul, expressing the abhorrence with which the thing asked is repelled by him. It occurs only once in the Gospels, in Luke xx. 16.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST (Col. iii. 1-5, R.V.).—The same peace as He enjoyed while here below, in the midst of sorrow, persecution, and rejection, and which on departing he bequeathed to His people (John xiv. 27). It is to "rule," or arbitrate in the believer's heart. This is something beyond peace, "made by the blood of the Cross" (Col. i. 20), which abides unchangeably the same.

THE LOVE OF THE SPIRIT (Rom. xv. 30), not the Holy Ghost's love, but the love which He sheds abroad in the hearts (Rom. v. 4) of the saints (see also Gal. v. 22).

THY KINGDOM COME (Matth. vi. 10).—Not a prayer for spiritual revival in the Church, or the conversion of sinners in the world, as it is often made to mean, but the fulfilment of the hundreds of promises and predictions in the Word of a literal reign of the Son of Man over this earth.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

Do the words, "Let no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii. 11), imply that some believers will have no crown in heaven? The diadem, or regal crown, will be worn by all the redeemed (Rev. iv. 4), because the grace of God and the blood of Christ provide it for them; but the *Stephanos* or "Victor's Crown," mentioned in 1 Cor. ix. 25, 2 Tim. iv. 8, Rev. iii. 11, &c., is a reward for faithfulness to Christ and diligence in His service here, and may be lost (2 John 8).

What is meant by the word "Mammon" in Matth. vi. 23? Things in the world personified, and viewed as an idol, claiming the entire energies as a master does of his slave. How many such slaves there are, some of them professing Christ's Name too!

What was the object in giving the Lord "Vinegar mingled with gall" (Matth. xxvii. 34)? This was evidently a stupefying draught, given to dull the pains of crucifixion; but the Lord, when he had tasted, refused to drink it. He was there to endure the Cross (Heb. xii. 3), therefore he sought not nor received anything to mitigate its sorrows. The "vinegar," which he did receive, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, (John xix. 28-29) was simply the sour wine in common use, then and now in Palestine.

What is the full meaning of the word "Cast thy burden on the Lord" (Psa. lv. 12)? The word "cast," in the original, means "roll," so that if you have not enough strength to cast it with both hands, you may simply roll it off you on to the Lord, who will receive it, and "sustain" you.

Is it right to tell sinners now to pray—"God, be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke xviii. 14)? It should rather read, "God be propitiated toward me, the sinner." Mercy can only reach the sinner on the ground of sacrifice, as every offering in that temple court in which the convicted tax-gatherer stood bore witness. This is what the Spirit-convicted soul is led to trust, and in this is found his righteousness before God, not like the Pharisee in his own doings. There is no need to pray for this now, since God has set forth Christ Jesus as a propitiation through *faith* in His blood" (Rom. iii.

25). Praying for mercy is not faith in Christ which is the only way whereby a sinner can be saved (Acts xvi. 31).

Is it possible for one to deny the eternal punishment of unbelievers, and yet remain sound on the other fundamental truths of Scripture? We believe not. The solemn truth of eternal punishment stands intimately connected with the atonement of the Son of God, and His work is closely related to His Person. If it required such a Person, and such a Sacrifice, to deliver men from the consequences of sin, then they must be eternal, and he who removes one stone from the arch of Divine truth, and casts it away, must slacken the rest. Human sin, and its consequences, like Divine love and its actions, must be measured by the standard of the Cross of Christ, and not by the reasonings and sentiment of men. We have never known of one who started on the downward path of reasoning on God's truth, regarding the doom and destiny of the wicked, who ended there, unless through Sovereign grace he was speedily delivered from the snare. Hundreds have drifted to the rocks of Christadelphianism and Unitarianism, and become wrecks in Christian life and testimony.

ANSWERS TO SPECIAL QUESTIONS,

As given in last month's "Believer's Magazine."

Is there any Scripture to guide, as to how a *new* Assembly ought to be formed, so as to have the confidence and fellowship of already-existing Assemblies in the neighbourhood?

ANSWER A.—We read in Acts xvi. 5, that the Churches were established in the faith, and "increased in number daily." This was evidently under the personal ministry of Paul, Silas and Timothy (chap. xv. 40, with xvi. 3), who would form a living link between these newly-formed Assemblies and those already existing. As a rule, new Assemblies are still formed under the ministry of accredited evangelists and teachers, and it surely would be comely, as well as for their edification, if brethren so labouring, would invite the fellowship of guiding brethren in surrounding assemblies, so that the new assembly might have their godly counsel and help from the beginning. The mistake often made is, that labourers "on their own responsibility," possibly over-anxious to gather up the results of their labour, begin a new assembly, largely

or wholly composed of untaught believers, with no experience in assembly life, and perhaps with too much confidence in their own wisdom, with the result that in a very short time they find themselves in deep waters, from which they cannot extricate themselves. The Scriptures clearly shew, that it was the custom of the Lord's servants to continue preaching and teaching in the midst of a newly-formed assembly, sometimes for years (Acts xviii. 11: xx. 31), until God raised up in their midst others to lead and shepherd the flock.—A. D.

ANSWER B.—Matthew xviii. 20, gives us the ground, or root principle, which forms saints into an assembly. A local assembly (ecclesia) exists, where saints have been gathered by Divine power into (*eis*) THE NAME of our Lord Jesus Christ. This I apprehend to be a spiritual thought, and not merely an ecclesiastical catchword or formula of distinction. It involves the supremacy of the Lord Jesus in the affections, as well as in the gathering, of those who are "together." Where such companies are thus divinely gathered, they are already in fellowship with those similarly gathered. It is not difficult to express fellowship where it really exists. Its secret is not in a mere formal and outward bond, which may be maintained when the real living link is awaiting.—M. I. REICH.

ANSWER C.—No hard and fast rule can be made as to the formation of a new assembly, but the following points should in our estimation be very carefully considered. 1. Is there a necessity for it? 2. Are there materials to form it? 3. Are there those who have shewn by their experience and wisdom that there are capable of guiding it? 4. Is it approved of by assemblies nearest, from which part of the company will be coming? 5. Will it have the hearty fellowship of these assemblies? An assembly begun to escape a difficulty, or of those who are on "the opposition bench," or "dissatisfied" where they are, is certain to come to grief, and so far as we have light, ought not to be encouraged or supported. We have often been amazed to see how quickly "preaching brethren" run to the support of new companies formed of such materials, or by such leaders, without the least consideration of elder brethren in the town or neighbourhood, whose fellowship they profess to value. Incalculable mischief is often done by this means, which years of labour will not undo.—T. L.

ANSWER D.—Paul, in writing to the Church of God at Corinth, says—"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase (1 Cor. iii. 6); and again—"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (verse 9). Paul was the instrument, but God was the Operator. In the R.V., Eph. ii. 21 is rendered—"In whom each several building, fitly framed together, growth into an holy temple in the Lord." If this be correct, then an assembly in early days was a *divine building*. The believers at Thessalonica were "turned to God from idols" by the ministry of the Gospel "in power, and in the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. i. 5-9). Then they were formed into churches after the Divine pattern, by the effectual working of the Word of God in them (chap. ii. 13-14). Scriptural churches are formed by God the Holy Spirit, and He works by means of the ministry of the Word. It is to be feared that some, if not many, meetings, claiming to be "assemblies of God," will not bear this test. Some have been begun by men for their own ends, and are rather "Gospel Missions" with the "breaking of bread" attached to them, than Scriptural churches. It is a solemn thing to attempt to plant a church without seeking the fellowship of leading brethren in the district. It is more solemn still to do so in defiance of their judgment, and it is a deeply solemn responsibility for brethren of note in other places, who know little or nothing of the circumstances, to go and help such meetings without consulting with, and weighing well the judgment of brethren who live in the place, doing their utmost to prevent schism. G. ADAM.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—While there is an entire silence in the Word, regarding anything like a "Central Ecclesiastical Authority," from which a permit must be obtained for the formation of a new assembly, it seems clear from Acts viii. 14 : xvi. 5, and other passages, that in early times there was much fellowship and co-operation among the Lord's servants, in the gathering together in Assembly of those who had been gathered out from the world to Christ. As our correspondent B., shews, by these "living links" genuine fellowship was maintained and fostered, and surely this is no less needful now. Speaking generally, a new assembly formed is the result of a Gospel work in some new district, in which many have been converted, and who as the result of the ministry of the Word among them, have

the desire inwrought by the Spirit to share the fellowship of saints. If at all possible, it is the best and happiest way for these young believers, and it may be old believers who have been delivered from sectarianism and worldly religion through the truth they have heard, to seek fellowship with the nearest assembly to where they live. Then, as guidance may be given, a "hive off" from that assembly, with its hearty fellowship, will naturally come, and a new assembly will thus be formed, in which brethren who have had experience in serving the saints will naturally take the lead. Or it may be, that distance hindering aged believers, mothers and others from assembling as often as they desire, make it necessary to form a new assembly. Care is needed in such a case not to hasten the pace, but to wait patiently upon God until all are of one mind, otherwise a party spirit may be engendered. There have been hundreds of new assemblies thus formed, which go on happily, in real testimony for God; centres from which the living water flows. But where in order to escape a division, or because of "internal" differences in which they could not carry their points, a party goes off, and without desiring or having the fellowship of those they have left, begin a "new meeting," that is an entirely different matter, and ought not to be recognised, or in any way supported. Yet it is often done, by some too who claim to be "guides," and teachers among God's gathered saints. Such a "division"—for it can be characterised by no other Scriptural name—should be the subject of much godly and *united* service among overseeing brethren in the town or district where it has occurred, and every effort made *at the beginning*, to get matters settled in a godly way, otherwise there will in all likelihood be found there, two companies, having no intercourse with each other, one recognised by some, another by others, and individuals received from both, or neither—a condition of things which is certainly not according to God, which stumbles young believers, drives many to Exclusivism, and which in most cases could have been avoided. An assembly needs to be in a healthy spiritual condition in order to give off part of its numbers to form a new company, and those who go, should be perfectly sure that they have the guidance of God, and the necessary fitness to assume the solemn responsibility of forming and sustaining a testimony worthy of the Name of the Lord Jesus.

The Believer's Union and Communion.

IT is of great importance to the children of God to know the distinction between being united to Christ and one to another, and what it is to walk in the joyful experience of this oneness.

For want of knowing this distinction, many godly believers in years gone by were kept in bondage. When their communion with God was broken, or interrupted, they thought that their safety was thereby endangered.

Now-a-days, we seem to be swerving to the other extreme. Believers are from their birth, taught the truth of their eternal union with Christ, so that when by careless, or sinful walking, the communion is broken, it gives many of them little concern. And the way in which these two doctrines are sometimes mixed up together in teaching, tends to lull carnal believers into a deeper sleep. By Divine help I will try to point out what is taught in the Scriptures on this subject.

First of all, as to Divine union. The Lord's prayer in John xvii. 20-23, gives the kernal of this truth. As far as union goes, no one can doubt but that this request has been answered. Embracing those who heard it made, and all those who have believed, or shall yet believe the Holy Spirit's testimony of Christ whilst He is now in heaven. All are one in the Father, and in the Son, as the Father and the Son are one.

To attempt to touch this vast, incomprehensible mystery by exposition, would be like the men of Beth-shemesh looking into the ark (1 Sam. vi. 19.) But whilst we cannot dare to analyse it, we can believe it. Thus the power which can break the union

between the Father and His Son, would be needed to break the union which God has made among all believers, who are one "in the Father and in the Son."

This unbreakable, eternal union, comes out in other aspects in other parts of Scripture. "If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 17). Again, "For in one Spirit are we all baptised into one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13). And again, "And we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John v. 20). Passages could be multiplied, but these ought to suffice to prove, that all believers are now and for ever one with Christ, by a bond which never can be broken.

"IF *children, then heirs.*" There is no condition here but one. If a child of God, then an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ. When a sinner is born into the family of God by the reception of Christ (see John i. 12-13), he is thereby constituted an heir, and his after-behaviour cannot affect that truth. But his behaviour after he has been born into God's family will affect him in other ways. It will affect his communion now, and also his reward, and his place in the coming kingdom.

The word "fellowship" may convey one of two thoughts. It may mean *partnership*, or it may mean *companionship*. Union or communion. It is needful to mark the context where the word occurs, so as not to confound the truth, and so mislead the children of God. "God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord." The word "fellowship" here, probably includes both union and communion; but it appears to me, that *union* is the primary thought. That is, that all who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "called saints," are called

unto the *partnership* of Jesus Christ our Lord. "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," by virtue of their birth. But when we come to the first Epistle of John, where the word "fellowship" so often occurs, it seems clear that *communion* is the primary thought. One of the purposes for which John wrote his first epistle was, that all the children of God *may* have communion with those whose communion was with the Father and with the Son (chap. i. 3). John wrote the Gospel which bears his name, that dead sinners might have life (John xx. 31). He wrote His first letter that those who had life, might know they had it; and might live in the enjoyment of it (chap. v. 13).

It is needful to mark well the importance that the Spirit attaches to a believer's *walk* in this epistle. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and *walk* in darkness, we lie and do not the truth; but if we *walk* in the light, as He is the light, we have fellowship one with another."

It is needful also to mark the force of the word "if," which clearly implies that fellowship in the sense in which it is used by the apostle John, is not a birthright blessing, but is largely conditional. Let us never put in an "if" where God has not put one; but let us never ignore that little word where God has put it.

The teaching of the above quotation from 1 John i. 6-7 is, that communion with the Father, and the Son, is dependent on *our walking in the light*; and so is our communion "one with another." Hence the paramount importance—if we would enjoy what God regards as communion—of our walking in the light of His presence by virtue of the blood of Jesus Christ; and also seeking to lead others into that light. In our endeavour to remove misunderstand-

ings amongst saints, and to restore broken fellowships, we have often not begun where we ought to have begun.

Genuine fellowship amongst the children of God, springs out of the higher fellowship with the Father, and with the Son. If that is wrong, nothing can be right till that is restored. What a mercy that our union with Christ, as with one another, does not depend upon our walk. But what a loss it is to our God and Father, to ourselves, and to one another, when we become careless of our communion, which can only be maintained and enjoyed in the light of the presence of God. Let us be thankful for the little we do know of fellowship in the light, and with purpose of heart let us seek to know it more.

G. ADAM.

Occupation with Christ.

THE first as well as the highest privilege, yea, and the sublimest acting of faith, is just to take our place before the Lord, acquainting ourselves with Him and being at peace. Instead of painfully enquiring of ourselves whether we are making suited returns to Him, we should charge our hearts to enjoy Him in those wondrous manifestations of Himself. Our first duty to the light that shines in Him is to learn *what He is*, calmly and thankfully and joyfully to learn that, and not anxiously and painfully to begin by measuring ourselves by it, or seeking to imitate it. His presence should be our home, so that, in the twinkling of an eye, whether at morning, at noonday, or at eventide, we might pass in there, with ease and naturalness, with an abundant entrance, as one expressed it long ago, "like those who have nothing to lose, but all to gain."

J. G. B.

Shepherd Work and Rule in the Church.

An Address delivered in Grosvenor Hall, Dublin.

BY HENRY W. FIGGIS.

LET me invite your attention to 1st Corinthians, 12th chap., 27th verse: "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." It is most important to observe, that the three special figures of the Church—the body, the building, and the flock—are presented in the Word of God both in an inclusive, wide, and general aspect, and also in a local and narrower one. The whole Church is the body (see Eph. i. 22-23), but so, though in a narrower sense, is the local assembly. "Now ye are the body"—"Ye (Corinthians) are the body, and members in particular." The whole Church in the aspect of the building—a temple—"groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;" but we also have it referred to in 1 Cor. iii., where the local church is a temple—"Ye are the temple of God," and based upon that is the solemn warning, "Take heed lest ye defile the temple of God: if any man defile the temple of God him will God destroy." And so with reference to the flock, we have the words in Acts xx. "all the flock;" but we also have the local aspect of the flock: "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Peter v. 2)—that is, the local flock. So that I take it, wherever there are a number of true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ *there* is a flock, *there* is a temple, *there* is a body. And those sweet thoughts that radiate from each of these figures, harmonise without collision with the wider and general thought that the whole Church is the temple, and that it is also the body of Christ. Now, I am struck with the way that the Spirit of God, suddenly, as it were, turns and says "God hath set *some* in

the Church." When we think of the membership of the body and the ministry of the body, we find a ministry that includes all believers, sisters as well as brothers, old as well as young, novices newly-converted as well as fathers; but when we come to think of the ministry in the Church, it does not include sisters, nor all men—not all the male sex because they are male,—but "God hath set *some* in the Church." So He turns from the body to the Church—"first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." Then, "are *all* apostles?" "Are *all* prophets?" "Are *all* teachers?" Are *all* workers of miracles? Have *all* the gifts of healing? Do *all* speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gift; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." Now, most of those are supernatural and miraculous gifts—"charisma," and in the 13th chapter we have an intimation, that these were given for a temporary period in the Church, and were meant to pass away when the purpose for which they were given was fulfilled. And whilst we speak about the failure of the Church and the sinfulness and worldliness of the Church—true, sadly true—yet do not let us say these "charisma" have been removed, that we have no working of miracles, or gifts of healing, *because* the Church has been unfaithful. To this I demur. 1 Cor. xiii. shows, that these miraculous gifts were given for a period in the Church, and that the time would come when prophecy would cease—when knowledge would cease and tongues would fail, in the perfect state of things, without interfering with the thought that there is a sense in which the perfect would come by and by. But there

is also a sense in which the perfect *has* come, for we have a full revelation of God given to us in the Holy Scriptures, and the special purposes for which these miraculous or supernatural gifts were given having been accomplished, they have been withdrawn. This being so, a very great deal of what precedes in the 12th chapter and what follows in the 14th chapter is primarily connected with a condition of things which has passed away, being instructions for the control and directions of miraculous and supernatural gifts in the Apostolic Church. And I would like to say that I know of no case of 1 Cor. xiv. strictly having been carried out in our days. I have never heard during the years that I have been connected with the assemblies of saints, anyone stand up and say, "Something has been revealed to me, and let the first hold his peace." The more I study these chapters, the more I am convinced that though the principles there set forth are the truth of God are there for all time, they were specially meant to guide the exercise of the miraculous and supernatural gifts which existed then. And I am further struck with this solemn fact, that the Holy Spirit of God puts a restriction—I say it with reverence—upon Himself; so that to those who were under the impulse, the "afflatus," the outpouring and lifting up of the Holy Ghost in marvellous measure in their souls, the apostle says, "Better not speak at all, than speak in an unknown tongue." If a man cannot speak so as to be heard by others, or if he has some difficulties of voice or style, and cannot be heard by those present, he had better not speak at all. But if a brother says, "O, I must speak," the apostle say, "My brother, sit down and keep silence." Turning the Epistle to the Ephesians, there, it

seems to me, we get upon lines—where we are not met with difficulties concerning this miraculous or supernatural condition of things—we get on to lines that the Holy Spirit lays down very clearly, and which were distinctly meant to continue during the whole period of this dispensation while the Church is on earth (read Ephesians iv. 8-13). Here we have the ascension gifts of the Lord Jesus Christ given to His Church for certain purposes, and for a certain tenure, or period. And it is perfectly evident that we still are living in a time that the Lord meant to be covered by these gifts of His ascension grace (for they are connected, not with His resurrection, but with His ascension—"He ascended up on high . . . and gave gifts unto men.") And these gifts are until the Church comes into the "unity of the faith"—we are not there yet,—and to "the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect Man." So that these gifts are given still. I cannot see the distinctive difference—the clear cut difference that some would draw, between ministry and rule or oversight. Of course I see the difference intellectually, but when I come to examine the Scriptures upon it, and seek to draw from them my teaching and inspiration, I do not see the difference. For instance, take the word "Pastors." Now, we find that that word and those others that are closely connected with the subject—I mean flock, pasture, care, feed, rule, tend—we find that they are all of them from the same root, they are all like "first cousins" to each other; they are from a parent stock, and the parent stock conveys just this idea, one who tends, feeds, guides, enlightens, rules, leads, directs, or any other such words—all meaning the same thing, or different aspects of the same thing, *a shepherd, the shepherd.*

The word is the very same as is used of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in Heb. xiii., 20 which is rendered "The *Great Shepherd*," also "*The Chief Shepherd* of the sheep," And it is the word which Peter uses in his 1st Epistle: "Ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to *the Shepherd* and Bishop of your souls." Only notice that just as when in Hebrews our Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of, it is not as a High Priest, but He is *the Great High Priest*; because it is a high priest's privilege to enter into the presence of God, and this is our privilege as priests. But as in all things He must have the pre-eminence He is called *the Great High Priest*. And in like manner, when the Holy Spirit comes to speak of pastors, shepherds, He speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ (still giving Him the pre-eminence) as the "Great Shepherd," the "Chief Shepherd," as the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, plainly thus intimating that there are under-shepherds and pastors. Now, this is the same word as is related to the word "flock" in Acts xx. ver. 28: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the *flock*;" and whatever difficulties of thought we may have about the Church in its corporate capacity, in its visible unity, as it was undoubtedly established under the apostles, I must confess that when I come to think of the Church, not as the building, nor yet as the body, but as "the flock," all such difficulties vanish from my mind at once, and I see the thing as plainly as anything can be—the flock—the flock, yes there is the flock. And there are those pastors whom the ascended Lord gives for its guidance and tending. In the 5th chapter of 1st Peter, 2nd verse, he addresses certain elders and says, "the elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an

elder." But what are those "elders" to do? To feed, tend, care for, cherish, guide, lead, instruct defend, reprove—all shepherd work. "Feed the flock of God which is among you taking the oversight." Oh, then they are "elders!" Oh, then they are "overseers!" Oh, then they are "pastors" and "shepherds!" Yes. Here I find all these thoughts blended together; and so I don't see how we can make a clean cut between teaching and oversight, for in the figure of the flock and the proper care of the flock they are intimately connected. Read 1 Peter v. 2, 3, to word "heritage." If you take that as God's clergy, then what the world calls "laity" are God's clergy—or, as perhaps some would more fittingly have it, "neither as lording it over your allotted portions" because these pastors, elders, teachers, leaders, bishops, were not bishops or such like, over a large district composed of a considerable number of assemblies, but in a special assembly—and the word would be "in this assembly do not lord it over your allotted portions, but be ensamples to the flock." We have heard it pressed, and we cannot have it pressed too strongly, the necessity of the example character; but we should not press one passage of Scripture against another. Most certainly those who are the shepherds and pastors of the flock should be those who set an example to the flock. But that cannot nullify the other distinct aspect, that there ought to be a very clearly marked and scriptural recognition of those whom the Ascended Lord has given to His Church, to be known, esteemed, revered, obeyed, and prayed for, by saints.

(To be continued.)

The great value of present life to any of us is, its furnishing the suitable, the indispensable education for eternity.—*John Dickie.*

Children and Sons of God.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT ABERDEEN CONFERENCE.

BY ALFRED J. HOLIDAY.

THE Spirit of God does not use words at random, and we are able to learn much of God's purpose concerning us, in the employment of these two words, "children" and "sons." Unfortunately, the translators of our A.V., evidently through lack of the perception, which through God's mercy some of us have, of the perfect exactitude of every single word as inspired of the Holy Spirit,—have in many cases translated one word of the original by several different English words and *vice versa*. On this account there is a considerable confusion in their use of the words, "children" and "sons." Our Revisers, happily, have largely escaped this error, and have endeavoured to use the same word in English to represent the same word in the original. The R.V. will, therefore, be helpful in pursuit of our subject.

Ere we turn to some passages, let me here impress, especially upon young Christians, the vital importance of not only carefully and systematically reading, but of diligently and prayerfully studying the Word of God. It is *all* profitable, and should therefore be all read. We may, at the time of reading, think one particular portion comparatively unimportant and unintelligible, but it is, nevertheless, our business to store the mind with the precious treasure to be used by the Holy Spirit to ourselves and others, as occasion may demand. Study takes us beyond the mere reading, and one good method of study is to carefully trace through the Scriptures the use the Spirit of God makes of any particular word. Let

us ascertain then the thought connected with the words, "children" and "sons."

"Children," it is said, always refers to the relationship, which all who are born of God have in common. Whatever distinguishing features may afterwards develop in a child, the moment it is born it is in the family—a child of the father who begat, and of the mother who bare it.

Read Romans viii. 16-17.—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and, if children, then heirs. . . ." Tens of thousands have treated this Scripture as if it said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness *to* our spirit . . ." which is a totally different thing. The word is a very strong compound word, meaning "to bear joint testimony with." Look at the preceding verse—"Ye have not received the spirit of bondage . . . but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." With this compare Gal. iv. 6—"Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." In Romans *we* cry, "Abba, Father"; here the Spirit of His Son in us cries, "Abba, Father" too, that is the joint testimony. It is not a question of the Holy Spirit testifying *to* us what we are; but it is ourselves taught, enlightened, and instructed by Him, saying that which He with us says. Neither is it a declaring to the world, but simply using the language which befits the blessed place and the blessed relationship that God has given to us. The word in Romans viii. 16 then is really "children," telling of our relationship and what it carries with it—"If children, then heirs." God has no disinherited children. There may be measures of inheritance, as the latter part of the verse indicates, but

for all the redeemed there is an "inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" (1 Peter i. 3). The measure in which we suffer with Christ will determine the measure of our share in it.

Turn now to 1 John v. 1-2.—"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments." I suppose it is the exigencies of the poetry that make poets put things in certain ways. but I always shrink a little in singing that verse—

"We now love all Christ-like ones for the love of Christ." This is likeness, not relationship. While we love to see the likeness of Christ in those who are His (and He makes our hearts glad if our life is after the divine pattern), it is *not* because of Christ's likeness that they are loved, but because they are "born of God." Even when the likeness of Christ is least to be seen, we ought to love them. Paul writes:—"Behold the third time I am ready to come to you," there was very little Christ-likeness about the Corinthians at that time. "And I will very gladly spend, and be spent, of you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (2 Cor. xii. 14-15). There was Christ-likeness in Paul, and it showed itself in loving those children of God, in whom very little Christ-likeness was to be seen. The Scriptures does not say, therefore, that we love the "sons" of God, but the "children" of God.

In the third chapter of this same Epistle, the translators have given us the wrong word; the "sons" of God here should be the "children" of God. Were it "sons," it

would take us away to another subject. But it is relationship. It is the name used by the Apostle in chapter ii. 12, before he begins to address the several branches of the family, "little children . . . your sins are forgiven you." A different word from "little children" of the next verse, where the reference is to the youngest members—the babes of the family. In verse 12, the word is as applicable to the eldest son or daughter as to the youngest. "Little" is what we call the diminutive form in Greek, and signifies, endearment. The diminutive form is the form of affection, and it is most interesting to notice that, when the Apostle Paul speaks *about* the children of God, he drops this qualifying form of the word. In like manner, when I am speaking *to* a child of mine, I might address her "my darling"; but, in talking *about* her, "my daughter."

We will now revert to Romans viii. for an example of the other word. But, first of all, we will get an example of the principle which teaches the difference between the two terms, "children" and "sons." We are all "children" of God. Every believer, every blood-bought, every born again soul, is a child of God, and God's purpose concerning such we have in verse 29—"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren." It is *this* which God connects with the word "sons." Sonship tells in our life, and it is used whenever the Spirit is speaking of God's purpose of making us like Christ; or of the means of accomplishing that purpose; or of the time when that purpose shall have been accomplished, and His likeness will be seen in every one of us.

(To be Continued.)

The Story of a Revival.

A CHRISTIAN farmer and his wife, who in their early years of wedded life were bright lights for God and earnest workers for Christ, had by easy stages got "settled down," until one would have scarcely known that they were "children of the day" at all. There was little in their surroundings to help them spiritually, so thus they remained until in the goodness of God, a relative from the Colonies, who was a man of God, paid them a visit while on a short holiday to his native land. After a few days sojourn at the farm, he made a proposal to the farmer and his wife that they might have a meeting in the barn on the Sunday evening, as he had a great desire to testify in his native glen, what the Lord had done for his soul, and to preach Christ to his kinsfolk and old acquaintances. Out of courtesy to their friend, they did not object to his proposal, but quietly hinted that they feared "nobody would come": not at all an uncommon excuse for those who have lost heart for the Gospel to make. "No fear of that; the Lord will bring them in, and speak to them too," answered the man of God, who had got into touch with the Most High about the matter, before saying anything of it to his relations. The barn was got into order, invitations were sent out to the farms around, and a notice of the meeting posted on the "smithy" door and at the "kirk" gate, on the Saturday afternoon. The news soon spread, and at five o'clock on Sunday afternoon the barn was packed with a congregation, more curious than devout, but so much the more need had they of the plain unvarnished truth of God being told them. God helped His servant

to speak the Word simply and faithfully, and He Himself carried it home to the hearts and consciences of many. It was a wonderful meeting, and fruit was gathered that night which remains until this day. Nor did it end there, for the meetings were continued for many nights after, and a glorious work of grace among the lost, with a genuine revival among the saved, caused many a homestead in that glen to be filled with the joy of spiritual harvest, over lost ones found and wanderers brought home to God. But well the servant of Christ knew, that the new life thus begotten, would require to be fed and cherished, and also guarded from the withering influences of the world, no less from the deadening effects of unequal yokes with the unconverted, and association with them in their religion. So he devoted the last week of his sojourn among them, to simple Bible Readings, giving them help in the truth of God and casting them upon the Word as their counsellor and guide in everything. The effect of "going by the Book" was very soon manifest in the young community, for although nobody had said a word to them about it, several of the young believers "saw baptism" in the Book, and wanted to have it "done." Continuing to follow the light they got, God gave them more. They next saw from the Word that they ought not to be mixed up with the unconverted in their religion (2 Cor. vi. 14-16) but "gathered together" as Christ's disciples in His Name alone (Psa. l. 5; Matt. xviii. 20; Acts xx. 7) to shew forth His death, to worship God and to edify one another. They began to gather thus, without knowing there was another such company on earth, but they found before many weeks had passed, that other little companies of

believers had been led on in the same path by the same Word, and were gathered in the same way; for obedience to the one Lord, and subjection to the one Book, not only makes division and causes separation from that which is false or forbidden, but it forms and sustains true fellowship with those and that which is of God. Thus a little light was kindled in that distant glen, which notwithstanding all the opposition from the world without, and the failures and weaknesses of the feeble few within, our God has kept burning until this day, to whom be the glory and the praise for ever.

True Fellowship.

SWEET is the union true believers feel,
 Into one Spirit they have drunk; the seal
 Of God is on their hearts and thus they see
 In each the features of one family.
 If one is suffering, all the rest are sad;
 If but the least is honoured, all are glad;
 The grace of Jesus, which they all partake,
 Flows out in mutual kindness for His sake.
 Here, He has left them for a while to wait
 And represent Him in their suffering state;
 While He, though glorified, is yet alone,
 Bears the whole church before the Father's
 throne.

LIVING BEFORE GOD.—Whenever we are living before men instead of before God, there will be restlessness and disquiet. There may be the desire to do many things that are written in the Word, but they will not be done in quietness and peace. We are never really preserved from hypocrisy unless we are *living before* God. It is the very best cure for the overwhelming conceit we have, all of us naturally, of ourselves.

J. L. Harris.

A True Leader.

THE servant of Christ cannot lead others in a path which is strange to himself. He must tread it himself first, before he can be entrusted by God to guide others along it. In order to have the moral fitness to be a leader, he must first be a follower. Look at Moses; he first surrendered all the glory of Egypt himself, then God used him to lead His people, Israel, out of it. Would God have called him to the honoured place of Israel's leader, if he had not in his own heart and soul been out of it long before? Certainly not. He never uses men to teach others what they do not practice themselves. Is this why there is a dearth of guides and shepherds in the flock of God? Nor is this all. Moses tasted the trials of the wilderness, by being in "the backside of the desert" forty years, tending the sheep, ere he was called to lead Israel as a flock, through that desert. It is the man who has learned by experience the trials of the wilderness, the daily life of dependence upon God, who alone can teach, and guide others safely along that path. Is the lack of practical teaching and godly guidance in the ways of God so manifest at this time, due to the fact, that few are acquainted experimentally with these ways? A true guide and leader of God's people must be in his measure a pattern of them, a sort of head line which they may copy. Able in his measure to say "Those things which ye have seen in me do" (Phil. iv. 9). It does not always follow, that even with such wise and godly leaders, the saints follow on. Israel rebelled against Moses: all in Asia forsook Paul. Nevertheless, true and godly guides are a great blessing in any church, and should be owned and esteemed.

The Bible Annotator.

"Ye in Me"—The Believer's *Position*—John xiv. 20.

"I in You"—The Believer's *Power*—John xiv. 20.

A THREEFOLD CORD.

Chosen by God the Father (Eph. i. 4).

Redeemed by God the Son (Eph. i. 7).

Sealed by God the Spirit (Eph. i. 13).

CHRIST THE GIRDED SERVANT.

In the Upper Room, *Past*—John xiii. 4.

In the midst of the Church, *Present*—Rev. i. 13.

In the Glory, *Future*—Luke xii. 37.

GOSPEL WORK IN OLDEN TIME :

As carried on by Paul and Silas in Thessalonica.

CHRIST the preacher's *Theme*—Acts xvii. 3.

THE SCRIPTURES, the preacher's *Book*—Acts xvii. 2.

THE HOLY SPIRIT the preacher's *Power*—1 Thes. i. 5.

HOLY, the preacher's *character*—1 Thes. ii. 10.

Four "*essentials*" to a genuine Revival.

READINGS FROM THE REVISED TESTAMENT.

"Take no thought for the morrow" (Matt. vi. 34) is a word which has been much misunderstood. It does not encourage *improvidence* on the part of believers. "Thought was formerly used in the sense of *anxiety*. The text is properly rendered in the R.V.—"Be not anxious for the morrow."

"We took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem" (Acts xxi. 15), is given in R.V.—"We took up our baggage," which makes it clear. Paul and his company did not possess carriages, as we use the word. They were "a pilgrim band in a stranger land."

"Beware lest any man *spoil* you" (Col. ii. 8), is rendered "lest there be any one that *maketh spoil* of you through his philosophy." This, as many know to their cost, has often been done.

"So that ye *cannot* do the things that ye would" (Gal. v. 17), gives the impression that the flesh in the believer has the upper hand, and prevents him from doing the good that he would. But the very opposite is the teaching of the Scripture. The R.V., gives it—"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh : for these are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye may not do the things that ye would"—that is, the indwelling Spirit enables the believer to so successfully resist the desires of the flesh, that he does not do the wrong, as he naturally would.

Answers to Special Questions,

As given in "*The Believer's Magazine*" for July.

How may a believer know when he is guided by the Spirit in the assembly, to give out a certain hymn, lead in thanksgiving, or minister the Word? There seems to be much need of definite, Scriptural instruction on this subject, as the incoherent character of many of many of our gatherings shows.

ANS. A.—The guidance of the Holy Spirit is a deep and important subject. It involves more than ecclesiastical order. It is the evidence of our sonship (Rom. viii. 14). It must be individually followed to be collectively enjoyed. It partakes of the same character in the assembly, as in the individual path; ever away *from* the flesh, and *to* the honour of Christ; ever in inward quietness and peace. We must wait for it. In many assemblies, there is little of silent waiting, therefore little of the leading of the Spirit. Even the "silence of poverty," is infinitely better than "the talk of the lips, which tendeth to penalty" (Prov. xiv. 23). The former is an eloquent appeal to God, to come in : the latter, is as the "strange fire" that brings His judgment down. "My soul, wait thou only (*Heb.*—"be silent") upon God." MAX I. REICH.

ANS. B.—"He that is spiritual, judgeth (discerneth) all things" (1 Cor. ii. 15). "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust (desire) of the flesh" (Gal. v. 16). Unspiritual exercises in a meeting, are often the result of religious flesh in believers wishing to hear itself, or to have a little prominence. If one is honestly desirous of knowing when he is led of the Spirit in the assembly, let him cultivate habitual fellowship with God, through the week. Apart from this, he cannot discern the Spirit's leading. The principle laid down in 1 Cor. xiv. 26—"Let all things be done unto edifying"—provides a test, as to whether one is led of the Spirit or not, in his exercises. This, as verse 29 shews, others listening are best able to judge, and if they tell him they are not edified, if he is honest he will not be offended. GEO. ADAM.

ANS. C.—Inward impulses are often mistaken for the Spirit's leading. Some hymn or scripture comes to mind, but this of itself is no indication that it is the fitting thing for the assembly at that moment. It may be the word given by the Spirit for that believer's own soul to meditate and feed on, but in no way suited to be given out to others at

that particular time. It is to be feared that *habit* causes many to lead in prayer and praise, as also in reading and speaking in the assembly, without the least exercise as to the fitness of their deliverances. If one is in the current of the Spirit's leading, the assembly will be led into the presence of God, and left there by the exercise, whatever it may be, but if the effect be to drag it down, and leave it in a lower spiritual condition than before, then clearly it was not the leading of the Spirit.

J. H.
ANS. D.—Plain, scriptural teaching from the Word, as to the character of the gathering together of saints, the Lordship of Christ, the order of the house of God, and most of all, the nature of the "liberty," which is according to God, in the Christian assembly, is very much needed everywhere. In my early years of Christian life, these subjects formed the subjects of public ministry in the assembly, at conferences, and especially in our local Bible Readings, with the result that young believers—and old believers brought out from sects and into the fellowship of saints—were taught and exercised in the truth, and took part intelligently in the assembly's worship. In many places these subjects are never spoken of now, with the result that "every man does as is right in his own eyes," and all sense of godly order or spiritual worship is lacking. I do not believe that we need expect to know the Spirit's leading, until His way is known, and the truths He has given regarding His dwelling-place, are owned and honoured in our midst.

J. W. T.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The conscious leading of the Spirit in individual and daily life, is the only process by which we can reach spiritual worship in the Christian assembly. If a musician can play his instrument well alone, he is unlikely to produce discordant notes in his band. Thus—as several of the answers given above, emphasize—vital and personal godliness must be the foundation of collective spiritual worship and edifying ministry. But more than this is required. The truth of God, regarding the nature of worship, the fellowship and mutual subjection of saints, requires to be taught and owned in the assembly, otherwise there will be no room left for the Spirit's guidance. We can only reckon on the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit of God in worship, and His power to be exercised in ministry, when His commands and

instructions regarding both, are diligently observed and honoured. The power and guidance of God's Spirit, is only known within the lines laid down in God's Word. That a spiritual condition in the believer is necessary to discern the Spirit's leading, two of the answers given clearly show. Granted that such a condition exists, there are certain marks by which the Spirit's leading may be discerned. It will ever be according to the truth; its manifestation will be to the profit of others, as 1 Cor. xii. 4-6, fully shews, and there will be a fitness and seasonableness of the exercise to the occasion. An inward conviction wrought by the Spirit in the waiting soul, that such-and-such a hymn at the beginning will be a fitting key-note to lead forth the hearts of gathered saints in worship: or if later, that being in the line along which the Spirit has been guiding, it will fitly express the assembly's praise. This will be accompanied by a fitting opportunity to give it out, with the result that all whose hearts are in fellowship with God, rise up as one, "to make one sound in praising and thanking the Lord" (2 Chron. v. 13). The one who is led by the Spirit to "give thanks," will so identify himself with the assembly's condition, as to express what all will be able to join, or say "Amen" to. The word of ministry or Scripture read, if in the leading of the Spirit, will draw forth fuller, richer worship; if only of man, it will damp it out. All this tells, how important it is, that saints should come together self-judged, clean, and in a fit condition to wait upon God; not with this hymn or that Scripture selected and ready to thrust in at the first opening, which, alas! is too often done, with the result that a round of fragmentary, disjointed exercises follow, quenching the Spirit, and bringing barrenness in their train. The mistaken notion that a pause—which is often God's signal for heart-searching, or the Spirit's opportunity for silently ministering Christ to the heart—must be broken by somebody doing something, is one of the most common hindrances to spiritual worship, whereas a time of silent waiting upon God, and heart-occupation with Christ, is sure to be followed by fresh and richer notes of praise and worship. And while it is true that all believers of this day of grace, are worshippers, it does not follow that all are equally competent to lead the Assembly's worship, or qualified to minister the Word to the profit of those who hear.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

What is the tribute spoken of in Matth. xvii. 24? Is it the Roman tax? No. "The half shekel," or didrachma, as the R.V. gives it, was a small tax of about fifteen pence, paid by most of the Jews for the up-keep of the temple services.

What does the expression "Lord of Sabaoth" (Jas. v. 4) mean? "Lord of Hosts." Used here, possibly to show, that He has power to avenge those who are oppressed.

Among the twelve disciples of the Lord, as given in Matth. x. 4, is "Simon the Canaanite." Do you understand this to mean that he was not an Israelite. The name is given in Luke vi. 15, and Acts i. 13, as "Simon Zealotes, or who was called "Simon the Zealot" (R.V.) We understand this to mean that, prior to Simon's conversion, he belonged to the Jewish sect of "The Zealots." "The twelve," doubtless, were all of "the house of Israel" (see Matth. x. 6).

I am at the coast with my mistress for a few weeks, where there is no gathering of believers in the Lord's Name alone. I was advised by one who is in the Assembly where I am in fellowship and takes part in preaching, to go to the Congregational, or Presbyterian Church, as being the nearest to the Scripture. Would this be right, in the circumstances? If, in obedience to the Word of God, you have been brought out from all the denominations, simply because their constitution and practices are contrary to God's will, obedience to that Word will never take you back to such places again, not even on a visit. The Word of God is the same in all "circumstances," and ought to be honoured and obeyed always and everywhere. It is to be feared that your adviser has never really been separated from worldly religious systems by the power of God's sanctifying truth, else he would never give such counsel. Possibly he came out because he liked to rove at his own free will, or to get more scope for "preaching," and "comes and goes" as he finds his "gift" appreciated. It is easy to be "outside the camp" where there is a large assembly, and little or no cross connected with it, but to stand alone for the truth tests the measure of one's faithfulness, and the grip the Word has on heart and conscience to separate and sustain.

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

✓A. C., ABERDEENSHIRE.—The author of the beautiful hymn, beginning—"Just as thou art, how wondrous fair," was the late Mr. J. Denham Smith. Yes, he was present, and spoke at the great gatherings in the Castle Park, Huntly, in 1860, and there are still many of the Lord's people to be found in the North who got "life," and others "liberty," through the words God gave His servant to speak then. One aged brother used to say—"I learned then that I was one with Christ, and after that, the kirks, with their dead religion, had no charm for me." A revival of the power of this great truth in the souls of God's saints would soon bring about another exodus from worldly Christianity.

A. E., LIVERPOOL.—The best way to "exercise" young believers in the truth is to teach it to them simply and graciously, as they are able to bear. And it is an immense advantage if they are in a godly assembly, where the truth is practised as well as taught. The principle of "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. xxii. 6), is as applicable to the assembly as to the family. If young believers are taught and trained in the Lord's ways, and if they have a godly example in guides and elder brethren, they will not be likely to go back to, or have any desire for, the religion of the world.

C. S., DUNBAR.—We do not know of any Scripture for a "hired" or salaried overseer, or pastor, in an assembly of saints. The article which appears in a contemporary Magazine, to which you refer, certainly gives nothing that anyone in the habit of consulting the Scriptures would regard as authority for such a position or practice. But when love to Christ waxes cold, and the "pressure of business"—which is just a decent name for the love of the present world—absorbs the time and energies of those who ought to be shepherding and guiding the saints, after the example and pattern of Acts. xx. 34, 35, then "the hireling" principle will, no doubt, be resorted to, to make up the deficiency. This is just how it began, and grew, until it became what we see it in the various denominations.

The Believer's Relation to Politics.

THE question is frequently asked—“Should a Christian be a Politician? Ought he to vote in the election of Magistrates and Members of Parliament; or, if opportunity occur, ought he to take office as a civil ruler and legislator in the town or kingdom wherein his lot is cast?” There is diversity of opinion among those who profess the Christian name on these matters; some contending in favour of the Christian sharing in politics, others against. There are many on both sides, whose zeal and sincerity we respect, but in seeking a satisfactory answer to a question such as this, we need to go beyond the arguments and practices of men, and seek our counsel from the Lord alone. We would therefore turn to Him and to His Word for help in the matter. A *Politician* is one who takes an active interest in the government of his city or country, and of the world at large. He claims and exercises the civil privileges conferred upon him as a citizen of the world, to create, or to influence the conduct of rulers. He joins in praising those in authority when they govern according to his political creed, and condemns them when they do otherwise. A *Christian* is a man who has been born of the Spirit of God (John iii. 5), separated from the world by the Cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 14), and called to be partaker of a heavenly calling (Heb. iii. 1). He is on earth a “stranger and a pilgrim” (1 Peter ii. 11), he is not of the world as Christ was not of the world (John xvii. 16), his citizenship is in heaven (Phil. iii. 20, R.V.). While he remains on earth he is to shine as a light in the world (Phil. ii. 15), and not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. vi. 14).

Now the question asked is—“Ought a Christian (not a mere professor), a man answering to the above description to engage in political affairs? Has he been called by God to so do? Is he in so doing, acting according to his calling, and the example left him by Jesus Christ, and in obedience to the commandment of God?”

The earthly life of the Lord Jesus is a pattern for the Christian. He left us an “Example that we should follow in His steps” (1 Peter ii. 21). All that He did, and all that He omitted to do, was pleasing to His God; for he says—“I *always* do those *things* that please Him” (John viii. 29). Was the Lord Jesus then a Politician? Did He take an active part in the government of His country. Did He exercise His civil rights as a citizen, or seek to influence the people against the government then in power? I do not find that He acted in either of these ways, nor as a Politician at all. He lived in a time when government was anything but what it ought to have been. His nation was oppressed by the tyrannical rule of Rome. An Edomite was on the throne in David's city. The poor were crushed, and the righteous suffered wrongfully. Yet the Lord took no political action to have it otherwise. *Jesus was not a Politician.* Once He was asked to become judge, and to arbitrate between two brethren concerning a contested inheritance, but He refused, and in His answer He turned the occasion to good account by warning His disciples against covetousness, and the unsaved against neglecting to consider the world beyond the grave—to be prepared for eternity. If the Christian follow His example, he will do likewise. At another time He was told of an outrage committed by Pilate, who had mingled the blood of

certain Galileans with their sacrifices (Luke xiii. 1). Here was a case of sacrilege: a trampling on the religion of His countrymen by a Pagan tyrant—just such a case as would rouse a Politician to immediate action. Did Jesus denounce the outrage? Did He applaud His countrymen as martyrs? Did He stir up the people to redress? No. Concerning the political aspect of the case He was entirely silent, but from it He points the solemn moral to the consciences of His hearers, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 3). Yet again, He is asked unjustly to pay a tax while in Capernaum (Matt. xvii. 24). Does He resist, as a Politician would say, "for the sake of example?" No. He proves His freedom from the tribute, but immediately works a miracle to provide Himself with means to pay it. Jesus was not a Politician: if He had, He would surely have acted in a case like this. When others came to Him asking if they should pay tribute to Cæsar, He refused to enter into the question of Cæsar's political rights, and simply said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's (Matt. xxii. 21). The example of Jesus was in all points perfect: yet He was no Politician. He left His people nothing to copy concerning politics, save His entire abstinence from them. This being so, I conclude that a Christian—one who is united to Christ in heaven and by His Cross severed from the world—who follows His example cannot be a Politician either. The Lord Jesus says, "I have given you an example" (John xiii. 15). "It is enough for the disciple that he be as His Master" (Matt. x. 25).

In the Lord's commandments to His people, the duty of subjection to "the

powers that be" (Rom. xiii. 1) is plainly enforced, and this duty remains the same, no matter what political party may be in power. The Christian is commanded to "obey" those in authority, whether Conservative, Liberal, Despotic, or Republican, and in obeying the ruler, he obeys God. The only exception to this rule would be, if the Government should command what God forbids, or prohibit what God commands, then God's commandment must always have the prior claim (see Acts iv. 19). In such a case, insubjection to rulers would not be self-will, it would be obedience to God. But while the believer's place and duty as a *subject* is emphasised again and again (1 Peter ii. 13-14), there is no command given as to the behaviour of a Christian ruler: nothing to steer the believer as a Politician. To those who believe in the sufficiency of Holy Scripture to guide them in fulfilling all their earthly relationships, the silence of Scripture on this will be significant. The absence of all legislation for the conduct of the Christian as a Politician, simply means that *God does not want him to occupy such a position*, hence He has given no light, no guidance, as to how he is to behave himself in it. If he will go into politics he must therefore grope his way, without a ray of Divine light to lead him. He must launch his bark on the stormy sea of politics, without a heavenly chart or compass to guide him. Alas! how many have found out to their cost that the arena of politics is not the sphere in which the heaven-born man is called to move. Yet he may be a true helper of his country and its rulers by intercession (1 Tim. ii. 1-2): the throne of grace, not the polling booth, is his place of real influence.

J. R.

Children and Sons of God.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT ABERDEEN CONFERENCE.

BY ALFRED J. HOLIDAY.

PART II.

IN Hebrews xii. you will find the word "sons" used in the question of the disciplining of the children: "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto *sons*—*not* children." "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him" (verse 5). We are told that the purpose of all the discipline is, "that we might be partakers of His holiness" (verse 10), conformed to the image of His Son. An earthly father, in chastening his son, does it to make the child what he desires him to be. God is holy and wants us to be like Himself. Chastisement is part of the Father's means for bringing that about. How often we acknowledge it, and yet how constantly we rebel against it, fainting under it or despising it. To those, however, who are exercised by it, it yieldeth the "peaceable fruits of righteousness." The only way to be exercised is, to find out what His purpose is, and then the first cry in our hearts will not be to be delivered from it, but to request that His purpose may be accomplished.

Look now at Matthew v. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the *sons* (R.V.) of God." Here it is a question of Christ-likeness. What a wonderful peace He made—peace by the blood of His cross. He reconciled us to God. All who are peacemakers have a likeness to Him. We are to imitate Him and walk in His ways. At the end of the chapter (verse 44) we read, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despite-

fully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the *sons* (not children) of your Father which is in heaven," which shows that we shall be called the "sons of God" in proportion to the extent in which we bear likeness to God in our behaviour.

To return to Romans viii. Verse 13 does not raise the question of our having eternal life, but expounds what we have in Luke ix. 24, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." If I use my life for myself, my own purposes, my own objects, I *lose* it. In verse 14 "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." We have the word "sons" correctly translated here. I am still a child of God even when I may grieve His Holy Spirit and walk after my own will. The relationship is not broken, but "as many as are *led* by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," *i.e.*, the likeness of character is manifested.

Then in verse 19 we have, not the present discipline by which God is producing the likeness of Christ in us, but, the actual result of what will be when we bear His likeness within and without. "The manifestation of the sons of God" occurs when the Lord Jesus comes back with his people, who had previously been caught up and changed into His likeness. "It doth not yet appear"—it is not yet made manifest—"what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (1 John iii. 2). "Appear" is exactly the same word as "manifestation" in Romans viii. 19.

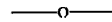
So whether it is the discipline by which God is now bringing about the likeness, or whether it is the actual evidence of that likeness in our walk and ways here, or whether it is the future perfecting of that likeness when this body of humiliation shall be changed into the likeness of the body of

His glory, the Spirit of God always uses the word "sons."

Galatians iii. 26 "For ye are all the *sons* of God by faith in Christ Jesus." The word "children" in our A.V. is wrong: it is "sons," and when I first discovered this it *seemed* as if the passage contradicted the whole of what I had previously learned from many other Scriptures. I therefore cried to God for grace to enable me to wait till He made the meaning plain. Addressed as it was to the Galatians, whom the apostle just a little before told they were very carnal, the Scripture could not possibly signify only persons who were manifesting likeness to Christ. I soon found that it was intended for all the children of God, and that instead of contradicting all I had previously learned, it only manifested how beautifully the two lines of thought harmonised, and showed that they were both parts of one whole. Look at the reason given for here calling us sons. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek . . ." Connect that with Col. iii. 8-13, and all will be made clear. Every child is a son *in the purpose of God*, though for the moment it is nothing but relationship our eyes can discern. God speaks of us according to His purpose, and when He is thinking of that purpose He can say "Ye are all the sons of God through faith of Christ Jesus"—not simply because of your birth and relationship, but because ye have put on Christ. And when did we do that? In our baptism. I am not saying it would not be true of all believers, but baptism is the expression of it. We have a kindred figure in the passage of Israel through the Red Sea, which speaks of death and resurrection. It tells of an entire cutting off

from the whole of the old life and of the beginning of a new life. Every claim afterwards made as to obedience and loyalty to Jehovah, was based upon this deliverance from Egypt, and not upon the ground of the sprinkled blood (though the two are intimately associated). So we are spoken of as sons in Gal. iii. 26, not because of our birth and relationship, but because the very moment we trusted Christ that work began of "putting off" and "putting on" which is only to be completed when at the manifestation of the sons of God we shall perfectly bear His likeness.

We thus see how the two lines of thought are only two parts of the whole. For, if we are children by reason of a divine birth, that divine birth carries with it the pledge, the assurance, of the coming perfect likeness to Christ. For this reason as well as for others the Holy Spirit is "the earnest of the inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." And it is the same blessed Spirit who, bearing joint-witness with our spirit as to our being children, by crying "Abba, Father," within, while we too cry "Abba, Father," works in us by His present power the divine likeness which will be completed by the same agency at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.



NO MIRACULOUS SUPPLY. — We as little deny the truth of God's promise, that our bread and water shall be sure, by going to our daily work to earn it, as we do that of the Spirit's help by studying God's Word in dependence on His goodness in order to minister it to others. We have no more reason to expect the bread of life to be miraculously supplied to us for feeding others, than we have the natural bread.

A. N. Groves.

David's Mighty Men.

IN I Chron. xi., we have a record of the men of might, who cast in their lot with David when he was an exile, and fleeing from the hatred and jealousy of Saul. When David came to the throne of Israel, these men were not forgotten by him. So our Divine David, the Lord Jesus, when He comes down to sit upon His throne of glory, will not forget any who have been loyal in heart to Him, during the day of His rejection by the world. This solemn truth has been often pointed out, but it seems to have little power over the hearts of many believers. Safety from coming wrath seems to be all that many appear to aspire to. To be counted worthy to fill a position of trust in the coming kingdom, has no charm for many a child of God in these days of carnal ease and security. Many are now singing of the "crowning day," who will never wear a crown, which to be *worn* up yonder, must be *won* down here. What it will be to lose a crown on "that day," can never be estimated till the time comes when all our opportunities of proving our love to Christ will have for ever gone.

IN I Chron. xii., we have an account of those who came to make David king. Amongst other things which are said of these worthies, there are three qualities which are worthy of notice. 1st, "They were not of double heart" (verse 33)—literally, "they had not a heart, and a heart." They were transparent men. They were "Israelites indeed" in whom there was "no guile." 2nd, "They could keep rank" (verses 33-38). This quality flows out from the one previously noticed. A man with a double heart, one who

professes one thing, whilst in his heart he is aiming at another, can never keep rank. Nor is it possible that any true-hearted servant of Christ can keep rank with him. 3rd, They all "came with a perfect heart to make David king" (verse 38). This was the crowning secret of the unity and harmony of the many thousands of Israel on that day when they came to set the crown on David's head. They were not only men of a *single* purpose of heart, but they all had *one* object. Every heart was set on that one object, which was David himself. There was no seeking of place, or power.

They were all so loyal in heart to David, that they were ready and willing to fall into the position which he allotted to each of them. What a lesson there is here to those who aspire to serve One who is greater than David. "From whence come wars and fightings among you, come they not hence, even of your lusts which war in your members" (James iv. 1). The thousands who came to David were all drawn to a person. It was not a place or position that they sought. It was not a set of rules and regulations, that brought them together; nor kept them together. It was their love to David, and their loyalty of heart to him. No doubt order in David's army had to be maintained, but that was a simple thing, when all were of one heart to honour him, and him alone.

Amongst all the causes of divisions amongst the Lord's people in our times, the most powerful is, when some one aims at appropriating to himself a share of the place and honours which belong to the Lord Jesus alone. Then those who are faithful to Christ must contend for His glory. And many seem to be blind to the

great truth of the Lordship of Christ and are going in for "peace at any price." Hence the increasing difficulty of defending the honour of the Lord Jesus amongst the assemblies of His saints. Even in a little measure this can only be done by dwelling much in His own presence. The Lord knows every one who is being sustained in His service by the power of love to *His person*; and He will not forget such in that day when "He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. iv. 5). And as it was when David came to the throne, he did not forget those who had been true to him in the time of his rejection, so the Lord Jesus when He comes in His glory will not forget those, who, under the constraining power of His love, are seeking to defend, and guard the honour of that precious, worthy Name, before which all the universe will yet bow (Phil. ii. 9-11).

G. ADAM.

Our Accuser and Intercessor.

IF the two-edged sword (Heb. iv. 12) make inquiry and disclose the corruptions in us, the high priesthood of Jesus is ever at hand to answer for them. As under the law, the ashes of the heifer were laid up in a clean place outside the camp, for the constant use of the one defiled by the touch of death. The relief was ever at hand, relief provided by grace. Let what judge or accuser may, raise his voice to condemn, he is always met by the intercession of Him who is seated at the right hand of God (Rom. viii. 34). The accuser is heard, comparatively at a distance, but the intercessor is seated in the place of nearest intimacy and highest dignity.

J. G. B.

Mephibosheth.

"Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."
"As one of the king's sons" (2 Sam. ix. 7).

Do you wonder that I love Him,
That His Name to me is sweet?
I was friendless, sad and lonely,
I was lame on both my feet.
Naught in me to win His favour,
Strength and beauty I had none;
But He sought me—I, the outcast,
He the King upon His throne!

And when I was brought before Him,
Filled with wonder, fear and shame,
Lo!—He spake, my sad heart thrilling,
Making music of my name;
And His tenderness and sweetness
Made my empty heart His own;
From the day I saw His beauty,
I was His and His alone!

Not of wondrous deeds of valour
Can I boast with tongue or pen;
Others fight and win His battles,
For my King has mighty men.
All that I can do is nothing,
I am helpless still, and lame;
I can only tell His kindness,
And the glory of His Name.

He has met my deepest longing
With the marvel of His grace;
I am ravished with His beauty,
Daily gazing on His face.
What to me are earth-possessions?
He has raised me to His side!
With Himself, and with Him only,
I am fully satisfied.

Mephibosheth's lameness would be quite hid from view as he sat at the royal table; painfully conscious of it himself, but screened by what his benefactor's grace had provided.

Shepherd Work and Rule in the Church.

An Address delivered in Grosvenor Hall, Dublin.

BY HENRY W. FIGGIS.

PART II.

WE have had the word "feed the flock"; but now, what about ruling? It is important to know that in other places the same word is translated "rule:" "He shall *rule* My people, Israel;" also in the Book of Revelation: "*Rule* the nations with a rod of iron"—showing that in the feeding and tending there is a ruling and caring for the flock, and if there be members of the flock, sheep that go this way or that way which they ought not to, the shepherd-rulers are to rectify that and call them back. May I ask you to notice a few other Scriptures in connection with this word "rule," not that which we have been looking at, and which is the same as tend, feed, pasture, etc., but another word which the Holy Spirit of God uses in connection with those who have the care of the flock. It is in Romans xii. 8. If you consult an English-Greek lexicon you will find that the meaning of this word is given as "to stand before," "to preside over," "to rule over," "to maintain," and this is the word that the Holy Spirit of God selects for use here, thus supplementing the meaning of the word used in the other Scriptures. In Romans xii. 8, "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." Then in 1 Thessalonians v., verse 12, "Those who are over you in the Lord"—of course it does not appear there in the English—but we find in the 14th verse the word "unruly." I have for years believed, and the more I read and study the Scriptures the more I am convinced that in

the last chapter of 1st Thessalonians, these verses of the latter part, are specially addressed to those elders or pastors of the Church; and I believe that an honest and careful investigation of the subject we are now upon will show its connection with the portion before us, because the Apostle says, 12th verse, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord"—the English translation of this is "those who rule." Rotherham translates it, "those who *preside* over you in the Lord." But what is the duty of those that are "over you in the Lord?" After having stated in the 13th verse that the saints are "to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among yourselves," he turns, and in the 14th verse he addresses those pastors, "Now we exhort you, brethren, to warn them that be unruly." Is it the duty of everyone in the Church to warn the unruly? Is it the duty of the young brother converted last year, or the young sister? Certainly not. It is the duty of the pastors to warn the unruly. It is the duty of those whom Christ has given to His Church to "comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak," etc. Down to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good." "Quench not the Spirit" (ver. 19), because those in the oversight of the flock: those who preside over the Church might be in very great danger of quenching the Spirit, showing that the Holy Spirit contemplated such a thing as possible in the case of those whom He has set in the care of the flock or in the ministry of the Word.

In 1 Timothy, the word "rule" occurs over and over again, chiefly in connection with a man who rules over his own house; and in these dark, evil days there is

break-down of rule everywhere ; there is in families a disobedience to parents, it is a sin of the day, and an unholy Eli-like laxity amongst parents. Shall we say, " Oh, we are living in days of apostacy in which parental rule is broken down, and in which we see children leaving and disobeying their parents ; I shall let my child do as he likes, it does not matter how I rule my family ?" God forbid ! All the more reason I should rule my family in the fear of God, and all the more carefully and prayerfully because of the evil character of the days. Do not let us treat large portions of the Word of God as a dead letter, but take the plain teaching of this Scripture and accept it as the Holy Spirit's own divine standard, " ruling well " your own household, " having faithful children." For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God ? But if he has proved unfit or unfaithful in the former, the Scripture debars him from the latter and wider sphere. May God give us each one grace to feel the power of His Word, and to obey it.

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Meet for the Master's Use.

" A vessel . . . meet for the Master's use " (2 Tim. ii).

O to be but emptier, lowlier,
 Mean, unnoticed and unknown ;
 And to God a vessel holier,
 Filled with Christ, and Christ alone.

Nought of earth to cloud the glory,
 Nought of self the light to dim,
 Telling forth His wondrous story,
 Emptied—to be filled with Him.

Vessels of the world's despising,
 Vessels weak, and poor, and base,
 Bearing wealth God's heart is prizing,
 Glory from Christ's blessed face.

Evil Speaking.

" Speak not evil one of another brethren " (Jas. iv. 11).

In speaking of a brother's faults,
 Pray don't forget your own ;
 A man who lives in house of glass,
 Should never throw a stone :
 If you have nothing else to do,
 Than talk of others' sin,
 'Tis better to commence at home
 And from that point begin.

You have no right to judge a man,
 Until he's fairly tried ;
 Should you not prize his company
 You know the world is wide.
 He may have faults—and who has not ?
 But this should only give
 A fuller scope for you to show
 The grace that can forgive.

If God had dealt with you in wrath
 As you deal with your brother,
 If He had marked each sin and fault
 As saints do to each other :
 There's not a man on earth could sing
 Of sins through grace forgiven,
 Nor would there be a note of praise
 Within the courts of heaven.

'Tis God-like to convince of sin,
 That it may be confessed,
 To seek to lead a soul to God,
 That it may be at rest.
 But slander, and delight of heart
 Our brother's faults to tell,
 Is but a branch of Satan's art,
 A craft conceived in hell.

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The Word of God has been given as bread for our inner man. I have been for more than seventy years reading it, and to-day it is more new and glorious than ever.

R. C. Chapman.

What Keeps an Assembly Right with God.

THE Divinely-appointed provision for the edification and maintainance of a right spiritual condition in an Assembly of saints, is the ministry of the Word in the freshness and power of the Spirit of God. Just as the spiritual life in the individual believer is fed and sustained by means of the "sincere milk of the Word" (1 Pet. ii. 2), and as the man of God is furnished and fitted unto every good work, by continuing in the things which he has learned and been assured of from the God-breathed scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 14-17), so an Assembly of believers gathered by the Holy Spirit unto the Name of the Lord Jesus, can only be builded together, and maintained in a condition worthy of God, for the fulfilment of its various functions Godward and manward by the continuous ministry of the Word of the Lord in its midst. This we believe to be a cardinal principle of the Scriptures, which cannot be set aside or lightly esteemed, without serious loss. It is not that now and again an address, or a "series of meetings" may be given by a passing stranger, helpful and acceptable as these may be, but the continuous, godly ministry of the Word, by those whom God has raised up and fitted in the midst of the Assembly for this service, and who, being in touch with it, know its needs. We assume that God does so raise up ministers of the Word in all Scripturally-gathered and spiritually-healthy companies of His people in less or greater measure. Possibly if saints were more thankful to God for those whom He has given, and sought to profit by, pray for, and uphold them more, there would not be the lack that in many places there seems to be, of pastors and

teachers among the saints of God. But the tendency is, to minimize the importance of the wholesome ministry of God's Word, and to neglect it for something more exhilarating, or entertaining. We have heard of a large Assembly of believers mustering some twenty at their weekly "Bible Reading," whereas if a "Tea Meeting" were intimated, or the chance of a discussion on some matter of trivial importance, a full muster will be found. Then again, the old-fashioned house-to-house Bible Readings, which in bygone years were so helpful in leading on believers in the truth, and in strengthening links of genuine fellowship among saints, have almost wholly disappeared, half-dress tea-parties, with gossip and music in many cases, taking their place. Need we wonder if young believers grow up untaught, and unexercised in the truth, holding it theoretically and feebly, ready to let it drop or give it up in the first trial or contest. We believe that now, more than ever, there is need for wise and well-balanced ministry of the truth in all its parts, in the grace and power of the Spirit of God, among God's saints, and that by this means alone will Assemblies as well as individuals be preserved in a spiritual condition, and be kept from drifting with the current of the age away from God and from His truth. How the fine gold has become dim in many, owing to the lack of that Word in their midst which God has set "for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." No doubt there are other necessities, but as we at least see it, there is nothing so manifestly lacking in our time, as the solid, healthy, and seasonable ministry of God's Word, and perhaps nothing that there is less desire after. The Word abides—"I commend you to God and to the Word."

The Bible Annotator.

BIBLE MARGIN JOTTINGS.

"Every whit made *Clean*" (John xiii. 10).

"Every whit made *Whole*" (John vii. 23).

Faith Growing (2 Thess. i. 3).

Hope Abounding (Rom. xv. 13).

Love Increasing (1 Thess. iii. 12).

NOTES ON MISUNDERSTOOD TEXTS.

"Gather together in one"—literally to head up—"all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. i. 10)—the Headship of Christ, the last Adam over the new creation.

"The mystery . . . which in other ages was not made manifest" (Eph. iii. 3-5). Not the Gospel, or the coming of Christ personally, but "that in Him the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and a joint-body, and joint-partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel." Not the Gentile blessed through the Jew as it will be in the days yet to come, but a body formed of Jews and Gentiles brought together, made one in Christ. This is the mystery which in ages past was hid in God, but is now (in this dispensation) revealed. If this truth were but allowed to grasp and act upon God's saints, what a power it would have.

"The gates of hell (hades) shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). This is not an affirmation that the church is infallible as Rome alleges, but a guarantee that it will continue without interruption, until the Lord shall come. It will never be engulfed by death as all others have been, for in the church abides life in victory over death, resurrection life, against which the gates of hades shall never prevail. Blessed reality!

"Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii. 4). In the Greek the words are in the aorist, and may be rendered "Thou *did'st* leave." It is not simply "because thou hast left," but "thou *did'st* leave." There was a definite period in this church's history when this declension commenced.

Answers to Special Questions,

As given in "The Believer's Magazine" for July.

What is the Divine method for the suppression of irrelevant and unprofitable ministry, of which there is a great deal in many places, much to the hurt of spiritual minds, and the stumbling of those

seeking after truth regarding the gathering, fellowship, and worship of saints?

ANS. A.—In every circle where there is liberty there must also be rule. Its object is to suppress what is of the flesh, and prevent an improper use being made of the liberty God has given. It certainly is the first responsibility of those who "labour among and are over" (1 Thess. v. 12) saints in the Lord to "stop the mouths" of those who speak what is erroneous or unprofitable.

P. M.

ANS. B.—Disorder of this kind is often a test of the spiritual condition of an assembly. Where it produces irritation, that in itself is evidence that the trial is needed. When brethren have recognised in it a call to self-judgment and the exercise of patience and faith, it has proved a blessing in disguise. Why should we not expect divine interposition in an Assembly of the Churches of God in response to united, believing prayer? (Matt. xviii. 19-20). The writer, having seen various methods tried, can confidently commend this as the most effective.

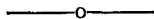
R. SCOTT.

ANS. C.—Where unprofitable ministry is persisted in, it should lead to deep humiliation before the Lord in all, especially among those who are guides in the Assembly. Without this, and supplicating the Lord to come in and help, any attempt to suppress it would probably be worse than useless. After waiting on the Lord and having his mind, surely those who shepherd the flock have responsibility to stop that which is hurtful to it. Unprofitable ministry, and lack of power to deal with it, should lay us very low before God. The erroneous conception which many have of the leading of the Spirit in the Assembly has made room for a state of things which never should have been allowed.

GEO. ADAM.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above answers indicate three methods in which unprofitable ministry may be dealt with. A.—believes rule and restraint should be exercised. B.—recommends prayer and patience. C.—indicates the need of both, with humiliation before God, and a correction of erroneous conceptions of liberty. That the latter has much to do with unprofitable ministry there can be no doubt, and until the root principle is dealt with, little good will be accomplished by pruning the outgrowths. If the great fundamental principles, so fully and

clearly taught in the Word, that the Assembly gathered unto the name of the Lord Jesus, though only composed of two or three, has the Lord Himself in the midst, that His absolute authority is to be owned there, and that the Holy Ghost abides in the Church to glorify Him and to enable the saints to carry out His will — if these are untaught, neglected, or ignored, man's will and man's way must take their place. Man's way is to appoint a chairman, to have a president, to elect "a minister," to arrange who shall speak, and in this way to secure order, which of a certain kind it will, but not what is according to God. To invent such a remedy is tantamount to saying that God's way is imperfect, or that it can no longer be carried out. Divine liberty is not liberty to everybody to do what he likes, or to speak whatever comes to his mind, but liberty for those whom God has fitted to give out in ministry what the Lord Jesus has given to them and His saints to receive at that particular time. It will always find a response in them, in reproof, correction, instruction, comfort, and edification, leading down in self-judgment, and up in worship. If one ignorant of the principles of ministry should speak unprofitably, patience and gracious personal instruction will often remedy that; if a false estimate of ability lead to this habitually, firmer measures will be required and should be taken by those to whom God has given shepherd care in the Assembly, prayerfully and unitedly; if persisted in notwithstanding—which we think will be only in extreme cases—then it may be needful, for the honour of God and the welfare of the saints, that godly rule put to silence the wilful one, who has evidently lost all sense of godly subjection as enjoined in the Word (1st Cor. xiv. 32), (Eph. v. 21), (1 Pet. v. 5).



The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

What does 2 Cor. v. 9. mean? Are not all believers already accepted? The proper translation is, that we may be "well-pleasing unto Him" (see R.V.). All believers are already "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6); it ought to be the aim of all to "be well-pleasing unto Him."

Is the laying on of hands in Acts xiii. 3, an ordination service? No; it was simply an expression of fellowship with Paul and Barnabas in the special service to which the Holy Ghost had called them. It has evidently escaped the notice of those who cite this as their authority for ordaining to the ministry, that it would be prophets and teachers "ordaining" apostles—the less ordaining the greater. This would scarcely be regarded as "in order" according to ecclesiastical usages.

Was Matthias, chosen in place of Judas, or Paul, the twelfth apostle? Clearly Matthias. We read of "the twelve" in Acts vi. 2, long before Paul was converted, and in contrast to him in 1 Cor. xv. 5. Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles (Acts xxii. 21; Rom. xv. 16).

What does the True Vine in John xv. teach? Fruit-bearing, in union with Christ. The present world the sphere: the present life the limit. The Vine does not teach eternal salvation, or the fruitless branch, falling away, as they have often been made to do. The figure of the body with its many members (1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. v. 30) all possessing a common life, all necessary to its perfectness, expresses heavenly and eternal union with Christ: The Vine, with its many and varied branches, some of which may, for the health and fruitfulness of the rest, need to be removed, yet not marring the tree, teaches fruitfulness through communion with Christ on earth.

Are the Metrical Psalms, suited for singing in worship of this dispensation? Not for the united worship of the Christian assembly. There may be a few—such as the xxiii.—which express the individual experience of the saints, but they are not as a whole suited to the present dispensation. None of them rise to the height of New Testament worship, which has for its basis accomplished redemption, resurrection life, union with Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit. Many of the Psalms are millennial and their language incapable of adjustment to the present age (see Psa. xciii.-c), others imprecatory asking vengeance on enemies (Psa. cix.) which no intelligent Christian in this age of grace could use, being wholly out of keeping with its character and spirit (see Luke xxiii. 34; Acts vii. 60). But as a book for heart devotion and experience, the inspired Psalms are without an equal.

What does the text, "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. xv. 33) mean? That contact with evil defiles and corrupts. As in the physical world, disease has the power of infection, while health has none. As a fever patient's touch will communicate the disease to another, so does evil, whether moral or doctrinal spread by contact. This is why God's Word so strongly urges separation from persons, places, and things unclean. Evil increases by its own inherent power; but it takes God to increase what is good.

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Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

E. A. L., LIVERPOOL.—The Assembly's Gospel testimony usually carried on in the hall where believers gather for worship, should be a vigorous, healthy effort in which all in their varied spheres and measure have their part. Inviting the people, visitation, open-air preaching, speaking to the anxious, are all included in the Assembly's fellowship in the Gospel. There may be very few fitted to preach publicly; but those who are—assuming that they are godly and qualified—should be loyally supported by the whole rank and file of the Assembly. We do not believe that the popular system of a few running a small mission of their own, or carrying on Gospel work on what is called "individual responsibility" is anything like so happy either in its inception or results—although in some cases it may be the only way available—as Gospel work carried on as part of the Assembly's fellowship in service. One chief reason why the "individual responsibility" system is popular is, it enables those who go in for "organs" and other excrescences to have a free hand to do as they like. This needs no "grace" to carry out, whereas mutual subjection such as is necessary to genuine fellowship, may not be much in their line.

J. G., GLASGOW. The basis of fellowship in the Church of God is the same now as in apostolic days, there can be no change, for Divine principles are ever the same. But while this is so, the Second Epistles—which were specially written to give guidance to God's servants amid the apostacies of the last days, clearly show, that there are limitations,

and that there needs to be greater vigilance and care exercised in receiving to the fellowship of God's Assembly, especially on the part of those who guide and oversee the flock, lest they bring in those who are only professors and not possessors of Divine life, or those who although truly born again are contaminated with error which spreads like a contagious disease to all who come in contact with it. There is scarcely a denomination that is not honey-combed with evil doctrine, such as denial of the Divinity of Christ, the need and the efficacy of His atoning death, the perfectness and inspiration of the Scriptures, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. When one comes from such denominations and seeks identification with saints seeking to honour these truths, surely the very least expected of saints is, that they inquire whether the applicant is sound in the faith and personally clean from the errors in the midst of which he has hitherto been. If a vessel coming to our shores from a plague-infected land, has to be examined and "a Clean Bill" given her, ere she can be allowed to enter port, or her crew permitted to mingle freely among others, surely at the entrance of the House of God, which holiness becometh for ever, there ought not to be less care or vigilance. But all this is ruthlessly set aside and the service of those to whom God has given discernment and pastoral care in the assembly annulled, by those who contend that anyone and everyone who is a believer ought without further inquiry to be recognised as a sharer in all the holy privileges of the Christian assembly. We believe this to be a wrong course of procedure, and as all who do not wilfully close their eyes to the dire effects of it must own, one that has caused and fomented more divisions in assemblies of saints than any other. We fail to see how any one who has been taught of God can quietly sit and allow such practices to go on unchallenged. He is at least responsible to let it be known that he is not an aider or abettor of such practices, and to seek to exercise the consciences of others by wisely teaching the truth as he has opportunity, which will either enlighten and recover, or else bring forth such opposition to the Word as will make it perfectly clear that man's authority has superseded the Lordship of Christ, and tradition over-ruled the Word of God. We believe that in many cases faithful ministry of the truth on these subjects would be used to recover from the "maze" into which some have drifted.

Backsliding.

BY J. F. GOCH, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA.

THERE are many, alas! very many, of God's children at this time in an unhappy and backslidden state of soul. The Arch-enemy of God and of our souls, has succeeded in ensnaring many of the saints.

I am writing this in South Africa, where Satan, the world, and the flesh—the trinity of evil—have wrought fearful havoc and claimed many victims. Many hundreds of God's people have come to this land, who were once happy confessors of Christ, but have fallen under the allurements of wealth, pleasure, prosperity, and lust.

All believers have had their periods of backsliding in heart, none can claim to have walked continually with God without stumbling. The deep corruption of our old nature operating through the flesh, has again and again brought on failure, and only the loving and patient dealings of our God have brought us back, and drawn from us the confessions which led us more and more to fear the snare, and eschew the path of danger. No one who has learned the meaning of the word "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," will have any but the sincerest sympathy with and desire for the restoration of a fallen and erring saint.

HEART BACKSLIDING.

Backsliding begins by the heart getting out of Fellowship with God. God is a jealous God, and what He wants to teach us is, that nothing may take the place of Himself in our affections. (See Josh. xxiii. 8-11.) I often meet Christians who tell me of their happiness when they were among warm friends and warm meetings, but now all is

gone. Why? Because the friends and the meetings had become the objects of affection instead of the Lord Himself, and so when they were removed from their happy surroundings they failed. It is often with this very object, that God removes us from such surroundings, in order that we may prove our love to Himself.

Is it not a beautiful thing to find a Christian walking with and rejoicing in God, in the midst of the scoffing and wicked surroundings of the workshop, the mess-room; among soldiers, sailors, miners, workmen and business associates of all kinds, as well as in the walks of fashionable society? I have found saints of God in the small villages and lonely farms who had no single Christian companion, and yet walked with God and kept separate from the world, because God was the object of their hearts' affection and fellowship. The fact that God has it recorded, that his servants Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Peter, and so many others failed, was not to encourage backsliding and failure in us, but to help us back to Himself as the only source of strength and rest.

THE CAUSES DISCOVERED.

If genuine confession and restoration is to take place, *the causes of backsliding* must be discovered. One thing we may be sure of: God never overlooks our sins. The place where we failed, is the place where we must look for restoration. It is vain to think that time will heal this sore; years will only accentuate the evil, but heal it—never. The danger is, that by allowing the estrangement between ourselves and God to continue, we thereby bring distance, hardening of the heart, and judgment, which follow successively. David came to

confession, which led to restoration and unspeakable encouragement to all God's erring saints ever since. Solomon did not come to confession, and his light went out in obscurity.

Each backsliding has a cause; some besetting sin which occasions backsliding, and it is for each to go back to that sin and bring it into judgment. "If we judge ourselves we should not be judged." Self-will, Pride, and Lust, are three giants opposed to spiritual life, and when we come under their power, our great enemy is quick to persuade us that deliverance is impossible, and that we will fall again by their hand. It is here where the great sin of Unbelief manifests itself openly.

Going to the root of these sins we discern that the sins here named, have sprung from the *heart not being in love with God*. Of Solomon it is written (I Kings xi. 4) "When Solomon was old, his wives turned away his HEART after other gods, and his *heart* was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the *heart* of David his father (v. 9)." And the Lord was angry with Solomon because his *heart* was turned from the Lord God of Israel."

Jeremiah said of Israel (ch. v. 23) "This people has a revolting and rebellious *heart* . . . neither say they in their *heart*, Let us now fear the Lord our God." Again (ch. vii. 24), "They walked in the counsel and imagination of their evil *heart*, and went backward and not forward." The Lord Himself said—"Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts," &c. And Paul speaks of "doing the will of God from the *heart*," "drawing near with a true *heart*," and of "singleness of *heart* to Christ."

When we see backsliding manifested: First, in the withdrawing from the fellow-

ship of saints, in prayer, in reading God's Word, in the service of the Gospel; and second, in worldly conformity and manifested sin, then we see THE FRUIT of the departure of the *heart* from God. It is a sad spectacle; it is like a beautiful building wrecked by fire, or like a lovely garden destroyed by wild beasts; and the havoc wrought, is apparently least observed by the one most concerned.

Where there is a loyal and true heart, a heart walking in sincerity and love, a heart jealous to watch against the affections being turned aside, there will be no backsliding and no yielding to "the sin that doth so easily beset."

A heart that is *not* in love with God, is also *not* in love with the saints; is ready to misjudge and find fault with God's people; is ready to take offence at little things—is therefore in a frame of mind that will justify itself and lay blame on others, and so the "counsel and imagination of their evil heart" leads them "backward and not forward" (Jer. vii. 24).

Coming to minor causes which really proceed from the root, there is: (a) *The failure to confess Christ before men*; the temptation not to be considered *over religious*; to mix with worldly men and women in their social pursuits, and thus be admitted to their companionship; to trim between Christ and the world; to seek to get as near to the world as possible, and yet to maintain the profession of Christ. All these things involve silence as to the confession of Christ before men. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 10.) -What is meant here by salvation? This, that the great salvation provided by the finished work of Christ becomes assured and enjoyed by the act of confession, and

so it is enjoyed ever afterwards in proportion as it is being confessed and manifested.

(b) *The failure to become identified with God's people.* Believers changing residences from one town to another, or from one country to another, have to face the personal question—with whom they will associate, and if it be decided not to declare themselves openly and to seek the fellowship and companionship of God's people, then backsliding very generally results.

(c) *Unequal marriages and unequal partnerships* lead to backsliding, and all these only confirm what is written (Deut. vii. 2-4) "Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them, neither shalt thou make marriages with them; for they will turn away thy son from following Me," &c.

(d) *Covetousness and money love* lead to backsliding, and this claims many victims. I need not refer to grosser sins, which are so well understood, that I need not occupy time and space over them. But O, beloved fellow-believer, let us set a jealous watch on our hearts, lest they depart from "the living God" and thus set us on the path of "the backslider in heart" of whom God says he "shall be filled with his own ways."

THE SORROWS OF BACKSLIDING

are threefold. (1) It affects the backslider personally and all that pertains to him; (2) It touches the heart of God; and (3) It involves the saints in grief.

(1) *The personal condition of a backslider* is very aptly illustrated by the Prodigal Son in his departure from God, in his going to a far country, in his revellings, in his resulting poverty, in his seeking help from a citizen of that country, in his being sent to feed the swine, in his desire to fill his

belly with the husks that the swine do eat, and in his abject misery. (Ps. lxxviii. 6) "The rebellious dwell in a dry land." I will enumerate a few of his sorrows.

(a) *The remembrance of past days of happy fellowship.* This eats like a canker, like an undying worm in his memory, but the recollection does not bring him back to the source of joy, because such meditations only emphasise the fact that he is occupied with himself and not with Christ, whom he had turned from, and so he is led on and on into delusive reflections till *his faith* in the Son, Grace, and Power of God is almost gone.

(b) *The lashings of a guilty conscience,* which persistently arise to accuse him, while he as persistently excuses and justifies himself, attributes his failure not so much to *his sin* against God as *his weakness*, which could not help it, and so keeps the controversy between himself and God going.

(c) *The consciousness of impending judgment,* for no man can escape the inner consciousness wrought by the Holy Spirit, that the "wages of sin is death," and the backslider knows that God will not overlook unconfessed sin, but will deal with it in judgment. And while he is thus in personal misery, which he constantly hides from the eyes of others, his nearest friends discern with concern the unhappy condition of his soul.

(To be Continued.)

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Position without power, principles beyond practice, jealousy about orthodoxy and truth, with little personal communion with the Lord—all these the soul stands in constant fear of, and in equal judgment and refusal.

J. G. B.

The Ordinance of the Red Heifer.

NUMBERS XIX.

Notes of an Address by J. W. McCLURE, of Canada, delivered in Aberdeen.

IT may seem strange that this ordinance should be found in Numbers—the Book of the Wilderness—and not in Leviticus, the book of the Sanctuary. This seeming strangeness, however, simply manifests the gracious provision that God makes for us, not only as to the requirements of the Sanctuary, but also as to our constantly recurring need, while treading along the desert to our home above. Suppose a person, after being led into the joy of accomplished redemption and in the possession of everlasting life, unhappily allows or trifles with sin, the result is broken communion, a beclouded soul, the song of salvation ceased. What is to be done? Well, if there were no resource such as this ordinance brings before us, the case would be a sorry one indeed. The poor believer would just have to go on with head bowed, till taken home to Heaven, when of course all would then be restored without a chance of being broken. But we have here provision made for the removal of sin, the restoration of fellowship with God and the renewal of the song while in the wilderness.

The subject before us may be put under three heads as follows:—

- (1) The Red Heifer representing the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (2) The defilement of the Israelite, our need as saints.
- (3) The application of the ashes of the heifer, the present ministry which God is carrying on to restore the broken fellowship of His people.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, this is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke” (verses 1-2).

In these few words there stands out before our souls, a picture of that blessed One, Who has won our hearts and Who will continue to ravish our hearts for all Eternity. Why was the offering to be a heifer? We may be sure there is a divine reason for it. There is a significance peculiar to this animal, absent in the other animals used for sacrifice, such as a bullock, a lamb, a goat, or a male of the flock. The passivity and willlessness of the heifer represents to us our Lord Jesus Christ as the One Who could say “I came not to do mine own will” (John vi. 38)—Him whose hand stretched out this universe, whose will was owned by demons as well as by the elements, yet without a will of His own! The colour of the heifer at once suggests to us the obedience unto blood of our Lord. The Cross is a many-sided object, and while we have in it the divine means, devised by God in a past Eternity, of putting away sin, we also see in it the supreme test of the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a theme of surpassing interest! Let us, beloved fellow-believers, enquire how our obedience appears in the light of it. Is there here a believer, who, knowing the truth, has not been baptized because of the cross involved?

Next we have the character of our Lord Jesus Christ as seen by man and as seen by God. “Without spot”—nothing which the eye of man could detect; “wherein is no blemish”—the eye of God penetrated to the innermost recesses of His life, and the verdict from the High and Holy One could

only be "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." "Upon which never came yoke." The only man who never came under the yoke of Satan was the Lord Jesus. "The Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me."

"One shall slay her before his face" and Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times."

The sprinkled blood is the evidence of life taken; and the place of sprinkling—"before the tabernacle," where the people stood—shows that the death of Christ puts the believer upon redemption ground. The One who is on the throne of God to-night, bears in His body the marks of the cross, and I stand upon that One's perfect work.

After the sprinkling of the blood, the carcase of the animal was burned "outside the camp." This foreshadows Christ dying under the judgment of God—forsaken by God, and as I look on the fire, I see more than the whole heifer being licked up by the flame. There is cedar, hyssop and scarlet! What meaneth this? It cannot be without design. I believe we have a God-given interpretation of it in Galatians vi. and 14. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." The cross was the end of something else than the life of Christ upon earth; it was the end of this world for me, and the end of me for the world. Scarlet, indicates that which is attractive to us, takes our fancy, our attention, that on which our ambition lays hold; while the cedar wood and the hyssop may speak of that which is more substantial—the wealth and material things of the world, rather than its empty honours and glittering toys.

In verses 11 to 16, we find what was done with the ashes, and the various ways in which the Israelites contracted defilement. One wonders in reading this chapter how they kept clean at all. Defilement in a tent, in the open field, by a grave, etc. The fact is, they could *not* keep themselves clean, but there was a gracious provision made for their defilement. And is it not hard to keep clean in this present evil world? Some object on the street may catch our eye, and come between our souls and God. Something gets wrong in the family, and out comes the regrettable word, grieving the Spirit of God as well as the person addressed. Again in seeking to restore a brother, there is that stirred in us which is contrary to God and we are defiled. What are we to do? Let us turn to verses 17-20 of our chapter. Here we have men who were defiled cut off, which, in their case, meant actual death. Why were they cut off? Because they were unclean? No. But because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon them. To be unclean did not, in itself, bring judgment upon them, but what did bring down wrath was, their going on without taking God's appointed way for having that defilement removed. Answering to the dead body, the tent and the open field, we may say, that we are liable to contract defilement by the flesh (dead to God and faith), in the social or family circle, and in the world or commercial circle. How trying at times it is amongst unconverted relatives to go on happily and sweetly with God; and among business men in the world how extremely difficult it often is to abide in communion. Sometimes one may be in the position where the ear catches the idle story which finds an affinity in us,

and so lands us in defilement. Ah! yes, it is a serious matter to keep clean. Well, now, our God, who knows our frame, is not angry with us when we are tempted to display a little temper; nor because, when, under those irritating circumstances, we are tempted to say things which are not comely, but God is displeased if, when we sin, we are indifferent to the need of being cleansed. "That soul shall be cut off" said God concerning the man who didn't purify himself. Why? Because he "defileth the tabernacle of the Lord;" because he "hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord." God cannot tolerate him going out and in among His people as if he were clean. And dear child of God, have you not often felt like saying:—"I am not so happy as I was; I am losing my joy I know; I am not getting from the Word of God the sweet and blessed nourishment I used to get; *but I am not doing any harm to others.*" What a mistake! None of us lives unto himself. We cannot pass through the world, we cannot mingle in the assembly, without having an influence; no more than we can walk at noonday when the sun is shining without casting our shadow. And further, though we don't say a word, we are either depressing or uplifting the saints with whom we come in contact. Yea, even in writing a letter out of fellowship with God, we will similarly affect the reader, notwithstanding that all the letter contains may be perfectly right and written with no desire to hurt. It is impossible to lift a fellow-saint beyond the place we are in ourselves. What an awful thing, for instance, it is to come to the Lord's Table out of communion; no coming and going between heaven and the soul; no response in the heart to the love of God. A pulling backward instead of upward; a

dead weight; yea, worse, God says "he hath defiled the sanctuary." Dear brethren and sisters, the greatest help you and I can be to the Church, is to live in fellowship with God; we can do no greater service.

(*To be Continued.*)

Healthful Words.

Gathered from an Address by Donald Ross.

OUR only business here on earth is to please God. He says "Abide for me. Thou shalt not be for another, so will I also be for thee" (Hosea iii. 3). God never deserted any man, and never will, who is true and faithful to Him. But when we start on our own account, pleasing ourselves, and taking our own way, He leaves us to reap the bitter fruit of it."

"When a saint departs from God in heart and way, the Devil suggests to him—"O, you have only to confess your sin, and it will be forgiven, and you made all right again with God." This is a cunning lie. The fruits of departure from God always have to be reaped. When Abram went down to Egypt, dishonouring God there, he got himself into trouble. God in mercy restored him to his altar, and he got back to his tent. But his backsliding did not end there. He brought back with him from Egypt, Hagar, the Egyptian maid, and she left a legacy of trouble to him and his house for ever. God teaches us that sin can never be trifled with without bringing dishonour on God and untold misery and loss on ourselves."

"A saint living out of communion with God is good for nothing save for mischief. The Devil can use him to do what he could not get any of his own to accomplish."

The Nearness of the Glory.

THE sense of the nearness of the glory should be deeply cherished by our hearts, and we need to be at no effort to persuade ourselves of it. It is taught us richly in the Word. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified," is a sentence which intimates this. It tells us of the path and the title to glory. When by faith we stand justified by the blood of Christ, we are at once made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. And the path to it being thus simple, the place of it is near, and its capacity to unfold or manifest itself lies in the compass of a moment, or of the twinkling of an eye, if the Lord please.

The congregation of Israel were set at the door of the tabernacle to acquaint themselves with their high priest and his ways. They took knowledge of his consecration and services, and then the glory appeared. That glory was just waiting within its vail, and all it wanted was a *title* to show itself, an *object* worthy of its visitation. And as soon as the congregation stand in the value of the priesthood, the glory finds this object. This is very expressive of the nearness to the camp in which it was all the while dwelling (Lev. viii. ix). Just so, at the introduction of the ark into the temple afterwards (2 Chron. v.), and at the creation of the tabernacle before (Exod. xl). And on these occasions the glory appeared to cause triumph and gladness, for the scenes it visited were ready first. But this was not always so. A light surprised the persecutor as he journeyed to Damascus. It was above the brightness of the sun at noon-day. And well it might have been, for it was a beam from the glory, and bore the Lord of the glory upon it (Isaiah xxxiv. 23).

But it did not come to gladden Saul all at once, or merely to display itself. It had, I may say, weightier business on hand. It came to make this ruthless persecutor a citizen of its own native land. It begins, therefore, by laying him in ruins before it. It is the light of Gideon's pitcher confounding the host of Midian, or the army of the uncircumcised. Saul falls to the earth. He takes the sentence of death into him. He learns that he had been madly kicking against the pricks, destroying himself by his enmity to Jesus, for that Jesus was the Lord of the glory. But He that wounds can heal, He that heals can make alive. "Rise and stand upon thy feet," says the Lord of glory to him and he is quickly made His companion, servant, and fellow-heir. It is sweetly characteristic of the present age that the hand of a fellow-disciple is used to strengthen Saul to bear the glory, or to accomplish his conversion. The seraphim alone do that for Isaiah (chap. vi.), the Spirit does it for Ezekiel (chap. ii.), the hand of the Son of man does it for Daniel (chap. x.); but a fellow-disciple is made to do it for Saul.

What a transaction was this! what a moment! Never, perhaps, had such points in the furthest distance met before. The persecutor of the flock and the Saviour of the flock, the Lord of the glory and the sinner whom the glory is consuming, are beside each other! The glory came, not to gladden, as it had the congregation of old, but to convict, and through conviction and revelation of itself and Jesus, to turn a sinner from darkness to light, making him a meet partaker of the inheritance of its native land. Can we trust all this and rejoice in it? Is it pleasant to us to know that the glory is thus near us? Stephen

found it so when the Lord of it was pleased to raise the curtain (Acts vii.). And when the voice of the archangel summons it, and the trump of God heralds it, it will be here again as in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to bear us up to its own country (1 Cor. xv., 1 Thess iv.).

Thus may we cherish the thought that the glory is near us. Our translation to its native land asks but for a moment, for the twinkling of an eye. The title is simple, the path is short, and the journey rapidly accomplished. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified."

J. G. B.

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Heart Musings.

What bliss awaits the saved soul!
In yonder home above;
Here—pain and sorrow oft befall,
There—all is perfect Love.

Not one sad note shall mar the strain
Of harmony complete;
But all shall join, with one consent,
To worship at His feet,

Who having loved them unto death,
Loves them unto the end:
And now, in tenderest accents, saith—
"If you would be My friend,

Go, do to others as I do,
And live in unity:
So shall the world believe that you
Are followers of Me."

Alas! alas! how little this
The Church reveals to-day;
While strife is reigning in her midst,
And men are won't to say—

"Can it be true what these profess,
One family to be;
And by one Spirit to be led,
While thus they disagree?"

O Christian! hasten to redeem
The time. He is at hand,
Who having suffered for your sin,
Gives you this blest command—

"Go, tell to all My dying Love
And resurrection power,
My presence on My Father's throne,
O'er death the Conqueror:

And more than conquerors they shall be,
Who in My strength confide;
As I now with My Father sit,
Shall they sit by my side.

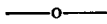
When in My glory I appear,
These with Me, men shall see;
And when I reign in righteousness,
They too shall reign with Me."

Such words as these should surely stir
Our hearts to follow Him;
Through evil and through good report,
His love should be our theme.

S. P.

—o—
THE SWEETNESS OF LOVE.—How inexpressibly sweet is love! I know nothing near so sweet as to be worthily beloved, except it be to be the *giver* of the love rather than the *receiver*. In regard to faith's fellowship of love with Jesus, we have the twofold joy of *getting* and *giving*. We get, up to Christ's uttermost capacity of loving us: and we give, up to our capacity of loving at all, when that capacity is enlarged by the Holy Spirit.—JOHN DICKIE.

A Word that took Hold.



WE remember being present at a large gathering of the Lord's people many years ago. After several brethren had spoken on various lines of truth, chiefly bearing on the Christian's individual walk and testimony, a well-known servant of Christ stood up and remarked, that we had heard much to humble and to help us in our individual lives as the Lord's people, which we all undoubtedly needed to lay to heart, and which he would not say a single word to weaken the force of in our souls. "But," said he, "We are not only individuals, we belong to the Church of God, in which there are corporate privileges and responsibilities, which we hear less about, yet in which we are equally liable to fail." Then for three quarters of an hour God wonderfully helped His servant in expounding the Word in much grace and faithfulness on separation from the world, the gathering of believers to the Name of the Lord, the Church as built of living stones according to the Divine pattern given in the Word, and our responsibility as believers to be separate from all that is opposed to that which God has commanded, however popular among men. It was a word in season to many young believers and others, who were there that night, and it is still spoken of with thankfulness to God, as having been used to show to some as they never had seen it before, the path in which God would have His people walk in the midst of these last and evil days. But such was not the effect of that word upon all. There were some very ill at ease while it was being spoken; even among those on the platform, there were some who were manifestly not in sympathy with the Lord's

messenger. They sat with averted faces and gloomy looks, all the time that message from God was being delivered, and no sooner was it finished, than first one and then another got up and sought by strange, invidious remarks about "narrowness," "lack of love" and such like to—as an aged Christian remarked "throw cold water on the Word which God had given." Some of us were astonished. We had never thought that any who were professedly gathered to "the Name" outside of all the world's religion, could have taken exception to any part of His truth, being spoken, as it was that night, for it was given with much grace and wisdom. But it was evident that night, that there were some even among those who were looked up to as teachers, who did not appreciate anything clear and to the point on these subjects. Why they should have manifested such hostility to truths which they themselves professed to own, and which are the only authority for them being ecclesiastically where they are, we cannot conceive, yet a hostile spirit was very manifest then, and the progress of time has not lessened it. The feeble attempts to weaken the force of the Lord's message that night—as they themselves, if they had discernment must have felt—were ineffacious, for it stood in "the power of God," and held its own in the hearts and consciences of the saints. Even to this day, that word is held in remembrance and exercises its influence on the lives and ways of those who were helped nearer to God by it. "The Word has hands and feet"—as Luther said: it can take and keep its hold, so that no opposition can overthrow it. Let all who speak it remember this, and make a full and free use of it, in the grace and wisdom of the Spirit.

The Bible Annotator.

NOTES ON DIFFICULT TEXTS.

"FROM FAITH TO FAITH" (Rom i. 7).—"From" or "by faith" (see R.V.). It is the same form of expression as in Rom. v. 1.—"Justified by faith." God's Righteousness is revealed on the principle of faith. This excludes the law. "To faith"—to every believing sinner whoever he may be. Faith, not works, is the recipient principle in man.

"SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW" (1 John iii. 4) is a glaring mis-translation. The R.V. gives "Sin is lawlessness"—insubordination, the very spirit of disobedience. This was in man before the law came, and exists where it is still unknown. Sin reigned from Adam to Moses, but "where there is no law there is no transgression" (Rom iv. 15). "The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. xxiv. 9).

"PASSING OVER THE SINS THAT ARE PAST" (Rom. iii. 25), not the sins of our unconverted days as some affirm, but the "sins done aforetime" (R.V.); that is the pretermission of the sins of His people in times before the Cross, through forbearance, in contrast to His way now of justifying "from all sin" (Acts. xiii. 39) in perfect righteousness, in virtue of the Cross.

"COMPARING SPIRITUAL THINGS WITH SPIRITUAL" (1 Cor. ii. 13). A much misunderstood passage. It is not much clearer in the R.V., where the marginal reading is "interpreting spiritual things to spiritual men." It is rather to "match spirituals with spirituals"—communicating spiritual things by spiritual words. Words of the Spirit's own giving, although written by the Apostle's pen. The Spirit of God is alone the Revealer, the Communicator and Power for intelligent reception of the things of God.

"IN ALL POINTS TEMPTED LIKE AS WE ARE" (Heb. iv. 15). This passage is generally made to teach, that the temptations of the Lord were in kind as ours, the "result" alone being different. But this is not the meaning of the passage. He never knew the power of sin within, from which so many of our temptations come. The words are "apart from sin." "In Him is no sin" (1 John iii. 5), "He knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). As Alford well says—"Throughout these temptations, in their origin, in their process, in their result—sin had nothing in Him; He was free and separate from it."

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Questions on Doctrinal and Practical Subjects for the general edification of our readers, should be addressed to the Editor, accompanied by the writer's name and address.

What is meant by "I sanctify myself?" (John xvii. 19). To sanctify means "to set apart" to God. The Father had "sanctified" or set Him apart and sent Him into the world (John x. 36). Now He sets Himself apart by death and resurrection, in order that His people might be set apart by the same means, and brought into union with Him where He is in heavenly glory.

Is the common expression "Washed in the Blood of Christ" according to Scripture. I cannot find it in the Word? The word in Rev. i. 5 in the R.V. is "Unto Him who loveth us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood." By virtue of the sacrifice offered unto God, the believer stands continually clean and is already "made meet" for the inheritance of saints in light (Col. i. 12) and he walks in the light, in communion with God, notwithstanding that sin dwells in him, because "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin" (1 John i. 7)—But there is no such thought in Scripture as that expressed in certain hymns which bid us "Plunge in the fountain," "Wash in the Blood," and such like. These and similar expressions beget false ideas in the mind, especially of the unsaved. "Sound words" should be sung as well as spoken, otherwise God's Gospel will be obscured and sinners stumbled.

Will the unconverted be judged for their sins in the coming judgment day, or only for the rejection of Christ? For both. "They were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. xv. 13). "For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Col. iii. 6), leaves no room for doubt as to the former, and Heb. x. 29 is equally clear as to the latter. For the believer the question of sin was settled at the Cross: for the unbeliever it is postponed to the judgment.

What do the words "Every family in heaven and on earth" as given in the R.V. of Eph. iii. 14 mean. I thought all God's people formed one family? The phrase embraces all God's intelligent creation, whether earthly or heavenly, angelic or human, who have been brought into relationship with Himself. The earthly people, Israel, and saved Gentiles below; angels, saints of former ages and the

church above, all owning and adoring Christ, but not in the same relation or in equal nearness. In the day of Joseph's glory is Egypt—which is a foreshadowing type of days to come—Gentiles and his own brethren according to the flesh owned him and bowed before Him, but His Gentile bride with her two sons, was nearer and dearer to Him than all else. So in "every family" will Christ be owned; by the Church as Head, by Israel as Messiah, by the Gentiles as King.

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Answers to Special Questions,

As given in "The Believer's Magazine" for July.

Is there any Scriptural authority for the election of elders, or overseers, in the local assembly? If not, ought such to be formally recognised, or is any one at liberty to begin to take part in such work, and to associate himself with those who are doing it, apart from any reception, recognition, or fellowship with others regarding his qualifications or acceptability? This is a matter which is exercising very many of the Lord's people. A simple, clear, statement of the teaching of God's Word on the subject would, no doubt, be helpful to many.

There is nothing in the word to warrant the election, by vote or otherwise, of any to perform spiritual functions, such as preaching teaching, shepherding or ruling the flock. The administration of temporal matters, or the communication of the church's gifts is quite another matter, for which we have precedent and example in the Word (Acts vi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 19).

J. W.

There are none in the church now, who like the apostles (Acts xiv. 23), or their delegates (Titus i. 5), have Divine authority to appoint overseers, it would therefore be presumption to assume it. The word ordain simply means "to appoint or set," and implies that the overseers in those early churches were not made overseers by their appointment, but having already the qualifications and already doing the work they were set in their places by apostles possibly to show to those, who, being just converted from heathenism, had little capacity to discern spiritual qualifications, that they did not assume the place of guides by their own choice.

E. C. H.

While there is no authority for the ordination of bishops or overseers in the Christian assembly, we are not left without guidance as to how they may be known and what our responsibility is toward them, 1 Thess. v. 12-13, bids us "KNOW them which LABOUR AMONG you and are OVER YOU in the Lord, and admonish you and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." When we see one doing the work it is not difficult to KNOW him, he needs neither badge nor title. The qualifications of one seeking to do such work are found in 1 Tim. iii. 1-6; Titus i. 6-9, and these should be seen in measure at least in all who aspire to such labours. The lack of them unfits a man, no matter what his ability, from being regarded as one fit to stand before the saints or guide them: and it would be a great mistake for others to encourage such a person to fill a false position by recognising him in it. Yet it is no uncommon thing for persons to attend what are called "oversight meetings" who never do overseer's work, nor have any qualifications for it, other than the desire for a place "at the front."

G. G.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above answers give what we believe to be according to Scripture regarding the character, qualifications and work of overseers in the Assembly. The question of "formal recognition" comes up now and again. Those who advocate it do so generally on the ground that it would give those doing oversight work a "standing." What this would add to their value we do not presume to know, but one thing seems clear, those who assume the responsibility of publicly giving a "recognition" to overseers, while they have the qualifications and are doing the work, would require to take upon themselves the responsibility of informing the saints when they cease to be "recognised" for it has to be remembered that overseers in common with all others serving Christ have no "tenure of office," save as they have spiritual fitness for their service, when this ceases, their claim to recognition ends. Those associated in the guidance of an assembly will readily be brought into close contact with any in whose hearts God has put an earnest care for saints (2 Cor. viii. 16) and who are reaching forth toward sharing in such arduous and self-denying toil, and they will not fail to seek to unite such energies with their own, by giving their fellow-worker "the right hand of fellowship" (Gal. ii. 9).

Special Questions.

Many expressions of thanks for help received through the answers given by various brethren encourage us to devote extra space to this important form of ministry. We invited the help of brethren to whom the Lord has given wisdom and ability in this particular line of things. We desire that all aspects of the truth may be presented, in simplicity and grace, so that the many in this day of confusion, and man's opinions, may be helped to a clear apprehension of the truth of God and so well established therein that they through grace may be preserved from the bye-paths of error.

Brief replies will be welcome to the following questions, which have been sent us:—

1. In many of our Assembly prayer meetings the same half-a-dozen lead in prayer all the year round, while others sit in dumb silence. This is not a healthy or desirable condition of things. What can be done to remedy it?

2. It seems to be the habit in certain Assemblies to have a fresh preacher every Lord's Day, usually one from a distance, sometimes arranged for months ahead. Does not this system hinder the Lord from sending or using the instrument of His own choice?

3. Is there anything in Scripture to show that one may be in the fellowship of the Assembly, who yet because of his unruly or unsatisfactory conduct, is excluded from taking any public part in its exercises?

4. There are companies of believers, professedly meeting in the Lord's Name, who are gradually giving up the truths that separated many of us a quarter of a century ago from the denominations, in some cases refusing to hear them. Would it be according to God to commend a young believer from an Assembly where these truths are owned and honoured to such a company? This is a very real difficulty to many at the present time. Any godly help will be valued.

Answers to Correspondents.

Only such subjects as are for the edification of our readers, can be dealt with here. No Questions involving names of persons or places can appear. All Questions and Correspondence to be addressed to *Editor, Believer's Magazine*, and marked "Private."

"YOUNG BELIEVER, PORTSMOUTH."—The Magazine which has been sent you is one of the organs of

a sect known as "Seventh Day Adventists." It is full of error, cleverly dished up, and garnished with distorted Scripture. If you wish to keep from its defiling influence, do not read it.

J. B. ABERDEEN.—*Bagster's Interlinear Greek and English Testament* has a literal translation, word for word, with the Authorised Version in a column alongside. It costs 10s 6d.

W.K., GOVAN.—Division in an assembly, whether caused by actions of party-men (Titus iii. 10) from within, or by the craft of some leader from without, "drawing away the disciples after him" (Acts xx. 30), is never to be regarded as a light matter. It is a sin against Christ, and a serious stumbling-block to young believers and seekers after the truth. Romans xvi. 17, 18, is plain enough as regards our attitude toward those who are the leaders in and causers of such divisions. The "simple" ones (comp. 2 Sam. xv. 11) who follow should be dealt with in "compassion" (Jude 22), and every effort made for their deliverance from the snare into which they have been led.

A.G., LIVERPOOL.—The very best way to keep young believers from wandering about and getting mixed up with all sorts of religious "fads" is to make your own meetings attractive to them. We do not mean attractive to the flesh in them by adopting the worldly tactics by which the "churches" keep their young folks together, but warm and helpful to their spiritual life. Then provide them with plenty of work, such as they are fitted to do. House-to-house visitation, kitchen meetings, Sunday school, and open-air work are all splendid for bright energetic young men and women, and it surely forms a chief part of the work of those who have shepherd-care in the assembly to see that they have every encouragement, facility, and help in such efforts, giving them full scope for their energies, and "freedom with control" in their service.

E. A., EDINBURGH.—There might be a great deal done to reach the crowds who walk the streets on Sunday evenings, if bands of young men, constrained by the love of Christ, would go forth distributing pointed tracts, with invitations to meetings, speaking a word as they pass along for God, accompanied by a verbal invitation to hear the gospel. The most important necessity of all is, a preacher who can gather and keep his congregation by the gospel fresh and full in the power of the Spirit.

God, and The Word of His Grace.

OUR RESOURCES IN DAYS OF DECLENSION.

SWEETLY do the words echo along the ages, spoken by the departing apostle to the Ephesian elders, as he bade them a last farewell—"And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts xx. 32). True to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come, as to them, and just as full of blessing. Full well the apostle knew what awaited the saints of God, for it had been shown him that grievous wolves from without, and men speaking perverse things from within, would seek to beguile and lead into paths of error the disciples of the Lord. But to him it was also given to unfold the sources of their security, and the secrets of their preservation. And here he does it. Yes, blessed be God! the remedy is here as surely as is the ruin; the panacea as surely as the disease. It is just like God to present them both together; the story of man's failure, and God's resources, of human sin and Divine grace. How gratefully and sweetly the words would have fallen on the troubled hearts of these godly men, who must have been sore perplexed by the dark picture that had just been set before them, of the Church's declension from its early love and from the Lord. And how full of blessing and holy cheer they are still, to all who mourn the deeper departures from the faith of these closing days of the dispensation.

To whom, or to what did the apostle commend them? Not to an apostolic succession; not to men of light and leading; not to their own wisdom and

sagacity, but to "God and the Word of His grace." God first: His Word next. Well did Paul know both, long had he proved them. "To GOD." And this God is "the God of all grace" (1 Pet. v. 10), whose resources are illimitable. And blessed be His Name, He has put them all at the disposal of His people. "God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye always, having all sufficiency in all things may abound in every good work (2 Cor. ix. 8). Surely this is enough. All sufficiency, always, in all things! This covers the whole field of need, whether of the individual saint, the servant of Christ, or the Church of God. All that we require in order to have the full supply of this grace, is a humble spirit of dependence, and a Christ-like faith to cleave to God, and to draw from Him. Such grace on His part implies dependence and trust on ours. The days may grow darker, the powers of evil wax bolder; the love of saints may become cold, the path of faith be forsaken for an easier or more popular road, but to all whose hearts are true to God, whose aim is to please Him, whose desire is to dwell in the light of His countenance, He will be "a present help," an all-sufficient portion. "For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psa. lxxxiv. 11). Grace to go on with here; glory awaiting us there. "And the WORD of His grace." Not the Word apart from God, nor God without the Word, but God and the Word. God's Word is all-sufficient. There is absolutely nothing in the way of guidance, authority, or legislation that is not found there, alike for the individual and the churches. It is just as applicable now as in

the palmy days of the Church at the beginning, before man's traditions had been introduced. The Word is like its Author, perfect and unchangeable. Nothing needs to be added to it, simply because nothing is wanting: nothing to be taken from it, because there is nothing superfluous. Blessed, peerless Volume! May it be the daily delight of our hearts: manna to our souls; light to our path; a standard to try our ways, the one supreme authority by which we shall be guided, controlled, and ruled in each department of our lives, in the family, the business, the church, the world. It is "able to build us up," to preserve us from the path of error; to keep us right with God, happy in His ways, whole hearted in His work, and in loving fellowship with His people. Give up the Word, turn aside from it, and you venture on a path where no Divine protector, no Divine preservation is promised. A saint or an assembly ceasing to cleave to God and to be guided by His Word, is like a rudderless ship, at the mercy of every wind and wave, certain sooner or later to become a wreck; whereas one, however feeble, cleaving to God and the Word of His grace, and making daily use of both, will be borne by power Divine through all the ups and downs of wilderness life, ever-triumphant, garments fresh and foot unwearied, onward and upward to the City which hath foundations, whose light and glory is the Lamb.

"There only to adore,
My soul its strength shall find,
Its life, its joy, for evermore,
By sight, nor sense, defined.

God and the Lamb shall there
The light and temple be,
And radiant hosts for ever share
The unveil'd mystery."

Backsliding.

BY J. F. GOCH, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA.

PART II.

WE seldom consider how backsliding affects our God and how He is in sorrow over it, but this is revealed all through Scripture over the failures of men. Many, many times He mourned over backsliding Israel. Here is an example (Jer. viii. 21-22), "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black, astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?"

The Lord Jesus wept over Jerusalem because their backsliding had brought them to the point of judgment.

The Father waited for the return of the prodigal and saw him when he was yet a great way off, and ran to meet him, and embraced and kissed him.

The Lord Jesus, while standing before the High Priest, turned to look at Peter when the cock crew, to mark the fact how He had noticed his failure. And such was the love of that look, that it broke Peter's heart, who went out and wept bitterly.

Yes, there is sorrow in the heart of our loving God over the failure of His children, and every one who has gone backward should consider this solemn fact, that he has brought grief to the heart of God, and that his sin has brought dishonour on His holy name, so that the enemies of God blaspheme. This brought heavy judgment on David; and while God is slow in executing judgment over our failures, yet, if persisted in, the judgments are sure to follow.

Another fact that is very little considered is
THE SORROW OF GOD'S CHILDREN.

The "little flock" have many things in this world that cause sorrow. The state of the world and the condition of the Church afford all thoughtful believers ample cause for grief, but the backslidings of saints cause a poignant sorrow which cannot be described in words, for "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it" (1 Cor. xii. 26). It often appears to us as if this world were a vast camp of determined and persistent rebels against God, as if Satan through his rebels laughed God to scorn. There is a "little flock" of sheep who have no hope of victory over these enemies by means of carnal force; they are a "feeble folk" who do not exercise revenge nor use carnal weapons, but have to obtain victory through the blood of Christ over every foe. And there is no sadder sight, than when the enemy has ensnared or entrapped and captured some of the little company to yield allegiance to Satan and his forces, and when that occurs the "little flock" is sorrowful, while those in the opposite camp rejoice. They are strengthened in their rebellion and the saints weakened in the struggle. The ultimate result is certain (1 Jno. iv. 4), "For greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." But the struggle is made the harder for the faithful ones and their sorrows are increased.

O wandering, backsliding ones, behold yourselves arrayed against God, see yourselves helping the rebels against God and His saints, and all the time you are in personal sorrow, and our "Elohim" (Triune God) is in sorrow, and the saints are in sorrow, as results of your present condition. We will now consider

THE WAY OF DELIVERANCE FROM
BACKSLIDING.

A backslider who has once fairly started on the *down-grade* way of Self-will, Pride, Lust, and Unbelief does not generally return, till he has had his fill of the pleasures of sin and experienced the sorrows resulting therefrom; till his sins have come home to roost upon him and he becomes to himself not an object to be commiserated, but one who deserves the just indignation of God for his misdeeds. I instance the following true case.

A child of God who had once been greatly used in the conversion of souls by his earnest testimony will provide the example. He was as a youth brought to God through one of the London Evangelical Missions, and bore a bright testimony for a time. He then left England for South Africa, where his first serious backsliding began, in which he went on till he was known as a drunkard. Through the agency of an earnest Christian he was brought back to God, and so great was his joy over his restoration that he publicly testified to the fact, and often afterwards related how his first public testimony after his restoration was used of God for the conversion of two souls. Such was the power of the Holy Ghost on him; and from that time he was led to labour for the salvation of souls, in which also he was greatly used, and he became honoured and much beloved.

It appears that the first serious step that he took in a wrong direction was his marriage with a young woman, against the counsel of his brethren and she became a snare to him. His testimony began to lack its former fire; his love grew cold and his faith dim, and instead of keeping his eyes

on God, he turned them on men. One trouble succeeded another, monetary difficulties were followed by domestic affliction, and with it came debt. He was a good tradesman, but always managed to get out at the wrong end of his income. Friends helped him, but as it was clear that he kept getting into the same trouble, his friends felt that it was wrong to continue such help; and now he began to judge his brethren and insinuated that it was for the want of love and interest in him that they withheld. Such a state could only develop into serious backsliding, and so it was that his mouth became still, his testimony was silenced, and in order to find some comfort, he associated himself with a Temperance organization. He made spasmodic efforts towards restoration, but never seriously judged himself in the matter of his getting into debt, or taking his eye away from men in relation to monetary help, nor did he take a decided stand on the side of God and His Truth, by acknowledging his past failures and confessing his renewed confidence and faith in the Father's love and the Saviour's forgiveness; and so he always slid back again till he dropped into the Insolvency Court, and there he is now, a poor, sad failure, nor does he yet discern that God's hand is by his very trouble seeking to lead him to true repentance and restoration.

The Prodigal of Luke xv. did not return till he "came to himself," only after he had "spent all," joined a citizen of that country, and desired the husks of the swine which no man gave him. Then in the misery of his castaway condition did he say, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him," &c. Here came the resolve to return, to confess his sin, and to seek restoration,

but it came only when the bitterness of his condition became unbearable.

When the prodigal left his father, *the father did not go after him.* In this we notice a significant fact. It is, that in backsliding the wanderer must *come back* to the Father *at the place* where he left Him, and it is therefore of first importance to bring the past life of departure from God into review (Ps. cxix. 59), "I thought on my ways and turned my feet into Thy testimonies."

When the prodigal begins to deal with himself, he becomes conscious of the Holy Spirit's help, first in convincing him of his sins, the bringing of them before his mind, and the still small voice that keeps urging him to return to the Father.

It is never an easy task to humble ourselves in confession of evil-doing. How often has failure to confess to another the injury done him, the occasion of backsliding? There pride was allowed to prevail, and "God resisteth the proud," so that where pride is harboured the light goes out.

David was in a backslidden state for probably more than two years; nor did he come to himself, till Nathan the prophet, brought his sin home to him with the words, "Thou art the man." That was like a bomb-shell that burst all his pride and self-will to pieces, and as a broken man he wrote the 51st Psalm. There was no pride left in the man who wrote that Psalm. Oh! those humble words, "Have mercy upon me, O God . . . blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, . . . Behold I was shapen in iniquity. . . . Behold

Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.
 . . . Purge me with hyssop. . . .
 Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
 Make me to hear joy and gladness. . . .
 Hide Thy face from my sins. . . .
 Create in me a clean heart . . . renew
 a right spirit. Cast me not away. . . .
 Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation.
 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit ;
 a broken and a contrite heart," &c. Such
 was this backslider's language when he had
 come to repentance. Such was this king's
 public prayer and confession, and this great
 man is an example to all backsliders.

Peter did not take long ; "he wept
 bitterly," and so he never got into the state
 so many others get into—his restoration
 was immediate.

Turning to the many who are backsliders
 in heart to-day, so many of them appear
 "at home" in their estranged state to *enjoy*
 the companionship of the world, to delight
 in the pleasures of sin, that we are moved
 to ask : Did they ever really taste the good-
 ness of God in the forgiveness of their sins
 through the death of Christ? Did they
 ever experience the renewing of the Holy
 Ghost and the joys of an endless life?
 Were they really born again? Were they
 indeed dead, buried, and raised again with
 Christ? If so, how are they apparently
 happy and contented where they are?
 Who shall supply the answer? Or will
 only the great day reveal it?

To those who desire deliverance, the way
 to it lies open in the Scriptures, first in the
 example already quoted ; and further, Ps.
 xxxii. is a complete direction, and the key
 to it lies in verse 5, "I acknowledged my sin
 unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not
 hid. I said, I will confess my transgres-
 sion." Also 1 Jno. i. 9, "If we confess our

sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us
 our sins, and to cleanse us from all un-
 righteousness." Yes, by the way of such
 confession comes restoration, and deliver-
 ance results, when faith has been brought
 into exercise.

"Higher than the highest heaven,
 Deeper than the deepest sea,
 Lord, Thy love at last has conquered ;
 'None of self,' and all of 'Thee.'"

The way to deliverance is simple, but no
 one will get there who does not deal with
 himself *in truth*. Man's lying nature, his
 inborn hypocrisy, his absolute depravity,
 must stand rebuked and guilty before God,
 and thus he will learn what *Truth* is and
 seek to come to and walk in the *Truth*.
 Heb. x. 22, "Let us draw near with a true
 heart in full assurance of faith," is a word
 that will suit the returning backslider,
 because Christ opened a new and living
 way through the veil which is His flesh,
 He offered His blood as an atonement for
 sin once for all, He stands as High Priest
 over the house of God, and so by virtue of
 that finished work the sin of backsliding is
 covered and forgiveness assured as soon as the
 sinner draws near with a true heart in faith.

There is a factor in deliverance which is
 to-day ill understood—it is the discipline
 of the Church. All discipline, whether
 internal or external, private or public,
 should ever have one aim, viz., *the restora-
 tion of the soul to the joy and fellowship of
 God*. The erring one should be deeply
 conscious of this, and where this exists
 there discipline will be the means of leading
 the soul to see and acknowledge the error
 of his ways, and return to the source of his
 blessing.

God's dealings with Israel, shows His
 readiness to forgive His backsliding child-

dren, and reveals how He deals with their sin. There is always the "savour of death" about sin, and sins like David's, for instance, have natural penalties connected with them which even the forgiveness of God through the blood of Christ does not remove; but the repentant prodigal will say, "I would rather fall into the hands of God, than remain in the camp of the enemy."

God's love and mercy, His forgiving and restoring grace, can always be depended upon, inasmuch as the sin of backsliding is covered by the atoning work of Christ (Isa. liii. 6).

THE JOYS OF RESTORATION FROM BACKSLIDING.

There are many of God's children who, when they had been truly restored from their backslidings, rejoiced so sincerely, that they seemed only then to have realised the GREATNESS of the blessing of salvation. And this suggests how many young Christians are apt to underrate the greatness of salvation, the greatness of the work of Redemption and Atonement, and the greatness of the work wrought for and in them when God forgave their sins and revealed His Son in them. This underrating is indeed one of the causes of backsliding, and restoration reveals to them how they had sinned in thus underrating it, and now their sense of their own unworthiness and God's goodness causes joy unspeakable.

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation" was David's cry, and in Ps. xxxii. he said, "Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." In Ps. xvi. he says, "In Thy presence is fulness of joy." Thus the first joy from restoration is a *personal one*; and that joy is because the discovery had been made that "God is love," and

that as Father, Saviour, Deliverer, Friend He is the soul's everlasting portion. Oh, the exquisite beauty and loveliness of Christ! It fills the eye with adoring wonder, and now the soul can say as in Ps. cxix. 67, "Before I was afflicted I went astray," and with verse 75, "I know, O Lord, that Thy judgments are right, and that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." The harp that was hung on the willows is now taken down and songs of deliverance are heard; the cloud that hung like a pall is removed, the face shines again with heavenly joy, and the confidence that had been cast away is once again in operation.

But the joy soon extends

TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH; the "music and dancing" in the house give evidence of that; the "neighbours" share in the joy, and once again there is gladness among the mourning saints. They thank God and take courage, because the enemy of their souls had not prevailed; the bird had escaped out of the snare of the fowler, and from the entanglements of sin. O that the Church of God participated more in the grief caused by the sin of backsliding! Then would she discern in deep humiliation, how much of the backslidings of today, are due to her want of holy conformity to Christ, and her weakness and nakedness would become manifested to herself, and then also her joy over restored ones would be proportionately increased. Alas! the joy of the Church is imperfect, but the joy of the Shepherd is complete.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

who gave His life for the sheep, had not been an idle spectator; the wanderings of His sheep were marked, and He was all the time in earnest pursuit, and when at last the sheep was found, He lifted him on

His shoulders rejoicing. His joy was great and deep and true; He calls His friends and neighbours (the Church and the angels) to rejoice with Him, "for I have found My sheep which was lost." Oh, the immeasurable love of Christ, that thus watches over His sheep and has such concern for their restoration and such joy over their repentance! Coupled with the joy of the Shepherd is

THE FATHER'S JOY.

which is represented in his treatment of his prodigal son. "But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." When the elder son reminded his father of the prodigal's wicked life and conduct, the reply came, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found." The love of the father had no eyes more for the sin, which had been judged and confessed by the erring one, and his joy now "was meet," for the lost one was found.

Worship, Above Ministry.

AMONG any number of Christians gathered together, we shall find that the majority prize more those meetings which are for instruction, than those which are simply for worship. Many causes have conduced to this; but it sadly proves how little Christians for the most part are realising their privileged standing before God; how little they see the open way into the holiest of all. They need to be told what their privileges are, instead of being able happily to use them. And hence God is deprived of the praise due unto His

name, and the saints of their richest blessing. It is no wonder that men are captivated by the outward form of devotion, or that they should cling to a burdensome ritual, when they see so little reverence and godly fear in the worship of those, whose profession is, that they are now constituted by the blood of Jesus and the Spirit of God priests unto God. The time was, when such a band of worshippers bearing without the camp the reproach of Jesus, in some obscure locality, far from the stately temple of Jerusalem, so worshipped God in Spirit and in truth, as to make others conscious of the unseen presence of God. And so should it be now. All things that would attract the senses, or work on the imagination, set aside as things to be shaken and removed—but such a consciousness of a present God, that all who looked on should see by the reverence and godly fear of the worshippers, that they were very near that God, who is veiled from their eyes. The very worship of the saints ought to speak loudly to the conscience of unbelievers. But this can never be, unless its principles and spirit be, the nearness into which the soul is brought by grace to God. Faith sees everything which man has used as an aid to worship set aside. In the heavenly Jerusalem there is no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Thus the soul moves undisturbed amidst the region of unshaken things. It has to do with God and with the Lamb. Its powers are engrossed by God and His glories. It has no room for a light thought, or for a proud one. It is in this region, therefore, that the truth and blessedness of that word is learnt. "Everyone that humbleth himself shall be exalted." *Grace humbles in order to exalt.* Let us

hold it fast, as the only element in which we can live, as our only power for worshipping God acceptably—with reverence and godly fear: for “our God is a consuming fire.”

May we know Him as such increasingly, and rejoice in the thought that in a little while we shall be in a sphere, where all is according to His holiness; and, when perfectly conformed thereto, we shall be able unceasingly to praise Him for having set aside the flesh and all its comeliness.

J. L. HARRIS.

A Word in Season.

I WAS far away from home, and had been busy all that long summer day. Jaded and weary, I turned into the little country inn where I was to put up for the night, not without a wish that some word of cheer from the Master might reach my soul ere I lay down to rest. I had read and prayed, but scarcely felt refreshed. Just then, my eye fell on a little card on the wall. Drawing nearer I read these words:—

If you want to be *miserable*—LOOK WITHIN.
 If you want to be *distracted*—LOOK AROUND.
 If you want to be *happy*—LOOK TO JESUS.
 When tempted. When troubled. When oppressed.
 In your Home. In your business.

Everywhere. Always.

“Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace* whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.” (Isa. xxvi. 5).

That little card in these strange surroundings was God's messenger to me. It brought the word in season to him that was weary. Verily, God has His messengers everywhere. “Praise the Lord, O my soul.”

Separation from the World.

THE blood of Jesus, both discloses God's love and shows man's natural hate. The spear that went into the side of Christ was the expression of the one, and the crimson stream which flowed in consequence, is the manifestation of that other. Both met at the point of that spear. And the blood staining that spear has a voice which says that the enmity of man's heart must never be ignored but fully encountered, and thus and thus only finally, fully overcome.

All the toil of Christ was expressly for this object, amongst others, of delivering us from this present evil world. For this He laboured, and groaned, and died. Then presently goeth His professing Church, and joins herself to and becomes the creature of the world. Let us not be deceived by appearances. Is the world less the world because, for its own comforts, it chooses to have a religion, not as anciently of its own inventing, but now of its own corrupting?—What if the intensity of its worldliness is merely thereby varnished over, and its utter antagonism to God and His Son thus disenabled? Then the consequent duty of him who would bow to the Word is plain. If it be still the same world of which God warns, albeit it has assumed the form of godliness, then the Holy Ghost's own injunction with reference thereto is “Be not conformed to this world” (Rom. xii. 2).

Is separation in spirit sufficient? when we are enjoined to “come out from among them” and to be separate, and not to “touch the unclean” (2 Cor. vi. 18). If “spirituality of mind” be all that is regarded, why have we the following inspired commentary on that injunction—“Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of *flesh* and *spirit*.”

Whether this command, as thus expounded by God Himself, can be fully obeyed, whilst yet one remains in bodily communion and open association with the strange and incongruous mixture of a world-church, we leave others, according as they are *ingenious* or *ingenuous*, to determine. Alas! the unquiet conscience that shrinks from plain duty because it is unpleasant, loves subterfuges, however miserable they may be. Hence it strives to forget that holiness is a separation from all contact with sin, and that all such separation is holiness.

W. LINCOLN.

The Ordinance of the Red Heifer.

NUMBERS XIX.—PART II.

Notes of an Address by J. W. McCLURE, of Canada, delivered in Aberdeen.

NOW, as to the application or means of purifying (verses 17-19), a clean person was to do this. "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. vi, 1). This is the clean person. In going to the brother who has been overtaken in a fault, we should, as it were, be saying, "God only knows, he may have to come to me next; I am not down now, but for the grace of God I would be so." Going in this spirit, a good deal may be accomplished. Look at the figure. The ashes were taken and running water put thereto in a vessel. This signifies the ministry of the Word, concerning the abiding value and efficacy of the blood of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is only as we are made to gaze afresh on the Cross, that we learn the terrible heinousness of sin, or know how completely it has been taken away.

The unclean person was to be sprinkled on the *third* day, and again on the *seventh* day. The third day points us to the cross, and the seventh day tells of the end of nature—the end of the old creation, just as the eighth or first day of the week speaks of resurrection or the new creation. How interesting! The first and second days go by—the sprinkling is reserved for the third; God thus showing that the cross is the place where sin is judged and put away. Again, we pass over the fourth and fifth and sixth days to the seventh—the end of the old, hateful thing. Yes, real restoration is like genuine conversion. At the cross I first got peace, by learning that all my sins were there borne, and also that I was such an awful creature that I had to be nailed to the tree. Now the old man is dead and done with before God, but he may give us trouble, hence the exhortation, "Reckon yourselves to be dead" (Rom. viii.) At the end of the seventh day the man was clean. On the morning of the eighth, bright and early, he is able to come into the sanctuary of the Lord. The whole week is gone like a dream with all its unhappy remembrances. Now he mingles his praises with the others. What is this? New creation worship. We have not of course now to wait seven literal days till defilement can be removed. The whole thing can be accomplished in this meeting to-night, if there is honest confession and appropriation of the value and efficacy of that great work of which these symbolic days speak.

The Lord make real to us what has been said, and teach you and me to crave after walking through this scene in fellowship with God, and with His redeemed people. And, if sin does get in, "soon back to Him to flee." Amen.

The Bible Annotator.

JOTTINGS FROM PREACHERS' BIBLES.

THREE THINGS IN JOHN x. 9.—Salvation, Liberty, Satisfaction.

THREE WALKS.—*Before* God (Gen. xvii. 1): *After* God (Deut. xiii. 4): *With* God (Gen. v. 22).

THREE SONSHIPS IN MATTHEW.—Son of Abraham (chap. i. 1)—Heir of Promise. Son of David (chap. i. 1 with Luke i. 29)—Heir to the Throne. Son of God (chap. xvi. 16)—Heir of All (Heb. i. 4-5).

God *with* us (Matt. i. 23). God *for* us (Rom. viii. 31). God *in* us (1 John iv. 16).

MARGINAL READINGS FROM "THE ENGLISHMAN'S BIBLE."

Psa. i. 1—"Blessed is the man." Margin—O, the blessedness or happiness of the man.

Psa. xxiii. 2—"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Margin—Pastures of tender grass. Verse 3—"He leadeth me beside the still waters." Margin—Waters of rest.

Psa. xxiv. 7—"Lift up ye everlasting doors." Margin—Entrances of Eternity.

Psa. xli. i.—"A very present help. Margin—A help readily found.

Psa. li. 7—"Purge me with hyssop." Margin—Expiate by a sin offering.

Psa. cxxvi. 6—"Bearing precious seed." Margin—Seed for scattering.

Psa. cxxxvii. 4—"How shall we sing the Lord's Song in a strange land." Margin—Jehovah's Song on a stranger's ground.

NOTES ON TEXTS.

"*In* the Kingdom and patience" (Rev. i. 9): "*Called* to the Kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. ii. 12). We must not expect in the present, what is promised for the future.

"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. xiii. 11). Not salvation from wrath, or from the power of sin, these the believing sinner receives when he comes to Christ (see 1 Cor. xv. 2: 2 Tim. i. 10), but for salvation from the presence of sin he waits (see Heb. ix. 28: Phil. iii. 20).

"To provoke unto love" (Heb. x. 24). Not to provoke others, but to so consider the needs, the weaknesses, the trials of fellow-saints, till *we ourselves* are provoked unto "love" towards them, which will cause us to do 'good works' for their help and blessing.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

What do the words "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 34) mean? Where then is David? If the context—especially verse 29—be compared, it will be perfectly clear that it is not to David's soul but to his body that the verse applies. He, as regards his body, waits the first resurrection, when with all who have died in faith he will be raised to ascend to heaven.

*Do the words "If we sin wilfully" and what follows, in Heb. x. 26-31 refer to believers or false professors? To believers, for such alone are addressed throughout the chapter. "Having therefore brethren:" "Let us draw near:" "Let us hold fast:" "If we sin." The wilful sin here spoken of, is such as none but saints could be guilty of, for they only have received "the full knowledge of the truth"—as the word in verse 26 implies. The case of Nadab and Abihu under the law, who were judged for the sin of self-will, because they offered what Jehovah "had not commanded them" (see Lev. x. 1-3, R.V.), illustrates the solemn truth here taught. It is not said that the wilful believer shall be "devoured," but the *adversaries*. "But the Lord will judge *His* people" (verse 30), and that which begins by in self-will forsaking the assembly of saints (verse 25), may become habitual, and end in utter departure from the Lord, bringing His chastisement. The passage is solemn and ought to search us all.*

Is it according to God's Word, for Christian parents to send their children to be taught dancing? If they want to bring them up as worldlings, they could take no surer way than to send them to learn what is one of the most fascinating forms of worldly amusement, and we understand it is not at all uncommon to find the children of believers who are professedly "out" from the world, in dancing schools with the full consent of their parents. We can only say that the associations of dancing, so far as we have seen or known them, are wholly of the world, and no Christian parents who desire the conversion of their children to live for God, will send them to learn what will help them to forget Him while they are unsaved, and cause them to become backsliders if they return to it after they have been converted. But alas? some are more anxious to see their sons and daughters cut a good

figure in the world, than to be brought out from it by a genuine, out-and-out conversion.

I am frequently asked why I do not take part in a local Temperance Society, or become a pledged abstainer. Ever since my conversion I have been an abstainer from all intoxicating drinks, but do not see it to be any part of my calling as a Christian to join a Society, or take a pledge. Am I right? Yes, perfectly right. Pledges may keep the unconverted from drink, and if they do let us be glad. But the Christian's work is to lift up Christ, and persuade sinners, whether abstainers or drunkards, to be reconciled to God through Him. Nothing short of this is genuine conversion. For the most part, Temperance Societies are composed of worldly people, and carrying on their work on worldly lines, with little room for God or any definite Gospel testimony. Let your testimony be clear and definite against drink, but do not become unequally yoked with unbelievers in an association which has as its highest aim the reformation of its members. Ring out to one and ail—"Ye must be born again."

—o—

Answers to Correspondents.

ANNIE G.—The author of the precious hymn, the first verse of which is :

"O no I am not desolate,
No orphan lone am I ;
The Mighty God my Father is
His heaven my home on high."

was the late John Dickie, who was then living in Kilmarnock. For some time he lost the power of speech. While in this condition, he was walking along the road one day, when he met an old woman who consoled him by saying—"Oh, Mr. Dickie, I am sorry for you, you do look so desolate." He smiled, then went home and wrote that hymn.

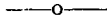
P. K., TOTTENHAM.—"The Christian Witness," was first published in 1834, and edited, we believe, by J. L. Harris of Plymouth. There were five or six volumes containing many papers by various able writers, dealing with subjects little heard of in our day. They are very difficult to get now. (If any of our readers know of a set for disposal, we shall be glad to learn of them.) Ed.

A. G. B.—There is no reference in 2 Thess. ii. to the Papacy, save as it is included in "the mystery

of iniquity" which doth already work, and that is certainly not limited to Romanism. Grave error is to be found in many Protestant Churches, some of which have preachers who sneer at the Divinity of Christ, deny His atoning death, and reject the inspiration of the Bible. This will continue until it has leavened the mass. "The Antichrist" has yet to be revealed, which he cannot be in person, until the Restrainer is removed. Till then "the spirit of Antichrist" will work, preparing his way, which the many forms of error of the present time in high places too, are doubtless with the devil's help rapidly accomplishing. It is no business of ours to strive with the mighty host, or to attempt to combat it ; our path is in separation from it. Our work is to hold up Christ, by the preaching of whom alone sinners can be saved, and saints separated unto God.

JOHN P., GLASGOW.—We do not believe that the Scripture warrants separation from a company of believers gathered unto the Lord's Name, while the foundations of a scripturally constituted church are there, and while there is access with the Word of God to correct abuses, and to set right what has gone wrong either in doctrine or practice. The First Epistle to the Corinthians affords a clear illustration of this. So also does the Epistle to the Churches of Galatia. If there be friction within, surely the lubricating oil of love—of which we hear so much—should be applied, and all other godly means tried to bring about a better condition. We cannot understand how any wise or godly man could in such circumstances advise those who are dissatisfied with the "administration" to "come out," and form a new meeting, giving the promise of his fellowship and support to such. For call it by whatever name you like, or gloss it over by whatever "extenuating circumstances" you can find, it is what God's Word regards as a "division," and ought to be so dealt with. It is all very well to talk of "forbearance" and "grace" while there is no particular demand made upon us for either, but we prove exactly what measure of these we possess, by our *patient endurance* under trial ; not by going out from the assembly of God when our wills are crossed, our pride humbled, or our counsel rejected. If divisions for every paltry excuse are condoned and supported by leading brethren, it is greatly to be feared, that the effects will recoil upon

themselves sooner or later. For when others see how lightly such schisms are treated, they will be emboldened to perpetuate them—as indeed they are doing—and those who have fraternized with and winked at them, will have no moral influence to prevent them from spreading, or to counteract them when they come to their own doors.



Questions and Answers.

We invite the help of brethren to whom the Lord has given wisdom and understanding in the Scriptures, in the answering of these questions, many of which are of an Assembly character, and bear upon points of real difficulty to honest and inquiring saints. Answers should be brief and simple. We desire to have all sides of the truth duly balanced.

Brief replies will be welcome to the following questions, which have been sent us.

1. In many of our Assembly prayer meetings, the same half-a-dozen lead in prayer all the year round, while others sit in dumb silence. This is not a healthy or desirable condition of things. What can be done to remedy it.

2. It seems to be the habit in certain Assemblies to have a fresh preacher every Lord's Day, usually one from a distance, sometimes arranged for months ahead. Does not this system hinder the Lord from sending or using the instrument of his own choice.

3. Is there anything in Scripture to show that one may be in the fellowship of the Assembly, who yet because of his unruly and unsatisfactory conduct, is excluded from taking any public part in its exercises?

4. There are companies of believers, professedly meeting in the Lord's Name, who are gradually giving up the truths that separated many of us a quarter of a century ago from the denominations, in some cases refusing to hear them. Would it be according to God to commend a young believer from an Assembly where these truths are owned and honoured to such a company? This is a very real difficulty to many at the present time. Any godly help will be valued.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

With the issue of this number we complete the *First Annual Volume* of "The Believer's Magazine" in its enlarged size, and the *Tenth Year* of its issue. The Volume will be ready in a few

days, neatly bound in Cloth Boards, without the news and advertisement pages, thus forming a desirable book of Scripture Exposition and practical teaching, for personal use or as a gift to Christians.

We have been very much cheered by the warm welcome which the "Magazine" in its extended form has received from the Lord's people, and for numerous testimonies of help and blessing received through the ministry of the Word in its pages. The circulation has substantially increased during the year—not by leaps and bounds—but steadily, which indicates that, as the Magazine becomes known, its readers increase. We heartily thank all who have been our helpers in this service, by contributing articles, supplying shorthand notes of addresses, providing reliable information of the Lord's Work in their districts, and by introducing, commending, and speaking of the Magazine to fellow-believers.

We shall be glad if all who consider the Magazine to be a help in the truth of God, will, at this season, commend it to the Christians with them, and thus seek to extend the sphere of its usefulness. Our aim is to help the children of God individually and collectively to a closer walk with God, and a closer cleaving to His Word, in a day of declension and subtle departure from the faith, alike in doctrine and in practice, while worldliness rushes in at all corners, seeking to damp out heart-love to Christ and hearty service and testimony for His Name.

We desire to continue *The Believer's Magazine* for the coming year on the same lines as at present, and shall welcome the continued help of servants of Christ, in writing suitable papers for its pages. We have at present in hands, papers and addresses by the following well-known ministers of the Word, which will appear during 1901.

THOMAS NEWBERY.	GEORGE ADAM.
ALFRED J. HOLIDAY.	DONALD MUNRO.
MAX ISAAC REICH.	JOHN SMITH.

A Series of Stenographed Addresses given by the Editor in Glasgow on "THE WORD OF GOD: its place in the Heart, the Home, and the House of God." Six Addresses on "CHURCH TRUTHS," with many practical papers for young Believers.

We shall be glad to send a packet of *Specimen Copies* to any of our friends who will seek to introduce the Magazine to those who may not have seen it. Kindly send address, say how many can be used for this purpose, and they will be sent on at once.