

THE
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WITH PRACTICAL MINISTRY ON
THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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The Believer's Magazine.

FOR BIBLICAL EXPOSITION, AND MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

A Prayer, a Promise, and a Pledge, for 1920.

IT was New Year's night. A company of Christians had assembled to give thanks unto God for the blessings of the previous year, and to commit themselves anew to the Lord and His keeping. The glow of the great Ulster Revival, in which most of them had been converted, was in their hearts, and its praises on their lips. There was nothing of form or ceremony, little of programme or order, in that gathering. The Spirit of God was there, and many lips were opened in prayer and praise and words of testimony at His call. All was fresh, and simple, and full of power. The stream flowed on, and the hearts of the happy saints overflowed. One man, to whom the Lord's salvation had come, saving him from a life in open sin, and transforming him into a devoted follower of the Lord, stood up, and from an open Bible in his hand—for it was his first public testimony for the Lord—read from Psalm cxix. 117, "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe, and I will have respect unto Thy statutes continually." His heart was too full, and his lips too weak to say much on the passage, but he simply remarked, "It's all there, a Prayer, a Promise, and a Pledge for all the year," and sat down. Yes, indeed, "it is all there," and there too for us, and for the year upon which we are entering now.

"HOLD THOU ME UP," is the heart

prayer of the saint who knows his weakness, and believes in God's keeping power. It may well be on our lips morning by morning, ere we set forth on the unknown journey of each day. "God is able," for in His hand there is power to "uphold" His people, against all odds, and above all traps and snares. Self-confidence leads to a fall, but conscious weakness clings to God, and proves His gracious, preserving power.

A PROMISE.—"I shall be safe." God has said it. "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord, shall be safe" (Prov. xxix. 25)—safe from the adversary's strength, his wiles and snares; safe from the world's allurements and deceptive charms; safe from the pride and plague of the human heart. Held in the hands (John x. 28) of the Father and the Son, preserved for Jesus Christ (Jude 1, R.V.) until He comes to claim His purchased possession.

A PLEDGE.—"I will have respect unto Thy statutes continually." Upheld and safe, not to become careless, never to walk at ease, unwatchful, but to be free and fit to "have respect" to, and be ready to do all that the Word of the Lord calls for from His people, in the "statutes"—the unchanging directions of His Word. Such is the simple but ever effective way of spending a truly godly and happy year. As the Irish convert said—"It's all there," and it is for us to enjoy it.

The Lord of Glory.

A MEDITATION ON THE GLORIES OF CHRIST.

THE title occurs once in the New Testament, and that in connection with the Lord's rejection at the hand of the great ones of the world, the leaders of this present age, who, if they had possessed that wisdom which is of God, "would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. ii. 8).

"The Lord of Glory" is the title here given by the Spirit, to Him in whom all moral, official, and eternal glories shine in all their brightness. And He is the world-rejected and the heaven-accepted Christ of God. Although no one ever stood in this world so worthy of its homage, so wholly due its allegiance, the world gave the Lord of Glory, not its crown and sceptre, but a felon's cross and shame. Heaven welcomed Him to its highest seat, and acclaimed Him Lord of all, as it crowned Him "with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9) on His ascension day. So we learn that the Crucified Christ of Golgotha, is "the Lord of Glory" in heaven. Blessed it is to know it, and knowing it to own it and to confess Him our Lord in this the time of His rejection at the hands of the world.

Of these glories of the Lord, the Word tells us particularly of three. There was His *Moral* glory, the beauty and perfections of His character, that shone forth in all His words and works and ways, as He passed through the world among all conditions of men. It "could not be hid." The people said, "He hath done all things well." The demons owned Him

"the Holy One of God." The Roman Governor testified, "I find no fault in this Man." The dying robber at His side testified, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." Disciples attracted to Him, asked, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" They left "all" to follow Him. Stupid and "slow of heart" to believe all He had taught, and to follow on in the path along which He led, yet they would not go back to walk no more with Him, as mere professors, who had no life link with Him did. They could, if they had wanted, but when He asked them, "Will ye also go?" they answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Ah! that was it. He had no equal. He has none now. "Chiefest of the ten thousand" to His own, He has won their hearts and bound them to Himself. Can we say that thus it is with us, beloved? Or are the world's attractions and allurements in danger of gaining our love and claiming our esteem, while toward "the Lord of Glory" our love is waxing cold, and our devotion half-hearted. If we find it so, it is time to call a halt, to search our ways, examine ourselves, and find what evil suitor is gaining that place in our hearts, which by right belongs to the Lord of Glory alone.

His *Official* glory as Redeemer, Shepherd, High Priest, and Head we are called to "consider" and to own. His claims upon us as Redeemer, His care for us as Shepherd, His service toward us as High Priest, and His supply for us as Head and Source of all blessing, we surely need no call to use. And the more we use Him so, the closer to Him we shall cling. Blessed be His Name, He is all ours, all

for us, ever with us, never forgetful of us, no, not for an hour. Our glory is to have such a Christ, of whom we should be able to confess, heartily, joyfully, and always: "He is the chiefest among ten thousand"—"He is altogether lovely"—"I count all things loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."—"We see Jesus crowned with glory" (Heb. ii. 9).

His *Eternal* glory, glory that He had with the Father before the world was, that essential, incommunicable glory which is His alone, which neither angel nor man can share it, we shall "behold" (John xvii. 24). But the glory given Him by the Father, we shall share (ver. 22; 1 Pet. v. 1). The church "arrayed in glory" (Eph. v. 27) not her own but His, will be presented faultless in the day of His coming. And when He returns in manifested power and glory to the world (Col. iii. 4), His saints will "appear with Him in that glory" as followers in His train (Rev. xix. 14). That glory His saints shall bear, and through endless ages display (2 Thess. i. 10; Rev. xxi. 11), before all worlds.

It is the heart's occupation with Christ as Lord of glory, and Lover of the soul, that wins and weans from earthly things. The tinsel glory of earth, fades before the excellencies of the Son of God. The heart now won by the love and loveliness of Christ will never find its rest or portion in things "under the sun." They have no glory, by reason of His glory that excelleth. If He is wanting all is gone. With Him, the wilderness blossoms, and the homeward journey "leaning on the Beloved" is as the days of heaven on earth.—J. R.

Jesus Christ :

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

INTRODUCTION.

BY WM. HOSTE, LONDON.

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

THE word here translated "declared" is often used in Greek writings of the interpretation* of things sacred, and divine—oracles, visions, dreams, and is that from which our word "exegesis" is derived.

The exegesis of a passage is its interpretation, as distinct from its application. The Lord Jesus interprets the Father; the Holy Ghost applies the truth to our souls through the Word, and we interpret it, for better or worse, in our lives, that "if any obey not the Word, they may be won without the word," like worldly husbands by godly wives (1 Pet. iii. 1). A Christ-like life is the soundest of arguments; while an inconsistent life nullifies all arguments.

"No man hath seen God at any time." There were *Theophanies* in the Old Testament, that is, appearances of God, under the temporary disguise of human form, as to Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, and Daniel. But God as such was never seen. "God is a spirit," "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim. vi. 16). Why cannot I see God? querulously asked the sceptic. "Are you sure you

* To interpret from one language to another, is *hermeneutis* (John v. 38).

could bear to see Him?" was the reply. "You cannot look at the sun, but God is greater than the sun." Israel "saw the glory of Jehovah;" indeed, it is said, "They saw the God of Israel," but to avoid misconception Moses impressed on them that though the Lord spake unto them out of the midst of the fire, and they heard the voice of the words, "they saw no *similitude*" (Deut. iv. 12). Let them take heed not to corrupt themselves by making graven images to represent what they had never seen (v. 15), and so fall where the heathen fell, of whom we read, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God . . . but changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man and to birds and fourfooted beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up . . . to dishonour their own bodies between themselves" (Rom. i. 23). They degraded God: He let them degrade themselves. If the witness of Creation to the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator suffices to condemn the heathen, who make idols of the Deity, what must be the responsibility of those who, in the full blaze of Christianity, represent God in image, picture, and painted window?

Moses himself desired to see God. "I beseech Thee shew me Thy glory," but instead, God shewed him His "goodness," for He said, "Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me and live." Moses had to rest content to see His "back parts," the "goodness" of God, as revealed in His Name. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness

and truth . . . and that will by no means clear the guilty" (Exod. xxxiii. and xxxiv.). But the key to all this was withheld, and can only be found in a crucified and risen Saviour. There was then a lesser glory which could be seen; a higher, which was inapproachable to the creature. But "God, who commanded the light to those out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6).

There can be little question that the appearances of Jehovah in the Old Testament time in human form, or under the *semblance of fire as in the bush, and in the Shekinah*, were through the same glorious Person. Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus of the New. He was "the brightness of His glory," before He became "the express image (Greek, *character*, impress) of His Person;" the *appearance* of the Invisible God before He became His image (Greek, *eikon*).

The Path of Blessing.

COMMIT thy cares to God,
 On Him roll all thy care,
 Worlds are to Him no load,
 He waits to hear thy prayer;
 He who in ancient years,
 Did part the rolling sea,
 Can still thy greatest fears,
 And make a way for thee.

All means always possessing,
 Invincible in might,
 His way is all for blessing,
 His doings all are right;
 Whatever God disposeth,
 He never fails in strength,
 Though earth and hell opposeth,
 It triumphs sure at length.

The Church as the Bride.

W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THERE is not a more precious truth in the whole Word of God, or one with such a wealth of typical pictures to illustrate it, as the truth of the Church as the Bride of Christ. The Church is not the subject of prophecy, and had it never been brought into existence, no prophecy would have failed. But now that it has been brought into existence, we can look back and see so many precious types, which would have been without meaning to us, but for their application to this aspect of the Church. To indicate a few, we may name Adam and Eve, Isaac and Rebekah, Joseph and Asenath, Boaz and Ruth. In all, save the first of these, we have the call of the Gentiles foreshadowed, as fellow-members in the body and as part of the Bride of Christ. That Gentiles as such are to be brought into blessing under Israel in the millennium, is the subject of prophecy. But this is quite a different matter from the Divine call of a people out from "all nations," to form a body and a bride for Christ in heaven.

Before we turn to the Word as to this precious subject, it may be necessary to notice one or two objections to it. We are told that Israel, and not the Church, is the bride. Israel is always spoken of in Scripture as the "wife," one already in marriage relationship. And the idolatry that they, as a people, so often fell into, is spoken of as "adultery," the sin of those who have broken their marriage vows. But when we come to the New Testament we see a different word used.

In Rev. xvii. we have one who professes to be the spouse of Christ, and she is more guilty than ever Israel was. Linked up with a world whose hands are red with the blood of Christ, her sin is of the same nature as Israel's, and yet the word God uses is different (see Rev. xviii. 9), for the "marriage" of the true bride has yet to come.

Again, it is said by some, that if the Church is the body, it cannot also be the bride. But the Word of God shows that the very first of the typical brides was said by her husband to be, "Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. ii. 23). Does not this objection betray a misconception of the spiritual realities, set forth in these two figures?

It seems as if the difficulty with some, in accepting the truth that the Church is the bride as well as the body of Christ, arises from confounding two spheres, the *heavenly* and the *earthly*. Israel, in the earthly sphere is the wife of Jehovah, while the Church is the bride of the Lamb. And restored Israel, will be associated with Jehovah in millennial blessing ON the earth, while the Church will be associated with Christ as the Lamb ABOVE it, in the heavenlies. For *association* is the outstanding thought in this relationship.

One other point. The marriage scene, which is described in Rev. chap. xix., cannot be that of Israel and the Lamb, and this for two reasons. First, Israel, as we have seen, is already spoken of as the "married wife." Second, at the time we have this scene taking place in heaven, the Jew is being crushed under the heel of the Antichrist, and the ten tribes have

not yet been restored or regathered. It is strange how any can think that Israel is in view, in this marriage scene of chapter xix.

We turn now to a few Scriptures, which clearly set forth the bridal relationship. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church: For we are members of His body (R.V.). For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning CHRIST AND THE CHURCH" (Eph. v. 25-32).

It seems passing strange how anyone could read this passage and still refuse to accept the truth of the Church being the Bride. Yet there are those who tell us that there is nothing in the passage to teach it, and that the reference to Adam and Eve does not teach it at all. When we hear this kind of talk, we are reminded of what one of earth's great men said, "Language was evidently given to hide its meaning." But the Word of God is all plain and clear. It abounds in figures, and types, and "the body"—or substance of them all—is Christ.

Worship.

NOTES OF A CONFERENCE ADDRESS.

BY C. H. JORDAN.

I PURPOSE submitting for the consideration of those present, some remarks on the subject of Worship.

It is a subject of the highest importance, and, from all God's dear children, it demands the most careful attention. It does not, however, appear to be as fully understood by some as it should be. The occasions when we meet to remember our Lord in the breaking of bread, are incomparably those which should be characterised by the spirit of true worship. It is then that we are gathered into His presence, and it would be well for us to more carefully appreciate on such occasions, the one who deigns to present Himself in our midst (Matt. xviii 20).

In order to help us in the consideration of our subject, we will refer to various Scriptures. First, bearing on this subject:

In the 8th chapter of the Book of Proverbs we have described in marvellous language our Lord's existence in the Eternity of the past, and the intimate and blessed relationship which ever existed between Him and God.

In the 1st chapter of the Gospel by John, He is set forth as the Word, the companion of God, the Creator of all things, and the Source of life.

In the 1st chapter of the 1st Epistle of John, He is stated to be the "Word of Life," the Eternal Life itself.

In the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, He is described as "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn

of every creature," the Creator of all things, the One by whom all things consist, and for whom all things were made; Head of the body the church, and First-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." And in Him it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell.

In the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we have a majestic description of His glorious Person and of His power. He is there said to be the "Heir of all things," the Maker of the worlds, the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, and the One who will ever remain, when all created things have perished.

Such are some of the attributes of the ever blessed Son of God.

He who was dead is alive for evermore, and is crowned with glory and honour (Heb. ii. 9). He, who when on earth "humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," is now "highly exalted," and given a Name which is above every name (Phil. ii. 8-9). And He is the One who, in the coming eternity, when in the midst of the throne, surrounded by all His redeemed, will be acclaimed as "worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. v. 12). Then shall we adoringly fall down and worship Him who liveth for ever and ever (Rev. v. 14).

Should more than this be required, to convince us of the majesty of the one who fulfils His gracious promise to be in our midst when gathered in His name?

Should it be necessary to exhort one another to "remember Him" when we are so gathered? Have we so little desire to engage in worshipping Him, that we prefer to be occupied with our own blessings, or with our own need?

Surely this should not be the case, but rather should we gladly avail ourselves of the precious opportunity of offering to Him the worship of our hearts, and of seeking to exalt Him in our midst.

Now, let us consider the means whereby we may be enabled to do this. In the forefront, we would place the study of God's precious Word, particularly those portions of it which refer to the person of the Lord. There should be frequent meditation of these Scriptures, so that there might be increasingly a clearer and a higher appreciation of Himself. Then let us ever bear in mind that when we are thus gathered in His Name at His table, it is to "remember Him" in obedience to His command. This should be intelligently understood, so that expressions of our need and general exhortation as to our conduct, might as far as advisable be avoided. Such things are very important, but they should have their proper time and place, and should not be allowed to interfere with the soul's occupation with the Lord Himself "in the midst." We should remember that we are in the sanctuary of His holy presence, inside the veil, in the holiest, into which we have liberty to enter by His blood. What a position grace has placed us in! Ought we not therefore to endeavour to forget ourselves and all our need, and even our mercies, when on such holy ground? Can

we not during the little time that remains, before our Lord comes, seek to place His worship on a higher plane than heretofore? Let us not forget that it is required of us that we should worship "in Spirit and in truth," and that our heavenly Father is seeking such worshippers. Should we not feel it both our duty and our privilege to pay far more homage to our Lord when in His presence, than to any earthly sovereign? The liberty we have to enter into His presence, should not therefore be availed of by us in considering ourselves, but in considering Him. That He is worthy of such homage, we doubtlessly admit. Then let us see to it that we honour Him thus, and are desirous of adoring Him in His own glorious Person, and not merely for what He has done for us.

When the wise men came from the East to worship the infant Christ at Jerusalem, they "fell down and worshipped Him," and presented to Him their treasures, and departed into their own country, not having asked a single favour. When our Lord was about to leave His disciples and to ascend into heaven, after His resurrection, "they worshipped Him," and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, having received His blessing without seeking it. In the Book of the Revelation, we have prophetically given instances of worship, majestically described, where the worshippers are wholly occupied in ascribing all honour to the One in "the midst of the throne." There is no evidence of any expression of need on their part, for indeed they have none. But their one object is to worship Him.

Now, is it not possible for our souls to be so taken up with the excellencies of our blessed Lord, that when we are gathered around Him at His table, our one and only desire will be to give Him our highest adoration? If such were the case, what joy there would be in His presence. He would rejoice over us, and our joy would be in Him, and it would be "full."

I do not desire to draw attention particularly, to the apparent lack of the spirit of worship in our meetings, but rather to so lead our souls into the contemplation of our Lord's own glorious person, that we shall have no other thought but to give Him, unreservedly, the honour He is so worthy to receive. We may be conscious of much failure in our worship in the past; then let us lay the matter before Him, and in earnest supplication seek the aid of His Holy Spirit, so that our worship during the little while that remains, ere we are gathered into the eternal presence, may be more to His glory. You and I are looking forward to a glorious and never-ending age of worship, when with souls unsullied, and with bodies glorified, we shall unite with all the redeemed in swelling that well merited acclamation of "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, unto our God for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. vii. 12).

In the meantime, let us seek to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ," "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." Amen.

A New Year Invasion.

THE record of this raid is given in 2 Kings xiii. 20, R.V. Bands of Moabites invaded the land, at "the coming in of the year." They were far-off kinsfolk of the house of Israel. But their history was bad (see Gen. xix. 37). They had been a snare to the people of God, had led them astray already (Num. xxvi.), and caused them to serve their gods (Judge x. 6). They are typical of those carnal, deceitful, subtle foes of ours, who scheme and plan to lead us away from God, into ways that well they know will strip us of our glory, and rob us of our power as the redeemed and separated people of God, His witnesses to the world, and His light-bearers among our fellows. The Moabites come for no good. Their mission is to "rob" and to destroy," as the devil's business ever is (John x. 10), no matter who he may use to do His work. Let this be clear, and half their game will be spoiled. The Moabite raiders are out for evil, they are enemies of God and of His work, and no matter what they pretend or profess, we can give them no quarter. They know when to come. The New Year is just over, with its times of new resolution, fresh dedication, and joyful expectation. The Moabites know it, and they come to spoil and ruin it all. They can stop a revival, start a disruption, split up happy fellowships, rend godly friendships, cause love to damp out, and sow the seeds of discord, discontent, and distrust, where love and grace have long had their reign. These Moabites, enemies of the Cross,

must be met square in the face with the armour of resistance. No parley is to be held with them. They are no better than their progenitors; they are children of Lot, their origin is evil, their end is to be smitten with the sword, and to perish for ever (Num. xxiv. 17). They are to be made to feel its sharp edge even now (Heb. iv. 12), not in destruction, but in resistance. And if they are, they will not visit again. If they are not resisted (1 Pet. v. 8), but given a "place" (Eph. iv. 27), they will not "flee," but come again. Who are these Moabite invaders? They are carnal, worldly professors of Christ's Name, who may or may not have Divine life in them, men who seek to seduce God's people into alliance with the ungodly (see Rev. ii. 14), to cast stumbling-blocks in the path to stumble those who seek to walk in the way of God's commandments. Beware of all such. They are more to be feared than Philistines, and can do more harm than Canaanites. Be particularly watchful of their doings now. They begin their raids at "the coming in of the year," and will spoil every vestige of work for God in the Gospel and among the saints, if they can. Let the Lord's watchmen be on the watch towers, and the Lord's warriors in their armour, in rank, to defend their heritage. And let there be no exposed flank, no gap in the ranks, through which they may gain an entrance to do their evil work. And let there be no comings and goings with these marauders, no unhallowed unions formed with them, when they come to seek or give "a helping hand," deceitfully.

Bright Lights in Dark Places.

SIGNOR PACE, AN ITALIAN EVANGELIST.

BY JOHN S. ANDERSON, ITALY.

BORN in S.E. Italy, he spent his early days in a good school, where he acquired the knowledge of agricultural science. At the age of 21, he joined the *Finanzieri* Regiment, and was sent to Florence. One evening he was going to the theatre, and opposite was the Gospel Hall with the invitation, "Free Entrance." He was a professed sceptic, but he entered, listened, heard the Gospel, believed, and was saved. Shortly after, he was baptised as a disciple of the Lord. His spare hours were then passed in my house, and in the hall. I observed that the truth was all new to him, and his ardent mind drank it in with avidity. Well do I remember how he questioned me about the denominations, "Why should we not meet and act as one?" This was troubling him much, and he went with his difficulty to a then, well known Christian Professor. Through reading the Word he was led on in the truth, learned the Lord's ways, and took his place and part in his uniform, in our meetings for worship. The local captain asked him what this new religion was, and why he in his military capacity promulgated it? Pace informed him that the doctrines we held were not new, that he did not profess to have the gift of spreading them; that as saints of God we met every Lord's Day morning to worship Him, and exercised ourselves in our gathering in offering Him praise. I had the opportunity several times of explaining to the captain how we met to

worship, and why in this manner. He decided to waive the question of Pace's new religion, but said he must leave Florence and go to the S.E. Coast of Italy. This was thought a wise scheme of curing him of his new religion. He came to the prayer meeting one evening, and while a brother was praying, "Lord, do not permit our dear brother to be sent away." Pace stopped him, and prayed that God would guide him, where He would have him go.

He arrived at a small coast town. In the barracks at night he heard some of his comrades whispering about Salvation. Pace called out, "Are any of you believers?" The reply was, "Silence, the lights are out. You can ask more in the morning." Being tired, Pace went to bed, but sleep fled from him. "Was I dreaming, or what was it I heard? The Gospel, believing, salvation: I shall find out in the morning." With sunrise he was up, and asked his comrades what their conversation meant. "There is a coastguard soldier who tells us that he is saved, and says we may be. He is now on duty at the coast." Off Pace went, and found his *brother* faithfully watching the coast. Pace went to him and asked him if he was a believer. "Yes, I am." Then they kissed, and they knelt on that lonely shore! Pace was able to confirm the testimony of his brother; and the news became so alarming for the priests, that they were sent to Rome. Such are God's ways, and the varied means He uses in making known His Gospel, and sending forth His witnesses to dark corners of the earth.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

GOSPEL SUBJECTS WITH NOTES AND OUTLINES.

Christ for Us.

As Substitute, in Death (1 Pet. iii. 18).

As Firstfruits, in Resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 20).

As Forerunner, in Heaven (Heb. vi. 20).

Salvation through a **SUBSTITUTE**, is taught in the language of the types (Gen. xxii. 8, 14; Exod. xii. 5, 6), by the voices of the prophets (Isa. liii. 5), in the records of the evangelists (John i. 29), and in the doctrine of the Epistles (1 Pet. ii. 24). And He, who was His People's Substitute in death, is, in Resurrection, their **REPRESENTATIVE**, now appearing in the presence of God for them. Pledge and Firstfruits of their presence there (John xiv. 19; xii. 26). As **FORERUNNER** He has gone to "prepare" (John xiv. 2), for, and to announce their speedy arrival there.

The Work of Christ.

He Died as our Ransom (1 Tim. ii. 6)—Redemption.

He Rose as our Justification (Rom. iv. 25)—Liberty.

He Lives as our Keeper (Rom. v. 10)—Security.

He Comes our Glorifier (2 Thess. i. 10)—Conformity.

The Dignity and Excellency of Christ's Person, give infinite value to His work. His blood is "precious" (1 Pet. i. 19), its virtues are abiding (Heb. x. 18). He gave His life (Matt. xvii. 28), Himself (1 Tim. ii. 6), to God a **RANSOM**—for all, in virtue of which there is a Gospel to all (Mark xvi. 15), God's good news of remission provided for all (Acts x. 43). Sufficient for all, yet only efficient in those that believe (Acts xiii. 38, 39). His **RESURRECTION** was God's seal of acceptance of His work (Acts xiii. 30), the witness to the believing sinner's justification (Rom. viii. 34). Now "in Christ" (Rom. viii. 2), **IN** His life (Rom. v. 10), the believer is "kept safe," preserved in and "for Christ Jesus" (Jude i., r.v.). At His coming again, all who are now justified, shall then be glorified (Rom. viii. 30).

CONCISE STUDIES ON FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS.

The Deity of Christ.

Made known by the Father (Matt. i. 23; John i. 1).

Claimed by the Son (John x. 30; John v. 21).

Witnessed to by the Spirit (Heb. i. 8; 1 Pet. iii. 15).

Owned by Angels (Heb. i. 6; Rev. v. 11-12).

Confessed by Saints (John xx. 28; Rom. ix. 5).

The Godhead of the Son, His equality with the Father and the Spirit, is the rockfast foundation of the Gospel. Apart from full Deity, He could not

be the sinner's Saviour, Revealed by the Father, manifested in the ways, words, and works of the Son, His Godhead is established by many "infallible proofs." Yet it is widely denied, not alone by infidels, but by some who claim to own Him as Example and Teacher. But if He were not God the Son, His claims were false and His teaching lies. The faith of the soul must be, "My Lord and my God," or nothing.

The Incarnation of Christ.

The Word became flesh (John i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16).

Partook of flesh and blood (Heb. ii. 14-17; v. 7).

Was Born of a woman (Gal. iv. 4, with Luke i. 30-35).

Took the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 7; Luke xxi. 27).

In the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3).

Eternally Divine, never ceasing to be less than God, the Son took flesh and blood, became true man, but without sin. His humanity was perfect, without taint or frailty, as His character was without blemish, His walk without spot, His death voluntary, not from sin or its results. He bare the sins of others, and for them He died. For others He "became sin," while ever in Himself the Holy One of God.

The Atonement of Christ.

Its Necessity (Heb. ix. 22; Job xxxiii. 24).

Its Nature (John i. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 18).

Its Sufficiency (Heb. ix. 12, 25-28; Eph. v. 2).

Its Results (Rom. iii. 25-26; Heb. i. 3; x. 17).

Apart from shedding of blood, is no remission (Heb. ix. 22); the blood is the life poured out (Lev. xvii. 11) to make atonement. Christ's death as a sacrifice to God (Eph. v. 25; 1 Tim. ii. 6), to give satisfaction and effect reconciliation (Rom. x. 10, r.v.), is thus viewed. Accepted and witnessed to by Resurrection (Acts xiii. 29, 30), He is now the Propitiatory (Rom. iii. 25), as well as the Propitiation (1 John ii. 2).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Should a Christian Join a Friendly Society?

Am I, as a Christian, at liberty to become a member of one of the many Friendly Societies which exist for the mutual benefit of their members in worldly things alone? They have no religious profession as societies. Their members may be of any religion, or none. And there is absolutely no compulsion to attend any of their meetings, in which a Christian might find things done he may not feel free to share. Any counsel from the Word of God, would be valued.

The objects and benefits of such societies may be for good. We believe their originators had the help of fellow-workers in view, especially in times of sickness and unemployment. And like many a worldly institution, they have doubtless succeeded in relieving distress. But the questions for a Christian to ask himself are: Does my Lord bid me be in affinity with those who are still men of the world and unconverted to God, in this or any other of their associations? Does being a member of a Friendly Society involve being under a common yoke with the unconverted? If it does, then the Word of God forbids the Christian to share it (see 2 Cor. vi. 14). It may exist for the best of purposes, but this does not make an alliance forbidden by God right. A Christian servant may serve a worldly master, and receive either his wages or his gifts, but no yoke is involved in that. But were he to become a member of an association of such servants, open to all, without the least consideration of their relation to God or spiritual state, he would by this act place himself under a common yoke with the unconverted, and have to disobey the plain commandment of the Lord to "obey" the master whom he serves. And this wholly owing to his relationship to his yoke-fellows even if he has no personal complaints against him, and even to "down tools" and go on strike, if the "society," of which he is a member, calls him to do so. This surely makes it clear that he is not "the Lord's freeman," able to do what he knows to be his Lord's will, but that his "Society" associations prevent him from acting as a Christian ought, and compel him to do what a Christian ought not. There are numerous "side ways" proposed, such as paying the weekly sum, but attending no meetings; having membership but no active interest in the working of the concern; and such like. But while these may work fairly smoothly, and give the Christian's conscience a measure of ease in his unscriptural position, the "yoke" by which he is governed is there, and may any day assert its claim on his "loyalty," no matter what the Lord in heaven says to the contrary. We know how Christian men in public works are hunted and badgered to "join" those so-called "Friendly Societies," and reproached as selfish, self-righteous, and much else, if they do not. Some have been threatened with expulsion from their employment, and others with non-advancement, unless they do. But there is a God in heaven, high above all. And if He ask His child to keep himself

apart from alliance with the ungodly, and unyoked from men whose principles are of the world and not of the Father, we are absolutely sure that He will never allow any obedient child of His to lack, or to suffer, or to be ultimately a loser, for honouring his God and obeying His Word. But faith may be well tested before it is rewarded, and it is just here that the CRUX of the whole case lies. When one is out of touch with God he cannot trust him, and so he prefers to trust "an arm of flesh."

Answers to Correspondents.

PRIMAS.—The "angel of the church" (Rev. ii. 1), was not "THE minister." There was no such official in the New Testament churches. In "the church at Antioch" (Acts xiii. 1, 2), we read of five who "ministered unto the Lord," and there was evidently room for more, when the Lord sent them see (chap. xiv. 23, 32, 35).

BETA.—The words of John iii. 8, do not as you infer, illustrate the work of the Spirit of God in the new birth, by the motions of the wind. The R.V. margin reads, "The Spirit breathes where He willeth," telling the sovereign acts of the Holy Spirit, here in personal regeneration, and in 1 Cor. xii. 11, in distribution and fellowship of ministry in the Christian assembly. His WILL in both being supreme. Would to God it were more recognised. Then we should have fewer spurious conversions, and less second-hand unprofitable ministry.

A. B. M., GLASGOW.—Go on with your Gospel work, in the sphere where God is blessing your labours. If He has a wider and larger field for you to occupy, He will give guidance. But do not make any move, until He points the way. Then the present obstacles will melt away.

G. W., CUMB.—If the men who preach in the open-air are not of consistent Christian character, their testimony will have little respect from those who know their lives. And it certainly cannot have the blessing of God. If you do not feel at liberty to share in it, then do not. There is plenty of scope. And the world is wide enough for all.

J. M'F., CO. DURHAM.—The assembly's weekly Bible reading is usually held on a week night, at a convenient hour to allow most to attend. An elder brother would, in most cases, open the subject with a brief exposition of it, then others briefly contribute what they can, as simply and shortly as possible. Difficulties may freely be stated, but wordy discussion on points avoided. We notice

that a large number of assemblies are taking up the study of **Paul's Epistle to the Galatians**, with the aid of the monthly notes which appear in **The Christian Worker** on this subject, for the present year. We shall be pleased to send a card of subjects and a copy of notes FREE, to others who desire to begin this month. It is equally good for personal study, and as a theme for Classes of young Christians, and Cottage meetings for Bible Study.

D. G., RENFREWSHIRE.—The gifts of an assembly for evangelistic work in places greatly neglected in the homelands, and for labourers in lands afar, should be kept entirely separate from expenses, such as hall rent, light, heat, in which ALL are liable. It is no "gift" to pay one's debt, and many, it is to be feared, do not even reach to that. Those who have charge of the finance of any assembly, may find it wholesome to remind their fellow-believers how much each is required to contribute weekly to clear their share of responsibility. Then they will know exactly where they stand, whether they are deeply "in debt," or abounding in the grace of liberality. It is surely an unhealthy symptom, if these matter of fact points in practical Christianity are neglected in any assembly. Hyperspirituality and small collections are apt to be found together.

H. L. B., LONDON.—We may well wonder why so few of the Lord's people are attracted to the gathering simply in the Lord's Name, as compared with "the former years" to which you refer. We do not believe there are anything like the same number of really "born again" church members in the "denominations" as there were then, certainly not so many spiritual folks exercised about doing God's will. But neither is there the glow of spiritual warmth, the distinct note of wholesome teaching, or the separate path in daily life which characterised those of earlier years, who were found "without the camp," gathering simply in the Lord's Name. There has been a steady "levelling down," a silence on truths not generally welcome, a mixing and co-mixing with men and institutions where there is no love for the clean-cut position held by our fathers a generation earlier. But the "winning" of these to the truth—which is the chief reason [given for so many going and coming with these coteries—has not taken place. Nor do we expect it ever will, until we ourselves are revived and in spiritual condition to be used of God in such a ministry. Those who would help others out of a morass, must be well free of it themselves.

Points in Practice, for Assembly Leaders.

Worship, is usually richest and fullest in assemblies where there are many praying saints and few preaching and teaching brethren. The latter, unless restrained by a due sense of what is due to God in worship from His assembled people, are apt to occupy too much of the time in speaking to their fellow-worshippers, rather than in leading them out in worship toward God.

Ministry to an assembly's need, in strengthening its weak points and leading on in the truth where it is deficient, can best be given by those in its fellowship who are able to teach. There is little of this possible, where strangers do all the ministering.

Rule in the assembly, is usually most efficient where there is least said about it. It is those who serve the saints, labouring among them, who are really OVER them in the Lord (1 Thess. v. 12), not the kind who sit in the front seats, attend oversight meetings, sign documents, but do no true oversight or bishop work among the saints.

Godly Order in an assembly is best secured (1) by seeking to promote a right spiritual condition in those who compose it, and (2) by such ministry of the truth as keeps newcomers and young believers added to it instructed in "the way of the Lord more perfectly" (Acts xviii. 26), than most nowadays are. It is lack of knowledge how to "behave in the house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15), rather than a determination not to do so, that causes some to "walk disorderly." And the blame lies at the door of those who do not teach them God's ways.

United Service.—We hear a good deal at present about "united efforts in Gospel work," which in most cases means a "spurt" for a week or two, followed by a relapse into the old ruts and the old lethargy. The Scriptural, and therefore the best way to secure united service—which, rightly understood, is the healthy co-working of all the "members" (see 1 Cor. xii. 12), each in his own place and sphere, directly under the Lord as Head, and in the guidance of the Spirit as Controller and Strength—is, to teach what God says, regarding the personal responsibility of each in sharing in the work of spreading the Gospel, and leaving room for them, doing it as He desires it to be done. This secured and maintained in grace and power, there will be no lack of united and efficient service. But anything short of this, is artificial and forced.

Neglected Spheres of Gospel Work.

Earnest workers in lowly spheres, whose "reports" are seldom seen or heard, are invited to contribute to this column, items of interest and words of cheer, for the encouragement of others.

Kitchen Meetings.—"We have four kitchen meetings, mostly in the houses of unconverted people, who grant their use willingly. And we get more hearers of the sort that need the the Gospel, that we have in our large hall on Sunday nights. God is blessing richly, and so we go on looking up."—J. C., Ayrshire.

Young Converts.—"We saw quite a few young men converted during the later months of the year, and as usual the sects were out after them, asking them to become 'members.' But an elder Christian man, whose voice is never heard on the platform, had been 'watching for souls' (Heb. xiii. 17)—a word generally applied to those seeking to win the lost, but which is really meant for the saved. When the meetings were over, he gathered those who had been converted in his house, and led them on in the Word of God. The happy result is, that nearly all are now in the fellowship of the assembly."—W. M., Fifeshire

Neglected Children.—"Our village is chiefly composed of miners' houses, and there are hundreds of children for whose souls nobody cares. They grow up godless and untaught. Four of us, who have classes in the Sunday School, prayed over the matter together, and we were guided to ask the use of an empty house in one of the "rows," which we fitted up with plank seats, and began a class for young folks in the early evening. At first few came, but we wrought on, visiting, inviting, distributing Gospel messages, and enlisting the help of those who came to bring others. Now we are filled to crowding, and a Gospel meeting for old folks is well attended. God is blessing, and we expect to see good work done."—H. M.

Notes on Current Events.

At the Opening of 1920.

A New Year brings its new responsibilities, to witness, to work, to war. The devil is never asleep, nor should the watchmen of the House of the Lord. Now is the time of danger. The lamp must never burn low, nor the armour be put off.

Drunkenness is resuming its ancient reign in the

British Isles. Bars again are crowded. The streets are thronged with intoxicated men and women, and the haunts of shameless devilry, continue to set at nought all laws with impunity. And some who call themselves Christians are involved in this gruesome buisness, filling their coffers with ill-gotten gain from this ungodly traffic. Shareholders of companies, sleeping partners in concerns whose doings are filling asylums and prisons with ruined lives, and hell with lost souls. God will have something to say about this yet. He has now, to His own, who dabble in such things, for "filthy lucre." And few of them escape the present reaping in "corruption," of what they sow in wilful disobedience of the truth they know.

Lawlessness, seems to increase as the years go by. It is the fashion now to sneer at authorities of all kinds. The people of God need to watch their spirits and also their words, for if they fraternise with those who "despise Government," whether in the home, the church, the workshop, the town, or the Empire, they will soon find themselves "in the running" with those who are heading for Revolution. Separation to God, and Christ, clean and clear cut, is the only path of safety.

Church Union is again in the air, and some wonderful statements are forthcoming on the subject. One very prominent leader has advanced as his opinion that "all Scotsmen are born into the Church, just as they are into the nation." We had always believed in the Bible way of it, that only "born again" folk form the Church. But if this other way is the common belief, it accounts for a good deal of the "deadness." And when we learn from the Church standards that all baptised infants are thereby made "members of the visible Church," we do not much wonder if they advance in their "Church extension" theories. This accounts surely for the utter lack of any clear preaching of the sinner's ruin and his need of regeneration, ere he can see or enter the kingdom of God. A "union" of such materials is of no use to God. Another "Disruption,"—only this time between the living and the dead, the saved and the unconverted—would be of more value. And we may surely pray, that if the "union" is consummated, it will help to teach some of the "born again" folk, who are ill at ease over these proceedings, the true character of the systems they are upholding, and bring them outside of the whole thing, to a place of separation to God, where they may be free to do that which God's Word commands His people.

Letters to the Editor.

1.—Principles and Practice.

Dear Sir,—I feel constrained to write and say, that I am deeply thankful for the plain and definite testimony given in "The Believer's Magazine," on the subjects of separation from religious systems of human invention, and the Scriptural way in which God would have His people assemble for worship, as guided by the Spirit, in subjection to the Lord in the midst. There is evidently a lack of teaching on these truths in most assemblies, and what is worse, departure from the way of the Lord in PRACTICE, among those who profess to accept and even to teach the "principles" of Scripture on these things. I know that this is hindering many who are exercised as to their position in religious denominationalism, and stumbling others, while to young believers in assemblies, it is a very bad example to see those who take the place of leaders and teachers being publicly advertised to preach in sectarian churches and missions, which exist for the upholding of what is contrary to the Word of God. I know from personal experience what such inconsistency means, because very soon after I was brought out from the denomination of which I was a member, and began to assemble with believers simply gathering in the Name of our Lord, I had a severe test of my faith in this precious truth. By means of the ministry of a brother in Christ, who set forth, as I thought, very clearly and simply from the Word of God the principles upon which the early Churches were gathered, and gave his personal testimony as one accepting them for present practice, I was led to see the truth of separation and gathering in "the Name" alone. But I had not long been there until I was astounded to find this very brother announced to preach at 11 o'clock on a Lord's Day morning in a Baptist Church, situate in the same street as the meeting place of the assembly in which he was supposed to be a ministering brother. And his is by no means a solitary case. It is becoming too common, and is not only defended but commended by many. But if it be right to go back to denominational religion for a day, whether as a preacher or a hearer, it is clear that it was wrong to leave it, and if it was in obedience to God's truth that we came out from these systems—some at much personal cost—it would be interesting to know upon what principle those who, like this preacher, go back to them, either to worship in them, or by their ministry to support them. To the

simple, ordinary reader of God's Book, the two positions are incongruous, and the attempt to hold both by the same individual, points either to a sad lack of intelligence or a dulness of conscience. I hope some one fitted for such a ministry will take up this matter, and deal with it squarely and definitely, in the light of Scripture.—Yours ever "in the Truth,"

R. G.

2.—The Lord Adding to His Own.

"It is joyful to be in the midst of a true work of grace, in which the sovereign work of the Spirit of God is manifest in the conviction and conversion of sinners, using the blessed Gospel, apart from any of the new-fangled additions of solo singing and such like, which are said to be necessary in our time to make it 'attractive.' What nonsense! As if God's own good news, the costliest and greatest of all His mercies to man, were not sufficient for the purpose to which He designed it! Well, we have seen here a proof that God needs no such 'aids,' but can and does gloriously work without them, saving sinners every night, and using His own Word plainly spoken as the instrument. And it has been an added joy to see how those so saved and 'added unto the Lord,' have of their own desire sought to 'join themselves' (Acts ix. 26) to the company of the saved, in whose midst they have been converted, so they have also been 'added to the Church' (Acts ii. 47), and are nearly all in happy fellowship in the local assembly here. I was accustomed for many years to work on what are known as 'interdenominational' lines, where we sometimes had conversions. But I never had the joy I have now, of seeing those whom the Lord saves, coming CLEAN out from the world and right IN to the fellowship of the assembly of God. For most who were converted there, became hid in the crowd of unconverted professors, who soon pulled them down to their own condition. There is real satisfaction in doing God's work in His own way, and where this is done, He sees to the results thereof."

H. L.

3.—Regular Pastoral Visitation.

"The work of visitation and shepherding, after the pattern given in 1 Pet. v. 1-3; 1 Thess. v. 14, 15, is, I fear, much neglected, especially in city assemblies, where it is most needed. We have found that by going out two and two one night a week, visiting the homes of those in the assembly, in order, with the object of helping them in spiritual life, and in social intercourse, we overtake most households once, and some twice, in a year.—J. B.

About The Believer's Magazine, for 1920.

We gratefully acknowledge the many cheering and congratulatory messages from readers of **The Believer's Magazine**, in home and distant lands, at the commencement of our **Thirtieth Year**. We are thankful to find that the ministries of many writers, which go forth through its pages month by month, prove a word in season to very many who "desire the sincere milk of the Word," and seek to walk in its "old paths." When we began its publication it was with the desire to give "All the Word of God to all the people of God" in due season, and in right proportions, and especially to give place and prominence to those truths which are our only authority for being where we are, outside the camp of all the world's religious sects and systems, with their creeds and constitutions, to be guided by the teaching of the Word of God, which "liveth and abideth for ever." We knew that there was an effort being made at that time, to minimise and relegate to mere "matters of opinion," quite "non-essential to Christian fellowship," the truths which some of us learned from the Book of God nearly half a century ago, and regard as vital and fundamental to true Christian fellowship and assembly testimony, as set forth in the Word of God, and not at all matters concerning which there may be, and perhaps must be, what is called by some "differences of judgment," involving contrary practices, which cause division. We do not own that these may rightly exist regarding those precious truths rescued for us, by a former generation of godly men, who at much personal cost came out from the world's religion, and back to the simple pattern given in the Word, alike for personal Christian living and united worship and service. We began with a small edition; helpers rallied around, giving of their best to enrich our pages; and as old and valued co-workers passed to their rest, others were raised up and continue their active fellowship in providing seasonable and edifying ministry month by month, as the years go by, never more than at the present time. We do not "boom" the Magazine, nor do we get others to do so. If the message it brings is of God, and for blessing to His people, it will find its way, as it has with steady increase throughout the years, and we are confident we shall still have the continued fellowship of all who love the truth, in furthering its circulation.

We are especially anxious to see the magazine getting into the hands of fellow-believers who do not usually either hear or read the simple ministry

of God's Word, but who are desirous of learning what the will of the Lord is. There are some of this class in the acquaintance of most of us. Let the names of three or six or twelve of such, be thought of, and a copy of **The Believer's Magazine for 1920** handed to them if near, mailed to them if afar, with the request that they will receive and read it, and the prayer that God will bless its ministry to them. And there are missionaries and Christian friends in lone places who will be cheered and helped by a copy sent, from those who know them, and seek to hold up their hands in service.

In addition to the long list of articles given in our last issue as being in hands and in promise, for 1920, we have just received the following excellent papers:—

The Story of Kellah; or, For His People's Sake. A study of the Books of First and Second Samuel. By Wm. Rodgers.

Bible Solutions. Expository Notes on Difficult Texts and Disputed Doctrines. Especially helpful to Young Believers.

Missionaries: God-sent or Self-chosen and Man-trained. A Searching and Solemn Inquiry.

Hills of Refreshing for Thirsty Souls. Precious Verses from the pen of an Invalid.

The Believer's Magazine may be ordered to come with the monthly parcel to the assembly, or it can be obtained through a local agent, or, if desired, sent to your own address direct from the Publisher.

The Christian Worker Magazine for 1920 will contain each month enlarged, suggestive Notes and Outlines on **Paul's Epistle to the Galatians**, arranged in Fifty-two Weekly Subjects, for use in Assembly Bible Readings and Young Believers' Bible Study Classes, now in existence in most progressive and well ordered assemblies. A midweek united Scripture reading for an hour, taking up a continuous subject to which all contribute their part, has been proved in years gone by to be by far the most profitable form of instructive and edifying ministry among us. Addresses on isolated and fragmentary subjects are apt to be forgotten, but continuous and consecutive study and meditation on an Epistle, when rightly conducted, remains, and becomes productive of practical results in life and service. We commend the study of "Galatians," with the aid of these "Notes," and whatever other sound Scripture "helps" you may have access to, for each week of 1920, for personal profit, and as a means of edification and confirmation in the faith

Praying for Revival.

IN the current issue of a contemporary Christian Journal the following striking statements appear, regarding present spiritual conditions in the British Isles:—"From members of almost all denominations the same report comes: much movement, multiplied organization, feverish activity, but no real evangelism and no conversions." Over against this the writer goes on to say, "If we can judge from the evidence to hand, there are here and there all over the land, earnest Christians, who, individually and in small groups, are waiting on God for a mighty Revival." The former of these statements shows the need there is of a true Revival of spiritual power from on high. The latter tells the line along which it is likely to be obtained. Notwithstanding great preparations, elaborate organizations, and no end of resolutions, it has to be admitted by all who know the real condition of things in evangelistic and church associations, that the Gospel preached in the power of the Holy Ghost, producing conviction of sin and resulting in conversion to God, is the exception rather than the rule. If here and there a green spot appears in the arid waste, and a few souls are truly converted to God, it is generally through the instrumentality of some faithful witness, or by means of the energies of some godly group of believers who know what it means to "wait on God," for His arm to go forth with the Gospel they seek to make known to their fellows, in the full confidence that it is "the power of God unto salvation."

There is not and will not be any Revival in the "denominations" as such. The greater number need Regeneration, rather than Revival. This seems to be sadly lost sight of. And where all *profess* to be the children of God, the "multiplied organizations," which man's wisdom has brought in, have turned away the "river of God," from which all true spiritual freshness comes, and all true fruitfulness is derived. And while God is appealed to for help, it is only to sanction the arrangements which men have made, and to use the machinery they have set up to do His work, without His command, and in most cases contrary to His Word. All this will have to go, before God can be expected to appear in power and in glory, as in earlier and happier days. But the way is open to "praying hearts" to "draw nigh" unto Him, for that true reviving which He delights to give to "the hearts of the contrite" (Isa. lvii. 15), who take the low place before Him, and seek to order their service, however humble its sphere, according to the Word He has given to be obeyed. All thoughts and theories of a "general revival," in which churches are to be reconstructed, Christendom reunited, and great progressive movements for the world's conversion set agoing, all are "vanity." The apostasy—not the revival—of Christendom is what we are told in the Word to expect. But while Christ is on the throne in the heavens *for* His people, and the Holy Spirit the Comforter is *in* and *with* them here, there may be reviving and refreshing "all the days." And there will be individually just according to the measure of our personal dealing

with God, and subjection of heart and life to His Word. A group of godly, praying souls, in fellowship with God about His people and His work, will be His channels for blessing to those around them, and as the preservative "salt" to hinder the spread of degeneration and corruption in the spheres to which their influence reaches. But *His* "churches" as such, will need a thorough cleansing and out-purging of what hinders the Spirit from working in them and through them, before any abiding Revival can be expected in their midst, for God will never sanction *that which His Word forbids, by sealing its operations or using it as His ordinance for blessing.* Of this we may be quite sure. But as in olden time "false prophets" misled the people by prophesying "smooth things" to them, and in painting fancy pictures of a national revival and return to more than pristine power and glory, while they were actually on the last stages of the path leading into national ruin, so the "false teachers" of Christendom of this day, are busily engaged in buoying up the false hopes of their congregations with fair promises of that which they know—or ought to know—will never come. The hope of the godly for reviving and *refreshing within* and for power for testimony and service *without* is, first the heart dealing with God, direct and personal, and next the coming together of those whose hope is in God, to wait upon Him, prepared to go on as He may lead them, apart from human organizations and multiplied machinery, in a path of dependence on Himself alone, and in the way of obedience to His Word.

J. R.

The Lord of Glory.

MEDITATIONS ON THE GLORIES OF CHRIST.

IN the beautiful, though mysterious words of Prov. viii. 22-28, we learn from Wisdom's account of her doings, that Christ, as the Anointed, is the Eternal One. He was with God "in the beginning of His way." He was "by Him, as One brought up with Him." He was ever "His delight," and ready for His use in working out all His counsels. In Him, all these counsels were laid, before the world was, and in due time all will be fulfilled. *In this ETERNAL ONE, all things of creation and redemption, things already accomplished and things yet to come, have in Christ their Fulfiller.* What a message does this bring us, and what assurance and comfort it conveys! Christ ever by God, ever ready for His use, to be brought forth as the Worker of all His counsels in creation, redemption, and salvation. All is settled in eternal counsel, all secured in Christ, and all to be manifested to the glory of His grace in due time. Nothing can arise, no weapon can be formed for evil, which God has not foreseen, and which Christ, as God's great Ordinance, has not resources to fully meet and deal with, righteously and victoriously.—J. G. BELLETT.

THE COMING ONE.—From the moment in which the first great promise of the Seed of the woman as Bruiser and Conqueror of Satan was given, faith looked onward to Him as "the Coming One"—as the Word in the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures is, and thus more plainly marks a divinely given title of our Lord

Jesus Christ (see Psa. cxviii. 26; Matt. iii. 11; xi. 3). In patriarchal times, Abraham looked for Him as the *Lamb* provided by God (Gen. xxii.), Moses spake of Him as the *Prophet* who should arise. David sang of Him who should be *King*, and heir to his throne. Prophets told of the Coming One as Sufferer and Sacrifice for sin, and throughout these long ages, all eyes of faith were turned toward Christ as "the Coming One." For Him all true hearts waited. Like aged Anna of old, they knew that "redemption in Jerusalem" and for mankind, would come through Him alone. To faith and hope, all through these ages, Christ was in reality their expectation, as "the Coming One."—HENRY DYER.

CHRIST IN HUMILIATION.—I know no language stronger than the words of Phil. ii. 6, where it is said of the Lord Jesus, "who *existed* in the form of God," to assert His Godhead—that He "*was* God," as John i. 1 tells us. In the eternal past, before there was a star in the heavens or a man on the earth, He "*was* God." What form of existence God has now, Christ had then. He was co-eternal and co-equal with God. But He did not clutch at this, glory though it was. "He emptied Himself"—not indeed of His Godhead, for He never ceased to be God, either when He lay in His mother's arms, or when He hung between two robbers on Golgotha's Cross—but He stooped to take the bond-servant's form, to do perfectly that which Adam and all his race had failed to do, to obey God, to do the Father's will and not His own. Herein is the glory of His humiliation! A

dependent Man on earth, living day by day on the Word of God, never acting, never moving without a command from His God, never hesitating, never halting when that command was given. And that always and all the way, for He "became obedient unto death." And what a death! "Even the death of the Cross." His is the glory of a perfectly obedient Man.—WM. LINCOLN.

PERFECT IN CHARACTER.—OUR Blessed Lord was perfect in His character. As the burnt offering of Levitical times tells of His perfect devotion to God in service and sacrifice, so the meat offering portrays the perfection of Him who so served and suffered. It was of fine flour; there was no coarseness, no unevenness in it. No grace excelled in Christ; all was in due proportion. His gentleness never degenerated into weakness, nor His faithfulness to obstinacy. No act of service of His, ever contradicted another. And what He was, He always was, everywhere and in all circumstances. In all this He stands as a contrast to the most devoted of His servants. In each, a certain grace preponderates. In a Paul, devotion, in a Peter, zeal, in a John, affection. But in the Perfect Man, no grace can be singled out as conspicuous, because all was perfect and in harmony. Blessed is it to have such a Saviour! Perfect, peerless is He, in all! How the heart delights to turn from ourselves and all others, to Him, to behold His glory here, as everywhere, excelling.—T. S. HENRY.

THE MORAL GLORY OF THE LORD.—His perfection in character and in way, is the glory we behold in His path in the Gospels.

The Church as the Bride.

II.—THE OBJECT OF CHRIST'S LOVE.

W. J. M'CLURE, CALIFORNIA.

WE will now consider the Church in her relation of Bride, and first as

THE OBJECT OF CHRIST'S LOVE. "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." When did that love begin? We must go back of our conversion, back beyond the Cross, back into a past eternity to find. "According as He (God) hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4). Then, indeed, could it be said of Him in regard to the church, that His "delights were with the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 31). He can truly say to the Church what He said of Israel of old, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3), and having "loved His own," he loves them "to the end" (John xiii. 1).

We turn to the type of Adam and Eve, and there see what foreshadows this. We have spoken of Christ loving the Church before it had any being. We see Him first as in the bosom of the Father, but there is no Church with Him there. As there was a time when there was an Adam but no Eve, so there was a Christ who was alone. The interval in Adam's case may not have been long, but it was just enough to make the type complete.

He also "GAVE HIMSELF FOR IT." That God did not make the woman at the same time and in the same manner as the man, was, we doubt not, that He might work out a type of the great truth that we find expressed in John xii. 14, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and

die, it abideth alone." There could have been no union with Christ, but for the Cross. Of Adam, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. ii. 18). But if he is to have a companion, he must go through death in a figure, for it will not do that God bring his bride into existence in the same way that He had brought Adam, or the type would be marred. So there is Adam's "deep sleep," which tells of the death of Christ. And there is the rib taken from his side while he slept, which surely proclaims life from Christ. And of that rib, God builded a bride for Adam.

It is most suggestive how that, in these Old Testament marriages, we get again and again foreshadowed what speaks of the Cross, as if God would reiterate this truth. Union only comes through the death and resurrection of Christ. Isaac is seen on the altar in Gen. chap. xxii, and in chap. xxiv. he appears as raised from the dead, and gets a bride. Jacob serves twice seven years for Rachel. Joseph was raised up from the dungeon to get Asenath. Moses delivers Zipporah, and she becomes his wife. Boaz goes to the gate and purchases Ruth, who as redeemed becomes his bride.

All these, each in its place and measure, foreshadows the great and glorious fact, so fully made known in the Epistles of the New Testament, namely, that the Church owes her existence to the death, resurrection, and glorification of the Son of God, from whom she came, to whom she is united, with whom she ranks in heavenly glory, and at whose side she will shortly stand in glory.

Jesus Christ :

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

INTRODUCTION.—II. WM. HOSTE, LONDON.

THE first mention of the glory of Jehovah is in Exod. xvi. Two gifts were bestowed on Israel, "at even" and "in the morning," and with a different purpose. "At even, then *ye shall know* that the Lord hath brought you out of the land of Egypt" (v. 6). This came true in the gift of the quails—natural food, material mercies, providentially supplied, easily understood, and very cheering in the wilderness journey. Provision by the way is intended to assure our hearts, that the Lord has put us in the way. But there was something else. "In the morning, then *ye shall see* the glory of the Lord" (v. 7). This was fulfilled next day, when "upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing as the hoar frost." They called it "manna," "for they wist not what it was," and, alas! soon tired of it (Num. xi. 6). This was a higher thing than the quails, it was a heavenly instrument: "He gave them bread from heaven to eat;" "Man did eat angels' food." As the old corn of the land they fed on later, is a symbol of Christ in resurrection glory, so is this of Jesus in humiliation, "the Bread of God which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world" (John vi. 33). But He was unrecognised, misunderstood, and hated. "The world knew Him not." "His own received Him not. 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). All such, the apostle linked with himself, when he testified, "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us, and *we* beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (v. 14). This glory was not, as I judge, the glory manifested on the Transfiguration Mount, but the *moral* glory of His Person.

One grand purpose of the Incarnation was to reveal the Father, and who could do this but He who had eternal knowledge of Him, being Himself the eternal Son—the Word who was "in the beginning"—and eternally in relation to Him? Who but a Divine Being could accurately know a Divine Person? for "no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Who is qualified to interpret the Father, save He who is "in the bosom of the Father?" No created being—cherubim, seraphim, archangel, or angel—could take that place, save He who is "the only begotten Son." He only could learn the secrets of the Father's heart, and interpret them to us. Would we learn "the secret of the Lord," then we too must lean upon His breast, like the beloved disciple. Would we know the Father? then we must trace the pathway of Him who, while He walked the earth, was yet in heaven (chap. iii. 14), considering His ways, His works, and words, for all were the reflection of the Father's will. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do" (John v. 19). "As I hear I judge" (John v. 30). "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me" (John vii. 16). "He that hath seen

ME hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 7). Not that they were the same, but that His every act, was the fulfilment of the Father's purpose, every word the echo of His command, every step the effect of His leading, and all His ways the unfolding of God's great heart of love.

Christ, the Pattern Servant.

NONE can read the Four Gospels, in which the Spirit, through the Evangelists, sets before us the activities of our Lord through all the period of His public life and service, without being impressed with how fully all His days and hours were filled in His "Father's business." Serving and giving, filled up each day. There was no loitering in His path. His activities in the midst of human woe and need, were ceaseless. He sought no ease, no relaxation for Himself. When He retired to a "desert place" it was to have converse with His disciples apart from the multitude. If He sought the solitudes of Olivet and Gethsemane, it was to pray. When He went into company, whether the crowd without, or the social circle within, as Luke vii. 36, it was to meet with sinners, and win them to God. His remaining in one place, and His going to another, were not conditioned by ease or comfort, or from friendship and society, but wholly at His Father's call, and in furtherance of His work. Hungered Himself, He feeds the multitude, working a miracle to meet their need, but never for His own. Perfect in all His works and ways, Jehovah's pattern Servant, as well as His obedient Son, He stands before us without equal, our Exemplar to be copied, as well as our Lord to be obeyed.

No Heart for Christ.

WHEN one engaged in any department of the Lord's service loses heart for his work, finds little or no joy in it, and eventually lets it drop altogether, it will generally be found that he has lost heart for His Master. Love for Christ, true devotedness to His Person, makes His service sweet. Even when there is little in the work itself to cheer, it will be clung to and pursued for the Owner's sake. But when love to Christ waxes low, then all that concerns Him ceases to hold its place in the soul's esteem. His Word and His work are soon relegated to a secondary place, when the heart has lost its object. This is something to be jealously watched, for out of the heart are "the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23). When the heart is wrong, the life cannot be right. When the heart is true to Christ, His service is a delight. But when it becomes cold, everything is a burden. Let us search and try our state, lest there be in any of us "an evil heart of unbelief," in activity, which leads away from God and Christ. A heart for Christ, is the only real inspiration for His work, and there is nothing else—neither gifts, nor activities, of any value to God, where a heart for Christ is lacking. If you are tempted to desert your place of service because of little appreciation of your work from those to whom it is rendered, this may be allowed to test your loyalty to Christ, and to show whether you serve to please Him alone, or to gain approval, and, it may be, receive reward from your fellows. The greatest need of our time is a heart for Christ.

A. H. M. S.

God's Work: Man's Imitations.

AN ancient Eastern legend tells, that when the Queen of Sheba visited Solomon, to hear his wisdom and have the "hard questions" that occupied her thoughts answered, she brought with her into the royal presence, two bouquets of flowers, one plucked from the king's gardens in their freshness and fragrance, the other its replica, but the work of busy men's skilled fingers. The queen demanded that Solomon should tell from a distance, which was the real and which the imitation. "Open the casement and let in the bees," was the king's answer. And the bees swarmed around the real flowers, for in them alone there was fragrance and sweetness. Man's imitations of God's work, alike in creation and in grace, may please the eye, but they lack the fragrance and sweetness of the true handiwork of God, to which spiritual life in the saved sinner ever seeks, and without which it cannot be satisfied. This is a day of imitations of things in the kingdom of God. Not just the crude and repulsive counterfeits of other days, but the attractive and pleasing works upon which cultured, clever, artful man, uses his powers and spends his strength. They have attraction for and receive the commendation of all, save those who have their "scent" of spiritual things fresh in them. It was of this the apostle thought, when he wrote, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John ii. 20). It was not their "learning" nor their wisdom, but their spiritual discernment as taught by the Holy Ghost,

that was to keep them right, and cause them to refuse man's errors and hold to God's truth. A right spiritual condition in a saint, is a surer defence against the wiles of the devil in his corruptions of the truth, than any amount of mere information. And a ministry of wholesome, plain fare, in the grace and unction of the Holy Ghost, is what keeps saints and assemblies right with God in inward condition, and bright and clear in outward testimony. But there are many imitations of such a ministry, good enough to dazzle and draw unspiritual and undiscerning souls, but not to lead them nearer to God and further from the world. A ministry that fails to sanctify and sever from love of the world, from running after its pleasures, following in its fashions, pandering to its tastes, and seeking to please rather than to profit, is not a ministry from God, or in the power of the Spirit. It is man's imitation. It may be like the real thing, but it lacks that sweetness which the pure and precious Word yields under the teaching of the Spirit, to the soul. And like the "bees," who have tasted of the true sweetness of the flowers in Solomon's gardens, and would not have man's imitation, so the soul, in fellowship with God, will seek after and be found where that true ministry of Christ is found, be its channel ever so commonplace, as men speak, and its sphere ever so lowly. "A good minister of Jesus Christ" is known by the results of his ministry upon those that hear it, not by his popularity with the crowd, nor by the number of "affixes" he can add to his name, or "successes" he may have to his credit.

Bright Lights in Dark Places.

II.—CAMILLO PACE, ITALIAN EVANGELIST.

JOHN S. ANDERSON, ITALY.

THE priests sent very alarming news to Rome, regarding Pace's meetings among the Coastguards, stating that if they were not stopped, the whole regiment might be converted. This was surely God's reply to those who had sent him five hundred miles to that part of Italy, in order to cure him of his "new religion!" But Pace was not intimidated by such reports. So he went on his way, as the Lord opened it for him in various parts of the country.

What keeps God's servants fresh in His service is faith, faith in Him and in His Word. Some brethren make a brilliant start, but there is soon a waning of that which gave them power at first, and that is *faith*. To my dear young brethren I would say, I am not now a young believer. But I like to meet a brother whose faith is not expressed in gusts, but in a calm, fresh trust in the Lord, and in the Word of His grace. This is what sustains in spiritual life, and gives power for continuous service.

I remember one day walking with Pace, talking about entering a very difficult town, in which there were "many adversaries." I was considering the best way to enter it. Pace said in faith, "Dear brother, the best way is to go." That was the result of his confidence in God.

Our brother believes in prayer. He encourages new converts, and small, weak meetings, to pray. All the brethren in the meeting in which Pace worships, pray.

Pace believes in telling the whole truth, even although it may disturb or offend his hearers. The truth of God convicts. It is a "Word of power." He never enters into personalities, but brings the Word of God to bear upon the matter he has laid upon him.

Signor Pace believes also in individual dealing with souls, and makes it a matter of careful and prayerful attention, to have something fresh for every one: a suitable Scripture, often applying it, and enforcing it by something that has just happened.

God Plans our Lives.

OUR life is planned, our pathway traced,
Our future all decreed;
Our duty is to follow on
Wherever God doth lead.

We cannot see, we may not know
The issues of an hour;
We simply have to take each step,
Upheld by grace and power.

What folly, then, to vex the mind,
With DOUBTS ABOUT THE ROAD!
'Tis better far to leave it all
In confidence with God.

Why not rejoice, if now there shines
The sun upon our way?
Why brood on storms that MAY arise,
On some far distant day?

Not all our thought, not all our care,
Will alter His decree,
If God, in love, has seen it best
That stormy days shall be.

Then let us cast our care on Him,
And be ourselves at rest,
Assured, in darkness or in light,
That God's good way is best.

Home-call of Ebsworthy D. J. Tapson, of Cardiff and South Wales.

TO the observant eye, the great lack of men possessing the true shepherd heart—the Church's greatest need, yet rarely prayed for—and who devote themselves to that self-denying, unnoticed, responsible work of caring for the flock—so fraught with blessing to the assemblies of God—is very evident. The subject of this obituary was so gifted, in a pre-eminent degree.

EBSWORTHY DAVID JAMES TAPSON was born in Newport (Mon.) on 16th March, 1843. The family moved to Cork, where his father died, and young Ebsworthy was apprenticed as a chorister in Cloyne Cathedral, with a view to study music. He told the writer of his early serious impressions, and said that from 7 to 12 years he was a real young Phaisee. At the latter age, he was led to Christ through reading the "Pilgrim's Progress." After several years' residence in Cork, where he taught music, he returned to Newport, where his widowed mother then lived. Here, he gave music lessons and engaged in accountancy. In 1868, he went to Tredegar as gas and water works manager, and he eventually became Estate agent to the company. He was prominent in efforts to promote temperance and other world reformation schemes; he was also superintendent of the Sunday School and the Rector's right hand man. And here came an epoch in his history—a turning point—when his real life as one who wished to serve God, according to His Word, began. He and his brother-in-law (the late Mr. William Laurie Hamilton) saw the truth of believers' baptism, and walked one Saturday afternoon across the hills to Abergavenny, some 12 miles, and there were immersed. They returned home that night with hearts full of heavenly joy. Next day they broke bread in Mr. Tapson's house. This was in 1874. Hearing of a dying poacher, Mr. Tapson went and visited him, and had the further joy of leading him to Christ—his first soul won for his Lord. The assembly thus formed grew, and many times has it been the writer's joy, in company with Mr. Tapson, to preach Christ there. This step of going "outside the camp" aroused the Rector's ire, and he publicly preached against his former parishioner and helper. After some 10 years, he was requested by Mr. Fry, of Penarth, to assume a secretaryship there, and moved thither. Being active and energetic, naturally he threw himself heart and soul here—as in every place—into the Lord's work, acting as Sunday School Superintendent, preaching the Gospel and visiting. On account of failing health he went in 1895 to

Johannesburg, in company with Mr. Hamilton, and joined him in business there. During a holiday, he and Mr. J. Goch visited many assemblies in the Transvaal. After three years, he relinquished business, and returned to Cardiff. After much prayer and godly counsel with the late Mr. R. C. Chapman, he gave himself wholly to the Lord's work, confining his ministry principally to the needy districts in South Wales, and occasionally Devonshire. Like Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 16), "he went in circuit," and visited many places, shepherding and caring for God's saints. The judgment seat alone will reveal how fruitful this work was for God's glory, in the salvation of souls, and in the helping, counselling, guiding, and, if need be, in correcting the ways of God's children. Very frequently, during many years, has the writer been linked with this "true yoke-fellow," in bonds of unbroken fellowship, and in never to be forgotten seasons of the Lord's right hand.

His pre-eminent gift was that of a shepherd, but in visiting he won many sinners to Christ. He walked with God, loved his Bible, and gave himself much to prayer. He was one of the most courteous, unassuming, tender-hearted, and gracious of men, but withal as firm as a Shammah in standing at all costs for God and His Word. A friend writes of him:—"We knew him very intimately for 40 years. He was always the same happy, gracious one; never caused a trouble, but smoothed over hundreds; was always ready with a word of comfort, but while he was so loving and gracious, he was firm as a rock when it was a matter of standing for the truth or Divine principles."

But "journeys oft" and "labours abundant" ultimately told on his vigorous constitution. Though frequently besought to "slow down," he smiled on his advisers and pressed on. For two and a half years he had been in an enfeebled condition, and on December 19th, 1919, the homecall—so welcome to one so weary in but not of his Blessed Master's work—came, and this devoted and deservedly much loved servant of Christ, entered into rest at Liphook, Hants, in the 77th year of his age. While we pray for his widow and family, let us not forget to ask that the Lord may raise up others with such true shepherd hearts, as that of our beloved brother, E. D. J. Tapson. The flock of God, scattered and strayed, need them, and "the Great Shepherd" (Heb. xiii. 20), alone can raise them up.

H. B. THOMPSON.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

The Love of God to Mankind.

- An Undeserved Love (1 John iv. 10).
- An Unmerited Love (Eph. ii. 4).
- A Manifested Love (1 John iv. 9).
- A Commended Love (Rom. v. 8).
- A Redeeming Love (Isa. lxiii. 9).

Christ the Life.

- Life beheld IN Christ (1 John i. 2).
- Life imparted BY Christ (John x. 10).
- Life received FROM Christ (1 John v. 12).
- Life secured WITH Christ (Col. iii. 4).

Present Blessings

Which the Gospel Brings, and Believers Possess.

- Forgiveness by God, for the Past.
- Peace with God, for the Present (Rom. v. 1).
- A New Standing before God (Rom. v. 2).
- A New Relationship with God (Gal. iv. 7).

CONCISE SCRIPTURE STUDIES FOR BELIEVERS.

Witnesses to the Believer's Salvation.

- The Witness of the WORD to him (1 John v. 13).
- The Witness of the SPIRIT IN him (Rom. viii. 16).
- The Witness of the LIFE FROM him (1 Thess. i. 8).

In the Presence of God.

- Christ appears there for His own (Heb. ix. 24).
- Believers are hid there from danger (Psa. xxxi. 20).
- In His presence there is salvation (Psa. xlii. 5, mar.).
- The upright dwell in His presence (Psa. cxl. 13).
- In His presence there is fulness of joy (Psa. xvi. 11).

What the Christian Looks For.

- A Saviour from Heaven (Phil. iii. 21)—Proximately.
- His appearing in Glory (Tit. ii. 13)—Intermediately.
- New Heavens and a New Earth (2 Pet. iii. 13)—Ultimately.

The FIRST is the Christian's proper Hope.

The SECOND is his Sure Expectation.

The THIRD is his Glorious Consummation.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Is 1 Cor. xiv. a Pattern to be Followed by us ?

Is the description, given in 1 Cor. xiv., of what seems to have been the order of the church in Corinth, applicable to the present time, and, if so, how can it be carried out in practice in the assembly of Christians now ?

The words of a well known writer on this matter are so much to the point, that we give them as they

appeared twenty years ago:—"The fourteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians gives 'the commandments of the Lord' (ver. 37) as to the order of His house, for all time, and we are bound, in loyalty to Him, to carry that order out in practice, as far as we are able. We dare not substitute any order of worship or of ministry that is not in accordance with the instructions here given. Whatever differences exist among the sects of Christendom in doctrine and practice, this one feature is common to them all—they are agreed as to the setting aside of the Divine order here given for the assembly." That this is a true witness, nobody who is familiar with the practices which obtain in the various denominations will deny. There is not one of them—not even where they all profess to be born again—that makes any attempt to practice what is here given as "the commandments of the Lord." Most have one man whom they call "the minister," who is chosen to "do everything" when the congregation comes together for what is commonly called "Divine service" or "Public worship." He may be a child of God or an unconverted man; he may be gifted or he may not; but he only is to preside and minister. Others, however spiritual or well fitted to share in the exercises for godly edifying, are not permitted to take any part. The Spirit of God is denied His place to lead in worship, and to give the Word in season for the edification and comfort of the gathered believers. Need one wonder there is barrenness? In some of the smaller denominations—such as Baptists—the "elders" are allowed a certain measure of liberty to pray and such like, but all is to be under the control of "the pastor." This line of things is creeping in very slyly to companies who at least professed at one time to be assemblies according to the Word. Its beginnings have to be watched. A certain few sated next to the table, who virtually "conduct, the service"—a speaker appointed, or at least expected to give the address—a visiting brother who comes with his prepared "sermonette," and whether in season or otherwise, has to give it out, are the thin edge of the wedge which only needs a little driving to produce incipient clerisy, which, wherever it gets a footing, makes void the Spirit's leading, displaces God-given ministry, and sets aside the Divine pattern of God's assembly as given in 1 Cor. xiv., for human arrangement, which is simply another word for a sect. When things have reached such a pass, and no appeal to the Scriptures is allowed, there is nothing left for the

Christian who desires to do the will of God, but to sever his connection with such a system, and go forth to find a Scripturally gathered assembly, in which he will be free to obey what he has learned from the Word. Or if none such is within reach, to begin anew—as others have done before—on the simple lines of the Word, counting on the Lord to give the needed strength to “do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word” (Psa. ciii. 20).

Answers to Correspondents.

Vox. It is clearly the will of God, that the “reading” of the Word of God, without comment or explanation, should have place (see 1 Tim. iv. 13) in the assemblies of God’s people. It is to be regretted that there is so little of it.

J. L., ULSTER.—For a Presbyterian minister—and an M.A.—to claim that “sprinkling” is baptism is, to say the least, amazing. His Greek Lexicon, which presumably he has consulted, tells him the word “baptizo” means “to dip, to immerse”; never to sprinkle. And John Calvin, the founder of Presbyterianism, whose view may at least have some respect from this Ulster Presbyterian parson, says in his “Institutes,” “It is evident that the term BAPTISE means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive church.” And who gave the command to alter it?

W. C., GLASGOW.—If one leaves the assembly in which he is, because of some personal disagreement, common courtesy—not to say godly order—would surely defer receiving him into another assembly in the locality, until inquiry has been made regarding the cause of his withdrawal. And if he has left to evade reproof for unseemly behaviour or disorderly practice, he ought to be told to go back and see matters put right with his brethren, receiving their commendation, before he is received in another assembly.

G. M., MANCHESTER.—While patience should always be exercised toward such as have had little opportunity of learning the way of the Lord in worship and service, but are willing to learn, firm resistance should be given to those who, while assuming a place of leadership in an assembly, are manifestly opposed in teaching and practice to the Scriptural principles that control it. We often wonder why such persons should be there at all. It cannot be from any real conviction that it is where God would have them be, for they are continually

advocating other lines, as superior. Possibly the secret is, that in no other circle would they be so allowed to have their will and way.

H. G. M., TORONTO.—The presence and power of God in the midst of His gathered people, will always be an attraction to those who are seeking the Lord, and desirous of walking in His ways, even when they know little as yet of His truth. It is a happy condition for an assembly to be in, when a sweet savour of Christ is in its midst, and real spiritual refreshment, from the ministry of the Word, draws fellow-saints who are seeking something they do not find where they are. We can think of many who, in earlier times, had their prejudices melted and their hearts opened to the power of the separating truths of the Word, through the warm spiritual atmosphere into which they had come, and who shortly were led on in the truths that kept them there. This is surely what we should seek to maintain, and so become as a “dew from the Lord,” in the midst of many people (Mic. v. 7).

Practical Points in Assembly Practice.

The Breaking of Bread, being the primary object (Acts xx. 7) of the assembling of the church on the morning of the Lord’s Day, it surely ought not be crushed into the last few minutes of the hour or hour and a half, in which the assembling lasts. If saints come together in a fit spiritual condition, the Spirit will undoubtedly lead them on to the “remembrance.” If they habitually require to be preached to, to bring them into such a condition, they need something more drastic than they usually get, and which others who do not need it, have to suffer.

Elders, who do oversight work in the assemblies of God, are not “elected” by vote of the people, nor “constituted” by those who are there already, but MADE—as in the word in Acts xx. 28—by the Holy Ghost. When this is understood and owned, there will be less talk about “ordaining” elders and “introducing” overseers. When one has a heart for the work of caring for fellow saints (2 Cor. ix. 16), moral and spiritual fitness answering to 1 Tim. iii. 1-7, and is found doing such work as is enjoined in 1 Thess. v. 14, there will be no need for him to wear a badge of office, or have himself officially named as a “bishop.” Where the “labour” is absent, the “position” is a mere cipher.

Dismissal.—While there is no cleric required to

"pronounce the benediction," and no Scripture warrant for the fashionable fad of a "dismissal anthem," it is comely that the assembly of the saints for worship should be closed in a reverent and orderly manner, and not as in some instances by a straggling exodus of part now, part then. Those who guide, are primarily responsible to see that all is done "decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40).

Hospitality.—To show Christian hospitality (Rom. xii. 13), especially to strangers and visitors, who may have no personal friends, and nowhere to go between meetings, is a grace that needs culture, of which some are sadly deficient. In smaller assemblies, where a stranger is a rarity, he will usually be "invited" to go to half a dozen Christian homes for rest and refreshment. But in larger cities, where such visitors are frequent, one too oft depends on another making up to the stranger, with the result that he is left to go where he may, and find what he can. This ought not to be, it will not, where each is looking out for the privilege of entertaining one of the "royalty" of heaven, to whom angels would gladly minister.

Letters to the Editor.

1.—The Spiritual Growth of an Assembly.

I have observed throughout a fairly long experience and acquaintance with a goodly number of assemblies of Christians, that spiritual growth and godly development of gifts and energies in the saints, are not always, or generally, to be found where there is an excess of gifted preachers and teachers. The chief reason for this, I take to be, that those more fully gifted than the rest, are apt to occupy most of the opportunities for ministry, so that those of lesser gifts, who can preach to edification and teach with acceptance and blessing, find little opportunity for the exercise of their ministry. I know, of course, that the world is wide and the need everywhere, and that they may find scope for their ministry in other spheres. But I am only thinking of it now as it affects the welfare of the local assembly in which these are "set" (1 Cor. xii. 28) by God. If those who are entrusted with the higher gifts, would link up those who are well fitted to preach and teach in lesser spheres—as we may surely gather Paul did with Silas and Timothy—there would be less danger of the lesser gifts being lost to the assembly, and the greater occupying far too much prominence. The same

applies in pastoral work. There are some who are too timid to visit alone, who would willingly and publicly accompany an older brother in visitation of sick, and discouraged, halting, or straying saints, who are too often neglected because they cannot be overtaken by those who are expected to shepherd them. Growth of an assembly proceeds, as all who compose it are fulfilling their functions and doing their part. And with spiritually healthy conditions, with wholesome and seasonable ministry in its midst, no assembly need be, or will be dependent on continuous help from without, and never of relays of official preachers and evangelists to carry on its work. It is this spiritual growth in all who, in varied measures, are qualified to serve, and "fitting together of saints for the work of ministering" (Eph. iv. 12, R.V.), that is so much lacking in our time, as compared with earlier years, when there was more true fellowship among those who minister and serve, and less need for a continuous supply of engaged and long prearranged ministries.

E. A. G.

2.—The Truth of God in Season Attracts.

It has been a joy to myself and others here, to observe, especially during recent months, how the Word of God, spoken in grace and in season, attracts those who are "hungering for the Bread of Life," and seeking further light on the Christian's path. We had a series of Wednesday evening expositions of the Scriptures on vital and elementary truths, such as young believers and others not well taught in the Word need, and are able to follow. They were simple, spiritual, and held close to the Scriptures, the Word itself being "read distinctly," and its meaning made clear and plain. Nothing for profit was missed out, nothing needed kept back, but all was in grace and suited to their need. Many older believers from the denominations came, and expressed great gratitude for help received in truths they never hear in their churches. There is a power of attraction in the Word of God freshly ministered and wisely applied, which melts prejudice and draws those in whom the life of God is, even when in low condition. But it has to be in season, suited to their state, otherwise it will not interest them but may drive them away. Toward the end of these meetings, truths bearing on separation from the world, the gathering of Christians to Christ, baptism, the Lord's Supper, and kindred truths were taught with all plainness, as the preacher judged those present were able to bear, and the results are already with us.

J. W.

Grace and Glory.

BY PHILIP MAURO, NEW YORK.

THE Psalmist wrote long ago, "The Lord will give GRACE and GLORY" (Psa. lxxxiv. 11). This double promise covers two great periods in God's plan. The present age is the age of grace. "Grace . . . came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 18), "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men" (Tit. ii. 11). This word grace is particularly associated with the first coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the Gospel which Paul received from Him, and preached among men, was "the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). The throne upon which the Lord now sits is a "throne of grace" (Heb. v. 16). So that the first part of the double promise of the Psalm, has been and is being fulfilled, by and as a result of the Lord's first coming, His coming in humiliation as a Sacrifice and a Saviour.

AS GRACE characterises the present age, so GLORY is the word conspicuously used to characterise the age that is to come. Grace has come through our Lord's advent in *weakness*. Glory will be revealed at and through His second coming in *power*. And as the grace manifested to men has so far exceeded all that prophets and righteous men of old time could imagine, so when the glory which is to be manifested at His coming again is revealed, it will doubtless immeasurably excel all that our hearts can desire or our minds conceive.

GLORY is that condition into which the Lord entered, in His present place in heaven. He was "received up into—or in

glory." (1 Tim. iii. 16). "Manifested in flesh" are the words used to describe His first epiphany in grace (Tit. ii. 10). "Manifested in glory" is the parallel expression used to describe His future epiphany in glory, in which His people are to be "manifested with Him" (Col. iii. 4). This is that glory which Christ, as Man raised from the dead, is to share with His redeemed people, and all who have been "justified freely by His grace" and "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Rom. vii. 24; v. 2) will, in the day of Christ's coming, become "partakers of His glory" (1 Pet. v. 1). Thus will be fulfilled the word, "Whom He *justified*, them He also *glorified*" (Rom. viii. 30).

In order that the redeemed who are now on earth, and those who have died, may be with Him where He now is, the Scriptures tell us, they if dead are to be raised in glory (1 Cor. xv. 55), in incorruption, and if living when the Lord Jesus comes again for His people, they will be changed, and "fashioned like unto His glorious body, literally, the body of His glory" (Phil. iii. 21). And the dead, as thus raised in glory, and the living, as thus changed, and like unto the body of Christ's glory, both are to be caught up together to "meet the Lord in the air," thereafter to return with Him to earth in glory. This is our hope. For this we are to be looking. "looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Thus will the ancient promise, "The Lord will give grace and glory," be fulfilled. Grace we have already received. Glory we are awaiting and expecting.

Where is thy God ?

FAITH'S ANSWER TO UNBELIEF'S QUESTION.

PERPLEXED by the mysteries of life, in a world where for a season evil seems to triumph, and often himself all but overwhelmed in seas of personal sorrow and suffering, the Christian is often made to ask, "Does God really love and care for me?" And the cold, contemptuous world looking on, does more than hint, that if God is as He claims to be, the Disposer and Controller of events, the man who is left to suffer, with no apparent deliverance being wrought, must be—as Job's friends averred concerning him in the day of his sore trial—suffering for his sins. In the bitterness of his soul, while passing through this "valley of humiliation," the tempted and sorely tried believer may, in the language of the Psalmist, well say, "As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me, while they say, 'Where is thy God?'" It is good for the soul to have a full answer to the devil's evil question, to meet it in the full strength of that Word of God, which liveth and abideth in the soul, so as to yield strength and courage in the hour of faith's trial. To the unbeliever's question and the scorner's sneer, the Word gives it full and overflowing answer, by telling what God ever is to His own, in all circumstances, and under all conditions. It is in faith's reliance on this Word and its use of it in meeting the adversary, that victory is won, the enemy silenced, and the heart set at rest in a fresh and blessed experience of the all-sufficiency of the "Faithful God who

keepeth covenant," and forsaketh not His own. To the infidel question, "Where is thy God?" no matter from whom or where it comes, faith, relying on that sure Word, answers triumphantly—

1. God is **OVER** His people (Deut. xxxii. 11). They dwell beneath the shadow of His wings (Psa. xci. 1-4). He covers them all the day long (Deut. xxxiii. 12). No enemy, no arrow can reach them there. For none cannot penetrate "the feathers of the Almighty."

2. God is **AROUND** His people. "The angel of the Lord encampeth around them that fear Him" (Psa. xxxiv. 7). He is as "a wall of fire round about" (Zech. ii. 5), protecting, delivering, and defending His own.

3. God goes **BEFORE** His own. Of Israel in the wilderness it is written, "The Lord went before them by day, in a pillar of cloud, to lead them by the way" (Exod. xiii. 21). He knows the way, and He leads on His own safely.

4. God is **BEHIND** His own (Exod. xiv. 19, 20), their "rereward" (Isa. lviii. 8), so that no Amalek enemy may come slyly up behind (Deut. xxv. 27, 28), to cut off the weak and weary ones, who are among the hindmost of the host.

5. God is **WITH** His own, to strengthen, to uphold, to help (Isa. xli. 10) all the way and all the days (Matt. xxviii. 20, R.V.), until the "house of the Lord" (Psa. xxiii. 6), the eternal home of the redeemed, is reached. To every fear, to every sneer, faith triumphantly answers, "Behold, God is my Helper" (Psa. liv. 4), and "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans viii. 31).

A. S.

Jesus Christ.

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

I.—"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD."

WILLIAM HOSTE, LONDON.

THE ministry of John, naturally aroused deep searchings of heart. Who could he be who drew such vast crowds into the wilderness, and of whom all bare witness that he was a prophet? When the Jews sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was, "he confessed and denied not (that is, he did not refuse to answer), but confessed, I am not the Christ" (John i. 19, 20). Their further question was a tacit acknowledgment of his greatness. If he were not the Christ, he might be either Elias or the prophet to arise like Moses; he could be no one less. The answer of John was surprising. He made no claim to be anything but "a voice," the herald of Another, "who coming after him was preferred before him," the latchet of whose shoes he was unworthy to unloose. Who could this august personage be? None other than Jehovah—the God of Israel, for the message of the voice was, "Make straight the way of THE LORD" (see Isa. xl. 3).

Even John had failed to recognise in his cousin, "Jesus," anything more than the holiest of men, of whom he needed to be baptised, rather than Jesus to be baptised of him. But since that memorable moment, when the promised sign was fulfilled, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove and rested upon Him, he knew Him as the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit—the Son of God. It is important to note the character in which

the Lord first presented Himself to Israel. for this must throw a vivid light on the purpose of His mission, and correspond too with the deepest need of men. Some would represent the world specially as a "troubled sea that cannot rest," or as a scene of sorrow, suffering, and death; but Christ saw it under a more serious aspect, which lay at the root of every other woe. It was a place of sin. He came to interpret the heart of God to a world of *sinners*. As He emerged from the hidden ministry of Nazareth into public life, it was in His sacrificial character. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin* of the world." The presence of Jesus as the Lamb of God's providing, revealed the Divine compassion to a sin-stricken world. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 John iv. 14).

A certain ill-omened school of interpretation represents the Cross as an after-thought, a profound disillusionment of our Lord's early hopes, a dire necessity, arising from the failure of His mission. Nothing could be further from the truth. How that death came to pass, did depend on circumstances, but that it should come to pass was inscribed at the head of the Divine programme, unfolding an eternal purpose. This was the primary conception of the mission of Christ. "He was the Lamb preordained, before the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times" (1 Pet. i. 20), "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the

* There is a distinction between "sin" and "sins" in the same context, as in John viii. 21, 24, R.V., and 1 John i. 6-9, but I think here, "sin" includes "sins."

world" (Rev. xiii. 8). The love of God was thus interpreted as not only toward the faithful patriarchs, "the sons of God" of antedeluvian days, nor merely toward the elect of Israel and of the nations, but to the whole race. He presented Himself as "THE LAMB." This was no unfamiliar thought to Israelites. Here was the antitype of centuries of sin-offerings, "on Jewish altars slain"—"the Lamb of God," not only for an individual, a family, a people, but for the whole world. It has been seriously objected to this interpretation, that it would be an anachronism to credit John with such a clear conception of the Cross. How could he know what was still in the future. It was not unusual in prophets to have a knowledge of the future, and John was a prophet, and "more than a prophet." But in what sense does the Lamb of God take away the sin of the world? Some refer the phrase to "original sin." Christ in His death so fully met the sin of Adam, that its effects are neutralised for all. Were that so, no infant would die. Others connect it with the millennial earth. But though Satan will be banished, sin will not be taken away, as the final rebellion of Revelation (chap. xx.) proves. The true meaning is, that the sin of the world is taken away, not absolutely, but potentially.

The Life of Faith.

IN quiet repose, like a babe on the breast,
 I trust, Blessed Saviour, in Thee,
 Thy love is the pillow on which I find rest,
 Thy strength is sufficient for me.
 Thy fulness is mine, so I never can want,
 Thy faithfulness never can fail,
 While Christ is engaged for to bring me to heaven,
 No foe can against me prevail.

The Church as the Bride.

III.—HER CALL AND HOMEWARD JOURNEY.

W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE CALL OF THE BRIDE is set forth in the winning, the departure, and the journey to Hebron of Rebekah. It is a story of exceeding beauty, and as a type of the truth we are considering, it is very full. The servant goes forth from Abraham's presence, to win a bride for his son. Nothing could turn him aside from his errand, and when he met Rebekah, it is said, "The servant brought forth jewels of silver and jewels of gold and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah" (ver. 53). So now the Holy Spirit, who came down from the Father on the day of Pentecost (Acts. iii. 1), to gather out a people to become a bride for Christ, has brought forth the things that are typified in what the servant gave to Rebekah. These are now presented in the Gospel as it is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Pet. i. 12). The silver speaks of atonement, and the gold of that Divine nature, which all who receive Christ have through the new birth; while the "raiment" speaks of that righteousness of God, which is "unto all and upon all that believe."

THE JOURNEY AND ITS END.—In the custody of the servant, Rebekah left her people and started on the long journey across the desert, to meet the one she loved, but had never seen. Day after day, she would learn more about him from her faithful guide. But one day at eventide, when Isaac went out into the field to meditate, he "lifted up his eyes," and

beheld the servant and his charge. Rebekah, too, "lifted up her eyes and saw Isaac." Then the long journey ends in the joy of the meeting with him she loved, and for whom she left her distant home. Nor is Isaac disappointed in her, for we read, "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah (captivating), and she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (ver. 67).

THE PRESENTATION.—In the last act of this lovely scene, we have foreshadowed the moment, now so near, when as the hymn has it—

"He'll descend and we'll ascend,
And meet in heavenly glory."

Through His work on the Cross and on the throne, the Church will then have become "A glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." No defilement or spot then. No decay or wrinkle there. Her's will be an eternal youth, as we see in Rev. xxi. 2, where a thousand years after this meeting in the air, the glorified Church is still described as a "Bride adorned for her husband."

THE MARRIAGE (Rev. xix. 7-9).—"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousnesses (righteous acts, R.V.) of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

Here, there is no attempt at description, just merely the announcement of the marriage. Why is this? Surely it is a theme upon which the Holy Spirit would delight to enlarge. But it cannot be described because of the poverty of human language, and of capacity on our part to realise it. Take an illustration. Paul was caught up "into Paradise." When there, he heard "*unspeakable words,*" which it was not *possible* to utter. It is not a matter of it not being "*lawful*" to speak of it, but it is that words failed.

We might say it was just at an ordinary time that he was caught up, yet that was his experience. But in Rev. xix. we have something extraordinary, something to which the ages looked forward, something that moves heaven in a wonderful way. It is that something for which Christ stooped to taste the bitterness of the death of the Cross, something that crowns the work of the Holy Spirit, who has come, like Abraham's servant, to find and win this bride and bring her home. This grand event is to be God's perfect answer to the Cross. It was the deepest depth of His sorrow, this is the highest heights of His joy. "It is the day of His espousals.

. . . The day of the gladness of His heart" (Song of Sol. iii. 11). If then it was impossible for Paul to communicate what he heard, much less could human language portray this wondrous scene in heaven, in which the glorified Lord is manifested to all heavenly intelligences taking "unto Himself" the Bride for which He gave Himself a sacrifice to God on the Cross of Calvary, and who is to be His companion in Glory.

Immanuel's Land: "The Glory of all Lands."

AS IT WILL BE, DURING THE REIGN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

With Coloured Map and Chief Places of Interest.

INTRODUCTORY PAPER. BY THE EDITOR.

DESERVEDLY favourite hymn, composed by Mrs. A. R. Cousins, of Melrose, from the last recorded words of Samuel Rutherford, Covenanting preacher of "Anworth by the Solway," and a "prisoner of the Lord for His truth's sake," in St. Andrews and Aberdeen—"Glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's Land"—conveys to the mind the idea that "Immanuel's Land" is heaven, and the "glory" that has its dwelling there, is that heavenly glory in which the resurrected and glorified saints shall dwell with Him for ever. But the expression, "Thy Land, O Immanuel" (Isa. viii. 8), as it is used by the prophet, has reference to "the Land of Israel" (Matt. i. 23; ii. 20), to which Immanuel came at His birth, in which He lived and died, from which He ascended to the heavenly throne where He now is, to which He will return in power and glory (Zech. xiv. 4), and over which He will reign in righteousness and peace, owned and honoured by "all kings" and in "all nations," having dominion from sea to sea (Psa. lxii. 1-8; ii. 17). The glowing words of the prophets, the sacred songs of the Psalmists, the definite promise of the Lord Himself, and the clearly expressed teachings of the apostles on this great and glorious subject, fill a large part of the Book of God. Yet how little are they read, or understood, or valued by the majority of the people of God! The unhappy habit of "spiritualising" most of the passages in which these "glorious things," spoken concern-

ing Jehovah's earthly chosen people and land, and of making Immanuel's Land, mean heaven; Jerusalem below, the glory: Zion, the church, and the coming years of earthly glory and prosperity foretold concerning the revived and restored nation of Israel in their own land, as "a spiritual revival," has confused the heavenly and the earthly, and left both in obscurity. But "the Land," which the Most High has set apart as the inheritance of the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 8), will yet be theirs, divided among the twelve tribes, as described in Ezek. chaps. xlvi.-xlviii., with the earthly Jerusalem rebuilt and beautified in its midst, that "city of the great King," beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth (Psa. xlviii. 1-3), the earthly capital and metropolis of the world. Its new name, Jehovah-Shamnah—"The Lord is there" (Ezek. xlviii. 35).

THE TEMPLE, rebuilt according to the Divine plan given to Ezekiel, as recorded in chaps. xl.-xlv., established as the House of the Lord, to which "all nations shall flow" (Isa. ii. 2), on the mountain of the Lord. PALESTINE will become then "a delightful land" (Mal. iii. 12), "the glory of all lands," yielding its increase, its pastures "clothed with flocks" (Psa. lxxv. 13), its people dwelling in peace, and for the first time of their long existence as a nation, since Solomon's reign, free from fear of war, oppression and bondage. To the tracing of this in the pages of the Word, we will devote this series of Short Papers.

How the Gospel was Spread,

IN THE EARLY YEARS OF EVANGELIZATION.

BY THE EDITOR.

TO the honest, and unbiased reader of "The Acts," who has no system to support, no personal practise to defend, how sweetly simple is the story of how "the Gospel of the glory of the blessed God" was spread abroad by the Church in the years of her early love, and the freshness of her spiritual strength. How free, unfettered, and Spirit guided it all was! How little of organisation, human arrangement, or deliberate planning there was in it all. Everything was under the hand of the Spirit of God, who had come forth from heaven to lead and control in every detail of that great and glorious work. And who could do it better? For He is in equality and co-partnery with the Father who gave the Son to be the Saviour, and with the Son who gave Himself a sacrifice to procure that salvation, which the sinner needs. He too, is the One who causes man to know his need of that salvation, and brings it to him by the Gospel. Who can better lead on, control, restrain, and order all connected with its spread, than He? And so it was that, on the very day of His coming to earth, He filled the hearts of the little company of the Lord's witnesses, who had waited on His arrival (Luke xxiv. 49) for that promised "endowment" in the power of which they were told by the Lord they were to bear co-witness with the Spirit to Him, among men (John xv. 26-27). And this Peter tells us they actually did, on the streets of Jerusalem (Acts v. 32). But how

simply and naturally it was all done, yet with what power! There were no great preparations for a Revival. No elaborate arrangements for a "Gospel campaign." A group of Spirit-filled men and women came down from a room in which they had been praying for ten days, all filled with the Holy Spirit, and unable to keep silence, they spake of the great things they had newly learned, things concerning Christ, known before in the letter, now like a glowing fire in their souls, possessed, enjoyed, and bursting forth in ecstatic utterances. Not in "preaching," not in "addresses" prearranged, or in manuscript, but possibly after the manner of Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16, first among themselves, conversing of and chanting "the wonderful works of God." There were "tongues," but that was a mere passing incident, soon to "cease" (1 Cor. xiii. 8). The message came to Peter, who stood up with the eleven at his side, bearing testimony to Christ in life, death, and resurrection. It was all informal, without prearrangement, but O, with what power! Jerusalem sinners who, six weeks before, had murdered the Son of God, and invented a lie in face of His open grave to deny His resurrection, were cut "to the heart" by the simple, direct preaching of the Galilean fisherman who, in these very scenes, had denied his Lord. And three thousand were then and there converted to God. On the days that followed, when the same Gospel was spoken in the same way, under the direct leading of the same Spirit, in the temple porch, before the council, and "in every house" (chap. v. 42), the stream of life flowed and sinners

were converted. The Spirit led on, the servants were under His control. In chap. vi. a new need arises, and the Spirit meets it, in providing seven men, "full of the Holy Ghost," to do the needed work. But there was no interruption of the work of evangelisation, and so "the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (chap. v. 77). So, as was said by the enemies of the Gospel, they soon "filled Jerusalem with their doctrine" (chap. v. 28). Then Samaria is next to hear the Gospel as the Lord had commanded (chap. i. 8). The same simplicity, and absence of human arrangement and device, is seen in its evangelisation. "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them" (chap. viii. 1). This Philip was a man, full of the Spirit (chap. v. 5), more than a server of tables, an "evangelist" (chap. xxi. 8), made so by the living Lord, not called by or sent from the church, but the Lord's free servant, under the direct control of the Spirit, who then and now is the Director—and the only one owned in heaven—of the servants of Christ. He goes forth, waiting no man's call, under obligation to no society, fixing no time for his "mission" there, and God uses his ministry mightily. Other scenes will come before us in later chapters, but these may cause reflection, and ought to compel consideration. Where is evangelistic work conducted on these lines now? Why are they altered? Who has done it? By whose authority? With what results? Are man's ways better than God's? Can the church or the servant "do as they like," in the work of the Lord? Will God seal with His

approval departures from the pattern He has left to guide us in doing His work? Or is it not this inter-meddling, that has dried up the living stream that then flowed—when the living Spirit was allowed to have His place and way—so causing drought and barrenness where once freshness and fruitfulness abounded, in the Gospel work of many a church, and the ministry of many a God-sent and once Spirit-guided evangelist. It is no answer at all to point to a few stray converts won, as if they were a Divine seal on an unscriptural way of procedure. For God is so "rich in mercy," that he does not stay the water flowing from the rock, to give life to thirsty souls, even when the servant's act, that brought it forth, is as it was at Meribah, a deed of self-will, bringing His judgment on the hand that wrought it (Num. xx. 13). There is and ever has been "blessing," as men speak, on the Word spoken by men in a carnal state, in false positions, hampered by man's arrangements, and even by those who are unregenerate, for God is sovereign. But it is another matter when some profess to come openly outside of human systems, which hinder the operation of the Spirit, and *there* bring in by new device and human reasoning, the same thing in principle that they—or their progenitors—left in the great world systems of religion, from which they separated themselves to be free to give the Spirit His place as Guide in the worship of God, and as Director of the work of the Lord. If this is to be realised in the work of evangelisation, all human directors, committees, and control must be cast off and refused.

Advice to a Young Preacher.

I REJOICE to learn you are out in the great world-field, preaching Christ. It is glorious work, "work for everlasting," as the old hymn has it. Go on in your service for God, and with God. Men will disappoint you: He will not. It is said of the first preachers, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word" (Acts vi. 4). If you neglect prayer, your preaching will lack Holy Ghost grip. If you do not take in from God's Book, His Word to your own soul, you will have nothing fresh to give out. Second-hand messages are stale. What you borrow from others, and merely pass on through your lips from memory, will carry no life with it to sinners, no grace to saints. It is the Word out from its dwelling in the heart. that is of use to others. Read from a book, committed to memory, and repeated in parrot fashion, the clearest truths are flat and insipid, and the hearers know they are like Elisha's axe, "borrowed." It used to be called "Plagiarism" in the Scottish Kirk to preach the sermons of others, as your own. And do not imitate other preachers in their style or manner. It is pitiful to see some trying to be who they are not, to put on the "style" and adopt the "whine" or "snivel" of another. Be natural, just what God made you. Nothing artificial or unnatural is of any use to God. Do not hover about the rich; the Lord was found mostly among the poor. And do not spend your time and strength in evangelising in overpreached places, where the preachers are treading on each other's heels.—*Jas. Campbell.*

What Became of the Blessing?

WE hear and read accounts of "blessing" being given with the Word spoken at large Conferences and gatherings of Christians, in various places. And it is frequently reported that this and the other man's meetings were "profitable." Where there is true Holy Ghost "blessing" with the truth, and genuine "profit" to the soul through wholesome ministry of the Word of God, that blessing and that profit will be manifest in the lives and testimony of the people of God. There will be real sound godliness, more prayerfulness, less worldliness, and greater zeal in spreading the Gospel among the unconverted. Is it always so? Does the "blessing," appear in the lives of those who are said to have received it, or is it, as the early dew that "goeth away" (Hos. vi. 4). We have seen Christians, the day after hearing high and delectable truths, as worldly as before. Clearly their consciences were not reached, while their tastes were pleased with what was spoken. The "blessing" had passed away, because it had no depth. It did not get deeper down than the feelings. There was no heart exercise before God under His truth, and in consequence, it did not effect the lives of those who heard it. The ministry that brings abiding blessing to the soul is not always that which pleases, or brings comfort. Very often it is the message that wounds before it heals, that searches before it sanctifies. And there is little of it in our time. When there is, there will be "blessing," which shall abide and increase.—*A. Matthews.*

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

CHRIST AS "THE LAMB."

- Beheld in Life, as appointed Sinbearer (John i. 29).
 Led as a Lamb to Death on Calvary (Isa. liii. 8).
 Seated on the Throne as the Lamb slain (Rev. v. 12).
 Judging the Ungodly in Wrath (Rev. vi. 19).
 Married to His Bride in Glory (Rev. xix. 3).
 Ruling for ever on the Eternal Throne (Rev. xxii. 1).

"NO DISTINCTION."

- The same word occurs in the three passages in R.V.
 "No Distinction," in the Guilt of men (Rom. iii. 23).
 "No Distinction," in the Gospel to all (Rom. x. 12).
 "No Distinction," in the Salvation and Standing
 of the Saved (Acts xv. 9).

CHRIST IS ALL IN SALVATION.

- His Death is its Cause (Rom. v. 8).
 His Resurrection is its Confirmation (Heb. xiii. 20).
 His Coming is its Consummation (Phil. iii. 20-21).

CONCISE SCRIPTURE STUDIES FOR BELIEVERS.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN,

As described in Phil. iii. 8-11.

- His Place—"Found in Christ" (ver. 9).
 His Portion—God's righteousness, in Him (ver. 9).
 His Petition—"That I may know Him" (ver. 10).
 His Path—"I press on" (ver. 14).
 His Prospect—"Resurrection from the dead" (ver. 11)

THE BELIEVER "IN CHRIST."

A Sevenfold View of him there.

- His Standing is "a man in Christ" (2 Cor. xii. 2).
 His Justification is "in Christ" (Gal. ii. 16, R.V.).
 His Security, "in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).
 His Life is "in Christ Jesus" (Rom. vi. 23, R.V.).
 His Nearness is "in Christ" (Eph. ii. 13).
 His Resurrection is "in Christ" (Eph. ii. 6).
 His Blessings are "in Christ" (Eph. i. 3).

CHILDREN OF GOD.

- An Exclusive Title—None but born again ones
 share it (John i. 12, 13).
 An Inclusive Relationship—"Ye are ALL the
 children of God by faith" (Gal. iii. 26, R.V.).
 A Conclusive Evidence—"The Spirit of the Son in
 them" (Gal. iv. 6).
 1. There is no Universal Fatherhood of God (John
 viii. 44; 1 John iii. 14).
 2. There are no racial Distinctions in God's Family
 (1 John iii. 1; John xvii. 27).
 3. Their Testimony in the world, proves who they
 are (Phil. ii. 16).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

The Christian's Relation to Recreations.

I, and a few other young men here, all of us lately brought to Christ and into the assembly of His people gathering to His Name, have been asked and are being pressed to join a recently formed golf club, which is said to be wholly composed of those that profess to be followers of Christ. Neither of us are clear about it. We would value help from the Word, bearing on this and other such forms of recreation and amusement of a public character.

The Bible is a book of principles and precepts. The Christian may not find a direct chapter and verse bearing on each detail in his life, or giving specific directions as to his attitude toward each of the ever-multiplying forms of amusement and recreation which make their appeal to him. Nor should he allow himself to be led by the practice of others, or be guided by the common reasoning that because many who bear the Christian name do this and go there, that therefore it must be right and well pleasing to God. The first and chief thing to ascertain is, whether it is commanded by God in His Word. The next, whether it can be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and the third, whether it will be a help or a hindrance to his own spiritual life, in his service for the Lord, whose he is and whom he serves. And what its effects may be upon others around him. It will not do to say, "There is nothing against" this or that, in the Bible. We do not go to God's Word to look for prohibitions, but for commandments and precepts from God as a Father, and from the Lord Jesus as a Master. If there are none, then we will find principles which govern the particular thing we seek guidance about. For example, we have in 1 Cor. x. 31, the words, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or WHATSOEVER ye do, do ALL to the glory of God." This is all-embracing in its scope. "Whatsoever" includes our leisure hours, our recreations, or amusements. If they cannot be engaged in to "the glory of God," they ought not to be engaged in at all. Then, again, "WHATSOEVER ye do, in word or deed, do ALL in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. iii. 17). Will any Christian claim that he can play cards, sing worldly songs, attend races, share in golf or football with the ungodly, or exhibit himself before them as a skilled player of such games, "in the Name of the Lord Jesus?" We leave this to be answered honestly before God, in the light of His

Word. One thing we fearlessly say, "We do not know any who are esteemed for godliness, devoted in service, successful in soulwinning, or separated as true Nazarites to God, who are members of 'clubs,' or "crack" players in the games of the world. And if you say that all are Christians, then a Christian "Football Team," or a "Believers' Cricket Club" would be about as great an anomaly as a paper whose title is "The Christian World." "Church amusements" are one of the greatest curses of our day. And they only need a beginning. Some who began with a "church social" have reached a "church dance," and we know some who, from "a friendly game" at golf, have developed into prize players, whose names appear in the world's prints as "cup winners." There need be no restraint in the free use of whatever liberty God has given, and certainly no bondage in the full acceptance of the mercies God has given us to enjoy. We may breathe His air, walk in His sunshine, enjoy His green fields, and sing like the birds in the summer woodlands. None has a better right than the "sons" of Him who created and has furnished the earth for man's abode. But it is no longer a Paradise, where no danger lurks, but "the evil world," in all spheres of which we need to move with girded garments and watchful eye. And when we think of the many who have become wrecks, so far as life testimony for God is concerned, by mingling with men of the world, and learning their ways, we are constrained to say to you, dear young friend, and to those who are with you: Cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Occupy your life's best days fully, in the Lord's service. Find your recreation in long walks to the country preaching or spreading His Gospel. And when you reach the end of life's brief day, you will have no cause to regret that you did not venture out on the dangerous path of making common cause with men of the world in their games, or in joining "clubs," that exist for purposes foreign to the Spirit of Christ and of Christianity.

Answers to Correspondents.

REX.—The Christian, while not called by God to take any part in politics, or share with the world in electing its rulers, is definitely told to be in subjection to all such (Rom. xiii. 1-4; 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14), no matter how created, or what "views of Christianity" they may hold. The "powers" of the times in which Paul and Peter wrote, were the

Emperor and Senate of Rome, pagans and persecutors of the saints of God. It was as "the Government" they were to be owned, no matter what their personal character, or how they were elected.

A. M. K.—A congregation or "meeting," which elects one—or more—to "the ministry," whether as preacher or pastor, or both in one, and pays for what service these render, is away from the lines of God's Word altogether, and has no claim at all to be regarded or acknowledged as God's assembly. It is a sect, with or without a name, in which the authority of the Lord is denied and the pattern given in the Word disowned. If its leaders once knew better, all the worse, for it is then a case of losing light they once had, and going back to practices they once condemned and disowned.

H. L., BRISTOL.—The Scripture pattern how to help young converts in the truth, is set before us simply and definitely in Acts xi. 23, 26; xiii. 43; 1 Thess. ii. 7, 11; Acts xx. 20. If you leave them untaught, they will drift into denominations and missions, in which little of the pure Word of God is taught, but plenty of error, from which it will be more difficult to deliver them in after years. The proverb holds good here as elsewhere. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. xxii. 6).

G. L., RYDE.—Visiting evangelists and returned missionaries, should not interfere with matters of local trouble or discipline, in the assemblies they visit. They are generally ill-fitted for such work. And besides, it is in the responsibility of those who are "set" by God (1 Cor. xii. 28) in that assembly who know the full details, are acquainted with those implicated, and can bring the Word to bear on them, to deal with local matters of rule and discipline. Strangers intermeddling with things in which they have no concern, are the most fruitful cause of complications—not infrequently of divisions—that we know.

GEO. G.—The words, "some doubted," in Matt. xxviii. 17, need not be applied to "the eleven," although they were there. It was in all probability on this occasion, that a general gathering of "the disciples" took place in Galilee, and that there the risen Lord was seen of "more than five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6), to whom the great commission of verses 18-20 was given. After what was known to and acknowledged by "the eleven" and "others with them," as recorded in Luke xxiv. 33, 34, it is hardly conceivable that they would now be doubters.

A. H., MANCHESTER.—Social gatherings of God's people may be surely used as occasions for mutual help in the things of God. What are called assembly "fellowship meetings," in which all the affairs relative to its welfare are freely discussed, and such suggestions and proposals made as are considered to be for its prosperity, its spiritual growth, and the healthy exercise of its functions, have long been regarded with favour and practised with common approval. But when elements of "lightness" are allowed to come in, and "frivolity," rather than wholesome mutual counsel prevails, the thing that once was a blessing becomes a soul withering folly, and leads on to those "church amusements" which, when in full bloom, may include croquet, cricket, bowls, and even a "congregational dance" in midnight hours. These things all begin small, but grow more rapidly than grace, in most instances. If a company of Christians cannot be held together apart from "socials" of the latter type, they are spiritually in a bad way, and it is high time that those who see it, tell them so plainly, whether it be agreeable to them or otherwise.

Practical Points in Assembly Order.

Attendance.—To enable those who visit absentees, care for sick ones, and comfort those that mourn, it is found helpful in large assemblies to keep a roll of the names, on which one within easy view of all as they enter makes a mark, indicating their presence. This roll is of great service to brethren doing pastoral work, and enables them not to miss any who require their care. There need be no offence given, or taken, from this simple expedient, which is only meant for use, where "the number of the names" is too great to be retained in the memory.

Absentees.—Where Christians may be absent from the assembly for weeks on end, without being visited, it is no uncommon thing to find they have been better cared for by the parish minister, or some of the elders of the congregation of which they previously were members. If not well grounded in the truth of God, as to why they gather as they do, the negligence of those who ought to have cared for them, but did not, may be—and has often been—used by the enemy, to send them back to some unscriptural system of the world's religion. This surely ought not to be. It will not, where those who "watch for souls" do their work, that the Lord has entrusted to them faithfully, and when fellow-

believers who know of cases of sickness, discouragement, or it may be where offence, imaginary or real, is the cause of absence, informs (see 1 Cor. i. 11) those doing oversight work of it.

Offences.—The Lord tells us "offences must needs come" (Matt. xviii. 7), and they are not all from the world. One may "take offence" at what a fellow-believer has said or done (Matt. xviii.), at some word of ministry assumed to be personal, about some assembly act supposed to be unscriptural, and such like. It is always best to deal with such offences quickly, and not to leave them to "right themselves," as some unwisely counsel. When gone about in a gracious, straightforward, and godly manner, most may be put right—with God, which always should be first, then between those involved, without going further. This is the sort of case Matt. xviii. 15-16, legislates for. It is seldom done as the Lord requires, and consequently the result is not as it might, and would be. When others are first told and the story grows as it goes, it is well nigh hopeless then to arrest its further career, and so to "hide a multitude of sins" (Jas. v. 30).

Sitting Back.—A course for which there is no Scripture warrant is prevalent in some places, and is evidently reckoned as necessary to evidence "faithfulness to the Lord" by those who practise it. It is to "sit back" owing to some one being at the Lord's table who has offended them, or whom they think ought not to be there. But it is a wrong course from all points of view. First, the one who takes it, by the act judges the whole assembly to be at fault. Next, the one blamed is assumed to be guilty, before being so proved. And last, by going out from the assembly—and this is what is actually done by one who so "sits back"—he puts himself where he can no longer be allowed to take any share in investigating the matter, or in giving such evidence as he possesses respecting it. So there ought to be no "sitting back," which is, and ought to be reckoned as withdrawal from the assembly. Were this made known, and its results made clear, there might be much less of it, and the evil effects that follow.

Restoration First.—When there is trouble in an Assembly, it is little use trying to quench it by having a "special effort in the Gospel," as it is called. Let there be restoration of soul and the healing of breaches first, then there will be true fellowship in labour. But to ignore the trouble, and drive on as if it were not there is like spurring a lame horse, which only aggravates the trouble, and causes it to proceed to a worse degree

The Imperishable Name.

JESUS—Jehovah the Saviour—the name given before His birth by the angel to the Virgin's child (Matt. i. 21), is the Name honoured by perpetual mention under varied forms, throughout the Book of God, from its first revelation of it in grace in the opening of Genesis, to its final celebration in glory in the Book of Revelation. It was the Name enshrined in the promise of the Woman's Seed. It was presented in the sacrifice on Moriah of Abraham's day. It was foreshadowed in a thousand forms in the types and symbols under the law. It was echoed along the whole line of the prophets' voices. And at the opening of the New Testament, the honoured Name is uttered over the "child born" the "Son given" (Isa. xi. 6), the Virgin's babe who lay in the lowly manger at Bethlehem (Luke ii. 11, 16). Wondrous indeed it is to find "Jehovah the Saviour" there: God was indeed manifest in-flesh. The Word had become flesh, and "tabernacled among us" (John i. 14). And although the world knew it not, angels celebrated the event in the estatic joy of heaven. The Lord's passage through the land of Israel as Saviour, Healer, Deliverer, and Dispenser of God's salvation in a world of ruined sinners, proclaimed Him Jehovah the Saviour. His death on Calvary, and the Name written in shame upon His Cross, was the witness of man's rejection of Him, while His resurrection from the tomb was heaven's broad seal of acceptance of His work, and God's full attestation of His satisfaction from it, and of

His well-pleasedness in it. In the Acts, "Jesus" is preached as "Lord and Christ," and in His Name remission is held forth to "whosoever believeth" (Acts x. 43). His Name has the power of salvation (chap. iv. 12), which is in no other name. In the Epistles, the Name of Jesus as Saviour and Lord is "highly exalted," and His Church here (1 Cor. xii. 3) is to bear and honour it in all corporate relations (1 Cor. iv. 4) and in all individual service (Col. iii. 17). In the Apocalypse, His Name is celebrated in heaven, by saints and by angels, and is owned and honoured through all regions of redeemed and renewed creation.

"JESUS" is the imperishable Name, unchanging and unchangable. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His is the one Name which abides in bloom and freshness; the unfading Name whose efficacy and virtue can never cease. Time and memory will cause other names, whose praises have been sung, to fade and be forgotten, but eternity will do nothing with the Name of Jesus but celebrate it in realms of glory. Throughout it is "the same Jesus," Immanuel, God with us, Jehovah the Saviour; the Son in the bosom of the Father, the Sacrifice on the altar, and the Lamb that was slain, glorified above all heavens. His Name and His Person invest His work with an infinite value, and the offices. He fills with an abiding dignity. His is the Name of imperishable value, and His the theme of all heaven's eternal song.

"Lamb of God"—Thy lowly Name
 "King of Kings" they Thee proclaim
 Heaven and earth shall own Thy fame,

Jesus Christ.

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

IV.—THE TAKER AWAY OF SIN.

BY WM. HOSTE, B.A.

JOHN the Baptist had appeared as the forerunner, "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." He baptised with the baptism of repentance. Those baptised confessed their guilt, and justified God in His sentence on their sin; but how could that sin be taken away? That, no ordinance could achieve. They must wait for Him that was to come. And when He came, it was not as a Preacher, but as a Saviour; not as an Example, but a Sacrifice; not as the Man of God, but as the Lamb of God—the taker away of the world's sin. The question may arise as to how sin was dealt with in the ages before Christ died. Was it on the ground of works, or of law keeping? This is very important, for if God could pass over sin on such grounds then, why should the death of Christ be necessary for forgiveness now? The answer is, there has never been but one ground on which sin could be passed over, namely, the atonement of Christ.

In old time, God dealt with man in various ways during successive periods known as "dispensations." Man was subjected to different tests, the light of conscience, government, law, the actual presence of Christ in Israel, and all this to bring out what was in him, stop his mouth, and shut him up to grace. But from the fall, approach to God by sacrifice was instituted and continued, like a silver thread, throughout the Old Canonic.

Every sacrifice was a fingerpost to Calvary. The elect of all ages bowed to God, and condemned themselves. Even in the absence of literal sacrifices, the principle held good, "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psa. li. 17). To such an one, God could apply the value of the future work of Him, who was ever present to His mind as "the Lamb slain." There are two ways in which a man might let a friend buy goods at his expense at one of the great business palaces of London: He might allow him to run up a bill to his account, himself guaranteeing the store payment by a certain date, or he might open a deposit account and allow the friend to draw on it. The saved of Old Testament time were accepted "on credit," if we may so say; those of to-day are in virtue of the price already paid at Calvary. The *ground* in any case, on which a sinner is forgiven, is not his acceptance of the work of Christ (that is the necessary act which unites Him to the Saviour), but God's acceptance of that work. All God's holy claims are satisfied, and He has proved it by raising Christ from the dead and giving Him glory.

There are, however, important differences in detail between the past and present dispensations. Then the true ground of justification was not revealed; now the righteousness of God is declared in the Cross. How could God be just in passing over sin, when the blood of bulls and of goats was powerless to take it away? The word used in Rom. iii. 25 for "remission," with reference to "the sins

that were past," is "letting pass" (*Paresis*), a word never used of God's dealing with sins now. It is omission of judgment, rather than remission of guilt. The real transaction at the Cross, revealed a righteous, because sufficient ground, for the putting away of sin. Before, grace had flowed in a narrow channel, now like Jordan, it overflows its banks all the time of the harvest of this Gospel dispensation. Christ is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

We may compare this, with other similar phrases in his Gospel, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man, that cometh into the world" (chap. i. 9). "The Bread of God, is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world" (chap. vi. 33). "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (chap. xii. 32). All such passages must be interpreted in the potential sense. Not all have been actually enlightened, quickened, or drawn; but Christ is the only Light, the universal Bread, the unique Magnet, the world's Taker away of sin. None can do it, but He alone. "He is the propitiation for our sins (actual effect); and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (potential efficacy), 1 John ii. 2, R.V.). He is sufficient for all, effective in those who believe. One might point to the parish doctor, or the village blacksmith. This one heals us, that one shoes our horses; but the condition is understood, acceptance of skill in both cases. Where is the eye to turn to the Light, the faith to eat the Bread, the will to be drawn, the hand to be laid on the head of the Lamb? This is what John

himself did, and the five disciples who came to Jesus—Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel, and the anonymous one, whom most believe to be the writer, John, himself. Millions have done so since, "and there's room for many more." None have ever ventured on the Lamb of God, but their sins have at once been taken away, and blotted out of the book of God's remembrance.

On the Sunny Side of Seventy.

ON the sunny side of seventy!
 Yes, I reached it long ago,
 For I now am nearing eighty,
 With my hair as white as snow;
 Failing sight, and step enfeebled,
 I may seem in evil case,
 And to sing of "Sunny Seventy"
 May seem somewhat out of place.

But is it? When we ponder
 What the Book of God has said,
 Of the righteousness and glory,
 That now crown the hoary head;
 Of the Faithful Shepherd's guidance,
 Through the dangers of the way,
 And the light shall shine the brighter,
 Till it ends in perfect day.

I am nearing now the border
 Of that bright and better land,
 Where with fellow-pilgrims waiting
 I shall join their happy band;
 Whether passing from the body
 To the rest of Paradise,
 Of through "change" or "resurrection,"
 In Christ's image to arise.

How bright the glorious prospect
 To faith's far-seeing eye,
 Of dwelling in these mansions,
 All prepared beyond the sky:
 But the best of all that waits me
 Is to see His blessed face,
 To bow before His glory,
 And to praise Him for His grace.

All around me here is transient,
 So will shortly pass away,
 All that waits me is eternal,
 And will never know decay;
 So I praise the Lord my Shepherd,
 That thus far I now have come,
 For "the Sunny side of Seventy"
 Just finds me almost home.

The Church as the Bride.

IV.—THE ETERNAL GLORY OF THE BRIDE.
W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE "Marriage of the Lamb" in the heavens, will be an event of indescribable bliss, over which will come no shadow of sorrow or fear of severance of Bride and Bridegroom. "Till death do us part" are words applicable to all earthly unions, but they have no place here. For the Bridegroom is death's Conqueror, and can say, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore" (Rev. i. 18). And the Bride is one with Him there, partaker of His life in resurrection, over which death has no claim and can exercise no power. Here, in a world of death and sorrow, the bridal trousseau may become the shroud, and the cold grave may claim the smiling bride of yesterday as its prey. But "up yonder" all is life and immortality. No shadow of fear, no dark foreboding of parting, can chill the heart, on that bright nuptial day.

THE FRIENDS OF THE BRIDEGROOM.—"Blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. xix. 9). We have heard this applied to the saints of the present time, as if it belonged to them. And some have been happy in the thought that it is for them. But it would surely seem exceedingly strange to think of the Bride being only "called" to the marriage supper. Is it not rather that others are invited in her honour, and to share her joy?

It may be asked, Who then are these invited ones? Saved sinners of Adam's race they must be, for the word "called"

precludes the thought of them being angels. They are those who were saved before Pentecost, and had passed off the scene before the Church was formed. A passage in John iii. 29 may help to make this clear, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled." John, in point of time, came very near being part of the bride, but that honour was not for him. Was he dissatisfied with his portion? Hear his own words, "*My joy therefore is fulfilled.*" And could we ask that ransomed throng, who are to behold the heavenly Bridegroom and His much loved Bride on their nuptial day, while feasting with them, "Are you satisfied to be the friends of the Bridegroom?" Surely each one of them would answer as John did, "This my joy therefore is fulfilled. I bless God that He has counted me worthy to be here, to share the hours of the day, and to enter into the joy of my blessed Lord."

THE DIGNITY OF THE BRIDE.—There came to the shores of Britain long ago the young princess of a royal European house. As wealth goes, the family was not rich. There were proud Peeresses in Britain whose titles dated from the Norman Conquest, and who were rich enough to buy her father out. But that stranger had accepted the hand of the heir to the British throne, and in time she became Queen-Empress, and all the proud peeresses had to own her precedence. The Church is mainly composed of Gentiles, "aliens" from Israel's commonwealth

and "strangers to the covenants of promise." Compared with Israel, we were mere outsiders. And as compared with the worthies of the Old Testament times, those men and women of faith, whose roll of honour is found in Heb. chap. xi., how small we personally appear to be! Yet grace has put us in the place that that young princess got, and in the same way. For it is our oneness with Christ that gives and secures to us our position, and this unique place as the Bride of the Lamb.

THE GLORY OF THE BRIDE—What is it? That name, "The Bride, the Lamb's Wife," is most suggestive. It is not, "Wife of the Lion of Judah." He truly is the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah." But she is known in that glory by the imperishable Name that will ever speak of His love in laying down His life for her, as the Lamb of God. Then, it was as "the Lamb," the rejected One, that she first came to know and to be identified with Him here on earth, the place of His rejection still. It will be her glory then to wear the glory of His Name who was "despised and rejected of men." It surely reminds us of the word of Paul in Gal. vi. 14, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." May we count it all joy here and now, to suffer with and for Him, with whom we are so soon to stand for ever amid these realms of unfading glory.

Satisfied.

When in the Glory mid His own
Christ shows His spotless Bride,
Aloud, the songs of Heaven declare
God's heart is satisfied.

Potters, Planters, Hedgers.

AN ADDRESS GIVEN AT A WORKERS' CONFERENCE.
BY THE EDITOR.

HERE, in the midst of a long list of names belonging to the royal tribe—the tribe of Judah, God has given an honoured place to some lowly servants whose line of service was hidden from public view. We would never have known that such men existed, or that such work had been done by them, but for this record of it as preserved by God in the annals of His Kingdom. Commonplace as their work was, it did not pass His notice; yea, He caused it to be recorded in His own Book of Chronicles, as something worth remembering in ages yet to come. Who were the workers? What was their work? "These were the *potters*, and those that dwelt among *plants* and *hedges*. There they dwelt with the King for his work" (1 Chron. iv. 23). Potters, planters, and hedgers—a very commonplace trio; yet it seems they were of some account "for they dwelt *with* the King." That was good company. And they were men of some purpose too, for the record runs, they dwelt there "for his work." The king's pots and plants required attention then, and they require the same still. I think we might—without doing injustice to other potters and planters—take special possession of this, and appropriate it to ourselves as serving our Lord among His plants—the fruit of His Gospel saved in early years. When an apostle says, "I have planted" (1 Cor. iii. 6), he refers to the earliest stages of the work for God in

Corinth. To give godly care to the new convert : to guide his early steps in the heavenward way. He who watches over the first stages of growth, is, in the highest and most honoured sense of the term, a "planter." Let us see to it that there is *root* in our plants—not mere lifeless professors : these give no flower, no fruit to the King. "Pots" and "hedges" are still needed for plants of heavenly birth. They must be *fed* and they need to be *protected*. Some find their service in watering and feeding : others in watching over and sheltering from the attacks of the enemy. There are frosts to protect from, and "little foxes that spoil the vines" to catch. There is infinite variety of work ; room and scope for all kinds of workers ; so there need be no jostling, no overlapping, and certainly no jealousy or strife. But although there were many spheres of labour, there was only one dwelling-place for all the labourers. "*There, they dwelt with the King for his work.*" The centre of attraction was their royal master. To be near to him, "with" him, kept them close to each other. In his presence they would not fall out, or fight. All this has its lessons for us. To dwell with Christ *our* Lord is the secret of effectual service, and of real fellowship among servants also. "In Christ" is our place of security, "with Christ," is the place of communion. And if our dwelling-place is there, if we abide in communion with Christ, there is no fear but we shall be "for His work." The plants and hedges will receive due care. Our very best will be done for *them*, because they belong to Him.

Jehovah's People and Land.

PART II.—ISRAEL'S CALLING AND INHERITANCE.

NO reverent reader of the Book of God, can have failed to observe, that almost two-thirds of its contents are occupied with the chosen people of Israel, and with that land given to them by God as their inheritance. Their past history, present scattering, their future gathering and glory in that land which bears Immanuel's Name, and shall yet be lightened with His glory, are minutely and graphically described in the Word of God. It is surely to the loss of the Lord's people of the present time, that they should be content to live in ignorance of what God had caused to be written on these subjects, or to suppose that, because they do not immediately concern their own present salvation or future hope, that they are therefore unimportant. A people who were chosen out of all nations to be "a special people" unto God "Himself" (Deut. vii. 6), called by His Name as no other people (Isa. lxxiii. 19) were, in whose midst Jehovah walked and dwelt, who were governed directly by Him as King (1 Sam. viii. 7), whose Statute Book was their law, of whom "concerning the flesh" the Christ came, in whose midst He lived and preached and wrought His works of power, and for whom in a special sense as a nation He died (John xi. 52), whose name was inscribed on His Cross (Matt. xxvii. 37), and over whom He is yet to reign as King (Luke i. 32, 33), must surely be a unique and favoured people indeed. The promises given, the place assigned, and the portion bestowed upon

them were the choicest, while the obligations accepted, the guilt incurred, and the Divine chastisements inflicted were the greatest known among men. They stand before the world as the witness of God's electing love (Deut. vii. 8), His redeeming power (Exod. xv. 13), His faithful and unwearied care in sustaining them in the wilderness for forty years (Deut. i. 31), and of the Divine judgment, in their degradation and scattering, until this day. Their future restoration, regathering, and re-establishment as a nation, their cleansing, renewal, and spiritual revival, their coming glory and blessing, are foretold by prophets, sung of by psalmists, and assured by apostles. And there are indications and signs, which the spiritual eye of the instructed saint cannot fail to discern, that the time is not far distant when the earthly people who are strangers and wanderers in all lands, shall again become the subjects of Divine interposition and of Satanic hatred, in Palestine.

JEHOVAH'S LAND.—While "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Psa. xxiv. 1), there is one part of it of which He says, "The land shall not be sold for ever, for THE LAND IS MINE" (Lev. xxv. 23). It is "the Lord's land" (Hos. ix. 3). Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Saracen, and Turk may each in turn have their time of domination over it, but the land of promise is "Immanuel's Land," and He alone has the disposal of it in His right. "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam"—as Gen. chap. x.-xi. tells how—"He set the bounds of the people

according to the number of the children of Israel" (Deut. xxxii. 8). And what was then planned in the Divine counsels for the earthly people, can neither be altered or annulled. The land given in promise to Abraham and his seed (Gen. xiii. 14-17), its position "in the midst of the nations" (Ezek. v. 5), make it "the hub of the universe." Its original honour caused it to be named "the glory of all lands" (Ezek. xx. 6, 15). Its fruitfulness, designates it as "a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exod. xxxiii. 3). Its beauty caused it to be called "the pleasant land" (Dan. viii. 9). Its boundaries are given in Gen. xv. 18, but only a part of this was occupied by Israel on their entrance on it. They failed to drive out the original inhabitants as God commanded (Num. xxxiii. 52), and allowed them to dwell among them (Jud. i. 21, 28), and finally became mixed with them, and were overcome by them. But in days to come, when their restoration to God and to the land takes place, they will occupy the whole of it (Ezek. xlvi. 15; xlviii. 29). Palestine, as it was known in the days of the Lord and His apostles, was only some 140 miles in length by about 40 miles in breadth—somewhat less than Scotland. The "Immanuel's Land" of the future is computed to be over twice the size of Great Britain and Ireland, covering an area of some 300,000 square miles, with Jerusalem as its metropolis and the temple in its centre. But "the heavenly country" (Heb. xi. 16), on which faith's far-seeing eye is set, with its prepared city, "whose Builder and Maker is God," is the home of the heavenly people, and to it they hasten.

Our Message to the World.

A WORD GIVEN AT A TRACT BAND CONFERENCE.

AN aged and honoured evangelist, who had served the Lord in preaching His Gospel in four continents, and was nearing the end of his long and honoured course of service, was speaking a homely word of counsel and of cheer to a group of young and earnest Gospellers, at the beginning of their life course of service. He said, "Keep to the old Gospel, for there is nothing like it. Preach the Gospel everywhere, to everybody, at all times. And be sure that what you give them is—

A PLAIN Gospel and nothing *more*.

A PURE Gospel and nothing *else*.

A FULL GOSPEL and nothing *less*."

That was a word in due season to the young preachers, and they felt it to be so. And so it well may be to us all, for it surely tells what God would have our message to the world to be to-day, as ever. There are Gospels many that are not plain, but sadly mingled and muddled. Sinners are told to "seek the Lord," to "make their peace with God," and to "give their hearts to Christ." There is more Law than Gospel in such sayings. They are not to be found in apostolic preaching, nor is a sinner capable of doing either. The Gospel does not tell a sinner to "seek:" it tells him Christ is seeking the lost (Luke xix. 10). It nowhere bids him "make" his peace, it says Christ has made it (Col i. 20). Nor does it bid him "give his heart," or anything else to God, but receive the One whom God has given to be his Redeemer and Saviour, even His Son (John iii. 16). To

add to the Gospel is to spoil, and to hinder its soul-saving power. Therefore make sure that the Gospel you preach has "nothing more," than what God has put into it. And let it be PURE as well as PLAIN. Nothing *else* than God's own message. Paul tells in 1 Cor. xv. 1-4 what he had "received" from the Lord, and in what words he preached to the people of Corinth (see ver. 2, R.V.). There is a great deal of "mystification" in much of what is called the "preaching of the Gospel." Attempts are made to popularise it. To make it simpler than the Bible does. But God will not own this folly. Nor will the Spirit use it. It is God's own Gospel, and He will have nothing else. Then it is to be FULL, the whole message and nothing less. A full-orbed Gospel is the appointed means for the conversion of sinners, and "the power of God unto" their "salvation" (Rom. i. 16). Let it be sounded forth in its fulness, nothing lacking, nothing kept back. And let it be *fresh* as well as *full*. Drink of it from the Fountain, until your own heart is warm and full of it (Psa. xlv. 1-2), then your tongue will speak of it joyfully, and the living stream will flow to those who hear. A full and flowing Gospel cannot go forth in vain. It will bring in its fruits now, or after many days. Ours is to see that we are in right condition when we utter it. God will look after the results, and we shall see them, and rejoice with Him over them, in the joy of harvest. The Gospel is God's costliest, as it is His last message of mercy to sinners. Let it be spread in all earnestness, in all solemnity, in the full confidence of its saving power.

God All-sufficient :

FOR ALL THE NEED OF HIS OWN.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS GIVEN 46 YEARS AGO.

BY JOHN RAE, OF ESTEVAN, CANADA.

OUR God is "the God of all grace" (1 Pet. v. 10). And He is "the God of patience and consolation" (Rom. xv. 5). Surely this is the God we need, for the wilderness journey. He makes "all grace abound" (2 Cor ix 8), so that we need lack nothing. He is patient and longsuffering with us in our weakness. And He never casts us out, or cuts us off. He comforts as "a mother comforteth" her children, and His consolations toward us when in trouble are very great. Verily, He is "our Refuge and Strength, a very present Help" (Psa. xli. 1). There is in God, all-sufficiency for all our need, for the whole of the wilderness journey. We do not need the world's patronage, when we have the shadow of "the Almighty" (Psa. xci. 1). Nor need we fear that we shall ever lack any good thing, if we obey the Word of God, walking in His truth, in separation from the ungodly. For He who says to His own, "Come out from among them and be ye separate," also says, "and I will be a *Father* unto you, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. vi. 18). It is truly blessed to have a God and Father like that! One "whose love is as great as His power," who truly cares for us and has the wherewithal to supply all our need, "according to His riches in glory" (Phil. iv. 19). Let us only trust Him and cleave to Him, and we shall prove His all-sufficiency to meet our every need, and His power to support us in every trying hour.

Out to Christ Himself.

GOD has brought us out from the abominations of the world's religion, and from the trammels of its sectarianism to His Son, to own Him our Lord by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 3), and to go by "the Book" He left to guide us. We have not been brought out as a parson once said of us, "to starve on the devil's common," but to feed in the "green pastures" to which "the Great Shepherd" leads His flock. This being brought out from human religion, its folds and sects, is not a "new movement." It began over nineteen centuries ago, when the Lord began to lead out "His own sheep" (John x. 4, 27) from the fold of Judaism, and to separate saved people from the unconverted religious crowd of cavillers and opposers of His truth (Acts xix. 9)—not some eighty years ago, as some preachers and writers say of what they now call the "Brethren movement." Let us be done with silly talk of this sort. Every "born again" one is "one of the brethren," and does not therefore need to "join" them. God has done that already. But He wants all to gather to the Name of Him whom He has made Lord in the midst of His own (Matt. xviii. 20). It is "unto Him" that God leads His people to gather "without the camp" (Heb. xiii. 13), and when they have really gone out to Christ they will not go back to sects. Because He will not disappoint them, whoever else may. Some go where there is "good teaching," others where there is "love." But when these fail they cease. Christ was not their attraction. J. S.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

THE SINNER'S STATE BEFORE GOD.

- By NATURE, a child of wrath (Eph. ii. 3).
 In MIND, a rebel against God (Rom. viii. 7).
 In PRACTICE, an enemy of God (Rom. v. 9).
 In POSITION, afar from God (Eph. ii. 12).
 In LAW, guilty before God (Rom. iii. 19).

THE GOSPEL'S GOOD NEWS TO SINNERS.

- It announces a SAVIOUR provided (Luke ii. 10).
 It tells of a SACRIFICE offered (1 Cor. xv. 3).
 It proclaims a SALVATION provided (Eph. i. 13).
 It declares a SATISFACTION accepted (Rom. iv. 28).

THE BLESSINGS THE BELIEVER RECEIVES.

- The Remission of Sins (Acts x. 43).
 The Possession of Everlasting Life (John v. 24).
 The Knowledge of Sonship (John i. 12).
 The Word of Assurance (1 John v. 13).
 The Seal of Security (Eph. i. 13).

CONCISE STUDIES ON BIBLE SUBJECTS.

A STUDY ON JUSTIFICATION,

As presented in Romans iii. 24-26.

- Its SOURCE—God's Grace (ver. 24).
 Its GROUND—Christ's Blood (ver. 24).
 Its CONDITION—Man's Faith (ver. 25).
 Its OBJECT To declare God's righteousness (ver. 26).

CLEANSING BY BLOOD, SACRIFICIALLY.

- Cleansed from sin's guilt (Heb. x. 22).
 Purged from sin's defilement (Heb. i. 3).
 Loosed from sin's power (Rev. i. 5).
 Freed from sin's conscience (Heb. x. 2).

CLEANSING WITH WATER, PRACTICALLY.

- The Word's action in Regeneration (Tit. iii. 5).
 The Lord uses it in Sanctification (Eph. v. 26).
 The Believer's rule in Conduct (Psa. cxix. 9).

Answers to Correspondents.

PATER.—If you are unable to give the time and care to your household that God requires of you, you ought not to undertake service either for the church or out of it, that will hinder you in fulfilling your home responsibilities. These, next to what is due to the Lord Himself, are to be paramount. But some, by denying themselves many lawful things, care for "their own" and also "for the Church of God" (1 Tim. iii. 5), and abound in service in the Gospel as well. When the heart is right and the Lord's business gets its right place, it is

truly wonderful what can be overtaken, done well, and nothing neglected.

M. O., GLASGOW.—Separate interests arising from divided counsels, and manifested in small coteries, each having its own hobby, do not indicate either superior spirituality or advancing Gospel activity. The formation of "associations" for carrying on evangelistic work, are more frequently the thin end of the wedge, that further driven causes schisms or "rents," and too often ends in open "division." God's Word speaks of one association only, which is God's assembly (1 Tim. iii. 15), in which there is—or ought to be—room for the exercise of all spiritual energies and ministries. If there is not, a godly effort should be made to put what is crooked straight, rather than to leave it in the hands of those who will drive it still further from the pattern of the Word, to serve their own personal interests.

E. J., CARDIFF.—Ask the person who claims to have the "liberty to preach anywhere," even "in a Roman Catholic chapel," to say when he was last invited to preach in one of these. It will be time to discuss such matters when they come within the sphere of "practical religion," as folks say. Some are more active in "claiming" liberties that do not exist, than in using those that they have neglected every day, and of spending time and energy boasting of what they can do, while as a matter of fact they do nothing at all in spreading the Gospel among those with whom they meet and mix every day.

G. F., BELFAST.—Spiritualism, in all its belongings, is of the devil, and should not be trifled with by any child of God. Morbid curiosity has caused some to go to seances and gatherings for what is called "investigation." And there they had their first experiences of the power of hell and the deceivings of demons blinding them to the dangers in which they were placing themselves. It is not for nought that God had prohibited ALL intercourse with those who have "familiar spirits" (Lev. xix. 31), and these all Spiritualist mediums have. They are possessed with demons. These can personate the dead, and in the powers of hell which possess them, deceive the credulous who imagine they give communications from the dead, which is in so single case true. All their information—and it is apt to be very mixed—is from demons, for it is absolutely certain that no human being, who ever lived on earth, and whose body is buried in the grave, ever came back to darkened rooms, to entertain the curious who assemble there. None

of the saved would, even if they could, leave their present blissful abode "with Christ" in Paradise, on such a mission. And we know from God's Word that the lost whose souls are in hades cannot (Luke xvi.), if they would.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Business, Remuneration, Betting, and Gambling.

A matter in which as a young business man I have been considerably exercised before the Lord for some time is, I find a matter of much concern to others. We are constantly urged to invest capital in companies, trusts, and other concerns outside of our own businesses, in which men of the world are shareholders and of some directors. We are all more or less uncertain as to the right or wrong of such a course. Some say it is business, others think it savours of gambling, and is not for a Christian. And we know there is much of the betting and gambling spirit in many such businesses. How would you differentiate? Help will be much valued.

BUSINESS may be simply defined as exchange of values. For something which a purchaser wishes to possess, he pays its owner what he accepts as an equivalent. When this is affected by sale, the article or property passes from seller to buyer, for a certain sum of money mutually fixed. If by barter, in which one article is exchanged for another, the transaction is a simple exchange of property of corresponding values, in which both give and are entitled to gain. And the same principle obtains in remuneration for service—as a workman in relation to his employer, a doctor to his patient, and a manager to his firm, all of which are entitled to an appropriate remuneration for the services rendered. And this should ever be reasonable and righteous on the part of the employer, and acceptable on the part of the employed.

BETTING is something entirely different. When a man makes a bet on the speed of a horse in a race, or on the success of a team of footballers in a game, or when he shares in a lottery or drawing at say, a church bazaar, in which certain prizes are drawn for and come by chance—or fraud—to one, at the cost of the rest, the winner takes the losers' money, but gives them nothing in exchange, and no equivalent of value in return. One enriches himself at the expense—it may be at the ruin—of the rest. Betting—and its equivalent, lottery drawing—is an immoral—in some aspects a criminal—act, in

which no true Christian ought to share. It is an open denial of the Golden Rule, not to do to others what we do not wish done to ourselves. It is inconsistent with the commandment of the Lord, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. vii. 12). It is a lowering of the standard of that "righteous" living, which grace educates and trains the saved unto (Tit. ii. 13, 14). It is purely selfish, utterly indifferent to the fact, that in winning it may bring ruin on others, in losing cause loss and suffering to those whom the Christian is under obligation to provide for, or deny his faith (1 Tim. v. 8). And it is a bad testimony to men of the world, who expect better things from a man who says he is saved by grace and bound for glory. Legitimate business may be done in the Name of the Lord (Col. iii. 24), and have His blessing, but betting is not of God, nor according to His Word, and can neither have God's sanction or approval. And it dare not be "taken to the Lord in prayer," nor to the bar of Scripture, for counsel.

GAMBLING is another form of the same depravity. It may be carried on in ways that are not so openly vicious as rattling a dice, cutting a pack of cards, or playing for a "pooled" sum of money, but it is of the same unprincipled character, which none who fear God can countenance.

There are honest and legitimate means open to those who have money to invest, and require its returns for their livelihood, apart from personally engaging actively in business, which are neither opposed to the spirit of Christian living, nor disobedient to the precepts and injunctions of the Word. To deposit money in a bank for a specified interest, is a simple contract, implying no yoke and involving no responsibility. To lend a given sum as bond on property, or for a contracted interest, is, or may be a sound transaction, against which no just reproach can be laid. But if one invests his own or his family's resources in some widely advertised, but wholly untrustworthy and possibly unexamined concern, lured by a high rate of interest, or in some skilfully but fraudulently floated concern, which promises to become a wonderfully productive affair, and likely to make its shareholders "rich in a hurry," it is simply "covetousness"—the unhealthy desire "to have more," with little concern or care as to how it comes, and without having to wait on the slowly revolving wheels of a legitimate business in which capital is invested and on which labour is bestowed. To stake what

may be the results of a lifetime's toil in a co-partnership with men of whose character nothing is known, and concerning whose methods of transacting business no enquiry is made, is utterly unworthy of one bearing Christ's Name. It is not business but gambling, and is alike destitute of Christian integrity and of common honesty. Little wonder God "blows" on such doings, and allows His people who embark on them, in open defiance of His Word, which they know to be against all such "combinations," to reap their own sowing, here and now in loss and sorrow, not to speak of spiritual decay. Alas! that the warnings, which abound on every hand, do not seem to have much effect in preventing others from following in the same path. But the man who seeks to conduct his business affairs for God, and on the lines of His Word, though his faith, may be oft tried, and his adherence to that Word severely tested, through what appears to be less success than others, with less conscience in their dealings. We are perfectly sure, God will never allow such to want any "good thing," nor will they ultimately suffer loss, even in temporal things. The man whose aim is to please God in his business life, will never lack His help in difficulties while his soul will prosper and his life will be fruitful in the service of the Lord.

Mems on the Word, and Work of God.

Tract Bands go forth this month to evangelize the needy and neglected villages of the Homelands. There are thousands of them, in which no Gospel is preached: to which no printed Gospel message comes. Young men, especially, should go in for this grand work. And the Assemblies, in which they are, should encourage them by willingly providing them with the necessary supply of pure Gospel Books and Tracts they require, and so become "partners" with them in the work.

Evangelistic Workers are greatly cheered by an appreciation from fellow-believers, of their efforts to spread the Gospel to reach those who do not come to hear it, and to arouse the careless around. Some known to us, who cannot preach, but can help those who do, give, as an expression of their fellowship in the Gospel, a monthly parcel of "Localised Gospel Messengers," with the name of Hall and Intimation of meetings on top, one for each household in the district, which younger ones gladly distribute on first Lord's Day of each month, thus interesting them in the Gospel, and bringing many to hear it. Or if a

magazine with more reading in it be preferred, "Good Tidings" is the thing, and will be received in the villa as readily as in the cottage.

Special Gospel Efforts by a well conditioned assembly of God's people to reach those who do not at ordinary times, come to hear the Word, may and often do have good results. But such efforts are not to be regarded as more than to give impetus to the continuous Gospel work carried on by that assembly. Where this is neglected, or allowed to drag lifelessly along, "special efforts" come to be looked on as the only means of evangelising, and "strangers" the only preachers that need be expected to "draw" the people. And this through time develops into the need for having a "resident" evangelist month by month, with his status and salary like "other denominations." No doubt this would be very acceptable to some, who are clamouring for it. And if "coming events cast their shadows before them," there is every prospect of this "semi-clerical" class making their appearance, if they have not already. But they will never find a "roost" where the claims of Christ are owned as Lord and the Word of God is allowed its place.

Letter to the Editor.

Continuous Blessing.—"For the last twelve months we have had a continuous work of grace in our Sunday evening Gospel meetings, and many bright cases of conversion to God. There has been no "special" effort and no prearranged preachers. But the Christians of the assembly have been very hearty, and many brethren from other assemblies have given their ready help, while visits of evangelists and others "preaching Christ," working on the simple lines of the Word, have been welcomed to minister the Word as the Lord guided them. I believe our 'red tape' arrangements of former time greatly hindered the Lord from working in our midst, and by His grace we shall see that there is no return to that system of 'booking' preachers and arranging for meetings months ahead, which we were unconsciously led into by those who seem to make it their business to encourage it." A. N.

["Continuous blessing" with the Gospel, and Holy Ghost conversions as the fruit of it, will be more widely experienced, when we return to the simple lines of the Word, allowing the Lord to carry on His work as He knows best how, willing to fall in with His plans rather than making our own, and then expect Him to endorse them.—ED.]

Christ, the Perfect Servant.

IN the records of the life of the Lord Jesus on earth, we have a perfect combination of inward quietness and outward activity—abiding communion with God and constant diligence in the service appointed for Him. That which first strikes the reader of the Gospels is the unremitting toil of the Lord, and it gradually becomes evident that this was because He knew His time for service on earth was short: "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work" (John ix. 4).

There is a striking expression in John vii. 1, "After these things, Jesus walked in Galilee: for He would not walk in Jewry." It is not *abode*, but "walked," for He "*went about* doing good." Neither opposition nor popularity hindered Him. If He was rejected at Nazareth, He "went His way, and came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days." And when He had done His work in one place, no efforts of the people kept Him longer there, His answer to their entreaties being, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities, also; for therefore am I sent" (Luke iv. 31, 43).

But if every page of the Gospels utters "I must *walk*" and "I must *work*," the words, "I *waited patiently* for the Lord" are not less legibly written there. With the Lord, the diligence of faith was never marred by the haste of unbelief. He lived thirty years in obscurity, waiting, in fellowship with God, till the right moment came "that He should be made

manifest to Israel," and when He did thus come forth, it was to receive "morning by morning" the guidance of His God.

A familiar example of how our Lord could *wait*, when others would have *hurried*, is found in John xi. Mere human sympathy would lead us to hasten to friends in sore distress; but He "abode two days" before He said, "Let us go into Judea again," knowing that this delay would contribute to "the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." The contrast between Himself as looking for God's guidance, and those who knew nothing of this, is expressed in His own words to His unbelieving kinsmen, when they urged His setting out for the feast at Jerusalem—"My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready."

The Church is called to walk in the footsteps of her Lord; His servants are expected to follow their Master. That something of this blessedness was known in early days is evident in the Acts of the Apostles. The first few chapters show us how the apostles *waited* for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, and then how *diligent* they were in their testimony in spite of all opposition. In the history of the apostle Paul, we see the same combination. His three years in Arabia were followed by unceasing service, and it was after the waiting time of the church at Antioch (Acts xiii.), when "the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," that those great "journeyings" of Paul began, the fruit of which *we* reap.

W. H. B.

The House of God.

WHAT IS IT? WHERE IS IT?

PHILIP MAURO, NEW YORK.

QUESTIONS like the foregoing, presuppose that there is to-day a house of God, accessible to His people, and as clearly marked and as recognisable as was the temple at Jerusalem. Is such indeed the case? This is obviously a point to be settled in the clearest way, else all that is said and taught in the Scriptures, is wholly without point or application to God's people of this dispensation, and there is nothing after all for them, but to do each one that "which is right in his own eyes." But God has not left His children in darkness and ignorance as to this. Indeed, it is not to be supposed for a moment that He who was so particular as to the place of gathering for His old covenant people, should be indifferent in His regard as to those whom He has begotten unto Himself, and brought by grace into His own family. The Scripture in 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16, is sufficient to settle this question in the clearest way. Paul is here writing things which were too important to await His personal coming. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the HOUSE OF GOD, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The last words, "the truth," connect closely with the next verse, as I will presently point out. But notice first, that the passage clearly shows at least three things: (1) That God

has a house; (2) that He expects His children to know it and be in it; (3) that He expects them to behave in it according to His own mind.

Hence, if there be any of God's children who do not know where God's house is, and do not know their place and responsibilities in it, there is certainly something wrong. The trouble, I know, is largely due to the confusion that exists in professing Christendom, in consequence of which God's ways have been obscured to many; and it is due also in large measure to lack of faithfulness on the part of some who assume to instruct the people of God, but who, being frequenters themselves of the forbidden "high places" of the religious world, are silent on this vital subject. I do not reprove any for their ignorance; but would help them to see the light. I have been corrected again and again by the Word of God; and in this very matter it set me right when I was far astray.

Once I thought that *inter-denominationalism* was the ideal thing. But it is clear to me now, that this is but another name for Great Babylon, which signifies CONFUSION BY MIXTURE. And now I am dismayed to find that not only are there enemies of "the churches of God" without, who would gladly compass their destruction; but also there are those within, who seem bent upon dragging them down to the level of the denominations.

God has given one clear mark whereby His people, however simple and unlearned they may be, can distinguish the places of His choice, from all other places. That single mark not only serves for the guid-

ance of His people in this important matter, but it also displays His marvellous wisdom in foreseeing the confusion of our day. He foreknew the period of innumerable religious systems and institutions of human origin; but He knew that NO HUMAN organisation—whatever its purpose may be—can exist without a *distinctive name*. If you will but think it over, you will realise the remarkable and enlightening fact that every human organisation, society, fraternity, association, and the like, depends for its very existence upon its own *special* name. If the name could be destroyed or taken away, the thing itself would necessarily dissolve. Only a heavenly and divine thing can exist in this world without a human name. Hence, from the very first, God secured and made clear the required distinction between His OWN HOUSE and the innumerable systems of men, by linking the former with His OWN NAME. The difference between Jerusalem (spiritually) and Babylon, ever has been, the difference between the one place of the One Name, and the many places of the many names. Hence, when the Lord said, "For where two or three are gathered together in (*i.e.*, unto) MY NAME there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20), He gave an indication to keep us from all WRONG places and guide us to the only RIGHT one.

The Peerless Name in Heaven.

"Jesus," the Name all harps employ;
 "Jesus," whose praise they sing;
 Himself, the Source of all their joy,
 Sounds forth on every string.

"Concerning the Collection."

(1 Corinthians xvi. 1).

PLAIN WORDS ON CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY:

THE privilege and duty of Christians giving of their money, is enjoined in great fulness of detail in the Word of God. Notwithstanding this, there is very general ignorance of what God requires, with great carelessness regarding what the Word directs as to the manner and measure of Christian giving. Too often a paltry coin is dragged thoughtlessly from the pocket, and dropped heartlessly into bag or box, more as a matter of form and habit, not to be different from others, than as a definite gift to God, from "a purposed heart" (2 Cor. ix. 7), to be "an odour of a sweet smell, acceptable, well pleasing to God" (Phil. iv. 18). A few plain and practical considerations on this subject, may be for our common profit.

LIBERALITY—that is the giving of our money to the Lord for His work—is part of the Christian's worship. "The sacrifice of praise" and the "communicating" of our substance are closely connected in Heb. xiii. 15, 16. It is therefore in due season that an opportunity for the saints of God to give of their money, when they are assembled for worship on the first day of the week (see 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2). It is strange that any who are the subjects of redeeming grace should forget or neglect this privilege. Yet it is often done, sometimes under the mask of an advanced spirituality too. An old picture comes to mind here, in which a grave Presbyterian elder is seen to be so profoundly engaged in the singing of a Psalm, that when the

deacon comes round the pews with the old-time collecting "ladle," he is so much engrossed, that he feigns not to see it. And how much better is the man who has just sung—

"Were the whole realm of Nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing so Divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all."

and is now fumbling in his pocket for the smallest coin it contains, "deeply exercised" lest he give a sixpence instead of a threepenny piece.

PAYING DEBT, is not giving. It should be clearly taught, plainly enforced, and well remembered, that what is given in what are called "Church Collections," is *not* always or generally "given to God" at all. It is in payment of debt incurred by those who are in and of that particular assembly, who are therefore liable for their share of the obligations they incur as its members. Rent of building, cost of cleaning, payment of light, and the like, are expenses in which each and all who are "in fellowship" together there, in that assembly are common sharers. They are morally liable to contribute their share of all such expenses, in the same way as those in a business co-partnership, to discharge their obligations to the world. Were this better understood, and more frequently made plain to those coming from places where no Scriptural rule is observed in such matters, there would be less scarcity of funds, and no necessity for the constant begging appeals, which so badly disfigure many assembly gatherings and Christian Conferences. The Lord's people need Scriptural instruction in this as in every-

thing else. And where they get it, wisely and seasonably, there is little to complain of in the matter of their giving. Where there is lack, it is most commonly carnality in life and worldliness in style that swallow up that which should go into the Lord's "Treasury" (Mark xii. 41).

THE LORD'S PORTION ought to be laid aside each first day of the week (1 Cor. xvi. 1), by each individual Christian, as a "first-fruits" (Prov. iii. 9) unto Him, out of the week's wages, the year's profits, or however else the income is derived. This portion—be it a tenth (Gen. xiv. 20; xxviii. 22; Num. xviii. 21-24), a fifth, or a half of the whole, is "the Lord's portion," set apart for His use, to be administered by the giver as His steward (1 Cor. iv. 2; Luke xvi. 10-12). Thus it is that God associates His people with Himself, in the meeting of many phases of human need, whether among his own "of the household of faith," or among the unconverted "without." To degrade this godly stewardship into a continuous begging for money, or in "raising funds" by what are popularly named "Sales of Work," with which are usually associated varied forms of frivolity to "draw" the crowd, and then relieve them of their money, is a caricature of true Christian liberality, in which none who fear God should take any part, or in any way countenance. God is perfectly able to find all that He needs to carry on His work in all the forms that He has appointed, without either asking funds from the ungodly, or by worldly devices to raise money among His own, as are not an adornment of His doctrine. J. R.

Not World Reformers.

THE work of the servants of Christ in this world, during the period of their Master's absence from it and His rejection by it, is to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God to it. This is the only business of God's servants here. They are not world reformers. They know from God's own Book, that "the present evil world" (Gal. i. 4), can never be made better than it is, but that it will go from bad to worse, until the devil shall reign supreme over it, and control it wholly by his craft and power. It is not the Christian or the church's work to enter into alliance with the unconverted, to "put down" this or that evil. It is no part of the Christian's work or testimony in or to the world, to make the world a "better place to live in," but to preach the Gospel, which is God's appointed means and the Holy Spirit's effectual instrument of "taking out a people" from it (Acts xv. 14) for God and His Christ. The Christian is not a world reformer, whose aim is to put what is wrong right in politics, to put down rampant evils by repression, or to occupy his time and energies in seeking to redress wrongs and overthrow wrong systems around him, in the scene where His Lord and Master was cast out for speaking the truth and asserting the claims of God among men. "Iniquities" have taxed the wisdom of able statesmen, baffled the ingenuity of wise philanthropists, and they still exist, and in most instances increase. When there seems to be some progress gained in one part of this field of world-cleansing, the same

evil, or another, breaks forth elsewhere. And this will continue until the Lord Himself returns to purge it effectively with judgment. But neither the individual Christian in alliance with the children of wrath, nor the churches of God in amalgamation with the world's religion, will ever by sharing in joint-schemes of world reformation advance the true cause of Christ one step, but as has been abundantly proved, will rather lose or vitiate any spiritual power they ever had, by attempting what God has forbidden, and neglecting what His Word has commanded. The only instrument of blessing for the world is "the Gospel of God concerning His Son" (Rom. i. 1-3). And that Gospel made known in its freshness and fulness to the world, by the Christian and the church living in separation to God, will not fail to fulfil its mission, which is not to reform the world, but to bring a people out from it to Christ. But those who seek to save others, must be clear themselves from the mire in which these sink. The best service the Christian can render to the world, is to preach Christ to it, and live Christ before it. It is one of the devil's subtle tricks to withdraw the Lord's servants from this God-appointed work, and fill their hands with world reforming schemes in common cause with the unconverted. And many are so ignorant of his devices, that they not only give themselves to such work with zeal worthy of a better cause, but seek to lure others ignorant of God's truth, into the snare. There, they soon lose their spiritual freshness, and become "good for nothing" (Matt. v. 13).

The Story of Keilah.

OR, "FOR HIS PEOPLE ISRAEL'S SAKE."

WM. RODGER, OMAGH.

AN interesting study in 1st and 2nd Samuel is, the contrast between the character of Saul and that of David. The story in chap. xxiii. of the rescue of Keilah, illustrates several of the points of difference between them. In it, as elsewhere, these seem to be grouped around two main distinctions. The first of these is: that David sets high value on seeking the face of God for guidance and help, whereas Saul does not. The other is, that David considers the need of others, while Saul does only what pleases himself.

It is to the second of these distinctions that we wish at present to call attention. While Saul, jealous on his own behalf, was giving his whole mind to the pursuit of David, the latter, jealous for God's people and for His land, was eager to do battle on their account. In verse 1 we read, "They told David," but in verse 7, "It was told Saul." Thus each man hears the news in which he is most interested. The Philistines may be at Keilah, and Saul apparently hear nothing about it. But when David is reported to be there, he hears of it at once. In like manner, in chap. xviii., his ear was quick to take in the song of the women concerning David's achievements and his own and his jealous heart was very wroth thereat. It would have been well for him had he, on both occasions, acted as he had done in chap. x. 27 (see margin). When certain there, expressed their contempt for him, it is

said of him, "HE WAS AS THOUGH HE HAD BEEN DEAF."

Are we not often very like Saul in these matters? How quickly we hear anything that has been said or done against US! How eagerly we seek to get even with one whom we think has wronged us, or of whom we are jealous! It is, perhaps, those who are most prominent in the Lord's service, who need most to be careful as to this. Has it not been the case that the news of some other servant of the Lord having "slain his ten thousand," while we have only "slain thousands," that he has seen ten saved where we have seen but one, has at times awakened within us a similar feeling to that which the song of the women of Israel aroused in Saul? Have we not been found expressing a hope that the ten may be "real," in a tone which implied that we very much doubted it? Now, there are, of course, certain men, whom one is apt to associate with unreal work more than others. Their manner of preaching, their way of dealing with individuals, and still more their life and character, lead to this. But the danger is, that the personal element may be introduced into such matters; and that we may be jealous on our own behalf, where we fancy we are jealous, like Phinehas, for the Lord's sake. Let none of us be above self-examination as to this. And let us remember that all true men who have done really good work for God, have been very free from such jealousy. Their spirit was as that of Moses, who said, "Enviest thou for my sake. Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets."

Now, while Saul's thoughts were thus occupied, David, harassed and persecuted as he was, found time to concern himself about the news that some of God's people were in trouble; and, careless of the consequences to himself, he desires to help them. His men do not understand his action or see things from his point of view. They say, "We be afraid here in Judah, how much more then if we come to Keilah, against the . . . Philistines." But to David a fight with his brethren, and a fight with the enemies of God's people, were two very different things. The one was to be avoided at almost any cost, the other was a matter of course. As Abigail, on the one occasion when he had almost gone astray in this respect, reminded him, his business was to fight the "BATTLES OF THE LORD," and not his own battles (1 Sam. xxv. 28). Concerning Saul, he himself said to Abishai, "The Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle and perish." Till then, David was content to wait.

This care for God's people was ever a feature of David's character, just as selfishness was a pronounced characteristic of Saul's. His whole course in this matter is beautifully summed up in the closing words of Psalm lxxviii. "He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes great with young, He brought him to feed Jacob His people . . . So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." David's early training as a shepherd had taught him to enjoy the

great truth that THE LORD WAS HIS SHEPHERD, but it had also taught him to enter into his own responsibility as THE LORD'S SHEPHERD OF HIS PEOPLE. We see this evidenced in 2 Sam. v. 12, where we read how he perceived "that the Lord had established him king, . . . for HIS PEOPLE ISRAEL'S SAKE." Again in 1 Chron. xxi. 17, when the pestilence was in the land, his cry was, "These sheep, what have they done; let Thine hand be on me." Thus he was like Moses, who prayed, "If Thou canst, forgive them, and if not, blot me out;" and like Paul, when he exclaimed, "I could wish that I myself were accursed . . . for my brethren." In all three, we surely see a little of the same love which moved the Good Shepherd Himself, to give His life for the sheep. In speaking of this great fact, John is led to add, "And we *ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren."

In closing, let us note the return David got from the Keilites for his help. The people he fought for and delivered, were ready to deliver him up to the men who had shown so little care for their recent distress. So it was with Moses, Paul, and many others of God's true servants. It is well to reckon thus, that none of us should count on anything else, lest we be disappointed. Those who court the smile and sympathy of God's people, may win them to their side, but those who simply act for their welfare as before the Lord, may need to be content to wait for their recognition and recompense till that day, when He shall "make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall each man have his praise from God."

Immanuel's Land.

ITS PAST HISTORY AND PRESENT CONDITION.

THE Book of Joshua, tells of Israel taking possession of part of the land given in promise to Abraham, and its division among the twelve tribes. In Judges, we learn that they failed to drive out the idolatrous inhabitants (chap. i. 21 ; ii. 3, 12 ; Psa. cvi. 34-36), how they were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works, which was the inevitable result. And for this the Lord delivered them into the hands of spoilers who spoiled them (Jud. ii. 14, 15), and His hand was against them. Pitiabile condition this, for a people chosen by God to be "a holy people" (Deut. vii. 6), formed for Himself, to shew forth His praise, and to be His witnesses in the midst of the nations, yet separate from and "not reckoned" among them (Num. xxiii. 9). Jerusalem was then a Jebusite stronghold, held by the enemies of God, whom the Israelites ought to have driven out. David, the chosen king—fair figure of Christ, in his lowly origin, mighty acts, victorious conflicts, and shepherd rule (Psa. lxxvi. 70-72)—took the city, calling it Salem, and the hill, naming it Zion (Psa. lxxvi. 2), the place of His dwelling. Moriah was acquired by David for the temple site, and in Solomon's reign of peace it was built and filled with His glory. It was in Solomon's time that Jerusalem reached the zenith of her glory and Immanuel's Land the climax of its prosperity. Gentile kings and queens from all parts came to hear the wisdom of its king, to see the glory of his throne

and kingdom, to look in silent awe on the bulwarks and palaces of the city, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," in which God was known as a refuge (Psa. xlviii. 1-13), the place which the Lord chose in which to place His Name, on which His eyes and His heart ever rested (2 Chron. vii. 16). But like all else of which man is the steward, this honour in which the land and the city stood, soon declined. Solomon, led into idolatry by his heathen wives, who "turned away his heart" (1 Kings xi. 1-6) to other gods, for whose worship he built high places, in no secret grove, but openly and publicly "before Jerusalem," until the anger of the Lord was aroused against him. The result of this was, that the kingdom was rent from him, and in the days of his son divided. So terrible was the idolatry of Salem and Israel, that "the land was polluted with blood" (Psa. cvi. 38, 42), until the Lord abhorred His inheritance, and the heathen, with whom they had allied themselves, were allowed to rule over them.

" Thus evil came and blighted
God's long-loved olive tree,
And Salem's shrines were lighted
To other gods than Thee."

Such is ever the course and end of all who turn away from God, disobeying His Word, making alliance with the world of the ungodly. It was the gods of wood and of stone, and the demons they represented (Deut. xxxii. 7 ; 1 Cor. x. 20), then ; it is the false religions, the other Gospels, the blatant infidelity that insults God to His face by rejecting the Word He has given, and denying to the Christ He has sent His Godhead, speaking

of Him as a "child of His time, knowing no more than His people," frittering away the virtues of His atoning death, and making man his own saviour, now. To mix and mingle with those who preach and teach these "doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. iv. 1), to listen to and patronise those who mock God and disown His Son, is to bid them "God-speed" and so to become sharers of their evil deeds (2 John 10, 11), and ultimately to fall into "the ditch" with them (Matt. xv. 14). Five centuries after the reign of Solomon, and as the result of his evil-doing and his vile example, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had that dominion, once entrusted to Israel and her king, placed in his hand, and using it he besieged the royal city, carried its princes captives to Shinar, razed the temple, took its holy vessels to the temple of his god, and brought desolation on the land. This was the end of rule in Israel, and the beginning of that period called by the Lord "the Times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi. 24), during which Jerusalem is to be "trodden down"—not necessarily always in desolation, but degraded from her place of lofty privilege and honour as the place of Divine worship, and the centre of Divine rule for all the earth, to be "a burdensome stone" (Zech. xii. 3) to all nations, as it surely has been throughout the centuries, is to-day, and is yet to be in fuller measure in "that day" when God will again resume relations with the earthly covenant people, and again openly espouse their cause. That day is not far off, as we may surely see.

J. R.

"Oh I to Be Nothing, Nothing."

IT was a testimony meeting. We had lustily sung the hymn beginning

"Oh to be nothing, nothing,
Only to lie at His feet."

Then we had some fine teaching and exhortation about being "crucified with Christ," "emptied of self," and taking "the lowest place," which all seemed to enjoy. The closing part of the meeting was for "testimonies." It was there that things came out in their true colours. The "testimonies" given did not strike some of us as being in any special sense those of people who had been "emptied" of that form of self which is exhibited in telling of having entered on a "higher life," nor did they give the impression that those who gave them had to any great extent had their desire fulfilled as expressed in the words, "Oh to be nothing." They seemed rather to be a people who were still "something," as the apostle speaks in Gal. vi. 3. Others told of being always found in Mary's place, "sitting at Jesus' feet." I could not help observing that most of those who made this claim had a tendency to be often on their own feet, rehearsing their experiences, looking down somewhat on others, whom they regarded as Christians of a much lower order. The fact is, a great many people sing and speak of things they know next to nothing about, especially on matters that flatter their flesh, and cause them to think they are living "one better," either in spiritual altitude or in separation from evil, than their fellow-believers. It is a form of self-conceit, very subtle, but it always gives itself away at some point.

John Rae, of Estevan, Canada.

At the close of about half a century of active service in preaching and teaching Jesus Christ, the Lord's servant, John Rae, Sen. "fell on sleep" on 28th January, in his 81st year, and was laid to rest in Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver, British Columbia, to await the resurrection morning. Born at New Deer, Aberdeenshire, in 1838, awakened and converted through the preaching of Reginald Radcliffe in 1859, he began to serve the Lord in spreading His Gospel, acting as a missionary in Presbyterian connections. Through reading the Word of God, he saw that, as a Christian, he ought to be baptised, and following what light he had, he obeyed, and settled for a time among Baptists. While labouring in Elgin in 1870-71, further light from the Word was given and acted on, which brought him outside of all denominations, to own the Name of the Lord alone as the only gathering Centre (Matt. xviii. 20), and His Word as the guide in personal life and church association. From that time onward, he "continued steadfastly" in the old paths of the written Word. In 1884, Mr. Rae with his family emigrated to Manitoba, settling first at High Bluff, thence to Portage-la-Prairie. There he was joined by John Smith. They visited and evangelised all that district, "the Lord working with them" (Mark xvi. 20). Sinners were saved, and little assemblies, gathering in the Lord's Name, sprang up in various places. Mr. Rae moved to Brandon in 1888, and from thence he visited houses, farms, and villages on the prairies of the great North-West. This was the special work for which the Lord had fitted him. Gracious, patient, and godly, his example as well as his teaching was a testimony for God. His tenderness, combined with loyalty to the Word of God, made him a true pastor to the people of God, whom he visited, cheered, and shepherded throughout all the years, until health failing, he was no longer able to undertake long journeys on the prairies. Then, as he wrote, us, "I enjoy the service of intercession." In this he continued to the very end, and passed to the homeland "in prayer." The lone dwellers in these regions will miss his visits, and so those of us who knew and esteemed him, his cheery smile and gracious words. Most of all will he be missed in the little assemblies of the great North-West, which were largely the fruit of his labours, and who looked to him as one who was ever ready to give godly counsel in difficulty and words of cheer in trial. If

one ministry is needed more than another, in our time, it is that of the faithful pastor, who seeks out the hidden, feeds the standing still, reclaims the wanderer, and restores the fallen, never failing to make Christ known to those who are still without God and without hope. A fuller record of our departed brother's life and labours—with photo. supplied by his son, Mr. James E. Rae—appears in this month's issue of "The Christian Worker."

Pleasures True.

Suggested by an article, "The Christian's Relation to Recreations," in March issue of "The Believer's Magazine."

PLEASURES true are found in Jesus,
More they are than shining gold.
Peace eternal we have through Him,
Sheltered safe within His fold.
Joy in Him is still increasing,
As we know Him more and more.
Fountain Head of all our blessing,
Untold wealth still to explore.

As we journey through the desert,
Guided by His mighty hand,
Pressing on though many dangers,
Firmly in His strength we stand.
Gladly led by God the Spirit,
Witness to our hearts within,
That the blood of Christ our Saviour,
Cleanseth us from all our sin.

If the passage should be dreary,
And the way at times seem long.
Still our hearts are tuned to praise Him,
In the darkness He's our song.
All around are many trials,
Satan tempts us very sore,
But our souls have found their portion
In the Saviour's boundless store.

In His Word we find our orders,
Written there by His command.
"Food to strengthen" on the journey,
Sent us from the better land.
"Milk and honey" in abundance,
Bread to nourish on the way,
So to all the joys "of Egypt,"
We can firmly answer—"Nay."

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column. NOTES ON EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

THE SINNER'S STATE BEFORE GOD.

His HEART is desperately wicked (Jer. xvii. 9).
His THOUGHTS are evil continually (Gen. vi. 5).
His MOUTH pours out evil things (Prov. xv. 28).
His FEET run to evil (Prov. i. 16).
His HANDS work violence (Isa. lix. 6).

THE SINNER'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOD.

All have gone astray from God (Isa. liii. 6).
All are "afar off" from God (Eph. ii. 13).
All are "without God" in the world (Eph. ii. 12).
All are "at enmity" with God (Rom. viii. 7).
All are "haters of God" (Rom. i. 30).

GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINNERS.

"God who is rich in mercy" (Eph. ii. 4).
"Not that we loved God, but He loved us" (John iv. 10).
He is waiting to be gracious (Isa. xxx. 18).
He is inviting all to come and reason (Isa. i. 18).
He is a God ready to pardon (Neh. ix. 17).

CONCISE BIBLE STUDIES FOR ALL.

THE BELIEVER'S PAST.

He was "without Christ" (Eph. ii. 12).
He was "going astray" (1 Pet. ii. 29).
He was "under sin" (Gal. iii. 22).
He was "in darkness" (1 John ii. 9).
He was God's "enemy" (Rom. v. 9).

THE BELIEVER'S PRESENT.

He is "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i. 1).
He is "free from sin" (Rom. vi. 18).
He is a "follower of Christ" (John x. 4, 27).
He is "reconciled to God" (Rom. v. 9).
He is "in the light" (1 John i. 7).

THE BELIEVER'S FUTURE.

He will be "raised" or "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51).
He will be made "like Christ" (1 John iii. 2).
He will be "glorified" with Him (Rom. viii. 17).
He will "live" and "reign with Him" (Rev. xx. 4).
He will "ever be with Him" (1 Thess. iv. 17).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Christians Sharing in "The Prohibition Movement."

In our village, a movement is in progress to get all the churches and missions to unite in voting for "Prohibition." To aid in this, a committee is being formed, representing all denominations, irrespective of their doctrines. Ritualists holding baptismal regeneration, Rationalists denying parts of the Bible, and Annihilationists who say there is no hell—

all will be on this committee—and there are Socialists already actively working for it. Would it be according to God and His Word, for those who have, in obedience thereto, become separated from the world in its politics and religion, to join in common cause with all the above and others, of any and no religion? Or if not taking active part ourselves would it be right to give our sanction, or to allow such as do, to represent us there, or to speak on our behalf as an assembly? Help on this will be valued by many who are not clear as to their duty in relation to the present agitation, connected with "the Prohibition movement."

It will scarcely be denied by any who know the real state of affairs regarding the drink traffic, and its dire effects in the British Isles at the present time, that public houses with their unholy work are the greatest curse to the country. There is not a single thing can be said in their favour, nor a tittle of respect due to those who carry on and enrich themselves from the ungodly business. Nor should any Christian have his money invested or his time employed in it, or be in any manner connected with it. The whole concern from bottom to top is "leprous" throughout, whose end will be according to its guilt. Nor should there be any hesitation with any true follower of the Lord in declaring his personal attitude toward strong drink, as a commodity or luxury in his home, and as offered in the houses and society of others. There are far too many of those who bear the Christian name—some of them in places of honour in churches and evangelistic movements—who are far from free of blame in this matter. And this is a deep dishonour to the worthy Name which they bear, a terrible danger to their own spiritual life and testimony, a stumblingblock to those "weak in the faith," likely to be emboldened by it, and a "rock of offence" to men of the world, who expect better things from those who claim to "belong to Christ," than to be tipplers and toppers, or in any other way triflers with that which at last "biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder" (Prov. xxiii. 37). The best "protest" against the use of strong drink any Christian can make is, to abstain wholly from its use, to have no place for it in his home, to go into no company where it is used, to have no share in any concern where it is allowed a place, and to give a full and definite witness against it being placed before others as a temptation, either in social intercourse, or in licensed premises, of which they are owners, in business concerns of which they are

shareholders, or in which they are servants. This is the sort of "protest" that carries weight, far more than all the "resolutions" moved and seconded at "Prohibition" meetings, or in votes canvassed and recorded by agitators and others in whom the fear of God is not found, nor any reverence given to His holy Word.

But it is quite another matter for a Christian to join himself under a common yoke with "men of all religions and of no religion," to secure "Prohibition" by Act of Parliament, or to join a committee who lead a crusade, whose object is to procure it in that way. There is no light from the Word of God to guide in such a path. The object may be right, but the means taken to attain it is wrong. Very fully and definitely does God forbid His people to become "yoked" with unbelievers in any service whatever (2 Cor. vi. 14, 16). He knows its dangers to spiritual life, and therefore warns His own against it. Some who think themselves wiser than He, embark on philanthropies, reforms, and crusades against vices, but we never knew one who did, without spiritual loss to himself, while gaining nothing either for God or man. World reformation can be best done by worldly men. Christians have different work assigned to them, which men of the world cannot do. Let them stick to it, persevere in it, prove the Lord's hand (Acts xi. 21), and leave the cleansing of the world to those whose expressed determination is to "make the world a better place to live in." The Christian's home and country is not here. He is content to pass through the earth as a stranger, walking on the "King's highway" (Num. xxi. 22)—God's own "right of way" for His own, in a world which has cast out its rightful Ruler, and has no place for His statutes in its government—not interfering with its politics, but seeking to work with His Gospel in taking a people out from it for Christ (Acts xv. 14) ere its judgment comes from heaven. And if a Christian—or an assembly of Christians—cannot on principle join with the world in its schemes of reform, they cannot surely delegate others to do it for them, or to "speak" with their authority, as the word is. Some are very fond of seeing their names on committees, and manifest their desire for authority to "represent" the company in which they aspire to domination, often with little conscience or consideration for others. But what cannot be done by one directly as "unto the Lord," he will not allow another to do for him, or in his name. We believe the present "Prohibition Movement" will become

a test, as to where many who claim to be "not of the world" really are, and to what extent the truth of God, which is confessed often enough with the lips, governs the ways and guides the lives of those who claim that the Word of God is "a lamp to their feet and a light to their path."

Answers to Correspondents.

ANON.—Do not hold any parley with Spiritism in any form. It is from the devil.

VERBA.—The apostle tells us in 1 Cor. xv. 2, R.V., "in what words" he preached the Gospel to sinners, and you will not go far wrong, if you keep to the pattern there given.

D. G., SUSSEX.—You are happy in having such a Christian companion and fellow-labourer. But do not lean on an arm of flesh, for the best is liable to fail. Thankful for all the help you receive, and the fellowship you enjoy, yet learn to stand alone, as Daniel had to, quite apart from the dear and true companions of his earlier years (see Dan. vi. 5, 10, with chap. ii. 17).

F. H., YORKS.—If you find yourself hampered and straitened, and unable to carry out what you see from the Word to be the way of the Lord for you in service, strike out in the path you believe God has called you to tread. Your brethren, while due all respect, are not your masters, nor have they any right to control you in any service you have "received in the Lord." Your responsibility is to "fulfil it" (Col. iv. 17).

FELIX.—Titles of honour and of courtesy are due to those who have them, whether men of the world (Acts xxvi. 2, 3), or of faith (Luke i. 3). But ecclesiastical titles, and especially such as belong to God alone (see Psa. cxi. 9), are not due, and ought never to be given to vain men, claiming priestly prerogatives, usurping all functions of ministry in themselves, and hindering the exercise of what gifts the Lord has bestowed on others.

SPERO.—There are no "signs" of the Lord's coming for His heavenly people. There will be, of His return to earth with them, and for the deliverance of Israel (see Luke xxi. 25-27). The words of Heb. x. 25 do not refer to the Christian's hope, but to "the day"—that is "the day of the Lord" (1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 2, 3, R.V.)—which introduces His judgments on the world. It is confusing these, to speak of "signs" connected with "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him" (2 Thess. ii. 1).

The Lord's Shepherd Care.

THE Gospel presents to the sinner, Christ on the Cross as a Sacrifice and a Saviour. The Word—especially the New Testament Epistles—reveals Christ on the throne as Shepherd and Leader of His own, as they pass through the wilderness to their eternal home. A sinner first needs a Deliverer and Saviour to bring him out from the condemnation under which he lies, to bring him back to that God from whom he has wandered, and is afar off (Eph. ii. 13). In the day of his conversion, he returns to own his Saviour to be the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul, one who will feed and lead him from henceforth, and for ever. The Lord, as Redeemer and Saviour, brings the believing sinner out from the bondage of his former state, and brings him into new relations with God and heaven. But while to him there is “no condemnation,” and can be “no separation” from Christ (Rom. vii. 35), there is liability to err from the way. And there is still in him a heart which in its natural tendency is ready to respond to temptation from without, and to yield to desire from within, to “depart from the living God” (Heb. iv. 12). The Lord's shepherd care is exercised unceasing on his behalf in the feeding of his new life with food convenient to it, and in leading him to the green pastures, to gather for himself what God has therein provided for His own. Raised from the dead, to become “the Great Shepherd” (Heb. xiii. 20) of all the blood-bought flock, He is charged by God to feed and lead, to rule and defend them all the

days and all the way. Of this shepherd care of the living Lord there are many foreshadowing types in the Word, as exhibited in those who, in various circumstances, exercised the shepherd's calling and manifested the true shepherd character in their service. Abel was “a keeper—margin, a feeder of sheep,” an honourable calling indeed. Moses, while an exile in Midian, watered Reuel's sheep and defended them against those who would have deprived them of their drink (Exod. ii. 16, 17). David, while tending a few sheep in the wilderness, faced and overcame a lion and a bear who had seized a lamb of his flock, overcoming both (1 Sam. xvi. 34-36). These, each in his measure manifest the true shepherd character, as seen in all fulness in the Lord Jesus. Of Him it is said, that He “knows” His sheep (John x. 14), and has given His life for them (ver. 15). They are His by gift of the Father (John xvii. 2), and through redemption by His blood (Eph. i. 7). He goeth before them (John x. 4), marking out the path in which the sheep are to follow, and the sheep follow Him, knowing His voice (John xx. 27). His eye is on them night and day, and He never forsakes His own (Heb. xiii. 5). Happy are all who abide under His shepherd rule, living always and everywhere in the enjoyment of His faithful care, and proving in daily blissful experience what is expressed in the familiar words so often on the lips, yet so little proved in the lives of the saints—“The Lord is *my* Shepherd. I shall not want” (Psa. xxiii. 1). A personal faith thus makes use of the Lord in His Shepherd character.

J.R.

Jesus Christ.

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

V.—THE FOUNTAIN OF JOY.

BY WM. HOSTE, B.A., LONDON.

THERE are striking parallels between the first chapter of Ezekiel's prophecy and the first chapter of John's Gospel. In both, a prophet-priest outside the land, receives visions of God from an opened heaven, revealing the glory of the Lord, and both end with a Man upon the throne. This naturally leads on to a marriage feast. At Bethabara the Lord Jesus is seen as "the Lamb of God," interpreting the thoughts of the Father to repentant ones, who had confessed their sins in baptism. At Cana, He appears in quite another character, interpreting the Father to His disciples as the Bountiful Creator, who knows what things we have need of before we ask Him, and "giveth us all things richly to enjoy," "filling our hearts with food and gladness." It is really Psalm ciii. followed by Psalm civ. Many would judge the former to be of a higher level than the latter, but the praise of the latter really reaches the higher note. It is not only for what God has done, but for what He is. "Thou art very great." "He" of Psalm ciii. becomes "Thou" of Psalm civ. "The Lord" becomes "O Lord, *my* God." There is the joy of forgiveness in Psalm ciii. But in Psalm civ. there is the joy of communion, the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man" (v.15)—joy of communion. It is this which we have at Cana. It is noteworthy, that the first scene into which the Lord introduced His small nucleus of disciples

was a scene of human joy, a marriage feast, thus setting his seal to the institution of Eden, and stamping with his approval the innocent joys even of a fallen earth. It seems a mistake to assert, as some do, that "the first man is gone," for marriage, like eating and drinking, moderate labour, and sleep, belongs to the estate of the first man who is "of the earth earthy," or, in other words, is "made of earth to dwell on the earth." It is the "old man," not the first man, which is gone for the believer, for that was crucified with Christ. Earthly relationships are not annulled for those who are in Christ, they take on a new and deeper character. Marriage is honourable for all, and "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife;" that is, set apart to her by the divine ordinance of matrimony, and the children are *set apart, though in no higher sense, as the fruit of it (1 Cor. vii. 14). It is a pathetic fact that however much and often marriage has by human sin proved a failure, a wedding is more than anything else in this sad world an occasion of joy and gladness. If people are not cheerful on their wedding day, when are they likely to be? By the blessing of God marriage "in the Lord" proves to many a source of happiness and blessing. God thus "sets the solitary in families," and provides mutual comfort and support for His creatures.

We may take the marriage of Cana as symbolical of kingdom joys in a future day, when "again shall be heard in this place (the land of Israel) the voice of joy

* "Holy," as applied to children, is from the same root as "sanctified" of the unbelieving parent, and entails no change of character.

and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, "Praise the Lord of Hosts, for the Lord is good; for His mercy endureth for ever" (Jer. xxxiii. 11). The disciples had "much tribulation" to pass through, before they could enter the Kingdom of God, but on that day at Cana, this was bridged over, and they had a foretaste at the start of their long journey, of the great marriage feast yet to come. Thus "He manifested forth His glory, and His disciples believed in Him"—their budding faith broke into blossom. Here then we see our Lord Jesus interpreting the Father's heart in a scene of human gladness, as the friendly Man among men, the kindly neighbour, rejoicing with them that rejoice—not an ascetic like John the Baptist, the Levitical Nazarite, to whom all wine was denied and a life enjoined contrary to nature—mourning to men who would not weep—the frivolous world around; but a true Nazarite of the dispensation of grace, type nearest to the heart of God, partaking of the blessings of this life, when they might offer themselves, piping to men who would not dance—the religious world, who mistake asceticism for devotion to God, because their system is founded on human ordinances, proper to a worldly cult, "touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are to perish with the using after the commandments and doctrines of men, which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body but (where we follow the R.V.) are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (Col. ii. 23).

The Church in the Gospels :

AS FIRST MENTIONED BY THE LORD.

WE do not usually look for truths concerning the Church or its calling, in those four Spirit-breathed settings forth of the earthly life, character, service, and death of the Lord from heaven, written by the four Evangelists. The revelation of "the mystery" awaited redemption at the Cross, the Glorification of the Son of God, and the coming of the Spirit.

The disciples, who were subsequently to receive a worldwide Gospel commission (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i. 8), are here seen rendering a restricted service to their Master, in a ministry confined to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Their own hopes were bounded as a horizon by the restoration of "the kingdom" to Israel (Acts i. 7-8), until the Lord Jesus indirectly informed them that this purpose was not immediately in view.

The secret of "the Church which is His body"—to be revealed in due time to and through the Apostle Paul—was then locked in the Lord's own breast, only referred to by Him in *name* on two occasions, and then in language which the Holy Spirit at His coming would interpret to them fully, and also complete by a further revelation (John xvi. 13).

The references to the Church found in the Gospels, by name and otherwise, are very precious indeed, for their terms and the circumstances in which they were made, are full of suggestion and of food for spiritual meditation.

The two references to the Church by name are found in the Gospel by Matthew.

in chapter xvi. verse 18, we have the first. This points to *The Church's Formation*. "Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

What was it that brought His Church so vividly to the mind of the Lord Jesus at this moment? Was it not possibly Peter's acknowledgment of Him as "the Christ," the name which, while signifying to the few the Anointed King, was to be later on invested with a new significance by the Holy Spirit in its application to the Lord Jesus, as Head of the body, the Church?

He saw this company of redeemed ones, a living temple in all its fair proportions; to be built by Himself, upon the foundation of Himself (1 Cor. iii. 11); Himself the Corner-stone of it, in which all would be "fitly framed together" (Eph. ii. 20-21), and He too the completing "Head of the Corner" (1 Pet. i. 7, with which compare Zech. iv. 7). His prophetic eye beheld the glorious superstructure to be raised on the one foundation of apostles and prophets, these being the first course of stones—which explains the reference to *them* as foundation in Eph. ii. 20—with every other living stone, perfect in form and perfectly in place, completing the building. The thought of all this was evidently a joy to the Lord. He had Himself led up to Peter's sublime confession, well knowing in His omniscience what would be. And it gladdened His heart to utter it.

We do well to remember the circumstance of this incident. The Lord had been definitely rejected by the earthly

people (Matt. xii.), and His works described to Satanic agency. That was in the past. In the future, the near prospect was the death of the Cross. Almost midway in the narrative, and possibly midway in point of actual time between these events, the Father vouchsafes Him this cup of refreshment in the thought of that Church, the gathering out of which was to follow immediately upon His accomplished death and resurrection, and the nucleus of which was already present with Him in His disciples.

Shortly after this, the Lord was seen by the chosen few, in the glory of His kingdom (Matt. xvii. 1-13). The rejected King was then invested by the Father with "honour and glory" (2 Pet. i. 17) as the One destined, in spite of man's rejection of Him, to reign. The very sceptre was put into His hand, to be, however, immediately resigned, for the time of His manifested Kingship had not yet come. When He *does* take His great power and reign, His Church—a glorious consort—will be with Him, having been "caught up" to heaven, and glorified with Him there, before He comes forth to manifest His supreme sovereignty.

These two things appear therefore in their sequence here, and in blessed appropriateness. The Gospel that pre-eminently sets forth the *King*, exhibits in chapter xvii. in the transfiguration the shadowing forth of His glory and reign. But in chapter xvi. He points to that church which is to be with Him in all that royal dignity. This first brief glance of His Church, Matt. xvi. 18, thus passes before the eye of the Lord Jesus. F.T.

Meet for the Master's Use.

IN the early years of my Christian life, I was present at a large gathering of believers, in which several godly and gifted servants of the Lord took part, ministering excellent things from the Word of God for our edification. Most of their words have long been forgotten. But the brief message of one aged man of God, in whose brief ministry the Word of God to all hearts was as the refreshing stream that "makes glad the city of God," remain, and repeat themselves in the soul until now. He said—"In my early Christian life, I had the privilege of being very intimate with one of the godliest and most spiritually-minded of men I ever met on this earth — Robert Murray M'Cheyne of Dundee. What most of all struck me in that dear man was, that everywhere and always, he seemed to be a vessel 'meet for the Master's use,' and always had the right word for those to whom he was the Lord's messenger. He seemed always to be ready for, and in right condition to engage in any service that the Lord gave him to do. The simplest word he spake, had God's power with it. The shortest letter he wrote, was as a word from God, and its message retained and remembered. The warnings he uttered brought awe to their hearers, as if the very voice of God had come through his lips. And the Gospel he preached was the message of life to thousands of sinners who heard it. I have heard many a preacher who could speak more eloquently, whose words would move a congregation to tears, yet to be

soon forgotten, and their effect as the morning dew that passeth away; while the simple, solemn, and always searching ministry of that lowly servant of Christ, remained as 'goads,' going straight to the heart." This surely, above all else, is what the evangelist, the teacher, the exhorter, and all who speak the Lord's message to saint and sinner, should seek after. Eloquence may be attained by practice. Doctrine and matter may be gathered by search and study. Ability to unfold and describe the truth may exist with little unction or spiritual power, but where there is vital godliness, personal acquaintance with Christ, a walk in the Spirit, and a clean, moral condition, there will be in that saint and servant of God a "vessel meet for the Master's use," who will be used of Him to bring sinners to the Saviour, and in whose ministry there will be words in season for the restoring, reviving, and refreshing of the people of God, because it will stand in the strength of the Spirit of God. And no ministry, either in the world or in the Church, is of any abiding value, that lacks this power. What we need and most of all suffer from the lack of in this day of unusual activity is, a ministry that stands in the power of "the Holy Ghost." And this power of "the Holy Ghost," will always operate through one who is separate from all that God disallows, and is "meet" and "ready" for the Lord to use, anywhere, at all times, as He may desire him to be exercised. The aged saint, who related his acquaintance with M'Cheyne, closed his testimony by saying, "And throughout all the time of his being used

of God, so wonderfully, he remained the same humble, lowly, and ready servant, never speaking of his success, or taking any credit to himself for it, but giving all the glory to his Master." Yes, and so it ever will be. Holiness of life and humility of mind keep the servant in the right condition and in the right place, where the Lord can find and use him in His work. Where this is lacking, gifts, however brilliant, will accomplish little, being void of spiritual power.

Our Lord May Come To-night.

MY lamp is trimmed and burning now,
 Around me shines its light,
 But out beyond, in deepest gloom,
 The world is ready for its doom,
 And Christ may come to-night.

No promise waits to be fulfilled,
 No wrong to be set right,
 The living Lord from yonder throne,
 Comes "quickly" to receive His own,
 And may be here to-night.

The "Morning Star" in yonder sky
 Is shining clear and bright,
 O throbbing heart of mine, be calm!
 My lips, prepare to chant His psalm,
 It may be sung to-night.

The "Lord Himself" will first descend,
 Robed in celestial light,
 With "shout of joy" to call His own,
 To share His glory and His throne,
 And this may be to-night.

The graves will yield their ancient charge,
 Acknowledging His might.
 The "living" in His image fair
 Rise up to meet Him in "the air,"
 And pass to glory bright.

O "happy hope," supremely blest
 Are all who hail thy light!
 And stand all ready to depart—
 To where already is the heart,
 And where there is "no night."

Immanuel's Land.

IN THE TIME OF THE LORD JESUS.

WHEN the infant Christ was born, "the Land of Israel" was under the Roman power. Its earlier glory had departed. Cæsar's decree, to have its inhabitants enrolled for taxing (Luke ii. 1), brought Joseph and Mary of Nazareth to Bethlehem, the home of their ancestors. And in all probability it was in the courtyard of the house of Chimham (Jer. xli. 17), son of Barzillai (2 Sam. xix. 3), David's true friend and follower, who inherited his patrimony, which had now become "an inn," that the infant Saviour was born. And it was within the borders of the northern part of this land, in the secluded village of Nazareth, nestling among its limestone rocks, that He grew up before God as "a tender plant" (Isa. liii. 2) in lowly estate, throughout the thirty silent years, of which we shall yet hear the full story told, in the Father's House in heaven. It was through "the Land of Israel" that He walked and served for three full years, preaching in its villages, sleeping on its hillsides, as a homeless Stranger. In its Jordan He was baptised, on its Hermon transfigured, on its waters He walked and sailed, on its strand He preached, on its green sward He knelt in prayer. In its Gethsemane He passed His agony, and on its Golgotha stood His Cross. "Immanuel" was there indeed, in His land among His own people, but they "knew Him not." He came to His own—His own land and city—but His own—the people whom He came to rule—"received Him not" (John i. 11,

R.V.). They knew not "the time of their visitation." In their unbelief they rejected their Messiah, and cast out the true Heir (Matt. xxi. 33-43). And now they suffer the just retribution of heaven on account of that dark deed, and the land which was once "the glory of all lands" has for eighteen centuries been "as a wilderness." Its fruitful fields are as the sands of the desert, its fair villages heaps of ruins, and its sacred soil trod by the feet of apostles and martyrs, as Aceldama, a field of blood, a burying place for its people as strangers. Invasion after invasion has laid waste its cities, razed its sacred places, and its people have been scattered as leaves before the storm into every country under heaven, to be downtrodden and massacred, or to be known as "tribes of the wandering foot" among all mankind. Alas! for a land that knew not its rightful Owner, nor recognised its Redeemer and its Ruler.

JERUSALEM—once the queen of its beauty, in whose palaces God was known as a Refuge, in whose midst God's temple stood, whose streets the Saviour oft times trod, within whose gates He often preached, over whose hardness of heart He wept. through whose gate He was led out to die, in whose garden sepulchre He lay in death's cold embrace, from whose Olivet He was received up into heaven—has been the battleground of all nations, and the target of their armies throughout the centuries. As the Lord forewarned, it has been besieged, reduced to ruins, partly rebuilt, but still "trodden down," a desolation of its first estate, the most solemn witness the world has ever seen of God's "severity," on a people who had

rejected His Christ, despised His Spirit, and forbade that His Gospel should be made known to others—upon whom God's righteous wrath has come to "the uttermost" (1 Thess. ii. 14-16). Long and drear have been the years of her widowhood. Silent in her loneliness she has longed for the dawn. But the time is not far off when, as surely as the Word has foretold it, she shall "arise and shine" because "the glory of the Lord has arisen" upon her (Isa. lx. 1). Her present release from the rule of the Turk, and her silent passage under the sheltering wing of her deliverer is not her full or final liberty, and certainly not her promised glory. But it surely is as the budding of the fig tree (Luke xxi. 29-31), which indicates the nearness of the time when God will resume His dealings with that people, that land, and that city, of whose future the prophetic Word has so much to say. To the consideration of these long neglected and much perverted Scriptures, we shall now turn and seek to learn from God, who only knows it, what awaits Immanuel's Land and its people, in the days that are to come. It is the lack of acquaintance with this "sure Word of prophecy" that leaves so many in our time to be an easy prey to abounding errors by means of which many are spoiled for godly living, Gospel witnessing, earnest service for Christ, and daily expectation of His personal return to remove His own to their heavenly country, and thereafter return with them to cleanse the earthly inheritance by judgment, establish His rule in Zion, and reign in Jerusalem over Israel's land, gloriously. J.R.

“They Made a Captain.”

WHEN a people away in heart from God, are bent upon leaving the path of separation unto God and from the world, into which the Cross of Christ (Gal. i. 4; vi. 14) has brought them, they can usually find the means at hand for their backsliding, and the man or men who are ready to become leaders of the expedition, being fitted for that office by their own worldly state, and insubjection to the Word of God, from which they have departed. This is seen to have been so among God's earthly people, whom He redeemed from the hand of their taskmasters in Egypt, and brought out from it, to be a people “for Himself” (Deut. vii. 6), to walk in the way in which He would lead them, and be obedient to the Word that He had given them. All went well for a season after the great deliverance, as it usually does with the truly converted sinner. They sang God's praise on the Red Sea shore (Exod. xv. 1-12). They spake of being “planted” in their inheritance in Canaan. They pledged themselves to prepare for God “a habitation” there. All was bright, decided, and clear, as it is with the believer severed from his old companions and associations, his eye fixed on heaven, the Word of God in his heart, and the pilgrim staff in his hand. But the testings of the wilderness, the scenes through which he has to pass bring out what his real condition of heart is, and how far the truth of God he confesses with his lips, controls his ways. Very soon after Israel had entered the wilderness, circumstances brought out

how little some of them had learned of what separation to God and from Egypt and its things meant. For we are told in Numbers xiv. 1-4 that a proposal was made by some among them—“Let us make a captain and return into Egypt.” And we are informed by Nehemiah in his prayer to God, in the confession of his own and his people's sins, over a thousand years later, that the proposal was actually carried out, for he says “in their rebellion” they “appointed a captain to return to their bondage” (Neh. ix. 17). Such a leader can always be found, one who “in his heart has already turned back into Egypt” (Acts vii. 39), and is thereby well fitted to entice others by argument and example to return to that and those from which God has severed them once for all, not to return again (Deut. xvii. 16). The present is a time in which such a return is very popular, being sanctioned in high places. The pleasures of Egypt have attractions to many; its social associations and its religions have their snares for others. And when the Word of God is brought forth, and its measuring-line applied to these contentions for “liberty” and “large heartedness” tested thereby, the old call is for “a captain,” a preacher, or teacher of some influence, to lead the way, to a general giving up of oldtime lines and the adoption of a “wider” path, which will attract Egyptians to walk with Israelites in common cause, and permit the people of God to go back to the world to mix in its socialities, take part in its politics, and share in its amusements. And when the heart is in Egypt, the feet will follow. H.B.

To every Man His Work.

WHEN Apelles, the famous sculptor, was giving some finishing touches to one of his celebrated statues, a cobbler passing, remarked that he had erred in the way he was placing the shoe latches of his hero. The great sculptor was not too high-minded to accept the criticism of the humble cobbler on a matter in which he had practical knowledge. So he thanked him for his information, and proceeded to act according to it. But when the same cobbler—whose conceit seems to have been excited by his success—began to suggest to the sculptor other alterations not connected with shoes or shoe latches, he was quickly silenced by the sculptor remarking, "A shoemaker should stick to his *last*, and not go beyond it." That was sound advice. And in other realms it may well be heard. Many who are well fitted to do certain necessary work in the kingdom of God, and who, sticking to it, do it well, are completely out of place when they aspire to enter on other service to which they have not been called, in which they have no experience and for which they are not fitted. An evangelist, for example, is seldom in his element dealing with Church affairs or tinkering in the administration of local difficulties. He would be well advised to "stick to his last," to go on with the work God has given him to do, and leave what he is not called to or fitted for, to others. A young believer, earnest and zealous for the Lord's honour, but still "a novice" (1 Tim. iii. 2), as the Word reckons, is not the one to rebuke an elder for what he

considers to be wrongdoing, or to overreach or oppose those whom God has set in the assembly to rule and guide His people. He, in common with all others—sisters included, may rightly point out to those on whom a first responsibility to maintain godly order and administer Scriptural discipline rests, what they consider to be a lack, or a weakness. But it is not their place to become leaders in investigation or in judgment of such matters. It is not the work that is given by the Lord to them. A little success in other spheres, while often figuring under the name of "encouragement," has filled with conceit some who had they been wisely led, might have become true helpers among the Lord's people, but who, by fulsome flattery have been spoiled, and so lifted up with pride of their attainments, that they require, like the conceited cobbler, to be wisely counselled to "stick to their last," and not go beyond it. The living Lord in heaven, in whose hand are all gifts (Eph. iv. 10-12), and who distributes them according to His will, has given to "every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34). And it is the wisdom of those who are His servants to each find out exactly what has been given him to do, and then to "stick" to it, neither going beyond his measure, nor emulating or interfering with others in their God-appointed work. When this is reached, there will be fewer faults to find, and less cause for complaints as to disorderly proceedings, with their evil effects, where peace and harmony should reign. For while human arrangements often do hinder God's work, so also does man's wilfulness.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

MANIFESTED in the Gift of His Son (1 John iv. 7, 9).
 COMMENDED in the Death of Christ (Rom. v. 8).
 BESTOWED in Call of the Saved (1 John iii., r.v.).

THE GOSPEL OF GOD.

In its suitability to meet Human Need.

To the GUILTY it proclaims FORGIVENESS (Acts x. 43).
 To the DEAD it announces LIFE (John v. 26).
 To the BLIND it gives SIGHT (Acts xxvi. 18).
 To the WOUNDED it brings HEALING (Psa. ciii. 2).
 To the BOUND it gives LIBERTY (Luke iv. 18).
 To the TROUBLED it preaches PEACE (Acts x. 36).

THE KINDNESS OF GOD.

Toward His enemies (Titus iii. 4-6)—Its Character.
 It is through Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 7)—Its Channel.
 It is great (Neh. ix. 17)—Its Measure.

CONCISE BIBLE STUDIES FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

GOD'S ACTIVITIES IN GRACE.

As Judge, God Justifies (Rom. viii. 33).
 As Sovereign, God Pardons (Isa. lv. 7).
 As Father, God Forgives (1 John i. 9).

THE ALL-POWERFUL WORD.

As the Living Word it Regenerates (1 Pet. i. 23).
 As the Grafted Word it Saves (James i. 21).
 As the Cleansing Word it Purifies (1 Pet. i. 22).
 As the Abiding Word it Assures (1 Pet. i. 25).
 As the Enlightening Word it Guides (Psa. cxix. 130).

SOME "HENCEFORTHS" OF THE BIBLE.

The "Henceforth" of New Life (2 Cor. v. 15).
 The "Henceforth" of New Walk (Eph. iv. 17).
 The "Henceforth" of New Work (Luke v. 10).
 The "Henceforth" of Communion (John xv. 15).
 The "Henceforth" of Reward (2 Tim. iv. 8).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Becoming all Things, to all Men.

I desire to have counsel from the Word on the following subject, which is engaging the attention of quite a number of us here, at the present time. The words of 1 Cor. ix. 19-23 were referred to at a recent Conference, and especially, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (ver. 22), which the speaker said meant in our day, that we are to conform to the world's ways as far as is possible consistent with

keeping ourselves pure, and that we are at liberty to go into any association, without patronising its ways, in order to gain a willing ear to the Gospel we preach, which men of the world will not come to us to hear. Can this be accepted as the meaning of the passage, and, if so, to what extent can this be practised in the light of such Scriptures as John xvii. 16; Romans xii. 2; James iv. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 14-17; Eph. v. 11? Simple, practical help on this far-reaching principle will be much valued.

The context—which should never be neglected—clearly tells, that Paul is not here dealing with Christian life and testimony in general, but rather with his service in the Gospel toward "all men" (Acts xxii. 15) and "all nations" (Rom. i. 5), which was the scope of his commission. That there are limitations to the principle of becoming "all things to all," or bringing himself "under bondage to all" (r.v.), is obvious to everybody. He did not become an idolater in order to "gain" the heathen worshippers of Jupiter at Lystra (Acts xiv. 14, 15), but besought them to "turn from these VAIN THINGS unto the living God." He would not eat in an idol temple—although an idol was as "nothing" to him—because by so doing, he would appear to be sanctioning that which was the expression of "fellowship with demons" (1 Cor. x. 19-20). But at another time (Acts xvii. 22, 23), he uses a heathen altar as his object lesson to bring to his hearers his message of that God who is Creator and Provider for all, and of Christ, who is appointed Judge of all men. There was no semblance of fellowship with idolatry in this, nor any hiding of the truth to "gain" the ears of his audience. He did on one occasion, at the urgent desire of James and the elders of the church at Jerusalem—who still clung to Judaism and its rites—adopt a Jewish vow and make himself "as a Jew," in order to conciliate those who were "zealous of the law," doubtless in the hope of dispelling their prejudices and gaining their confidence to his message. But the sequel shows, that there was nothing "gained" by this incident, but on the contrary his very presence in the temple in connection therewith, became the cause of the tumult raised by the ungodly Jews, and of Paul losing a liberty he never fully regained. "To become all things" to men, in order to gain them, does not mean to surrender the least tittle of God's truth, or to hide it in silence. It certainly cannot mean that a servant of Christ may sanction wrong, either in doctrine or in practice, in order to gain a hearing. Nor can any in justice claim that

it provides for each employing any means he thinks fit, or going into any association that will serve his purpose in providing a congregation to hear the Gospel, the very existence of which, as a religious institution, is a denial of that Gospel, and the mercies it brings. Nor can the end desired be attained by his presence there, for immediately "the truth" the evangelist declares, expresses the errors of that system, he will be expelled ignominiously, leaving those of that place more hardened, more hopeless than before. If you go into a market, or on to a racecourse, you are there as the Lord's freeman, to speak what He gives, and none for a moment regard your presence there as sanctioning the racing, or the gambling and drinking that are associated with it. But if you stand on a Rationalist platform, or preach from a Presbyterian pulpit, people regard you—and rightly so—as an upholder of and for the time the minister to that people, serving under their auspices, and in fellowship with their cause. "All things to all men" Paul did become, not by descending to their level, morally or spiritually, but by dealing with the various classes to whom he spake, as he found them. To Jews, from their own Scriptures, of their national history and sin (Acts xxii. 3); to Gentiles he presented Christ in another manner (Acts x. 34-42). His Gospel was one, but he adapted it to his hearers, just as a missionary in a heathen land must, to the natives, using words and illustrations suited to their capacity. The trend of things in the world's religion is to descend to all sorts of foolery to gain or hold the people "for the church," having church socials and dances for young folks, whist drives and such like for others, to keep their unconverted "members" together. For when vital godliness fails, and a spiritual ministry dies out, where a flimsy profession instead of a new birth manifested in "obedient children" is accepted as all that is necessary to "join the church," or be "received into fellowship," so surely must carnal means be resorted to, to clamp the thing together, and hold in existence what would otherwise die out of "dry rot."

Answers to Correspondents

THEO.—Your evil example in going into a Spiritualist "circle" for any purpose whatever, may lead others into the snare. And you yourself are not by any means immune from that danger. Trafficking with demons, is a dangerous business.

BETA.—A company of believers, who have chosen

their "pastor" and entered on a contract to pay him a salary for his preaching to and pastoring of them, has no title to be regarded as an assembly of God, according to His pattern given in the Word. They are a sect, with or without a distinctive name, in which no Scripturally taught believer will remain.

J. B. K.—One who introduces in his ministry at the Lord's Table such subjects as Local Veto and Licensing Reform, has manifestly no discernment as to what is due to the Lord on such an occasion, or what the saints need. When such have no chance of getting an audience to listen to their fads and foibles at other times, meanly take advantage of the coming together of the assembly for the worship of God and to keep the "feast of remembrance" of the Lord, to harangue fellow-saints on matters that have no connection with that unique and sacred service at all, they should be sharply and plainly rebuked for this. If any godly rule exists, where such habits obtain, it should surely be exercised to put a stop to such disorder and desecration.

M. L., BELFAST.—"The saints," as the term is used in Scripture, are not a selection of the redeemed, or a superior class more holy than the rest, but ALL "the called of Jesus Christ" (Rom. i. 7)—that is all the saved. The following note of the late Adolph Saphir is a good answer to your question. He says—"It is contradictory to the Scriptural idea to speak of "Saint" Paul, "Saint" Peter, and so on. For none are saints more than others. All who are born of God, are "called saints"—that is, saints by the call of God."

A. B., EDINBURGH.—The Epistle to the Hebrews, is undoubtedly a message of "present truth" for saints of this dispensation, and is not—as you say is being publicly taught by some—only for saved Israelites of past and future periods. This is the doctrine of Dr. Bullinger. The theory that its teachings are not for "the Church of this dispensation," deprives us of ALL that is taught in the Word of God concerning the priesthood of Christ, and of our place within the veil and without the camp (Heb. xiii. 13). Do not lend your ear to any teaching that would rob you of these three glorious privileges procured by the Cross of Christ, to be experienced and enjoyed now. Tampering with, or twisting the Word of God, is a dangerous occupation. And it should not be forgotten, that the man who started this theory, ended in teaching the annihilation of the unregenerate, and indenyng the reality of hell.

W. M., YORK.—There is neither precept for, nor

example of instrumental music being used in the worship of God, or in the preaching of the Gospel, in "the Acts" or in the Apostle's Epistles. Nor is there a single instance recorded in the Word, of either choir or soloist accompanying Paul and Barnabas on their Evangelistic Mission (Acts xiii. 1-4, xiv. 27). Those who defend the practice, quote Eph. v. 19 and Col. iii. 16, with Archbishop Trench's definition of a "psalm" as something sung to "the accompaniment of harp or lyre." This is a slender and rather far-fetched foundation to build on! And those who use it forget, that even if it be allowed, it does not apply to "hymns" or "spiritual songs"—which we think are both in more frequent use than David's "Psalms," in Gospel meetings. But when people want to get "Scripture" for their doctrine or deeds, they will wring it out somehow, after the same manner as they find infant baptism in Mark x. 14 and Acts ii. 39, although there is not a single drop of water in either of these "authorities" for it. We suggest Babylon's Orchestra in Rev. xviii. 22, as the true prototype of present day "Musical Services." It was certainly from thence they came, and thither most of those who use and champion them, are fast drifting.

Practical Points for Assembly Leaders.

Teaching by Practice.—It is not always remembered, that we teach by our practice, more effectively than by our words. A walk "in the truth" (3 John 3, 4), honouring God by obeying it "always" (Phil. ii. 12), is a course that must command respect, even from those who do not themselves order their course by the example set before them. But if one teaches what he does not practice, he is a stumbling-block rather than an ensample, to fellow-believers.

First Proved.—It is no proof that one is qualified to preach with acceptance, or teach to edification, that he has been given "the platform" somewhere, and announced as a "ministering brother." Some who are anxious to pursue their way to the front, know well how to get themselves "recognised," by getting this done for them by partisans. The Word is explicit that before one is to be recognised as being fit to publicly serve—as the word "deacon" here used implies—in any capacity, he is first to be "proved" (1 Tim. iii. 10). And this can only be done by those in whose midst he lives and walks—not by some distant assembly in which he is practically a stranger.

Encouragement.—One whose life is godly, and whose word, although short or simple, is felt to be "in season," and comes to its hearers as a message from God, should surely be encouraged by elder brethren to "take heed to the ministry" he has "received in the Lord," and "fulfil it" (Col. iv. 17). It is through exercise that gift increases and ability to use it is attained. But where all ministry is absorbed by the front line of preachers, and no room left for the "lesser" gifts, it need be no great wonder, if few are being raised to fill the places of those who pass to their rest. God does not waste His gifts, nor bestow them where there is no place for them to do the work He has fitted them for.

Fellowship among those who minister the Word of Truth is finely exhibited in Acts xi., where "men of Cyprus" had preached, and many had been converted (ver. 21). Barnabas of Jerusalem followed, giving the converts such as he had, exhorting them to "cleave unto the Lord" (ver. 23). This seems to have been all the length he could take them. But he knew there was one away in Tarsus, who had more, and that he was the man whose ministry they needed. So he set off to find him, and bring him there. This is a fine picture of that true fellowship among the Lord's servants which surely ought to be seen in our time. But it is something different from the "engaging" of preachers for a stated period, not infrequently to pull down what another has built up. The one is God's way, the other man's counterfeit of it.

Visitors.—It does not always follow, that because a visiting brother is with us for a Lord's Day, that he is necessarily either in a fit condition spiritually, or has the right word from God to speak to those assembled around the Lord's table. But it has almost come to be an "understood" thing that he will "use the time"—not infrequently a large part of it which should be occupied in the worship of God. And if any other take part, it is regarded, by some who have never got rid of "clerical" notions, as "out of place," seeing he has opportunity to speak at other times. But this is man's reasoning, which should have no place at all where the Spirit of God is there to guide. Many a meeting is completely spoiled by one "forcing himself" (1 Sam. xiii. 12) to speak, what he ought to know is neither from God, nor for the blessing of those who hear it. If we believe that God is there to order His own house, let us not hinder Him in the doing of it, either by officiousness in filling up what are called "pauses," or prearranging "thoughts" to be thrust in first chance.

The God of all Grace.

AND HIS RESOURCES FOR HIS PEOPLE.

ONE of the expressive titles given to God in the New Testament Scriptures is, "The God of all grace" (1 Pet. v. 10). This tells that He is not only "a gracious God" (Jonah iv. 2), long-suffering toward His enemies, a "God ready to pardon, gracious, and merciful" (Neh. ix. 17), but that He is the Source and Supplier of all that wealth of unmerited and undeserved favour into which He brings His own, and in which He "sets" and makes them to stand (Rom. v. 2). "The Grace of God" is that glorious attribute which human demerit and sinfulness call forth, and which the Gospel—"the good news of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24) to sinful man proclaims. To its activities toward sinners, and of its abounding variety to meet all need in saints, the Word gives its grand and glowing testimony in great fulness. A glance at some of its workings toward us as sinners, and of its ministries to and in us as saints, as they are presented in the Word, may magnify that grace in our eyes, and help us to lay hold of it by faith for use in "every time of need" (Heb. iv. 16).

Grace brings salvation (Tit. ii. 11). Man neither deserved nor desired it. "Unmerited, unheeded, and unsought." God in grace brought him salvation (Tit. ii. 10), and declared his forgiveness, "according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). And it is "by grace" that sinners are saved (Eph. ii. 5), by grace alone. Then, as "justified freely by His

grace" (Rom. iii. 24), the believing soul is led in and "made to stand" in grace, never again to appear in God's court as a criminal, but henceforth as one accepted, "taken into favour in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6), to abide in that circle of God's favour, and of the Father's love, henceforth as a beloved child.

It is by grace that the believer is now taught, trained, and brought up to live as "becometh" a saint (Eph. v. 3) while here. Law and terror can never effect this. Neither the taskmaster's whip nor the lawgiver's scourge could exact such willing subjection, or draw forth such loving obedience as God desires. But grace accomplishes both, causing the heart to sing (Col. iii. 16), the feet to move in swift obedience in the way of His commandments, and the manner of life to be conformed to His will (2 Cor. i. 12). And it is "by the grace of God" (1 Cor. xv. 10) that men who were once proud, heady, high-minded, self-willed, and domineering, become lowly, loving disciples of the Lord, ready to serve others, and to bear reproach for His Name. Such miracles of grace are all around us, men and women who could easily earn themselves a place of honour in the world, yet have surrendered all for Christ, giving themselves to His service, awaiting that hour which will bring them grace and acceptance at the manifestation of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. i. 13). Of all true and acceptable service, grace is the moving spring and power. And this grace God multiplies according to the need, and ministers according to the gift He imparts (Eph. iv. 7), and the responsibilities He

imposes on those whom He calls to serve Him. This grace is not to be received in vain (2 Cor. vii. 1), but received and "held fast" (Heb. xii. 28), so that God may be served in reverence and "godly fear." And when suffering comes our way, and we are led to call on the Lord for deliverance, the answer comes, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9), whether to endure the trial, or to wait for His deliverance from or through it. The grace of God—that known and experienced acceptance of His, ever the solace and strength of the soul—is all-sufficient in all seasons for every emergency, in every difficulty, for all conditions of Christian life and service here. And the sure word of promise which faith accepts as guarantee of its sure fulfilment is, "God is able to make ALL grace abound toward you, that ye ALWAYS, having *all-sufficiency* in ALL things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. ix. 8). There is "grace abundant" for every possible condition in which the people of God may be found, waiting to be "multiplied" (2 Pet. i-2) "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." And "He giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. v. 5), who know and own their need of it. With such a God as "our God," and such resources at faith's disposal, there is no necessity for either fainting under trial, failing in service, or fleeing before difficulty and danger, by any saint or God. It is ours to appropriate and to use this grace for ourselves, and with lives radiant in its enjoyment, to dispense its virtues and blessings to those around us, as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. iv. 10).

One with Christ :

IN LIFE, REJECTION, AND GLORY.

ONE place I have in heaven above,
The glory of His throne ;
On this dark earth whence He is gone,
I have one place alone ;
And if His throne in heaven I know,
I joy to find His path below.

One lonely path across the waste—
Christ's lowly path of shame ;
I would adore His wondrous grace,
That I should tread the same.
The Stranger and the Alien, Thou,
And I the stranger—alien, now.

Thy Cross a mighty barrier stands
Between the world and me ;
Not yielding with reluctant hands,
But glorying to be free
From that which is as dung and dross,
Beside His glory and His cross.

I see Him there amidst the light,
The Father's blessed Son ;
I know that I am with Him there,
That light and love my own.
What has this barren world to give,
Since there in His deep joy I live ?

Sent hither from that glorious throne,
As He was sent before,
Of that great love in Him made known.
To witness evermore :
For this, would I count all things loss,
My joy, His glory, and His Cross.

To take with Christ the outcast's place,
With Him the cross to bear,
To be "despised" and scorned by men
Because His love I share :
The highest honour to us given,
On this side Paradise and Heaven.

And when the warfare here is o'er,
The pilgrimage is past,
The glorious Lord will come from heaven
To bring me home at last ;
Himself, in glory bright to see,
And He to share it all with me.

Christ, as Overcomer.

A MEDITATION. BY J. G. BELLETT.

THE Lord Jesus has gone back to heaven as Overcomer. He is there seated and waiting in this character. And it is as overcomers that His people are to enter and be welcomed there, to occupy their appointed places. This He has Himself told us, from the heaven into which He has gone, in the words, "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne" (Rev. iii. 21). It is as an Overcomer, enjoying triumphant rest after conflict, that we know Him there. It is in that character that we "see Jesus" (Heb. ii. 9) there, as the apostle speaks. This is surely something new. It is the Lord presented in a new character, as One who has been in conflict, and has overcome His foes. When "the Lord God" of Genesis ii. 3 "rested from all His work," His was a rest and refreshing, but not a rest after conflict. There had been no opposition to that creation work. When the foundations were laid below, and the heavens above filled by His hand, angels attended and looked on. The morning stars, sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job xxxvi. 7). It was the rest of a Creator who had ended His work, but the song of an Overcomer was not heard there. The Name and honour of one who had met and triumphed over all opposition was no part of that early song. But when the Redeemer's work was finished, and He was "received up into heaven," to sit

"on the right hand of God" (Mark xvi. 19), He surely entered the heavens as One who had been as a man of war in battle, and had overcome all His foes. The song that was raised in heaven was a song of triumph after conflict, to One "whose right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory" (Psa. xcvi. 1). The tempter entered Eden to put Adam to the proof, and he prevailed there (Gen. iii.). He met the Lord in the wilderness, with the same set of wiles, and was beaten (Matt. iv.), the Lord overcoming in all points there. And finally, at the Cross, by His obedience unto death, He "overcame" the great adversary and, leading captivity captive, passed up to the place and seat of the Overcomer. It is as the Lord, "strong and mighty" (Psa. xxiv. 8), who has been proved "mighty in battle," that His people know Him there, whose triumph song they sing. They are "overcomers" with Him (1 John v. 11, 13; iv. 12). And it is as "overcomers" that they are to pass into the coming kingdom, not as Adam passed into Eden to be tested and fail, but as "in Christ," clothed in the virtues of His redeeming work, and accepted in His glorious Person, to be "glorified together." The saints will enter on the full "triumph of Christ" to be with Him in that heaven into which He has already gone, and from which He is to come again, to receive and bear His own to the love of the Father's house, and thence to the throne of manifested glory, "more than conquerors" through Him. Blessed it surely is, to anticipate the day when as "overcomers," we shall enter on these glories, to share them.

The Church in the Gospels.

THE next reference to the Church in the Gospels as found in Matt. xviii., verses 15-20 is a more extended view, and, in substance, a considerable advance upon the first. It views the assembly of saints an organised company exercising rule as gathered unto Christ's Name, in His authority, with Himself in its midst. Here again, the character of the passage harmonises perfectly with that of the Gospel—Kingship and rule—wherein it appears. Authority is here conferred by the Lord to His assembly, to deal with evil arising in its midst. The ostracism of the trespassing and yet unrepentant brother, the “binding” and the “loosing” here, are all distinct and in contrast to that of Matt. xvi. 19. The words there, were to Peter personally. Here it is the Church, the assembly of believers corporately, to which *Divine* authority is given to deal with evil. To this authority is added a precious promise of prayer answering, and the very reason and ground both of the authority and the promise is being gathered in His Name (see also 1 Cor. v. 4). The Name we take into our lips forbids *individual* association with evil (2 Tim. ii. 19). And the Name unto which we gather collectively is our place in making request to the Father and in, carrying out His will of the Lord.

We see the truth contained in this passage, exemplified in Acts chap. v. Here a professing brother and sister, both in the assembly at Jerusalem, agreed together to “lie to the Holy Ghost.” Their

sin is manifested to the gathered believers, then “bound” or fastened on the evildoers (see particularly ver. 9). And this “binding” is ratified by swift judgment from the Lord in heaven. Peter acts simply as spokesman of the assembly, and acts in the Lord's Name. Another similar action is seen in the dealing with a case of moral evil in the assembly at Corinth, as recorded in the first Epistle to that Church, in chapter v. The sin there is “judged,” or determined, *i.e.*, made clear, the Name of the Lord Jesus is invoked, and the apostle Paul, acting in spirit *with* the assembly (“when ye are gathered together”), and in the power (authority) of the Lord Jesus, delivers the offender to Satan. The “binding” is again clearly exemplified here. Happily, this discipline resulted in the repentance of the sinning one, and on clear proof of that repentance and of his restoration to God, the “loosing” follows, in the offender being forgiven and restored to the assembly (2 Cor. ii. 6-11). These first mentions of His Church, by the Lord, in its two aspects, are characteristic of all that is taught in the Epistles, and are the key to a right dividing of the Word of truth regarding it. Failing to distinguish between the Church as now being built by the Lord Himself, including all believers of this dispensation, and the local assembly gathered unto His Name, and applying indiscriminately what is spoken concerning the one to the other has been a common cause of misunderstanding, leading to confusion in applying Scriptures which are used of the entire Church to the local Assembly, and *vice versa*.

The Unjust Steward.

HOW TO USE UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON.

PART I.—W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE steward in the parable of Luke xvi. 1-12, is evidently not one of the kind of which Paul speaks in 1 Cor. iv. 2, where he says, "Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found *faithful*." He regarded his position as one that afforded a good opportunity for the gratification of his own desires with the means his lord had entrusted to his care. Word comes to the ears of the master that this steward is "wasting his goods," and the steward is called to give an account of his stewardship, "seeing that he can be no longer steward" (R.V.).

This sudden and unlooked for announcement, puts him in a dilemma. "What shall I do?" says the steward "within himself," as the R.V. reads, "for my lord taketh away from me my stewardship? I cannot dig, and to beg I am ashamed." Then he thinks of a good plan. His master has some debtors: why not use or misuse his stewardship so that when he leaves it, these will give him a home? So he calls these debtors and inquires how much they owe, and proceeds to cut off their bills. One has his debts cut by a half. Another has twenty per. cent knocked off, and so on. When his master heard of this clever deed, he commended him—not his unrighteousness, for he would not take kindly to being robbed. But he would likely make some such remark as, "That was very smart," or "He is a clever and far-seeing fellow."

Our Lord then goes on to urge His own, to so use what is not their own, but merely entrusted to them, in such a way as to make friends for the future by means of it. But ere we look at that application of the parable, we would say a little as to its general bearing on men. Man is an unfaithful servant. The earth is the scene of his failure as a steward. Death is his removal from his stewardship. And the Great White Throne will be the place of accounting with God regarding it (Rev. xx. 13).

What his views of God or of his responsibility to God are, matters not. He may be a nominal Christian or a rank infidel, His wealth may be great or little, inherited, or acquired by his own energy; but it does not belong to him. He came naked into this world, and thus he will go out of it. While he is here, he may do as the steward of the parable did, waste his Master's goods on his appetite and desires, and cherish the thought, that it is not the business of any one—God or man—what he does with what he regards as "his own."

It is a solemn thought, and one often overlooked in preaching, that man is responsible to God as *Creator*, and that time, talents, and money will all have to be accounted for to Him, in the judgment. No man is at liberty to ignore the claims of God, and those who do so, will but add to their judgment. It is true that the greatest of all sins is the rejection of Christ, but in dealing with men by and by, it will be seen that they have been "treasuring up wrath, against the day of wrath," by the way they have used the

means with which they have been entrusted.

THE CHRISTIAN A STEWARD.—It may be asked, What about the believer? He too is a steward. The place for the exercise of his stewardship is earth. Death, or the coming of the Lord will end it. And while he will never stand at the Great White Throne to be judged as a sinner, seeing his judgment has already been borne by the Lord Jesus, yet he must give an account to Him. This will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and for his service.

How little do most of the Lord's people enter into the solemn realisation of this truth of Christian stewardship! How few seem to realise that all they possess belongs to Another, and that they are merely entrusted with it to hold and use for Him. In the case of the unsaved, it is as a rule utterly ignored, and among believers it is almost so. Too many of them feel—if they do not speak—like Nabal, when David sent to remind him of what he owed him, "Shall I then take *my* bread, and *my* water, and *my* flesh that I have killed for *my* shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they are" (1 Sam. xxv. 11). What has been entrusted to them is spoken of as "*my* money, *my* property," etc. Instead of being merely stewards, they look on themselves as owners, many of those who claim the Christian name showing little more real liberality toward the present work of the Lord, than Nabal shewed to David in his day. But the Lord sits "*over against* the Treasury" (Mark xii. 41) as of old, and He knows what is put therein.

"Concerning the Collection."

(1 Corinthians xvi. 1.)

PART II.—INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE GIVING.

THE world's charities and its philanthropies are not to be the Christian's pattern in giving. The published contribution list in which one seeks to outvie his neighbours; the publicity which is held in honour in the world, and alas! often magnified in the churches, ill accords with the Divine principle of giving, as set forth in Matt. vi. 3, by the Lord.

INDIVIDUAL GIVING is open always to all Christians who have a heart to share it. And only such gifts as are from the "willing-hearted" (Exod. xxv. 2) are acceptable to God. Money, wrung from a miser's hands, is of no interest to God, who "loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7). "Ready to distribute" (1 Tim. vi. 18), "distributing to the necessity of saints" (Rom. xii. 14), are graces and habits to be cultivated in ourselves, and encouraged in others. Wherever real need is known to exist, there, surely, the open hand is evidence of true love (1 John iii. 17). And what is done or given to the least of those who belong to Christ (Mark x. 41; Matt. xxv. 40), is regarded by Him as done or given to Himself. The poor we have "always with us" (Matt. xxvii. 11), and they—and especially those of the household of faith (Gal. v. 10), the widows of godly husbands, and of departed servants of Christ, should be particularly held in honour, and lovingly remembered. It is a reproach on the Name of the Lord, that any such should be dependent on the world's charity for the necessities of

life, or have to suffer from lack of them. while many of their fellow-believers revel in luxuries and deck their persons with costly garments and useless jewellery.

COLLECTIVE GIVING.—From the earliest times, local Christian Churches have expressed their fellowship with labourers in the Gospel in regions beyond, by sending them gifts (Phil. iv. 15)—not as salary, or as payment for preaching, but as expression of their fellowship (Phil. i. 5), in the spread of the Gospel in regions beyond, where there are none to receive them to their homes, or to show hospitality toward them. And the same principle obtains in giving for the temporal support of those who, at the call of God, give their whole time to the preaching of the Gospel, and ministry of the Word at home (1 Cor. ix. 9-14), godly care always being exercised in the manner of such giving, so that no unproved or unfit adventurer may receive that which may encourage or help to carry him along a path of unfruitful and unacceptable service, while depriving others of that which the Lord would have given them through His stewards. And the disposing of the assembly's gifts—whether sent direct by those who are entrusted with, or bear them (Acts xi. 29), or who undertake to administer them—should be its *own act* of fellowship, naming the labourer for whom it is designed, or the work or sphere in which it is to be used. Otherwise it may be found that unwittingly, that assembly is supporting labourers whose ways are unscriptural, and helping to perpetuate systems from which they have been separated in obeying the Word

of the Lord. And a godly care should be exercised in handing the assembly's gifts to visiting labourers and passing missionaries, to do so in such a manner that it will not be like giving so much "pay" for so much "preaching," as is often the habit. For while "giving" and "receiving" are commanded and commended in the Word, "hiring" and "bargaining," in the service of God, whether by arrangement or habit, are condemned. And as the preacher is never to look to any assembly for remuneration, as "an hireling looketh for the reward of his work" (Job vii. 2), or to speak evil of any who fail to express their fellowship with him, but to be directly dependent on the Lord, whose he is and whom he serves (Acts xxvii. 23), so the assembly, in sending its gift to this or that servant labouring for the Lord, is not to regard him as "our missionary" or "our evangelist," as if their expressed fellowship with him in his work gave them any special claim to his service, or of control over him. There is far too much of this spirit abroad, and if it be left to go unchallenged, we shall soon see "Boards of Directors" and of other officials, whose interference with the Lord's servants in their midst, and domination over them in their ministry, will bring barrenness and formality, where fruitfulness and spiritual power ought to be seen. For human interference with what the Lord retains in His own hands, is the surest way to stop the flow of that spiritual power which is the cause of all blessing with the Gospel to the world, and of all freshness and fruitfulness in ministry, among "Churches of the Saints." J.R.

Jewish Return to Palestine.

THE deliverance of Palestine from the domination of the Turk, and the declaration made by the British Government that they view "with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people," has aroused an intense interest among the Jews, the wide world over. The ardent desire to return to the land of their fathers has never died out from the exiled race, during the centuries they have been scattered among the nations. The "Zionist" movement of recent years has as its object, the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Nothing short of this will satisfy the Jew. Before the war, many wealthy families had gone to colonise and cultivate the land, and such progress had been made, that the fair fields waved with golden grain, the vineyards yielded their fruits, and the pastures were becoming "clothed with flocks." Then the war came, and most of the immigrants had to flee, leaving all behind. The land was again laid waste, and is only now beginning to recover. But the enthusiasm of the Jewish race in all lands for their return to Palestine is unabated. Large sums have been already subscribed for restoration purposes. A site has been acquired on Olivet for a Jewish University. A leading architect is said to have a complete plan of the temple ready, and doubtless the necessary funds for its erection will be found in due time. The return of a Jewish people, their establishment as a nation in the land, the restoration of the Mosaic ritual after some sort, and Jerusalem

again resuming her place as "a city of the Jews"; as the metropolis of their land and of the earth, "are events that may be accomplished in a very short time. But the Jews who will so return will not be the "Israel of God." They will return only in part, and these in pride and unbelief. The ten tribes, who were carried into Assyria in B.C. 721, have never returned, and will form no part of this gathering. The two remaining tribes, who were carried to Babylon, whose representatives were in the land when the Lord Jesus on earth had their day of visitation when He was here. It was them that rejected and crucified Him. It was them that opposed the Gospel and sought to hinder it being preached to the Gentiles. Therefore "wrath has come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thess. ii. 15, 16). Some thirty-six years after the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, Jerusalem was besieged and taken by the Roman armies. The temple was burned and desolated, not one stone was left above another, as the Lord had foretold (Matt. xxiv. 2). Since then, they have been wanderers in all lands. The hope of their speedy restoration and establishment as a nation in Palestine has aroused much interest throughout the world, and many have come to think of their return as the fulfilment of the many great and glorious promises of the prophetic Scriptures. And some have said that from this it is evident that the coming kingdom of the Lord Jesus and His millennial reign as King over Israel and all nations is at hand. But this is not according to the Word of God. For those Jews who return to Palestine thus, with

no other object than to make it their home, to claim it as the land of their fathers, and to establish themselves there as a nation, will not have repented of their sin in crucifying "the Lord of Glory" (1 Cor. ii. 8), as God in mercy aforetime called them to do (Acts iii. 19). They will return in unbelief, as Christ despisers still. And for a season, they will have apparent prosperity and success. They will gather the riches of the world to deck and garnish their country, and they will in all probability have the protection of the fleets and armies of the Great Powers for a season. But they will be there for judgment, and the darkest hour of their history is yet to come. For there can be no restoration of their national glory, no resumption of God's dealings with them as His covenant people, until they acknowledge their sin, and say to each other, "Come and let us return unto the Lord, and He will heal us. He hath smitten and He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight" (Hos. iii. 15; iv. 1). And this will be while in the land, which surely tells us, that their return to it will be not as yet converted and cleansed, but as in pride and unbelief, to become an easy prey to the last great deceiver, who will first by "flatteries" and fair promises, gather them under his sheltering wing, making a covenant with them, probably promising them liberty and protection in return for their allegiance to Him. And then and thus will they pass into their last and greatest woes. Then will begin the "day of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. xxx. 7), and then will they learn the bitterness of having rejected their true Messiah.

Blind Watchmen.

GOD describes them in the fifty-sixth chapter of the Book of the prophet Isaiah, verses 10, 11. They are "blind," "dumb," "ignorant," "sleeping," and "loving to slumber," so far as God's interests are concerned. Regarding their own, they "can never have enough," they "look to their own way, every one for his gain." They "cannot bark" from fear of giving offence, though robbers steal that which belongs to God. But if any dare to touch their own kennels or interests, they bark loud and bite bravely. A good watchdog will not allow a suspicious person to pass without giving warning, but these blind and lazy watchmen lounge in their chairs and talk about "charity" and "large-heartedness," while the enemies of the Cross of Christ fritter away bit after bit of God's truth, and bring the devil's error in at will. Sure, there is a Satanic charity. Lot had it, when he lived in Sodom and sat in its gate. Demas had it, when he went back to love the present world, and to forget its guilt. All who set self and self-interests above God and His truth, above Christ and His claims, have it. Carnal men who live luxuriously and gain favour with the world, by keeping back what they know to be God's truth, while winking at the ungodly doings of those over whom they are supposed to be watchmen, have it. Verily such men, wheresoever found, will have much to answer for in that day, in which each will have to give account. God needs watchmen who will not shun to tell those who do evil, of their sin.—*Gordon Furlong.*

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

GOD'S CALLS TO MEN.

- "Return unto Me" (Isa. xlv. 22)—In Repentance.
 "Look unto Me" (Isa. xlv. 22)—For Salvation.
 "Trust in Me" (Jer. xlix. 11)—For Supply.
 "Pray unto Me" (Jer. xxix. 12)—In Need.

SALVATION IN CHRIST JESUS.

- Saved, through Christ's Death (1 Cor. xv. 2).
 Saved, by (or in) Christ's Life (Rom. v. 10).
 Saved, at Christ's Coming (Rom. viii. 11).
 The First, is from Sin's Condemnation.
 The Second, is from Sin's Commission.
 The Third, is from Sin's Corruption.

PAUL'S RELATIONS TO CHRIST.

- Alienation from Christ (Acts xxvi. 9), in Opposition.
 Apprehended by Christ (Phil. iii. 12) unto Salvation.
 Allegiance to Christ (Acts ix. 10), owning Him Lord.
 Ambition for Christ (2 Cor. v. 9, N.V.) to please Him.

CONCISE STUDIES FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS.

SERVING THE LORD.

- Saved to Serve (1 Thess. i. 9)—The Cause.
 Called to Serve (1 Cor. vii. 22)—The Authority.
 Constrained to Serve (2 Cor. v. 14)—The Motive.
 Serving in all Humility (Acts xx.)—The Pattern.
 Power for Service (Luk. xxiv. 49)—The Spirit.
 The Judgment of Service (Col. iii. 24)—The Reward.

CHRISTIAN BONDS.

- Children of one Family (John xx. 17)—One Father.
 Sheep in one Flock (John x. 16),—One Shepherd.
 Members of one Body (Eph. iii. 6, R.V.)—One Head.
 Servants of One Master (Eph. vi. 9)—One Object.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

- A Purchased People (Acts xx. 28).
 A Possessed People (Tit. ii. 14, R.V.).
 A Holy People (Deut. vii. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 15).
 A Happy People (Deut. xxxiii. 29; Psa. cxliv. 15).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Joining in Games for Philanthropic Objects.

We are deeply thankful for sound and Scriptural counsel received through "The Believer's Magazine" on our attitude as Christians to sports, such as football, bowling, cricket, in common cause with the unconverted. Now, we hear no more of the "arguments" given to support these, which the Word of God applied to them has pulverised. But the enemy is always inventing something new to entice

and beguile the unwary. Now a number of our Christian young men and women are invited to give their presence and support to frivolities and money raising schemes to collect funds for local hospitals, which are undoubtedly doing a good work for humanity, and threatened with having to close down from want of funds. Ought we as individual Christians, or as an assembly gathered in the Lord's Name, to associate ourselves with these efforts? Simple, Scriptural help will be valued.

To "do good unto all" (Gal. vi. 10), stretching forth a helping hand to meet the common needs of humanity, is clearly commended in the Word, and was fully exemplified in the life and ministry of the Lord. "He went about doing good" (Acts x. 38), and ministering of the things of this life to those in need of them, as well as preaching the Gospel. His people may well follow the example He has left them, as much as in them is. Hospitals and homes for the sick, especially such as are accessible to the Gospel, are worthy of our liberality personally, and many assemblies make at least one yearly contribution toward their upkeep, in the city or town in which they live. But to join with all and sundry in drawings, games, parades, sales, and the frivolities which usually accompany them, is not for those who "belong to Christ," who are "not of the world, even as He is not of the world." It could not be done "in His Name" (Col. iii. 17); it would not be to God's glory (1 Cor. x. 31). And it certainly is not included in "whatsoever things are lovely" (Phil. iv. 8), for one redeemed by the blood of Christ from a "vain manner of life," to appear dressed as a clown or performing the part of a charlatan in what is claimed to be a "Christian service." A much more effective way of helping in this or any such work, is to deny yourselves luxuries in dress, save money squandered in sweets, and such like, curtail expenditure in personal and assembly life, and so have something always by you, ready to impart to him or that which needeth, while maintaining the place of separation to God and of witness-bearing for Christ to which believers are called—not on the Lord's Day, and as assembled to worship God only—but everywhere, always, and in all relations of life. This is what God's people are called to, and what the Lord points to as their path. And while it may raise the sneer of the religious world, to abstain from and refuse to share in their frivolities, under the name of philanthropy, it is the path the Lord trod, and that He bids His people follow.

Answers to Correspondents

BREPHOS.—It takes a lot of grace to manage a little Greek, and if you think it might become a snare to you, better do without it. Read your Testament well as you have it, and you will not miss much.

TYRONE.—Your query relates to a matter which the individual Christian must settle between himself and God. There is no direct Scripture bearing on it. But in the light of Prov. xvi. 31, "hoary hairs" are no disgrace, but rather bring their owners within the scope of a special promise (see Isa. xlvi. 4).

COLONIAL.—Speculative guesses as to how long the "day of Christ," or the time of His judgment seat, will last, are best left alone. What the Word teaches is, that the raised and glorified saints are to be manifested *before* Christ (2 Cor. v. 10), and their works declared in the day of Christ (1 Cor. iii. 13), ere they are manifested with Christ in glory (Col. iii. 4).

G. B., GLASGOW.—According to the patterns of Gospel service, presented to us in the Acts—which are there for our guidance—the labours of the Gospel preacher are to be followed by the formation of those who believe his message, and are converted to God, into local churches or assemblies of believers, constituted according to the simple and abiding pattern described in the Word. "Associations," limiting their efforts to "getting people saved," to be left untaught in God's principles of gathering and worship, and the converts left to choose any church association they like, may bear the name of "undenominational"—which is considered to be a great attraction in Gospel work—but as a matter of fact, they either soon ceases to exist, or as of necessity, from a law of self-preservation, drift into some denominational connexion. They must adopt some form of church life sooner or later. You may sever your "evangelistic work" from "church connection," as you say, to give greater freedom in carrying it on, but you will require to sever it from Scripture control also, before long. For if you get converts, or "make disciples," as Matt. xxviii. 18, 19 has it, you are then to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever" the Lord has commanded, which will include gathering in His Name as an assembly, guided and governed by His Word. You cannot improve on God's plan, for carrying on His work, so your wisdom will be to take it as it stands and work it out in simple obedience.

T. M., SUSSEX.—There are brethren in all assemblies—even the smallest—who from the beginning, manifest "earnest care" (2 Cor. viii. 16) for their fellow-saints, and seek to "addict themselves" (1 Cor. xvi. 15) to serve them. They need no formal recognition, but do the work and are "esteemed for their work's sake" by all the godly. They neither require a chief seat nor a public "recognition" to mark them out. Their work makes them well known.

J. M. L., CHESHIRE.—When the apostles passed from the scene, all Divine legislation for the churches ceased. No company of men has any authority to meet, making "laws," or adding to that which is written in the Word for our guidance all through the present dispensation. The work of leaders in the churches is administrative—seeing that what is in the Book is carried out in its integrity, but not adding anything to "that which is written" in God's Word, whether deliverances of "the oversight" or minutes of "the elders."

D. W., FIFE.—Do not allow your service for the Lord to cease, because some give you the "cold shoulder" in it. It is the living Lord in heaven that you serve, not your brethren, and what in your service is well pleasing unto Him. He will not fail to recognise and reward. Perhaps you need all you get, to keep you humble, for it is the worst that can happen to a young worker to be "fawned" on and "puffed up," to fall into the snare of the devil. Go on with what God has given you, and He will look after your opposers. It is no part of your business to fight in your own defence. Leave that to God, and He will see to it in due time.

Sketches of Assembly Life and Testimony.

I.—Gospel Hall, St. Paul Street, Aberdeen.

For some forty-eight years, an assembly of believers has been gathered simply and only "in the Name of the Lord Jesus" here. Being one of the first companies in the North of Scotland to so assemble outside of all sects, taking the Word of God alone as their guide book, it may be of interest to our readers to hear a little of its origin, and how the Lord has led and blessed this assembly throughout the years. Owing to the St. Paul Hall having changed ownership quite lately, this meeting place had to be vacated, and another found in Union Hall, Skene Terrace, in the centre of the city, opposite the Public Library, which may the Lord

cause to be a place of green pasture for His people, and a centre of earnest evangelistic work among the thousands who need the Gospel of God, in this great city.

In a small hall in Castle Street in 1870 a few believers had begun to assemble in the Lord's Name alone. This was the beginning of the Northern assemblies. The few that composed it, had been led out from various denominational connexions by reading the Word of God, and following the light it gave them. Their two chief helpers were John C. Ritchie, who was gifted to teach, and John Bendelow, who was an indefatigable Gospeller, and a continuous open-air preacher. Shortly after this small assembly was formed, Donald Ross and his fellow-labourers in the Northern Evangelistic Society, had come to see from the Book of God, that it is the will and way of God that all His believing people ought to be baptised by immersion, and assemble as fellow-saints, apart from the unconverted, to "show forth the Lord's death" on the first day of the week, in assembly character, not as a new denomination, but according to the pattern given in the Word, which the Lord means to be followed by His people throughout the whole of the Church's course. Mr. Ross and his fellow-labourers had been carrying on a continuous Gospel work in an old chapel off the Gallowgate, and God had saved a number, who were hungering for the Bread of Life, and in a spiritual condition to follow wherever the Word of God might lead them. The evangelists, having themselves been brought out from worldly religions and denominational connections, began to teach what they had learned and obeyed, with the result that a number were baptised and led on in the way of the Lord, seeking to be found in fellowship with those who had been assembling in the Lord's Name, before them. The hall in Castle Street being too small, and the old chapel in the Gallowgate being unsuited for assembly purposes, the Gospel Hall in St. Paul Street was secured and opened, and has been all the years the chief gathering place in the city. From it, three offshoots have sprung, and go on happily in fellowship, the Lord blessing in the Gospel and adding to their number. The Aberdeen assemblies in the earlier years of their existence, received much help through the faithful and searching ministry of Donald Ross, Donald Munro, John M. Campbell, George Masson, Andrew Allan, and others, and the Lord has raised up from amongst themselves quite a number of earnest workers who give of their best

in the spread of the Gospel, in shepherding the saints and in pioneering with the story of redeeming love in the regions beyond. The Annual Conferences, held for three days at the beginning of the year, have been a means of much blessing, and are attended by large numbers of Christians of the city, who belong to various denominations, who eagerly attend to share in the ministry of servants of Christ who come from far and near to give the Word in season. In addition to the weekly Gospel testimony in the various halls, there is a vigorous open-air testimony carried on in various central places in the city—the Castlegate, foot of Market Street, and end of Loch Street having been utilised for this throughout many years. The St. Paul Street assembly has sought throughout the years of its existence to "go by the Book," avoiding laxity on the one side and exclusiveness beyond what the Word commands, on the other. From its fellowship has gone forth many, to become witnesses in other lands, and true helpers in Colonial assemblies. There has been for over forty years a large and thriving Sunday School carried on, on simple, Scriptural lines, and in it many have been brought to the Lord in early years, and added to this assembly, and to those who hived off, all of which give due place to this important work. In order to maintain and cherish godly fellowship, the assemblies in the city and suburbs have a half-yearly tea meeting, where things common to all are talked over, and mutual exhortation and help given. Throughout these years, special efforts to reach the crowds who go "nowhere" to hear the Word, have been made in public halls, with good results, all the assemblies congregating to help. Very few of these who saw the beginnings of St. Paul Street, remain, most have gone to their rest with Christ. But while God removes his workers He carries on His work, and raises up others to fill the thinning ranks of those who, in varied measures and by various ministries, "work the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. xvi. 10).

Fresh Papers, from many pens, flow in a steady stream for edification and comfort, giving wholesome ministry to meet present need among the people of God, for which we are profoundly grateful.

Sketches of Assembly Life, giving the origin, progress, growth and character of local Assemblies in the British Isles, telling what the Lord has done during the past half century among them will be welcomed by the Editor.

All in Christ: Christ is All.

IN infinite grace, God has given to mankind the gift of His Beloved Son. More He could not give. Less would not have met our need. As sinners in unregenerate years, we needed a Surety, a Sacrifice, a Saviour, a Deliverer. As saints, ready to stray, liable to stumble, actually failing and falling, we needed a Shepherd to lead, a High Priest to succour, and Advocate to restore and help. All these combine in the Christ of God, who has been given as ours. All excellency and all fulness are in Him. He satisfies all the Divine claims in the excellency of His Person. He meets all human need by the virtues of His work. Christ is all to God, and everything to us. In receiving Christ (John i. 12), we receive Him in all His fulness, become accepted in all His virtues, stand before God in the full value of His work, and become vitally and spiritually "joined to the Lord," henceforth to be regarded as "in Christ Jesus" (Eph. i. 1). Higher than this none can rise. Nearer than this none can ever be. Dearer to God, than to be loved by Him with the same love wherewith He loves His Son (John xvii. 23), is impossible. And all this is always true of all who belong to Christ, who are Christ's, and in whom Christ is, always and everywhere. and there is no distinction, no difference. But this amazing grace, this marvellous gift, has to be received in all confidence, realised in all enjoyment, and used in all conditions. All is in Christ, and Christ is all, to His believing people. But He is to be received in all the excellencies He

holds, and used in all the offices He bears. This is faith's prerogative. It receives Him as Saviour. It commits itself wholly to Him as Preserver and Keeper (2 Tim. i. 12). It confides in Him as High Priest, and joyfully owns "we have such a High Priest" (Heb. viii. 1). It draws from and uses the "fulness" that is in Him (Col. ii. 9). It finds and joyfully owns His Lordship, and bows in loving loyalty and obedience to His Word. It finds its all in Christ. It asks for nothing more, and seeks for nothing different, for it finds its joy in Christ. and knows no other portion. God has given His all in giving Christ. And the business of a lively faith through the whole course of earthly life is, to discover what is stored in Christ for present use and enjoy it in the soul. Eternity's blest employment will be, to still more fully discover what is ours in Christ. Not so much in ceaseless, fresh gifts and new resources, but in God discovering and revealing to His glorified sons and saints, all that is theirs in the Christ He has long ago given, whom they welcomed in simple faith, and delight even now to own as "Altogether lovely," for whose sake they gladly renounce all earthly gains, accounting them as "refuse," "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 8), their Lord. How joyous, calm, and free, are the lives, and how steady, full and bright is the path and the testimony of those who find them all in Christ, to whom Christ is all and everything, everywhere and always.

"Solely Thine own no more, but given
To me, O Christ, Thou now art mine,
My life, my joy, my hope, my heaven,
And I forever wholly Thine.

Jesus Christ :

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

PART VI.—THE FOUNTAIN OF JOY.

TO judge from the map, Cana occupied the very site of Gath-Hepher, the city of Jonah the prophet—a fact so strangely ignored by the Pharisees, when they asserted “out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” But a greater than Jonah was present that day. He came with His disciples as the invited Guest. It was His wont to accept invitations; indeed, we never hear of His refusing one, whether to the houses of His own people, as Matthew, or Martha, or Simon the leper, or to those of the religious world, like Simon the Pharisee. But wherever He went it was as the Faithful Witness. It may be questioned whether Christians do not sometimes fail through indolence or fear of man, to avail themselves of invitations to the tables of the unconverted, even where they can go without the sacrifice of principle, or to participate in the foolish or sinful pleasures of the world. The question in such cases is not so much where, but how we go. Do I sit merely in fellowship with men, as one of themselves, or as a servant of Christ and a witness for God? “If any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast (some would say at once, under plea of separation, don’t go), but the apostle adds, “and ye be disposed to go (leaving the decision to the conscience of each), whatsoever is set before you eat, asking no question for conscience sake,” but, as the context shows, when principle is involved, to stand firm for God.

Thus the Lord interpreted the Father by His condescending and loving interest in the joys of the home and of human friendship, not on a pedestal of Pharisaic superiority, “Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou,” but as the meek and lowly One, never more morally separated from publicans and sinners, than when receiving them and while eating with them.

But the Lord was more than the invited Guest. He became the bountiful Host, dispensing abundant provision to the needy, and that not at the suggestion of Mary, for human relationships as was proved again in John vii. 6, never might interfere with His service for the Father, but in the Father’s own time. Mary, though wrong as to time, was right as to fact. Like the little maid in Naaman’s house, who, though she had never heard of a leper being cleansed, knew that the prophet of God could and would heal her master, so Mary, though she had never seen one miracle wrought in all the long years at Nazareth, knew He was the One to appeal to, and could and would supply the need. She was not discouraged by the seeming failure of her request; she knew His hour would come, and so gave her memorable advice to the servants—so timely for all of us—“Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.” And when His hour did come, He knew what to do and how to do it. He stored His wine, not in wine jars, but in strange receptacles, in water pots, each holding twenty-one gallons, set for ceremonial cleansing, so needful in a scene of defilement, under an earthly system of religion. But the water-pots were empty, fit symbol of the emptiness

of the forms they represented. But our Lord had them filled to the brim with water, to turn it into His wine. Thus He displayed the omnipotence of the Creator. The God of nature, the Lord of the vintage, laid aside the leisurely processes, so familiar to us, and performed in a moment what He usually did in months. Exactly when the water became wine, we are not told; it became so for practical use, when the servants obeyed the command, "Draw out now!" The wine is there, if we will but draw it out and serve to the thirsty around. The secret of the Lord was with the servants. They knew, for they feared and obeyed. The governor of the feast tasted and wondered, but did he ever learn whence the good wine flowed? In any case, the Lord interpreted the loving-kindness of the Father for those who had eyes to see. To such He would say, "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." The act was symbolical. How many are taught to say, "Thy love is better than wine"—"we will remember thy love more than wine, the upright love thee." How often the waters of affliction are turned into the wine of joy! As Samuel Rutherford wrote, "When I get into the cellar of affliction, I search round for some of the Lord's wine." Joy is the second of the ninefold fruit of the Spirit from Him who is the Fountain of it, but lack of love here, often turns the good wine sour, and so spoils that which makes glad the heart of God and man. But surely the testimony of the redeemed of the Lord in heaven will be, "Thou hast kept the good wine until now."

The Church in the Gospels.

THIRD PAPER.

WE now pass on to two references to the Church in the fourth Gospel. This mention is not by name, but it is the Lord speaking *to* and *of* the company of His redeemed as He knows them. We are carried here to a higher plane. It is not here the *King* speaking to His subjects, but—characteristic of the Gospel according to John—the Son of God speaking to His own. Remembering the Divine dignity and majesty of the Speaker, we turn to the opening of the wonderful passage, comprising chapters xiii. to xviii. of this Gospel. At the very beginning, in chap xiii 1, the keynote of the whole is struck in the words, "HIS OWN."

It is blessed to see the Church in its temple character, firmly founded on the Rock foundation. It is precious to be authorised by and found gathered unto His Name, Himself in the midst (Matt. xviii. 20), discerning the real though unseen presence of Him who bears it as with us. But it is surely sweeter still, to learn from His own lips that we are "His own." This stands at the forefront. Then at the end of this section, in chap. xvii. 24, we find an expression practically identical with this of verse 1, "They also whom Thou hast given Me." "His own" are given to Him by the Father, and therefore His property, very dear to Him. Seeing these chapters open and close with the same precious statement, it is surely intended that all comprised between this beginning and this ending, should be read in the light of these words. "*His own.*" What will

He not *do* for "His own." He will be their High Priest, and in this character maintain them free from defilement (John xiii. 1-11; Eph. v. 25-26), making constant intercession for them (see John xvii.). He will make ready a place in the Father's house, and at the right moment come back and receive them to that place; yea more, to Himself (1 John xiv. 2-3). Meanwhile He will do whatsoever they ask of the Father in His Name (chap. xiv. 13), and will make request that the other Comforter may be sent to them (chap. xiv. 14-16). He will let His loved ones know His nearness (chap. xiv. 18), will manifest Himself to them (chap. xiv. 21), and will, with the Father, make abode with them (ver. 23). He will associate "His own" with Himself in fruit-bearing to the Father's glory (chap. xv. 5-8), and in full and intimate friendship, in the knowledge of the secrets of His Father's bosom (chap. xv. 15). And what will He not *say* to "His own?"

He will speak comfort to their hearts (chap. xiv. 1); words of encouragement as to their service (chap. xv. 1 on) of instruction as to their walk (chap. xv. 10), and of their attitude towards each other (chap. xv. 17). He will speak words of warning as to the world and its treatment of them (chaps. xv. 19, and xvi. 1-3); of promise, as to a fuller unfolding of His truth (chap. xvi. 12-14), and of hope as to His return for them (chap. xvi. 22). He will tell them that He *loves* them (chap. xv. 9), that His *joy* is in them (chap. xv. 11), that they are His *friends* (chap. xv. 14), and also His *chosen* ones (chap. xv. 16). And these four things which,

together with their implied relationship to the same Father (chap. xv. 16), can only be said in their fulness, by a Bridegroom of and to His bride. In this wonderful way, does the Lord Jesus express the overflowing love of His heart towards His saints—His Church—of the present dispensation, in unique words, such as never before had been uttered to men on earth.

The Ravens and the Lilies;

OR, THE FATHER'S CARE.

THIS world is a scene of sin and strife,
And its trials I must share,
But mine is a sweet and a happy life
With a Father's love and care;
I only need to be clothed and fed—
My wants are but few and small;
And the One who loveth me hath said
That my Father knows them all.

Let others barn and storehouse build,
And about to-morrow weep;
Each hungry raven's mouth is filled,
And they neither sow nor reap;
But never a care need cloud my brow,
Nor a tear mine eye bedim,
For my Father watcheth o'er me now,
And my needs are known to Him.

Though long be my absent Master's stay,
And far be my heavenly home,
I am called to live from day to day
In the hope that He will come;
And with artless ease His grace to show
'Mid worry, and strife, and din,
Who hath taught me how the lilies grow,
Though they neither toil nor spin.

Thus, simply, Lord, would I trust in Thee,
Till the days of trust are o'er;
One word from Thy lips is better to me
Than the miser's hoarded store.
And when Thou art pleased my trust to try,
And my weakness fain would yield,
Oh, tell me again of the raven's cry,
And the lilies of the field!

The Unjust Steward.

PART II.—W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE Lord now proceeds to apply the teaching of the parable by first stating.—THE PRESENT EFFECTS OF UN-FAITHFULNESS.—“If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?” (ver. 11). This teaches as clearly as possible, that if a believer is not faithful in the use of money, God will not make him a steward of His Truth. It is put even stronger in ver. 12, “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?” There are three comparisons drawn by our Lord in this parable between His own Word and money. First: As to its relative importance, money is “*least*,” while His Word is “*much*” (ver. 10). Second: As to its character: money is the “*unrighteous mammon*,” God’s Word is the “*true riches*.” And does not the term “true riches” suggest that the other is very uncertain? How often have we seen the words of Prov. xxiii. 5 fulfilled before our eyes, “For riches certainly make to themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven,” that is out of the reach of the one who thought they were his. A bad investment, the failure of a bank, a slump in real estate, the failure of some joint stock affair, etc., has left many a child of God penniless, who had regarded himself as “rich.” Verse 12, gives the third comparison, “That which is *another man’s*” and “that which is *your own*.” All the material wealth of

earth, the “cattle upon a thousand hills” belong to “another man”—to Christ, who bought all by His blood. What we take in of His Word, becomes *our* “*own*.” And if the child of God is unfaithful in the use of it, he makes it impossible for God to open up to his heart the “true riches” of His grace and glory, that which is of more value than money, and which will be his own for ever. Earthly wealth must be left behind, but all of the truth of God, communicated to the heart by the Holy Spirit, and thus made “our own” in experience and in use, we shall take with us. And this is truly a blessed thought. A man may spend a long time in the acquisition of knowledge about some earthly business or profession, then in many cases cannot use it as long as it took him to acquire it. Not so with the things of God. It is surely a joy to acquire them now. But much more than this. The right use of them, increases our capacity for more of these riches, by and by.

That there is a very close relation between the general lack of intelligence in the things of God, and the failure of God’s people in the matter of stewardship, cannot for a moment be doubted. That is plainly told us in this parable. Cases there may be, where one, known to hold a greedy grasp of this world’s goods, seems to have a grasp of the truth of God, and is more liberal in dispensing it than in imparting of the worldly wealth in his possession. This can be easily accounted for in the light of this parable. The case presents no real difficulty. An active mind can acquire an intellectual

grasp of truth, without having been taught it by the Spirit, and natural or acquired ability can give it out, without the help or unction of the Spirit. But sooner or later, the difference between what has been communicated by the Spirit, and what is picked up by the intellect, will be made manifest. The man who seems to be rich in the truth, but has not got it from God, will end according to Jer. xvii. 11. "As the partridge gathereth young which she hath not brought forth, so is he that getteth riches and not by right; in the midst of his days they shall leave him, and at his end, he shall be a fool" (R.V.). Only that which is from God, and kept by the Holy Ghost (2 Tim i. 14) is of real value.

God's Choice is Best.

THY will, O Lord, I pray, not mine—
 For I could never choose aright;
 My future path I cannot see,
 With this my dim and earthly sight.
 Choose Thou for me. O Lord, I ask
 Whatever seemeth good to Thee;
 For I would rather rest in faith,
 And, like a child, just trust in Thee.

I am afraid that I would choose
 The smoothest path and bluest sky;
 So I would never, 'midst the storms,
 Hear that sweet whisper, "It is I."
 And I would ask, I know right well,
 A life without one single care;
 Thus I would lose the soothing balm
 Of coming oft to Thee in prayer.

A life without one cloud to hide
 The brightness of that azure sky;
 Without one heart-pang or a grief,
 And ne'er one bitter, helpless cry.
 But gracious Lord, Thou knowest all—
 Thou knowest what I need the best;
 Content with what Thy will appoints,
 Unerring love will choose the rest.

The Gospel in Regions Beyond.

A CONFERENCE ADDRESS TO WORKERS.

BY THE EDITOR.

TO "preach the Gospel in regions beyond" (2 Cor. x. 16), is always the aim and ambition of the true Gospel-er. And it surely ought to be so in each assembly of the saints of God. For one chief purpose for which God causes a church of His to be planted in any locality is, that it may be found "holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. ii. 16) to those around and beyond it. It is surely right that an assembly should consider first its responsibility Godward in His worship, and ever seek to appear before the Lord in right spiritual condition, clean and full, withholding nothing from the God to whom the worship of His redeemed is due. Nor can it without serious loss, neglect the ministry of the Word of God for edification and comfort, causing spiritual decline, which in time will manifest weakness in testimony toward the world. These are commonly accepted facts among us, however feebly they may operate to command the obedience and control the lives of the saints of God who profess to believe them. But this stewardship in the Gospel is not so generally acknowledged or avowed, at least not in the measure and manner in which it is set before us in the Word, neither by the individual Christian nor by the local and particular assembly in which he may for the present be found. We leave out of count the evangelist, who at the call of God leaves his boat and nets—his daily occupation—to go forth as a public pro-

claimer of the message of reconciliation, giving all his days and every day, to his one great ambassage, directed by and dependent on the living Lord alone in his service. We think of the great "rank and file" of the people of God, saved by grace and bound for glory, to whom the Lord of the field and Master of the house has given to "every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34)—with Romans xvi. 3-16; Phil. iv. 3 before us, we may surely say, to every woman also—for the whole household of faith is laid under tribute by their Lord, to take share and part in this stewardship (1 Cor. x. 17), this trust (1 Thess. ii. 4), which has been committed to all, in varying measures and in differing spheres. This responsibility is not made known, or pressed home, as it ought to be in general ministry of the Word, with the sad result, that few are more than half-awake to their life-work here as the Lord's witnesses—who ought to be His credentials, among their own neighbours, fellow-villagers, townfolk, and countrymen, to "testify the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24), and warn sinners of a judgment to come. And this, not so much in official and public manner, as in individual and constant effort, putting in a word by the wayside, in the home, by road and rail, in season, out of season, using up every opportunity and creating one where there is none, to bring eternal things, the need of the soul, and the Gospel of God to their fellows, always and everywhere. There was much more of this in years gone by, and God abundantly blessed it. We are becoming too "genteel" to speak to people about God

and Christ and salvation. Christians have so learned the world's maxims that they must wait to be "introduced," and the like. There should ever be wisdom used and always politeness exercised in approaching our fellows with the message of God, but we have the example of the Lord Jesus—the most perfect "gentleman" that ever lived on earth—in thrusting in a testimony for God, winging an arrow as from a "bow drawn at a venture," and bringing into the common converse of life, about food and drink, about labour and taxes, the great truths of the Gospel, and their adaptation to the needs of men. It is in such like spheres that "the regions beyond" lie to the greatest number of the saints of God. And it will be the dawn of better times, when this is realised and acted on. There is a sort of sentimental and evanescent kind of "interest" in what is called "missionary work," easily evoked and as easily lost, which is well kept in evidence among us. It costs very little, and accomplishes less. But there is or may be, a deep, inwrought fellowship with God in His evangelisation of a needy world, whose time of grace is quickly passing, and it is this we want to get at, to grasp, and by grasped by. Then to work out in practice all that is involved in such descriptions of Gospel service as bearing witness, sowing of seed, catching of fish, plucking brands from the fire, and espousing souls to Christ. To "evangelise" the Gospel, as the word is in 2 Cor. x. 16; Rom. x. 15, and elsewhere, is not so much to proclaim it publicly, but to make it known, to explain and apply it to the soul. And this is a

service open to all who are in a spiritual condition to share it. And another word, translated "preach," and used in Mark ii. 2; Acts viii. 25; xiii. 42, means just "to discourse," to sit down by the wayside, the fireside, the bedside, and anywhere, speaking of Christ to sinners. It is this line of service that we chiefly fail in. Public preaching, when in the Holy Ghost, reaches the crowd, arrests the attention, forces men to think on eternal things, and sets the conscience working. But the personal, individual, and particular message to the soul's need, is carried chiefly by those who watch for souls in the after meeting, by the wayside, in visitation, by tract distribution, and in many other ways. It is here and along such lines, that the energies, sympathies, and fellowship of the whole assembly of believers in any given place should be directed, and encouraged by ministry of the Word and constant seasonable exhortation. And it is the duty of those who take the lead in assembly Gospel work, to see that no methods are practised or copied from the world's religion, and brought into use, which consciences, governed by the Word of God, cannot approve of or share, and so hinder godly co-operation and mar true partnership in spreading the Gospel among the many who need it, first in our immediate locality, and then out and further afield, in "the regions beyond." It is arduous work, making stern demands on the worker. But the end will justify the outlay.

Grudge not the heavy cost,

Faint not at labour here,

'Tis but a lifetime at the most,

The time of rest is near.

Mistaken Judgments.

IT is on record that Oliver Cromwell, in concluding a memorable speech given before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, bearing on Ecclesiastical Judgments, said, "And now I beseech you, my brethren, to ever seek, while dealing with these matters, to remember that, while giving all diligence, with all sincerity, to arrive at a just judgment, it is possible that you may err and be mistaken." That was a seasonable and sound advice, for it has been proved many and many a time that such mistakes in judgment have been made. For even the wisest and most prudent of men, may form a wrong judgment, arrive at a false verdict, and pronounce an unjust sentence. There need be no malice, no evil counsel, no wish to do unjustly, yet withal it is possible to err in judgment, to reach a wrong conclusion, and to cause the innocent to suffer from failing to take account of the possibility of being mistaken. Were we perfect in knowledge, pure in motives, and always quite able to weigh evidence in the just balances of God's presence, all this might be avoided; but it is not always so. Is it ever thus with men who assume the position of being judges of others and of their doings, in the church and in the world? Were this better known, and its solemnity felt in the soul, there would be fewer ready to judge their fellow-believers, and to utter quickly reached verdicts too often based on slender and inadequate evidence. Need we wonder that our Divine Lord found it necessary to utter among the "laws of

His kingdom" the words, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. viii 1). This does not mean that the Christian is to wink at evil when it crosses his path, or refuse to deal with it when it appears in the sphere of his responsibility. This would be to ignore the plain teaching of God's Word, and to set at nought such Scriptures as Eph. v. 11; 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. ii. 21, and to refuse obedience to such calls to separation from evil and evildoers as 2 Cor. vi. 14-17 enjoins. But to find delight in searching out supposed evil in order to harshly "judge" it, too often projecting our own personality into the matter, and allowing our own partialities and prejudices to guide, can only be for evil, resulting in a wrong verdict and an unjust judgment. Hence the Lord's warning word against that spirit of rash and ready judging of that which may be wholly hearsay, the work of the gossiper, the tittle-tattle of the evil tongue, or the venom of the accuser, who first desires to find evil in his rival, and then proceeds to discover and charge him with it. And by such devilish methods the innocent are misrepresented and too often suffer. Hence the need for full information (Deut. xix. 15, 18; Matt. xviii. 16), patient investigation (Deut. xvii. 4), unbiassed examination of evidence, referring everything to God (Prov. iii. 6), leaving room for Him to bring to light that what may be hidden to man, and always remembering that the best and wisest of men are liable to "be mistaken." Little wonder then that the "Protector" so warned the "fathers and brethren" of the Scottish Church.

True Leaders and Rulers,

IN THE ASSEMBLY OF GOD.

IT is not infrequent that men assume to themselves places as leaders—or overseers—in God's assembly, who have not the qualifications of Israel's leaders, as quoted from Exod. xviii. 21; Deut. i. 15. (Read the full description in 1 Tim. iii. 1-7.) Ability to make money, or push oneself forward in the world, does not imply ability to lead the people of God in the ways of the Lord. It may often mean the very opposite—especially if the heart is manifestly engrossed with such things. Alas, greediness for gain has ruined many a man, leading sometimes to the bankruptcy court, to the shame and confusion of the people of God, and so blighting their testimony.

Men who "fear God" are a great boon to, and greatly to be desired in any assembly of God. The world may not like their "religion," but they realise the consistency of their course in the fear of God that causes them to "hate evil," and "depart" from it (Prov. viii. 13 and xvi. 6) is also "clean" (Psa. xix 9). So that they in private and public life have the record of being "clean" men. Some men are always finding reasons for disciplining others who do not please them or agree with them but godly men are ever disciplining themselves, before God, and thus as true shepherds can lead the flock into the pastures green. Oh, to abide in "the fear of the Lord all the day long" (Prov. xxiii. 17). As one has said, "We cannot all be great, but we may all be clean!"

T. D. W. M.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

CALLS FROM CHRIST.

- "Hearken unto Me" (Mark vii. 14), for Life.
 "Come unto Me" (Matt. xi. 28), for Rest.
 "Believe also in Me" (John xiv. 1), for Peace.
 Life comes through hearing the Word (John v. 25).
 Rest is received in coming to Christ (Matt. xi. 28).
 Peace comes through believing in Christ (Rom. xv. 13).

CHRIST IS ALL.

- Appropriation of Christ (John i. 12), Salvation.
 Acceptance in Christ (Eph. i. 6), gives Peace.
 Assurance from Christ (John vii. 37), brings Liberty.

WHAT THE GOSPEL PROCLAIMS TO SINNERS.

- FORGIVENESS, through Christ (Acts xiii. 38).
 REMISSION, through His Name (Acts x. 43).
 PEACE, by Jesus Christ (Eph. ii. 17).
 LIBERTY, from Sin's Dominion (Luke iv. 18).

CONCISE BIBLE SUBJECTS FOR STUDY.

SIN, AND ITS RESULTS TO MAN.

- The Character of Sin (1 John iii. 4)—Lawlessness.
 The Pleasures of Sin (Heb. xi. 25)—Allure.
 The Deceitfulness of Sin (Heb. iii. 13)—Beguiles.
 The Result of Sin (James i. 15)—Death.

THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO SIN.

- In Him is no sin (1 John iii. 5)—By Nature.
 He knew no Sin (2 Cor. v. 21)—In Experience.
 He did no Sin (1 Pet. ii. 22)—In Practice.
 He was without Sin (Heb. iv. 15)—In Person.

THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST FOR SIN.

- He was manifested to take away sin (1 John iii. 5).
 His soul was made an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10).
 He once suffered for sins (1 Pet. iii. 16).
 He gave Himself for our sins (Gal. i. 4).
 He put away sin by His sacrifice (Heb. ix. 26).
 He died unto sin once (Rom. vi. 10).
 There is no more sacrifice for sins (Heb. v.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

It has been suggested by some of our elder brethren in the assembly here, that we give up our Sunday evening open-air meeting, which has been continued for some thirty-three years with much blessing to souls, and join in an "interdenomina-

tional" effort, in which all churches and missions take part, in one of the public parks. We know that some of the leaders in this joint effort are unsound in their doctrine, and that their manner of life is far from what a Christian's ought to be. But the thing is popular, and there are many go to hear. Some in the assembly are opposed to co-operation on these lines, and others do not consider it right to close a door which God manifestly opened for His Gospel, and has abundantly blessed. We younger ones are perplexed, and would greatly value simple help from the Word in our difficulty.

It is no part of our ministry in these pages to encourage insubjection to elder brethren by those who are younger in years. The injunction in 1 Pet. v. 5 on this matter is plain and clear. And so is the call to remembrance of and submission to those who rule and lead among the saints. Of those to whom such subjection is due it is said that they have "spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow" (Heb. xiii. 7). But if any should seek to lead others in paths which are not found in the "the Word of God," but contrary to it, or into associations out from which that Word of God has already brought them, such leaders have no claim to be obeyed, or to have the example they set followed, seeing it is not in "faith," but rather of faithlessness to their avowed principles. For what need had they for leaving the one denomination or church they were in, if they can unite with others like it for a passing occasion, and close down their testimony in order to manifest their broad-mindedness, and manifest what is called their "unity" with what they formerly regarded as something to be separated from. There is great inconsistency somewhere. Either they were wrong in coming out from sectarianism at first, or they must be wrong in going back to it now. If it were contrary to the Word of God to be associated with one sect in its unscriptural position and practices, how can it be according to the Word to go into association with six or eight? Of course, they will tell you that this amalgamation is only on a passing occasion and for a special purpose. And that they have no thought of permanently giving up their "principles," or ceasing to carry on their "testimony" as hitherto. We can only say that "principles" which can be so conveniently laid aside, and a "testimony" whose banner may be lowered at so little cost, are scarcely worth the space they occupy. And as may be seen in looking around where such lines have been and are being followed, it does not take long

for such accommodating folks to drift back to the sect, out from which they—or their progenitors—professed to have been brought in obedience to the call of God through His Word. The word given to—and then through Jeremiah long ago—is in season and to the point in such a case surely, "Let them return unto thee, but return not thou to them" (Jer. xv. 19). If God has led you out from religious systems, where there is no place for His truth, He will not lead you back to them as co-workers, nor will you desert the work He has placed in your hands in order to manifest a "unity" which has no existence in fact, but immediately melts away when the occasion passes.

Answers to Correspondents

J. M.—The godly way to deal with such a matter as you name—which is purely of a personal character as distinguished from a case for an assembly to deal with—is to get the brother with whom the trouble is, alone, and in a gracious and brotherly spirit point out to him wherein you consider he is at fault in keeping the company he does, and engaging in the pastimes you consider not to be in keeping with his Christian position and testimony. In most cases such godly and faithful dealing will find an answer in the brother's conscience, and cause him to consider his ways. If otherwise, it will bring out what his true condition of soul is, and probably reveal what is as yet unknown, of his departure from God in other ways. But go direct, and as from God, with the object of restoration—not to expose, reprove, and irritate him. It is little use going, after telling this, that, and the other what you know and what you mean to do.

W. G., LANARKSHIRE.—A "hive off," to form a new assembly, in some convenient place, is a good thing if necessity require it, and if there are those amongst the outgoing company well taught in the Word, able to help and qualified by experience to guide and rule. But if those who are most eager for such a movement are malcontents and troublers, who have manifested no grace or gift such as are needed in guides of an assembly, it would be hazardous to begin a new assembly under such leadership, and almost certain to end in failure. While it is a sign of spiritual health and vigour to find a place "too strait" for the development of spiritual energies and expansion in evangelistic work, with plenty of scope and need in other spheres, it should be remembered that a new assembly requires

special and spiritual care, and more of it than many are accustomed to give. Hence the need for waiting upon God for oneness of mind, having the fellowship of those who are to be left in the whole matter.

PRESBYTER.—Oversight is to be exercised by those whom God has called to and fitted for it in the local assembly, not beyond it. One can only "take care of" (1 Tim. iii. 5) those he knows, and is "among" (1 Pet. v. 1). There are no "archbishops" spoken of in the Word. Nor do we read of any "council" of elders or overseers who meet to make rules and arbitrate in cases of dispute and discipline. All these proceed from the spirit of clerisy. It will not do to claim Acts xv. 6 as authority for such courts and councils, unless those who assemble are "apostles" as well as elders, able to say concerning their findings and deliverances—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (ver. 28). If any claim this authority, you are right in refusing it, and in regarding all tinged by it as pure ecclesiastical assumption and clerisy, which thing the Lord says "I hate" (Rev. ii. 6, 15).

Practical Points for Assembly Leaders.

Individual Responsibility is the name generally given to acts performed by one apart from the fellowship of others, who seek to care for the saints and guide in an assembly. It is an unlovely and generally a disquieting line to take, never productive of any good, often of much suspicion, and evil. Seldom is it necessary to act so quickly or decide in any course so urgently, as prevents consultation with at least some of those who are known as "wise in counsel" and "prudent in matters" in assembly affairs, and who are equally interested in its welfare. Nothing can be lost in having help and fellowship in all such matters, while much may be spared of suspicion, distrust, and too often of party feud in acting unconsciously and precipitantly in things concerning which no such haste is required. An aged servant of Christ was wont to say, "Never do anything that may endanger the peace of the assembly."

Declension in spiritual life and testimony in an assembly of believers, is not always or generally manifested in a lack of outward energies. Very often these are more abundant than in others more spiritual. It may be felt in the poverty and formality of their assemblings, the lack of the Spirit's guidance in the worship, the barrenness of the

ministry, of which there is great excess in quantity, too often stale and out of season, filling up time, but of no real help in leading out the hearts of the gathered saints Godward in worship, Christward in remembrance, which is the chief object in the church's assembly on the first day of the week. When worship is cold, dull, intermittent, there is a low spiritual condition, analagous to the cold shiver that precedes some dire disease in the human frame. Where such a condition exists, it is no use drumming Christians up "to work." The remedy lies in a call to repentance, and a personal searching of hearts and ways before the Lord (Rev. ii. 2-5).

Letters to the Editor.

On Subjects of Common Interest to All.

1.—Happy Work for Aged Saints.

"In our assembly here, there are quite a few precious saints, who, in the years of their activity, did much to help on in various ways the work of the Lord among us. No longer able to share in such active service, some whose hearts retain their early warmth, and who know what an assembly needs, invite young believers to their homes, using the time in communicating to them what they have learned of the truth of God from the Word, giving them chapters from their early experiences of Christian life, and how they were brought outside the camp to gather simply in the Lord's Name. Such help is of great value, and might be very much more extended, if brethren and sisters of long experience would seek to do something along the same lines as our beloved aged fellow-saints here. It is a perfectly Scriptural form of ministry, as we learn from Acts xviii. 26."

2.—Leading Out our Young Men in Service.

"In the assembly here, we have some ten to twelve bright Christian lads and young men. Their confession of Christ is clear and decided. Their walk and conduct is irreproachable. They are earnest and diligent in giving tracts, and seeking to bring others to hear the Gospel. Several of them have taken part in our prayer meetings. But none, so far, has opened his mouth in testimony, either outdoors or in the hall. I believe some are well able and have the matter to give, with a measure of ability to give it. But they do not; indeed, have no opportunity, so far as our usual Sunday evening Gospel meetings are concerned. The preachers for this are always fixed and inti-

ated beforehand, frequently 'booked' months ahead. So these promising lads fill the seats and practically have no opportunity to 'testify,' so far as our meetings are concerned. What is the result? Just this, they will be 'silent members' all their days, or go out in other spheres to find scope for their gifts. But in either case their help is virtually lost to the assembly, which is a loss indeed, and surely calls for investigation and consideration, whether we are not drifting from the pattern of the Word of God in this matter, approximating to all that we see of the world's religious ways around us. In earlier times, when some of us were seeking in much feebleness to witness for the Master, we were taken by the hand and encouraged to take part with elder brethren in such preaching as we were able to share. But there is practically none of this now, at anyrate in large halls, where the 'monthly minister' system is in practice, and no place found for the younger men."

[NOTE.—Our brother's complaint is, alas! not an isolated one. Our practice has been to encourage godly young men, with a growing measure of gift and ability to use it to begin kitchen meetings, or take an empty shop in some needy part and begin in a modest way according to their measure. The assembly in which they are encouraged in such work will reap the benefit.—ED.]

3.—The Best of all our Blessings.

"Our brother M——, who has recently gone to be with the Lord, told me the last time we met, that he received many invitations to go to missions, chapels, and such like places to preach, but did not go, even in cases where he thought he might without compromise, 'simply,' said he, 'because by going I might stumble young believers who might thereby be emboldened to follow my example, and be found where I do not believe God would have them be. And not only so, but I found that my going to such places was regarded by some of my brethren, who seek with me to care for the flock, as a course they could not approve of, which had the tendency—rightly or otherwise—to mar our hearty fellowship in the work of the Lord. And who am I that I should allow anything to mar or hinder that which is the best of all our blessings—one heart and one soul in the service of the Lord.' I cannot forget that word, so I pass it on to fellow-labourers everywhere." It has a principle in it worthy of the consideration of us all, and an example which we would do well to follow.

An Earth-Rejected Christ :

AND HIS PEOPLE'S PATH AND TESTIMONY.

IT was foretold by the prophet Isaiah, long years before the coming of Christ, that when men saw Him in lowly form and grace, they would find nothing in Him that would cause them to "desire" Him, but that He would be "despised and rejected of men" (Isa. liii. 3). "Despised," He was, because of His lowly form and lack of that "majesty" which is held in honour among men, and "rejected" because He stood apart from the ways of men, neither receiving their proffered honours (John vi. 15), nor acting as arbitrator in their personal (Luke xii. 13-14) or national disputes; but ever witnessing for God and His Truth (John viii. 40; xvi. 37). And because of His faithful testimony, which exposed the sin of man, and brought the claims of God to bear on the conscience, the Son of God was "rejected of men." This was not by some, but by all classes and conditions of men. Around His Cross priests, scribes, and soldiers stood mocking (Matt. xxviii.), rulers and people deriding (Luke xxiii. 35). And as Acts iv. 27 informs us, in the reckoning of God and heaven, whether in or absent from the last great tragedy of Calvary, "Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and people of Israel," are held to have been "gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ" on that day, taking sides with the powers of hell, in the murder of the Lord of Glory. Nor is this all. For after His resurrection from the dead—the seal of God on His witness and His work—and His ascension

to heaven to sit on the right hand of God, His rejecters sent the insulting message after Him—as seen in the parable of the nobleman (Luke xix. 14)—"We will not have this Man to reign over us," which decision, the records of the rejection of Christ's ambassadors and their message surely confirm. And the world is the same Christ-rejecting world still. It has not changed its attitude toward the Christ of God one whit. True, that part of it called "Christendom," has assumed His Name, and is now called "The Christian World." It professes what it calls the "religion of Christ," but it has little place for the despised Nazarene, whom God has made "Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). And this is the world in which the redeemed of the Lord now are. It is here, in the midst of those who despise and reject their Lord and Lover, that they are called to live their daily lives, and bear their daily witness to His truth. Need they wonder, if they meet the same hatred as their heavenly Lord and Master met? They need not, for He told them they would (John xv. 18, 19). If they do not, the change must be in them. Surely the fine gold has become dim, in most who bear the great Redeemer's Name. Compromise has been at work. The clear-ring testimony to the world of its sin and coming doom, has been muffled. The clean-cut path of separation, marked out in the Book of God for the followers of the earth-rejected Christ, has been made broader, and a Christianity, to which the world can give its countenance and the devil has patronage, has come to be popular. But what does God think of it?

Redemption.

Col. i. 14; Eph. i. 14; Rom. viii. 21-24.
 NOTES OF A BIBLE READING. BY J. G. BELLETT.

THESE Scriptures bring before us the subject of Redemption in a threefold character. They present the Lord Jesus as the Redeemer, in two aspects. He is a Redeemer, first by *Purchase*, then by *Power*. His redemptive work is a purchase by His blood—the blood of His Cross (Col. i. 20). But it is more than this: it is a rescue from bondage by the arm of His power. So the redeemed are a *Ransomed* and a *Rescued* people. Their like has not been in the creation of God. For neither angels in their dignity, nor Adam in his innocency, stood in this high place. It belongs to sinners saved by grace alone. And creation, which by the fall of its first head and ruler became subject to bondage, is the subject of redemption as surely as man who ruined it. It is already purchased by blood, and in due season it will be rescued by power. This gives it the title of “the purchased possession,” which waits for the hour of deliverance at the hand of Him who bought it, and will yet deliver it from the power of that usurper who is called its “prince” (John xiv. 30), and now rules it.

The record of the purchase, which the Lord Jesus has made by ransom, is given in the Gospels (Matt. xx. 28). The present result thereof, in a redeemed and already liberated people, is shown in the Epistles (see Eph. i. 6; 1 Pet. i. 19), while the final redemption of the body (Eph. iv. 30), and of the inheritance, is yet to come (Rom. viii. 20-23)—the former, at the

Lord's coming to the air (1 Cor. xv. 52-56), and the latter as described in the Apocalypse (chaps. 1.-19.). There, the Lord Jesus is seen, not simply as “the Lamb of God,” in which character He is presented in the Gospels (John i. 27), but also as “Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (Rev. v. 5, 6), with the title deeds of the inheritance as the “purchased possession” in His hand, and now seen as the Avenger and Deliverer, effecting its rescue from the usurper by judgment. Thus the wondrous story of Redemption, of which God had given His pledges and foreshadowings in former days, in ordinances such as the jubilee (Lev. xxv.), and in histories as that of Boaz (Ruth, chap. iv.) and Jeremiah (Jer., chap. xxxii.), passes before us, and its virtues are sealed to us by the blood of the Cross. And this Redemption of our God, was no afterthought of His. It was His purpose from the beginning, and the glory of all His works. Creation displayed the resources of His wisdom, and His might, and the morning stars “sang together” when earth's foundations were laid. But Redemption excels, for it has drawn forth the still richer resources of God's love and grace, proclaiming greater triumphs of His power and awaking louder songs to the praise of Him, whose Redemption honours are to be celebrated in the courts of heaven for ever, in the glowing words—“Thou art worthy, for Thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy Blood” (Rev. v. 9). And this song of Redemption is a “Conqueror's Song,” for it proclaims a *rescue* from an enemy's power, as surely as it announces a *ransom* paid for righteous freedom.

The Unjust Steward :

PART III.—W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE practical application of the truth, is given in our Lord's advice to His servants as stewards, "And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness ; that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles" (ver. 10, R.V.). What does this mean? The question has often been asked. It is really the application of this parable, to the stewardship of the servants of God. *The unjust steward was making friends for himself by means of what belonged to another, so that those friends would receive him into their homes, and in this he was wiser than most of the children of light.*

If by the use of the money entrusted to us, the Gospel of Christ has been proclaimed by some servant of Christ in a region where it otherwise might not have been proclaimed, and if souls are led to Christ through that, what would be the feelings of those converts towards the one who was thus instrumental in sending the Gospel there? If they knew this, and met the person, who had enabled the evangelist to carry the good news to them, they would surely greet that one with some such words as, "Oh, I feel so grateful to you for being the means in God's hand of sending the Gospel to us." One other example of a different kind. If by the use of what we possess, some dear child of God, who is suffering and in poverty, has had their life brightened and their load eased, did they but know who was

instrumental in thus bringing in a little sunshine into their lives, would they not henceforth respect and love the one whom God had used as His channel of blessing to them? And surely when in heaven they will know all, they will not be less grateful there, than they had been on earth.

But it may be urged, "This is not how we are to obtain a place in the eternal tabernacles (dwelling-places). Nothing in the verse says that that is how we obtain a place there. The only title is the *Blood of Christ*, and the only fitness is the *New Birth*." Quite true, but these dear ones can *Welcome* us there, and that they will do so, in fellowship with their Lord, seems clear from the teaching of this parable. What an incentive, then, this should become to the believer, to diligently use "the mammon of unrighteousness" with a view to the future. The steward in the parable was acting unjustly when he did that. But the steward of God is doing the thing which the Lord has enjoined on him, when he does it.

How common it is for a Christian to dole out a little of that which has been committed to him, and feel his conscience eased by doing so, instead of realizing that all that he has, belongs to the Lord Jesus, and that as His steward he is to be ready to use it as He appoints and requires. Many hold this "mammon," till they are about to pass to their home in heaven, and as they cannot take it with them, they leave it to those, who, perhaps, may squander it, or use it in the service of the devil, causing them to be more difficult

to reach with the Gospel than they might have been, had they been without such riches. Others may leave their money and property to be used in the work of the Lord. But these scarcely deserve any thanks, for if they had lived twice as long, then for twice as long God's work might have suffered, so far as the help of their means was concerned. It is surely more to the glory of God, that those who are entrusted with money, should be intelligently exercised as to fellowship with the work of the Lord in giving, during the time of that stewardship with which they have been entrusted in life; than to leave it to others to squander or apply it as they see fit, after they are gone, for then it will not only be a reward by and by, but a cause of present joy to see the Gospel of Christ speeding its way to those who have not heard it, and the work of the Lord spreading to places now sitting in the shadow of death.

This is true wisdom, yet little acted on as compared with what it ought to be. Men of the world keep their eye on the future, and use the present in view of it, for as the Lord here says, "The children of this world are in their generation, wiser than the children of light."

—○—

RAISING MONEY.—The plans, devices, and schemes of all kinds for raising money—many of them a disgrace to Christianity, and a dishonour to the cause of Him whom we call Master and Lord—all bear witness to the sad fact, that what is elsewhere known as the "almighty dollar" is as much an idol in the church, as it is in the world.—*Henry Groves.*

Three Divine Judgments :

AND HOW THEY ARE DISTINGUISHED.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS— BY ALPH. WILKES.

THE common notion of "a general judgment" of all mankind at "the last day," to determine who is to be saved and who condemned, has no foundation in the Word of God. All that is taught in Scripture is against it. God distinguishes alike both as to persons and time, in His judgment of mankind. To fail in "rightly dividing the Word of Truth," on a subject of so vast importance, is to miss the mind of God, and have the power of the truth lost to the soul.

Three main judgments are named and described in the New Testament. These are :—

1. *The Judgment Seat of Christ* for His own.
2. *The Living Nations* of the earth.
3. *The Wicked Dead* at the end of time.

The glorified saints, previously "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," will be afterwards manifested before "the Judgment-seat of Christ" (2 Cor. v. 10), in glorified bodies, to receive the Lord's verdict on their Christian lives and service here. None but believers will be there. This *Beema*, or Judgment-seat of Christ, takes precedence, and will happen—it may be immediately—after the removal and glorification of the saints in heaven, and whilst the Apocalyptic judgments are raging in the earth, during "the day of the Lord."

The Judgment of the Nations, as described in Matt. xxv.—and there only—designated in the headlines of some of our Bibles as "A description of the last

judgment," is not so. It is not to be identified either with the Judgment-seat of Christ which precedes it, nor with the Great White Throne which follows it, at least a thousand years later. The judgment of the sheep and goats in Matt. xxv. is the judgment of an earthly people, on earth. The one matter to be decided is, who of these nations is to be admitted to the millennial earth, and who is to be cast forth into "everlasting punishment." The Judge is Christ as "Son of Man," seated on "the throne of His glory," before His millennial reign begins, and almost immediately before His descent to Mount Olivet (Zech. xiv. 4).

- *The Great White Throne* (Rev. xx. 11) will be set after the millennial reign is over, and "the earth and the heaven have fled away." Whose who stand before it for judgment, are "the dead, small and great," who are to be judged "according to their works." There is not one word to indicate that any believer of this dispensation at least, will be there, for as the Lord Himself has told us, concerning all who on Him believe, they "shall not come into judgment" (John v. 24, R.V.).

There is nothing of resemblance, nothing common to those three judgments. The first, is in heaven, and of saints only. Its object is manifestation; its issue rewards. The second, is of nations; its sphere is on earth. The third, is in Eternity, after the heavens and earth have fled, and time ceases to be reckoned. The Lord as *Head* of His church and Master of His servants will judge and award His own at His Judgment-seat. As *King*, He will sever the sheep from the goats, both being men

in the flesh, still on earth. The members of the body of Christ are not the "sheep," as distinguished from the "goats." They are not in this judgment at all, but long before have been "glorified in heaven." Those "sheep," who enter the earthly sphere of Christ's kingdom, sit on the King's right hand in a place of honour, and their sphere is in a kingdom "prepared *from* the foundation of the world," whereas the heavenly saints were "chosen in Christ BEFORE the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 3), and sit with Christ in His own throne (Rev. iii. 21).

So we learn that the theory of "a general judgment at the end of time" has no place in Scripture. It confuses things that differ, obscures the Gospel and the blessings it brings, and makes it impossible to distinguish between the heavenly and earthly callings.

Right Spiritual Condition First.

WHERE there is no spiritual freshness in the soul, and little vital godliness in the life, it is next to useless to recify "points" in church order, or teach "doctrine" regarding prophetic and coming events. It has often been noticed that carnal and worldly Christians, seem to be able to "take in" any quantity of "teaching" on ecclesiastical and prophetic subjects, and "enjoy" them, when sound and seasonable ministry of God's Word, dealing with a right condition of soul toward God and a straight and righteous life among men, would have little in it they would "appreciate." A right Spiritual condition is the first and chief thing needed.

Returned Jews in Palestine.

THEIR EXPERIENCES AND TESTING THERE.

THOSE Jews who return to the land of their fathers, seem for a brief period to live in peace and prosperity there, under the protection of the revived Roman Empire, with whose head, or Kaiser, "the many" (Dan. ix. 27) enter on a covenant for seven years, owing and promising allegiance to him, in return for which he evidently promises them liberty to continue their "religion" in whatever form they wish, in their rebuilt temple and restored ritual in Jerusalem. But at the end of three and a half years, this Lawless One, in whom all wickedness is personified, "the Man of Sin," in whom all deceptions culminate, the devil's chief representative on earth, whose throne and authority (Rev. xiii. 4-6), he for a season holds and uses in defiance of God and in blasphemy of His Christ, comes out in his true character. For this all-powerful "King of Price," claims that all worship and allegiance due to God alone, shall be his, and demands that his image is to be set up "in," or "on" the temple, in some prominent place, where all may see it, to be worshipped by all. Thus this last Gentile monarch repeats, only in yet more devilish form, that which Nebuchadnezzar, the first Gentile king, did, when he raised his golden image on the plain of Shinar, demanding universal worship, or if that were denied, the fiery furnace. It is when this idol—this "abomination of desolation," as the Lord names it (Matt. xxiv. 15)—is set up, and "signs and wonders" wrought by Satan's power to

induce the Jews to own the Antichrist as their Messiah, and worship him as their god, or die by the sword, that a cleavage is seen among these dwellers in Palestine. Not that any of them are yet really converted to God, or ready to own their guilt in the murder of their true Messiah. But evidently awakened by the Spirit of God who, while no longer here in the church on earth indwelling, or in the world restraining evil and going forth in grace with the Gospel, as in 1 Pet. i. 12, will be yet again be working among the Jewish people (Joel ii. 28-32, with Acts ii. 16-21), while true witnesses (Rev. vi. 3; Mal. iv. 5), are raised up by God to testify among them His claims, to be feared and worshipped (Rev. xiv. 6). This will bring to them the supreme test, whether they will own God as their God, and await His delivering power, or bow to the Antichrist, and worship the devil, who is then owned and worshipped in all the earth (Rev. xiii. 4). Terrible climax this, to the flattery and deification already given to men, and to the honours paid to those who blaspheme God and despise His Christ! The prayers, experiences, and hopes of this "remnant" of Jewish people in Palestine, are detailed in many of the Psalms (see especially Psa. x., xii., xxiv., lxiv., with Mal. iv. 15, 16). Their calls for vengeance on their oppressors (Psa. lv. 15; lviii. 6-10), their uncertainty as to forgiveness and acceptance with God (Psa. lxxix. 8; xxv. 18), and their hopes of blessing on the earth, all mark this Jewish remnant of the future, who appear as God's only witnesses on earth after the saints of the present heavenly calling have

been removed to heaven, as a distinct people, whose experiences and hopes are different from those of the church, and the saints of this age of grace. Throughout all this period of unequalled testing and trial, in which God's "furnace in Jerusalem" (Isa. xxxi. 9) shall melt like silver, to purge away the dross of this God-fearing remnant of the Jewish people (Ezek. xxii. 18-20), there will not be found one Christian of the heavenly calling. All of these will be with Christ in glory. All who refuse to bow to this last and most devilish form of idolatry are slain. In Rev. vi. 9-11, these are seen, as in heaven, resting until others of their brethren on earth are killed, and join them, the meanwhile praying for vengeance of their persecutors. Others flee, as the Lord had told them (Matt. xxix. 14) from Jerusalem, in and around which the fires of persecution burn hottest, to seek refuge in "the mountains." This is what Scripture calls "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. xxx. 7), and the Lord designates "tribulation" (Matt. xxiv. 21), such as never has been, nor will again be on earth. Its result to the Jews in Palestine will be, that two-thirds will perish (Zech. qiv. 17), and one-third will pass through the fires (Isa. viii. RV) converted and purified (Dan. xii. 1-10) to form the population of Jerusalem, and the nucleus of Messiah's earthly kingdom.

"The Beast"—that is the last great Emperor of the Roman earth—with his "prophet," will have gathered the whole chivalry of Europe to Palestine, around Jerusalem to make their last terrible onslaught on it, and to exterminate all who

own the God of heaven as their God. Then everything seems to be against the feeble remnant, and all power on the side of their adversaries. Then the powers of hell have once again, as at Calvary, combined (Psa. ii. 2, with Acts iv. 25-27) in all their force and rage against the Lord. But the heavens are to be no longer silent. The hour of Divine patience has come to an end. That "great and terrible day of the Lord" has come. In a moment, the heavens above are cleft asunder, and the conquering Christ, accompanied by all His saints—the armies of heaven—descends, and their foes, mighty and many as they are, perish in a moment. The two great leaders are caught alive, and hurled into the lake of fire, its first tenants. Jerusalem is delivered, and the Jews who are spared, looking on their great Deliverer, recognise in Him the Nazarene, whom they rejected and crucified, and they mourn. Such a day Jerusalem has never seen! Such sights Palestine has never witnessed! Purged by judgment, its people converted, Palestine becomes "a delightful land," "the glory of all lands," with the throne of the Lord in Jerusalem (Jer. iii. 17), and the city rebuilt in splendour, becomes "the joy of the whole earth."

The ten tribes, will be dealt with by God *before* they return to the land, "in the wilderness" (Hos. ii. 14). Cleansed from sin, and idolatry (Ezek. xxxvi. 24-27), quickened into new life, born and indwelt of the Spirit (Ezek. xxxvii. 11-14), purged from their unbeliefs (Ezek. xx. 30), God will bring them to their land, to be joined with Judah and Benjamin there.

The Thoughts of God :

BY A. LAWES, NORTHAMPTON.

THE fortieth Psalm very beautifully expresses the delight that God has in Christ and His people. The figure employed by the Psalmist here, of "reckoning," or numbering, shows the task of counting these thoughts of God to be a never ending one, "They are more in number than the sand," unfathomable in their depth, exhaustless in their fulness. Their sum is so great as to forbid analysis or numeration. He so treasured and delighted in them as to exclaim with impassioned feeling, "How precious are Thy thoughts unto me, O God!" God's thoughts should entwine themselves into the very being of every true believer. They are not mere glances of the mind, but careful and attentive surveys, having the heart directed to them as an object. In these thoughts of God is intention, desire, purpose. They involve the pre-determination and prearrangement of every circumstance and step in the life of the saints. Electing grace, redeeming love, divine power, guidance, preservation, glory. Yea, "all our thoughts" are the result of these "thoughts of God" respecting us. They are a Father's thoughts, who loves, pities, cares for, and supplies all the need of His people. The wealth of worlds could not purchase such treasures, as "these thoughts of God" unfold to His own. Their number can neither be reckoned nor spoken of.

2. Of the Lord Jesus in His death it is said, "He was reckoned among the trans-

gressors" (Luke xxii. 37). This brings before us the incomparable One in whom all God's thoughts centre, and around whom all those thoughts revolve. Our souls shrink with horror as we think of the despicable place, the awful company, in which the holy, harmless, undefiled One was placed by men. Even this was in harmony with the thoughts and purpose of God (Acts iv. 27-28), and the "Scriptures must be fulfilled." Thank God, He could never become a transgressor, but "He was wounded for our transgressions," and when pouring out His soul unto death, and bearing sin's penalty, He made intercession for the transgressors, crying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

3. Another reckoning in Rom. vi. 11, is essential for the maintenance of that standard of holiness to which we are called, "Likewise *reckon* ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

This is a positive command, therefore obligatory, to reckon ourselves to be what God regards us. We come to be dead, by the interposition of a Substitute who died for us. Alive unto God is in necessary antithesis to "dead unto sin." It is important to maintain a full consciousness of union with Christ, and an abiding assurance of the fruits and consequences of that union, faith's participation in all that Christ is, all that He has done, all that He ever will do. Union with Him gives us benefit in His death and share in His life. The "likewise" joins Him and His together. They are therefore to conclude, think, esteem themselves as

being in that state. The claims of the old nature are to be rejected, obedience to its desires refused. A change in our personal relation to it, alters all. Henceforth there is to be no liking for, no pursuit of, no encouragement to its sinful propensities; but as those who have been crucified with Christ, now to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

4. In Romans viii. 18, the Apostle institutes a comparison between present suffering and future bliss, and versant himself in the school of suffering, is eminently qualified to speak on such a subject. Signally honoured as he was by his Lord, whom he so faithfully served and followed, he had great burdens to bear. Oft tried and tested by fierce persecutions for Christ's sake, yet with a master hand he strikes the balance between the sufferings of earth and the felicity of heaven. This was no rash or sudden determination, but the product of deliberate consideration and very careful reckoning. He had reasoned the case within himself; he knew by experience what such sufferings for Christ were (2 Cor. xi. 23-28). He knew too what the glory of heaven is (2 Cor. xii. 3-4), and, like Moses, he had respect to the recompence of reward (Heb. xi. 26). A truly sanctified reckoning his. If only the people of God emulated the Apostle, the voice of complaint would be less heard, and patience have her perfect work. There would be "rejoicing in tribulation," tears would be transmuted into songs, and the pathway lighted up with glory. Such "reckoning" lifts above the portals of

earth's sadness, into sweet repose in the hope of glory soon to be revealed.

5. The parable in Matt. xxv. 24-30, treats of Divine sovereignty and the activities of grace, and should be prayerfully pondered by all the saints of God. The Master travelling to a far country makes a wise distribution of His gifts, bestowing them according to the several abilities of His servants, proportionately committing them to be used and accounted for when He returns. "Then the Lord of those servants cometh and *reckoneth* with them." Two out of the three, proved diligent and faithful, making returns in proportion, thus obeying and honouring their master who commands and rewards. The motive of service should be love to Christ. The incentive to faithful stewardship, the Master's "well done." The third, though taking the place of a servant, made no attempt to turn to good account what was entrusted to him, and has to make a miserable apology and excuse for his slothful conduct. He neither knew his master, nor trusted him. His reasoning is absurd, his conviction and condemnation just, his loss irreparable.

With such solemn lessons before them, let all true servants of the Master seek to place a right estimate upon the gifts bestowed upon them, that in view of the reckoning day, may they fulfil the responsibilities of stewardship, to the glory of our absent, but soon coming, Lord, who will recognise all that has been done for Him and give it His just reward. Men may have spurned their service and reckoned it worthless, but the Lord knows all.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

"ONE THING."

- One thing befalleth all (Eccl. iii. 19)—Death.
 One thing thankful by all (Luke x. 42)—Salvation.
 One thing thou lackest (Mark x. 21)—Decision.
 One thing I know (John ix. 25)—Assurance.
 One thing I do (Phil. iii. 13)—Devotion.

MAN'S UNCLEANNESSE BEFORE GOD.

- Filthy Man (Job. xv. 16)—Sin in the Nature.
 Filthy Lives (Psa. xiv. 3)—Sin, in Practice.
 Filthy Garments (Zech. iii. 3)—Sin, in Manifestation.
 Filthy Rags (Isa. lxvi. 6)—Human Righteousness.
 Filthy Characters (Rev. xxi. 11)—Eternal Condition.

CLEANSSED AND CLEAN BEFORE GOD.

- Cleansed Sacrificially (Rev. i. 5)—By Christ's Blood.
 Cleansed Regeneratively (Tit. iii. 5)—By The Spirit's Work.
 Cleansed Actually (Acts x. 15)—By God's Act.
 Cleansed Practically (John xv. 3) (Eph. v. 26)—
 By Christ's Word.

CONCISE STUDIES OF BIBLE THEMES.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

- A Living Hope (1 Pet. i. 3).
 A Happy Hope (Tit. ii. 13).
 A Saving Hope (Rom. viii. 24).
 A Purifying Hope (1 John iii. 2).

GOD AND HIS PEOPLE.

- A Brief Study in Ephesians, Chapter 1.
 What God purposed for His People (ver. 3).
 How God Redeemed His People (ver. 7).
 How God Possesses His People (ver. 13).

THE CALLING OF THE SAVED.

- Called by God's Grace (Gal. i. 15)—Source.
 Called by the Gospel (2 Thess. i. 14)—Means.
 Call you to His Kingdom (1 Thess. ii. 12)—Place.
 Called to His Eternal Glory (1 Pet. v. 10)—Goal.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

The Leading of the Spirit in the Worship of God.

Am I right in expecting a special leading of the Spirit, when we assemble as on the Lord's Day morning for united worship, and to shew forth the Lord's death, other than that which, as "sons of God," it is our privilege always to enjoy (Rom. viii. 14; Gal. v. 17)?

The words of 1 Cor. xi. 23, "When ye come together in the church"—or in assembly—distinguish between that which is common to all who are Christ's and of His body the church (Col. i. 18), always and everywhere, and when they, or such of them as hear and heed "the commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 27, 28, R.V.), "are gathered together" (Acts xx. 7, R.V.), as God's assembly, over which the living Lord presides, and in which the Spirit leads and divides to each one "severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11, R.V.). This gathering in assembly, is different from a meeting convened by a servant, or servants of the Lord, as in Acts xiv. 27—where Paul and Barnabas "gathered the church together" to hear THEM speak, which assembling would be, as we say, "THEIR meeting and under THEIR control," as any meeting for ministry of the Word, or to hear a report of the Lord's work from a visiting missionary is, in our own time. But when "the hour is come," that God's assembly as such is gathered together, there is no one required or allowed to preside, because the Lord Himself, in a manner not elsewhere known, is present "in the midst" (Matt. xviii. 20). And the Spirit of God, as indwelling His habitation (Eph. ii. 22), is there to draw forth worship from the hearts of the gathered saints, through the lips of whom He knows—under the guidance of the Spirit—will express the assembly's praise, thanksgiving, and adoration, in utterances to which all in fellowship with God, will be able to add their "Amen." In this unique assembling, there can be no prearrangement, and ought to be no preparation—in the sense of any having a selected hymn, or a prepared speech, note, or even a chosen portion of the Word upon which the soul may have privately meditated and spiritually fed—for none CAN know how the Spirit may guide, until the assembly has been gathered and His leading been actually experienced. In this aspect there is a special leading of the Spirit, which the spiritual will discern and seek to own, whether it be in silence or in utterance. Where, through carnality of heart, or insubjection of will, this gracious and holy guidance is not owned, but each considers he has the so-called "liberty" to do and say what he pleases, or to break in on silent pauses by "saying something" to fill the gap, or "give out" something he has prepared and determined to deliver himself on that occasion, it is needless to expect much of the Spirit's guidance, or to experience that holy concord which at times the heart enjoys, but which is so easily marred by the frowardness of the flesh

in some and its sluggishness in others. Lack of simple, Scriptural teaching on such subjects, may account for little of the Spirit's leading in some instances, but it is much to be feared, that lack of spirituality, and right condition of soul to discern "the things of the Spirit," is the greater hindrance to its enjoyment in most assemblings of the saints.

Answers to Correspondents.

BETA.—To live "looking for that blessed Hope" (Tit. ii. 13)—which was the attitude of the early Christians—precludes the theory of your correspondent, but certain "signs" must precede the personal return of the Lord. "Signs and wonders" there will be (Acts ii. 19) before the Lord's return to earth, but none to herald His descent to "the air" to call for and receive unto Himself His sleeping and waking saints.

W. B. L., SOUTHAMPTON.—You cannot expect God to order and bless your business life, if you are in partnership with an unregenerate man. But you can confess your disobedience to God's Word in entering on such a "yoke," and call on the Lord to make a way of "escape" from it, legally and honourably. And He is "very pitiful" (Jas. v. 11), now, as in the day of Jehoshaphat's unequal yoke with Ahab and his deliverance from it (see 2 Chron. xviii. 31).

A. M'K., CUMB.—The expression in current use, of "remembering the Lord's death," is not a Scriptural one, although the right thing may be meant. The Lord's own word is, "This do in remembrance of Me." And the apostle's comment on this is, "Ye do shew (proclaim) the Lord's death till He come." We cannot improve on the terms used in the Word, so it is always best to stick to them.

H. B., ONTARIO.—You are perfectly right, as an assembly of God's people, in refusing to receive the teaching of any man who has openly avowed his rejection of the fundamental truth of the baptism of believers by immersion, as taught in the Word of God. And it is no credit to such, but rather a disgrace, if they consent to a compromise in order to be accepted as teachers, that although they "hold household baptism," they will not teach it. If in God's Book, why not teach it, and let all have the benefits it is said to confer? If not of God, but a theory spun from man's fertile brain, why hold it? God's truth cannot be trifled with in

this fashion, nor ought any countenance be given to those who would divide it into "essential" and "non-essential" portions. The writer of Psa. cxix. 128, had a better way, when he wrote, "I esteem ALL Thy precepts concerning ALL things to be right, and I HATE every false way." What are we, that we should bargain and huckster in the things of God, and keep back any part of it, in order to accommodate preconceived opinions, or gain entrance to places where "the whole counsel of God" plainly set forth, would not be tolerated?

G. S., Co. DOWN.—If one has fled from discipline in the assembly where he was, or fallen out in some personal matter with his brethren, it would be wrong for another assembly to receive him, without first making inquiry as to the cause of his change, and conferring with those taking oversight in the assembly which he has left. Godly order, not to say common Christian courtesy, surely demands such a course.

Letters to the Editor.

1.—Helping Young Believers by Seasonable Ministry.

"In the Lord's mercy, there has been a little reviving among us in these parts, during the past six months, and a goodly number converted by means of the Gospel preached. Of these a few have been added to the assemblies, and seem to manifest true interest in the things of God. But we feel there is a lack of simple, fresh, and seasonable ministry suited to the need of such. We have visits of ministering brethren occasionally, but the greater part of their subjects are too far 'advanced' to meet the need of these young believers. They are not what some of us got when we were young in spiritual life, and what healthy 'babes' require to strengthen their spiritual life and give light on their heavenward path. What young believers require is, sound Scriptural teaching on their place and portion in Christ: how to nourish the new life, and walk with God; separation from the world: definite teaching as to what this involves, practically applied to matters of daily life; with exhortation and warning as to companions and associations that help or hurt the soul. Prophetic subjects and such like, are less required, yet get far more attention. When God gives us spiritual babes to feed and care for, it is surely our first responsibility to feed them with the 'milk of the Word' (1 Pet. ii. 2), and 'train them up in the way they should go' (Prov. xxii. 6).

This responsibility lies primarily on those who take the place of guides in the assemblies, who should not only do what they can personally, but after the pattern of Barnabas in Acts xi. 25, 26, bring those whom they know to be well fitted for such work, to give their help in this most ministry." G. W. P.

2.—Conferences and Meetings for Ministry.

"Conferences—as they are usually named, although there is really nothing in their character to warrant this designation—are not what they used to be, either in character or results. This may be partly at least, because they have changed their character since I first knew them. They were then seasons of much spiritual freshness, and many came long distances to share their refreshing ministry, and go back to their homes to talk for many days of the truths they had heard. The speakers in those days were mostly aged and experienced men of God, who knew their Bibles, and could speak from experience of the things of the Lord. Many of them had learned the truths of separation from the world, gathering in the Lord's Name, and walking with fellow-believers in the ways of the Lord, at much personal cost, and could speak of them with definiteness and decision, yet ever in grace. By means of this ministry the assemblies were confirmed in the faith, and they "multiplied greatly." Of course, there were other ministries, but these annual or half-yearly meetings held in convenient places, to which ministering brethren came from far and near, as the Lord guided them, were seasons of special help in the things of God. Now, for most part such ministry is wanting in such Conferences and many truths for which we stand, and seek to give effect to in practice, are little heard in general ministry. And never in interdenominational circles. The lines generally followed and evidently reckoned to be better are, to invite a certain number of popular preachers, some of them not at all separated from sectarian associations, who are called upon by one who occupies the place of 'chairman,' to 'now address the meeting,' which he has to do, whether he has a message from God to the present need of those gathered there or otherwise. And it is becoming notorious, that the same speakers, the same subjects, and the same lines of teaching go the round. Seldom is there anything said that would offend a parish clergyman or a dissenting parson. And there is just as little to help a seeking saint to know the ways of the Lord, and the path of separa-

tion for His own in these last days, and such truths of the Word which are our only authority for being where we are, outside the world's religious systems and for gathering as we do. Indeed, they could not be in many of the larger conferences, where the invited speakers are either in sectarian positions, or in close association with those who are. At the very last of these Conferences at which the writer was present, the chief speaker advised us to "go in" with all sectarian movements, and take part in them. Need it be wondered if young believers follow such a lead, or that numbers are found drifting back to the sects. Quite recently, a company near to where the writer resides, who has been on this downgrade line for years, inviting sectarian preachers, and mixing with all sectarian missions, while rigidly excluding all ministry that would bring the Word of God to bear on such inconsistencies, engaged one of like mind to act as their 'pastor,' announcing him to preach on the Lord's Day mornings, and have since openly declared themselves to be a 'Baptist Church.' If those who are heading in this direction want to reach the same destination, let them go. But I aver, they are not fit persons to teach or guide in assemblies. W. M.

3.—How I was Led On in the Truth.

"I was converted to God through the reading of God's Word, apart from any preaching or teaching of man. But I knew nothing other than that Christ died for sinners, that I was one, and that through His death I have life (John iii. 36). I got nothing to help me, in the church of which I was then a member. If our minister was really saved, he never said so, nor had he anything to give to such as were hungry for the Word of Life. I noticed in a Saturday evening paper that 'an address to Christians' would be given on the Sunday afternoon in the Trades Hall, and I thought to myself there might be something for me there. So I went. The speaker was a well known city manufacturer, whom I knew by sight, and his 'address' was on the words 'in Christ Jesus' (Rom. viii. 1). I had never heard the like before. The truth so simple, so sweet, so graciously spoken, fairly won my confidence, and rejoiced my soul. I continued to go each Sunday afternoon that winter, and others much in the same condition as myself went also. There are very many dear children of God just waiting for such ministry, and the men who can give it at a time when people are free to hear it, will never lack a congregation." J. F.

Christ, the Perfect Servant.

ALWAYS AT HAND, AND FIT FOR USE.

IN the glowing words of the prophet Isaiah (chap. xlix. 1-4)—who by the Spirit, spake of the Christ who was to come, as Peter tells us (1 Pet. i. 11; 2 Pet. i. 24)—here describes Him as the Servant of Jehovah, whose mouth was made like unto a “sharp sword” hid in the shadow of Jehovah’s hand, ready for His use, and as a “polished shaft in His quiver,” ever at hand, always fit to be used by Him in mercy or in judgment. This place of high honour belongs to the Lord Jesus, Jehovah’s perfect Servant, alone. He only of all the sons of men, God calls us to “Behold,” for His alone was a perfect service, as His was a faithful witness-bearing (Rev. i. 5), everywhere and always well pleasing to God. For in that service of His, He was always “upheld” by His God, and in Him and it whose it was, God ever had His delight. (Isa. xlii. 1).

This is wonderful. Men might and did slight His service. His kinsfolk might say He was “beside Himself” (Mark iv. 21), and His enemies attribute His works to Satanic power (ver. 22), but to God it was ever a “delight,” and all His doings were well-pleasing (Matt. iii. 17). So far as men could see, its present results were small indeed. According to man’s reckoning He had “laboured in vain,” and spent His strength “for nought,” yet we know from ten thousand witnesses that “whatsoever He did prospered” (Psa. i. 3), as a heaven filled with ransomed sinners—the fruits of His toil—will yet

gloriously proclaim to wondering worlds. Yes, Christ was the Perfect Servant, ever at hand and ever ready to be used by God, in the fulfilling of His purposes of grace and in the execution of His counsels of mercy among the sons of men. For He was always ready, always fit, as a “polished shaft,” ever hid in Jehovah’s quiver for His use. And He is the same ready Servant still. While there is a convicted sinner to be saved, and a needy saint to be supplied. the Christ of God, the glorified Son and Servant, is ever at God’s right hand, and ever available to be used by God in such ministry as His children and His Church require, all the way and all the days of their sojourn here. And as it is God’s delight to use Him, and His delight to be used in such service. So let it be our constant habit and the attitude of our souls, to look to Him, to receive from Him that which He well knows how best to bestow, and through what channels to allow it to reach us. For as Servant and Source of supply He delights to be so used, to meet all His people’s need. And this same perfect Servant is His people’s Exemplar, their Pattern to copy. If the believer yields himself up to God, and lays himself out in service for God, he must be found in the right place, “hid in the shadow of His hand,” and in the right condition, “hid like a polished shaft in His quiver,” always ready and always in condition fit for God to use. Be this the attitude and this the condition of all who seek and expect to be sent on God’s errands and used in His “honourable and glorious” (Psa. cxl. 3) work among the sons of men.

J. R.

The Shadow and the Substance

A DEAD RELIGION AND A LIVING CHRIST.

J. L. HARRIS.

TO a Hebrew of ancient time, the temple at Jerusalem, the sacrifice on the altar, and the priest in his consecrated garments, were all sacred institutions. They had come originally from God, and were held in veneration by all pious Israelites. The temple on Moriah was "the house of the Lord," the sacred shrine wherein He dwelt. The smoking sacrifice on the brazen altar in the court, foreshadowed Christ as the Lamb of God, the true Sacrifice, of which all the Levitical offerings were types. The priest, in his garments of glory and beauty, coming forth with uplifted hands to bless the congregated people who waited without for his appearing, must have been a solemn as it surely was an impressive sight to all who awaited his manifested presence, after atonement had been made in the sanctuary on the great atonement day, year after year. Let us suppose ourselves one of these Jews out of "every nation under heaven," who stood on the streets of Jerusalem listening to Peter's preaching on that Pentecost Day, of which Acts ii. informs us, and of those who received his testimony to the Son of God, crucified, raised, and glorified at God's right hand in heaven, confessing Him as the Son of God, and receiving Him as their Redeemer and Lord. What a change is at once wrought for and in this Hebrew of the Hebrews! Not only is he at peace with God through the blood of Christ's Cross (Col. i. 20). Not only does he now know

himself as one reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom. v. 10), as one brought nigh by His blood (Eph. ii. 13), one of the family and household of God (Eph. ii. 19), having access to Him as Father; but as one who, in virtue of the new relationships into which he by grace had been brought, he is one who has lost his standing in Israel, and become an exile and a stranger among his brethren "according to the flesh." He can no longer continue a worshipper under the old economy in which he had been brought up. He would henceforth cease to be one who went "with the multitude to keep holy day." If he went to the temple in Jerusalem at "the hour of prayer," it was to testify to Christ, and make known that salvation which is in His Name alone. To the orthodox Jew he was as one cut off from Israel, fit only to be put out from their synagogue, or put to death (John xvi. 1-2) as an apostate from the religion of his fathers. He was in fact and in blessed experience brought "nigh to God," set as a worshipper "within the veil" in the very presence of God, accepted in Christ, and as a purged worshipper. His sacrifices well pleasing to God, yet in the eyes of men an exile and a wanderer, without a temple, without a sacrifice, without a priest, with no visible shrine at which to worship, no altar with its smoking sacrifice, no mediating priest with his censer filled with incense ascending on his behalf, He had lost all these, by his conversion. as we say, but he had found them all in Christ. Of Him he could truly say, "We have an ALTAR" (Heb. xiii. 10); "We have a Great High Priest" (Heb. iv. 14)

—not indeed amid the shadows of an economy past and passing away, but in Christ Himself, the substance, and who abideth “the same yesterday and to-day and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8). The old and the new, the earthly and the heavenly cannot be mingled. And if God has set aside a religion of visible and earthly ritual in a worldly sanctuary to make way for a new and heavenly worship of which Christ is the sum and centre, what must be the iniquity of bringing into God’s worship a system of rites and ceremonials which has no warrant in God’s Word whatever, yet is held in favour and sanctioned by many who claim and who bear the Christian name. Brethren, beloved in Christ, let us put it to our consciences, as before God, how far we are sanctioning by our presence and practice, a religion of “dead works,” which God disallows, and how far we are true worshippers of a living God, and in our hearts occupied with a living Christ.

A Personal Question

FOR ALL THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

Are you ready for His coming ?

Face the matter, do not shrink ;

Let this pointed personal question

Search your heart and make you think.

Are you really, truly ready ?

Let me ask you, if I may.

Are you ready for His coming,

If the Lord should come to-day ?

Are you ready for His coming ?

He will surely come again :

He is faithful who has promised,

But He has not told us when :

In a moment unexpected,

This, or next, we cannot say.

Are you ready for His coming,

If the Lord should come to-day ?

Separation to God in Reality.

THE word to God’s people of ancient days was, “Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God ; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself” (Deut. vii. 6). Yes, “unto Himself”—a people “near to Him,” as the Psalmist (Psa. cxlviii. 14) has it. And the Lord Jesus, in His prayer to the Father, describes His saints of the present time as “the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world” (John xvii. 6). What fuller, clearer, more definite descriptions of “the people of God” (1 Pet. ii. 10) can there be than these ? Yet how little of the holy separation, the godly life, the heavenly testimony they express, is to be seen generally among the redeemed of the Lord in this present time ! How few men and women of the world are impressed, caused to think, and turned to God, from the conviction that the people who live among them claiming to be Christians, are an “holy people unto the Lord !” Do they show it in their conversation—their general behaviour and manner of life among mankind ? Would it strike the unconcerned who buy from them and sell to them ; who are familiar with their daily habits and pursuits, that they are a people “near to God,” in whom He dwells, whose Word is their rule, and whose object in life is His glory ? And do we, who claim to be of this “special people,” really manifest it in a godly separation from the follies of the world by means of which, the arch-enemy of souls is deceiving and alluring sinners down to the pit ? Alas ! with many it

is not so. They mix and mingle with the world of fashion, and seek to keep pace with the first of such in the race, not infrequently excelling them in gaudy attire, expensive furnishing, and unbecoming style, for people who say and sing they are "not of the world." It was because the Israelite of old had been "separated from other people" unto God, that he was to regulate his personal, domestic, and business life, according to "the statutes and judgments" God had given him, and not "walk in the manners of the nations" around (Lev. xxi. 22-26). While this was continued, the Lord blessed and multiplied His people greatly. They were a testimony for God among these nations. But when the line of separation was broken down, when they "were mingled among" the nations, they "learned their works," and very soon "served their idols." In this way their separation to God as His special people became lost, and their fruitful land became a wilderness. It is the same now. When the people of God despise their birthright, and become conformed to the world, they lose their spiritual freshness, cease to be a power for God, and sink into a Laodicean self-satisfaction, which brings nothing either to God or man. It is this and nothing else, that is the cause of all the blight and barrenness so many mourn over. The only real remedy is to return to God in honest, full confession of sin, then return to the place of true separation from the world into which the Cross has brought us, making "a clean cut" from all the unhallowed, yet popular, soul-withering, Spirit-grieving, God-dishonouring amalga-

mations with the ungodly, alike in their false religion, social fraternization, political and commercial combines, and unhallowed pleasures. When this is done—as God demands it should be, fully, honestly, and in reality—we shall have such prayer for revival of spiritual freshness in the soul, such an inflow of Holy Ghost power in worship and service, and such showers of blessing with the Gospel preached as will astonish us, and attract the attention of the world. Then, there will be no quibbling as to whether saints of God should attend picture palaces, play golf and bowls with the ungodly, and vote for sin-pruning and world-reforming schemes, in common yoke with haters of God, and enemies of the Cross of Christ. Separation to God and Christ, and from the world, will be a reality, first in the heart, then in the life. Fellow-saints will see it, own it, and whether they follow in the same path or not, will have a true witness to the path of separation to God, which will grip their consciences, and cause them to own that there is reality in what those who walk in that separate path, claim for it. Where "separation" is only a religion of words and phrases, with no "manifestation of the truth" in daily life and conduct, such as will commend it "to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. iv. 2), it is a sham, a thing of empty form, of no value to God, and having no power, or even respect, among men. Separation to God in reality, has never been a popular path, it never will be. But the "reckoning day" will tell what God thinks of it, and what He has to say to those who seek to decoy His people from it.

The Heart and the Life.

W. H. BENNET, YEOVIL.

AS a rule, the outward life expresses the true state of the heart. There are apparent exceptions, for hypocrisy may be carried to a great extent, and tares may so resemble wheat for a time, as to be distinguished only by the Searcher of hearts.

The outward life of Judas must have resembled that of the other apostles, for when the Lord declared that one of them should betray Him, no one apparently suspected Judas. Yet, even in his case, there was a certain correspondence between heart and life. He desired to see the kingdom set up that he might share the glory of it, and therefore he could show any amount of zeal to promote this desirable end. But his heart had never been truly fixed upon Christ Himself, and therefore when, from his point of view, the kingdom seemed hopeless, his heart's desire for gain came out in the betrayal of Him whom he had never loved.

Let us then ever bear in mind that outward profession of faith in Christ, even though accompanied by much zeal, does not give proof positive of a heart renewed by God's grace, *resting and delighting in Christ Himself*. Few statements of Holy Scripture are more solemn than those words of the Lord concerning the future: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not *prophesied* in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have *cast out devils*? and

in Thy Name *done many wonderful works*? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 21-23). With much profession of *His Name*—mark the three-fold repetition—and much zeal and power in outward things, there has been lacking true subjection of heart to Himself, and that spirit of obedience which characterises all those to whom He is the Author of eternal salvation (Heb. v. 9).

Such solemn utterances call for very prayerful consideration, especially in a day when Christ's Name is easily taken on the lips, at little cost. The Lord's object, however, is not to lead us to suspect and judge others, but to exercise *our own* hearts and consciences. There is a *secret communion* between the Lord and those who are born from above, without which none should be content. The heart that learns—in God's presence, and by the Cross of Christ—what sin is, knows its own bitterness, and becomes truly contrite before Him, but it has also a heaven-born joy in the knowledge of Christ and His love with which no stranger intermeddleth (Prov. xiv. 10). If there was little difference to the outward eye between the works of John and those of Judas, there was in John's case a heart acquaintance with his Lord to which Judas was an utter stranger. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," because He "looketh at the heart," and it is His delight to commune with them.

The words still earlier in the Book of Proverbs (chap. iv. 14-27) that have led to the above remarks, have special reference to those in whose hearts God's Holy

Spirit has wrought—those whom the Lord owns as His brethren, because they are children of God by birth from above. In the exhortations of these verses *heart* and *life* are seen to be very closely linked together. Two paths are contrasted. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,” while “The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.”

The Soul-winner's Equipment.

WE are told in Acts vi. 4, that the earliest preachers of the Gospel, made this resolve, “We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.” This was to be their only line of things, and they were to “give” themselves to it. There are no Apostles now, but all who serve the Lord in making known the Gospel, seeking to win sinners to Christ, need the same equipment for their service, whatever its measure or sphere may be. The successful soul-winner must “give himself to prayer.” He needs to do so in order that his spiritual condition may be so maintained, that he may be a vessel “meet for the Master's use.” No prayerless servant was ever used as a channel of blessing to others. He needs to daily deal with God about His service, praying, and asking others to pray (Eph. vi. 18), that he may open his mouth boldly in making known the Gospel, and so speak that many may believe (Acts xiv. 1). The message is Divine, but it is liable to suffer at the hands of those who bear it.

The Church, in Two Aspects.

NOTES OF ADDRESSES TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

BY THOMAS LOUGH, BELFAST.

IN perplexing times like the present, it behoves all who “love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption” (Eph. vi. 24, marg.), to inquire diligently and reverently what the teaching of the Word of God is concerning the Church which “Christ loved” and for which He “gave Himself” to God a Sacrifice and Saviour.

For the sake of simplicity, and that younger saints may be led into a fuller understanding of the mind of God, we will look at Scriptures concerning the Church in two aspects, as set forth in the Epistles.

1. As the Body of Christ, now being formed of all the saved of this present dispensation, by the preaching of the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, called out from Jew and Gentile, formed into one body, of which Christ glorified in heaven is Head (Col. i. 18), and all who believe are members (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13). The Church in this aspect, includes all the saved from Pentecost (Acts ii. 1) to the coming of the Lord, and our gathering together unto Him as in 2 Thess. i. 1, when He will fulfil His own promise of John xiv. 2, receiving His own to Himself in heavenly glory. The first mention of the Church in this aspect is found in Matt. xvi. 13-18, where, in answer to Peter's confession of Him as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” the Lord said, “Thou art Peter—a stone, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not

prevail against it." At the time these words were uttered, the Church had no existence in fact. It was something still future, as the Lord's words clearly tell. For He did not say that He *had* built His Church, or that He *was* building it, but "I *will* build my Church"—a work then in the future. Saved sinners there had been, all through the ages past—individual saints such as Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, all saved by grace, through faith in a Christ still to come. But there was no "body," no spiritual unity, no joint-membership of saints as Eph. iii. 5, 6, tells of, until after the Lord Jesus had died, and risen and been glorified in heaven, and the Spirit the Comforter had come, in whom all believers are baptised in one Spirit into "one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13, 14). The Church, as thus viewed, includes "all saints," throughout the entire dispensation, whether known or unknown to each other, whether assembling together, or apart. There are no false professors, no unconverted members, only "living stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5), built by the Lord Himself, who knows them that are His (2 Tim. ii. 19). And those whom the Lord so brings in and builds together thus, He never "casts out" (John vi. 37) or puts away. All who have been brought into the Church will be kept "by the power of God through faith" (1 Pet. i. 5) unto full and final salvation, and at last "caught up together" (1 Thess. iv. 17), to be "glorified together" with their Lord. Not one of the true members of Christ will be wanting, not one lifeless professor there. The Rock Foundation of the Church is Christ Him-

self, so it can never be overthrown. The Head of the Church is the living Lord Himself, so it can never be without right government or full supply, for it is from Him that all needed for its upbuilding and extension comes (Col. i. 19; Eph. iv. 16). The same living Lord and Head gives gifts and grace to those whom He calls to minister to it (Eph. iv. 11-16), and He will continue to do this while there is a saint and member of His body on earth, requiring such help. When the last member has been formed, the last stone added, the Church will then have reached its full-grown manhood, and thus completed, will be left no longer on earth, but removed to heaven. It is of great importance to the children of God to see from the Word, the Church so, in its Divine formation, its Spirit-formed unity, its Source of supply, and its direct and personal Headship and government by the Lord Himself. It is no man's church. It belongs to no country. It is called by no human name, and bears no distinguishing title, such as nations, denominations, doctrinal distinctions, and sectarian differences make and glory in among men. It has no rival, for there is no church save one, in the counsel of God. To it, it only, all believers are Divinely joined, and only those who are in and of it here, will be found in the "Church glorious" (Eph. v. 27) hereafter. When our thoughts concerning "Christ and the Church" are formed by the Word of God, and not by the traditions and usage of man, we will speak of it in Scriptural terms, and not in such words as "our Church," "Mr. M.'s church," and other such like unscriptural expressions.

Palestine, in Days to Come.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE moment of the Lord's return to earth, WITH all His saints, will end the "Times of the Gentiles," which, under the symbol of "a great image" is smitten, and becomes as the chaff of the threshing floor, while "the Stone" that smites it becomes a great mountain "and fills the whole earth" (Dan. ii.). Then and thus will be inaugurated the kingly rule of Christ (Psa. ii. 4), and the words of Rev. xi. fulfilled, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." And then, too, Palestine will pass under the dominion of its rightful Lord and Owner, and become "Immanuel's Land." Great physical changes will prepare it for the Lord's occupancy of it, and His dominion over it. In the day of His return, when "His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives," it will answer to His touch by cleaving in twain, causing a great valley through the backbone of the whole land, forming a great ship canal from the Mediterranean, through the Jordan valley to the Dead Sea. Through this chasm the waters will flow, forming an inland sea, probably reaching to the suburbs of Jerusalem, thus preparing it to become the chief seaport of the world, and the commercial emporium of all nations. And Isa. xl. 4, 5, tells us that further great changes will take place in valleys being exalted and mountains made low. These have been mostly "spiritualised," but are no doubt to be literally fulfilled in that day, to permit of the division of the land among

the twelve tribes according to Ezekiel's vision in chap. xlvi.

JERUSALEM, rebuilt upon its own heap (Jer. xxx. 18), in great splendour, enlarged far beyond anything it has yet been—computed, according to the measurements given in Ezek. xlv. 6, to be nine miles square—becomes "the City of the Great King," bearing its new name of JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH—"the Lord is there" (Ezek. xlvi. 35), becomes the metropolitan city of the world, to which the nations gather (Jer. iii. 17), attracted to its light, and their kings to its brightness (Isa. lx. 3), to which all flock to worship (Zech. xiv. 16, 17), and to hear the Word of the Lord (Mic. iv. 2).

THE THRONE OF THE LORD will be there (Jer. iii. 17), occupied by a lineal descendant of David's house (Zech. xii. 6-8), called "the Prince" in Ezekiel chaps. xlv.-xlvii., Christ's Vicegerent, who will combine the kingly and priestly offices in his person. That this prince is not the Messiah is clear from the fact, that he has to prepare a sin-offering (Ezek. xlv. 22) for HIMSELF, which the Lord Jesus never required; but sits in virtue of His great offering of Calvary (Heb. x. 12), a Priest on His throne in heavenly glory (Zech. vi. 13).

THE TEMPLE, to be built on a new site, according to a Divine pattern provided in Ezek. xl.-xlv., will be filled with the glory of the Lord (Ezek. xlv. 1-6), a "house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. lvi. 7), in which *commemorative* sacrifices will be offered by an earthly priesthood, from the family of Zadok (1 Kings i. ii), preserved by God through all the ages, for this very service (Ezek. xlv. 15-31).

A House of Wrecks.

I HAVE heard of a strange house, in which a lone man lives on a rocky coast. The house is entirely built of wrecks, portions of ships which have come to grief, and been driven on the rocks to become total wrecks on that dangerous coast. The floor is made of a ship's deck. The kitchen is a ship's galley. The walls and roof are from the panels and cabins of various steamers. The entire structure is composed of the remnants of wrecked vessels whose day is past. A strange house to live in surely. What memories it may awake within its occupant! What warnings it ought to give to other seafarers who look upon it! That house, made up of wrecks of stranded ships, may teach all who bear the Christian name a solemn lesson. There are wrecks on the heavenward voyage, ruined lives and testimonies of those who once sailed gracefully across life's sea toward the Golden Shore. Their broken and battered hulks lie on many a strand. And there are men who, hiding their end, use up whatever is left of these wrecked and ruined testimonies to serve their own ends, and minister to their own advantage. They live in houses made of wrecks, finding in the remnants of wasted lives and blighted ministries, something to shelter and support them in their own unscriptural doctrines and doings. How many prattle and dote on Evolution, who forget the unhappy end of Darwin. And we hear of some, who claim the Christian name and expect to be recognised as able ministers of the Word of God, who dabble

in what they claim to be "Investigations" of Spiritism, or communications with the powers of hell, ignoring the awful fact, that thousands upon thousands, who have gone forth in such a quest, have been wrecked on that treacherous coast. Yet they live amid these wrecks, and seek to lure others to the same end. Awful indeed is such a testimony, and terrible indeed will its judgment be. For of all the withering words uttered by the Lord while on earth, none was so severe, none so hopeless, as the doom of those who place stumbling-blocks and causes of offence, encompassing the fall of those who belong to Christ, especially His little ones who, in their simplicity, receive whatever is set before them in precept or by example, from those who are or pretend to be, their teachers and guides. Let the reader be warned, not to venture on any quest which God has forbidden, or in any prying into subjects, which God reserves among these "secret things," which belong unto the Lord (Deut. xxix 29), and are therefore not to be made matters of unhallowed speculation among us men. Let the wrecks that lie all around us warn, that God is very jealous of His Name and His Truth, and that He does not promise to keep any of His people who venture forth on paths in which He has prohibited His people to walk, or to company with those who are deniers of His Word and corrupters of His Truth. Walking there, God withdraws His hand of protection from any of His people because of presumptuous acts and wilful disobedience. They then become an easy prey to all the powers of evil. W. A.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

NOTES AND OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

PEACE.

- Christ came to bring it (Luke ii. 14).
 Christ died to make it (Col. i. 20).
 Christ rose to impart it (Luke xxiv. 36).
 Christ lives to bestow it (Eph. ii. 14).

CHRIST'S SHEPHERD WORK.

- He came to seek the Lost (Luke xix. 10).
 He is now saving the Lost (Luke xv. 5).
 He is leading the Saved (Psa. xxiii. 1-2).

KNOWING CHRIST.

- To know Him, for Life Eternal (John xvii. 3).
 To know Him, as Aim and Object (Phil. iii. 10).
 To know Him, as Standard of Life (1 John iii. 3, 4).

CONCISE STUDIES ON BIBLE STUDIES.

WHAT FAITH RECEIVES.

In believing the Gospel of Christ.

- Remission of Sins (Acts x. 43).
 Justification from Things (Acts xiii. 39).
 Eternal Life (1 John v. 12).
 Salvation by Grace (Eph. ii. 8).
 Joy and Peace (Rom. xv. 13).

WHAT FAITH DOES.

- It is by Faith we Live (Gal. ii. 20).
 It is by Faith we Stand (2 Cor. i. 24).
 It is by Faith we Walk (2 Cor. v. 7).
 It is by Faith we Fight (1 Tim. vi. 12).
 It is by Faith we Overcome (1 John v. 4).

THE HEIRSHIP OF BELIEVERS.

- They are Heirs of Salvation (Heb. i. 14).
 They are Heirs of Promise (Heb. vi. 17).
 They are Heirs of the Grace of Life (1 Pet. iii. 7).
 They are Heirs of the Kingdom (Jas. ii. 5).
 They are Heirs of God (Rom. viii. 17).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Godly Observance of the Lord's Day.

It is becoming a common habit among some who bear the Christian name, to use part or whole of the Lord's Day—especially in the summer months—in visiting places of interest, motoring through the country sightseeing, and using railway trains for personal purposes, not in any way connected with the worship or service of God. I never hear

this referred to in public ministry of the Word, nor of the claim God's Word makes upon His people respecting the godly observance of the Lord's Day. I believe very many—especially young believers—need and would "suffer the word of exhortation" (Heb. xiii. 22) on this matter.

We are quite at one with our esteemed questioner as to the importance of a godly observance of the Lord's Day, set apart by the Lord Himself from all other days, as a memorial of His glorious resurrection, and for the assembling and united worship of His people. We entirely agree, also, as to the present day danger of desecrating that day, by neglecting its privileges and forsaking the assemblies and services that connect themselves with it, and in using its precious hours for personal pleasure, and so dishonouring Him whose Name it bears, while stumbling worldly people who expect better things from those who profess to be followers and worshippers of the Lord. The first and highest privilege of the Christian, freed from business and other claims on that day, is, to come together with fellow-believers to "remember" the Lord, and "shew forth His death" in the breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 34). "The Lord's Day" and "The Lord's Supper" are intimately linked together by the use of an adjective—not elsewhere used in the New Testament, found only in Rev. i. 10 and 1 Cor. xi. 20, which links the "day" and the "supper." Precious opportunities given for ministry of the Word, proclaiming the Gospel, teaching the young on that day should be used, and quiet hours for personal study of the Scriptures, and feeding of the soul afforded, fully used. Indeed, it is this latter we think, that is most of all neglected, for no number of "meetings" can make up for its lack, and no public service can long maintain its freshness, when it is crushed out of the Christian's life. To race through the country sightseeing; to use the Lord's Day for social and generally non-spiritual visits, not to speak of motor drives, railway journeys for pleasure, and light conversation, is very unbecoming for any saint of God. Half a century ago, some may have been too exacting and severely formal in their use of "the Sabbath," as they called it; but the extreme opposite is the danger now, and of this there is need for solemn rebuke where it is not done in ignorance, and for plain and practical teaching as to what is due to the Lord among His own in the godly observance of His own hallowed and honoured day.

Answers to Correspondents.

ALEPH.—When God is at work in saving power, there will be no need to advertise it; it will make itself known in the lives of those who are saved (1 Thess. i. 8). Where this sort of testimony is absent, the less that is said of how many "profess," the better. Profession is cheap; it costs little in our time. But true conversion, evidenced in discipleship and persecution, is not so easy, and never will be so popular.

J. H. D., ONTARIO.—The late Donald Munro, evangelist, went out from Scotland to Canada, first in 1871, and began his service for the Lord at Park-hill, where his eldest brother resided. The Lord saved a goodly number then. After a brief return to the homeland, he went out again to Ontario in 1872, where he was joined by John Smith, and later by James Campbell and other workers, who preached the Gospel with great plainness and power to the unconverted, following up by teaching the truths that separate believers from the world, and gather them to Christ. It was then and through the succeeding years, that most of the assemblies in Ontario were formed, all in definite separation from the world's systems, and according to the simple and abiding pattern given us in the Word of God. If, as you say, "some who profess to so gather are returning to the world's religion, and several such companies have their hired ministers, who go in and out with all the sects like other parsons," that is not what they were at the beginning, but what they have become under the mixed teaching and by the evil example of some who got in among them with "other doctrine." But they are in a minority who so act, and will sooner or later become sects in name, as they already are in practice. But such decline and departure from God's Word and way, no more reflects on those who were used in the formation and early upbringing of Canadian assemblies, than the carnal and divided condition of the Church at Corinth did upon those who were its "fathers in Christ" (1 Cor. iv. 15), or the backsliding of Demas upon Paul (2 Tim. iv. 10), because he was at one time his "fellow-labourer" (Phil. 24). It is indeed grievous to see simple souls "made a spoil of" (Col. ii. 18) by men who either never had any real sympathy with the path of separation to God, or through trifling with God's truth have lost it, but it is yours to go on quietly but firmly, holding fast and giving effect in practice to all that God has taught you.

D. L., GOVAN.—If you are impressed with the

spiritual need of your fellow-shopmen, seek to do something to reach them with the Gospel. We know an artisan who gives at the first of each month, to all the men in the workshop with himself, a Gospel magazine, which is taken home to be read by all the household, and another who opens his kitchen for a week night Gospel meeting, and gets a fellow-workman to speak to those who come, and God has richly blessed both efforts.

VINDEX.—If your brethren in Christ, with whom you are in assembly fellowship, will not adjudicate in your case as you have placed it before them, you must leave it with God. It would be wholly contrary to the letter and spirit of the Word of God to appeal to a Court of Justice for judgment in what you say is "more of a spiritual and moral, than a commercial character." What do worldly men know about spiritual things? 1 Cor. ii. 14 says—nothing.

J. M., HAMILTON.—It is much to be regretted that evangelists and teachers have so far mistaken or forgotten their calling, as to go round the country lecturing on political subjects, and exhorting Christians to vote in common, and work in concert among those of all religions and no religion—Socialists, infidels, and opposers of the Gospel, in what they call "exercising the power which has been committed to their trust;" in other words, to force the hands of government, civic or national, to do what the majority want, whatever that may be, as if "Vox Populi," the voice of the people, were always "the voice of God." Alas! we know it ever was and will be in opposition to God, His Christ, and His truth. They must have very flimsy ideas as to what and where sinners are in relation to God, and of true conversion and what effect it is, if they think that efforts of this kind will reform the world or lift the unregenerate out from the hole of the pit in which they are. When the ungodly charged Paul and his co-workers with being "men who had turned the world upside down" (Acts xviii. 6), it was not by meeting at the polling place and giving their vote, but by preaching Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost, and setting the devil's kingdom in an uproar. And it never will be cleansed or reformed until the Lord does so by judgment. The Gospel's business is to take people "out of" (Acts xv. 14), not to make it a "fit place for people to live in," without God, proud of their morality and religion.

W. R., MANCHESTER.—Although a wrong use was being made of the "elements"—the bread and wine

of the Lord's Supper in the church at Corinth, there is no suggestion made by the Apostle in his Epistle to that Church, that they should cease using the symbols. And neither there or elsewhere, do the Scriptures teach that under better spiritual conditions they may be laid aside. Your "friends," who have discovered that it is only the "carnal," who make use of the symbols of "literal water" in baptism and actual "bread and wine" at the Lord's Supper, have got far ahead of Paul and his company who "came together" on the first day of the week (Acts xx. 7) to "break bread," and far, far beyond Philip, the evangelist, who baptised the Ethiopian eunuch in "literal water"—of which he says, "See, here is water" (Acts viii. 36), and which is named in Rom. vi. 5, "the likeness" of Christ's death. Ritualists and others who make water baptism a "means" of salvation, and those who speak of it as a way of "entrance into the kingdom," displace and give it a virtue nowhere claimed for it in God's Word. But Quakers and "higher life" folks, have no place for it at all. Both are wrong. The Word of God is right, and there is no ambiguity as to what it teaches as to both.

Letters to the Editor.

Drifting Backward Towards Babylon.

"I notice, since my return from another land—where I have sojourned for the last twenty years—a great change in the condition and practices of the assembly—or assemblies, for there are now three—in my native town. So far as I am able to judge of things as I see them, the tendency generally is to 'let go' much of the precious truth taught so powerfully from the Word, and practised so blessedly among the assemblies in these early years. I cannot shut my eyes to the fact, that in the case of some, at least, they are gradually **DRIFTING BACKWARD TOWARD BABYLON**, out from which God brought us by His Word, at the time I and hundreds more, were first led to gather in the Name of the Lord, with His Word as our law and His Spirit as our guide. All was simple and happy then. What power was with the Gospel preached in simplicity, with nothing to 'attract' the crowd, save its power and adaptability to the need of the convicted sinner! What sweetness and soul feeding ministry of the Word there was! Prejudiced Christians could not stay away, although they said they would 'never come

back' to hear any more of what disturbed them in their false position in the denominations! But they felt its power, and as their souls got blessing they came again and again, until they were severed by its power from worldly associations, and gathered simply to the Name of the Lord, in the joy of worshippers and in the path of disciples! I see little of this now. A Christian lady, on whom I called, said with tears in her eyes, 'I used to go to your meetings because I got blessing, and was attracted by the simple, loving, unworldly lives of the few believers who met in "the upper room" then. But they are different now, so are the meetings, and I do not get anything to strengthen me as in the ancient days.' Alas! I felt it was true. Christians who were marked by their simple modes of life, lowly service, and true piety then, have, in many cases, been 'successful' in business, and spend more on dress and style. But there is less given to God's poor and the Lord's work, than when they had less of the world's goods, but larger hearts. And the happy fellowship of these early years has become less; indeed, in most large companies there is none, save among 'classes' and groups who fraternise according to social standing, more than because they 'belong to Christ.' And the coming generation, who have either followed in the wake of their parents, or adopted their 'religion,' have little love for the truth, and easily give it up. Yes, we are drifting backward toward that Babylon—religious radicalism and confusion—out from which our fathers came at great personal cost—to become swamped in the common apostasy in practice from the Lordship of Christ, and subjection to Him and His truth, which with our lips we confess. O my brethren, beloved, let us search our ways before the Lord, and return in lowly repentance to Him and the ways of His Word. He is rich in mercy, and ready to restore and 'revive us again.' Then to go forth with us in power, to win the lost by the Gospel preached in all simplicity by those who are living in the joy of the blessings it brings. Then to teach the saved 'all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded,' keeping back nothing, whether it give offence or not. Then we may know again something of the Revival times so many of us look back to, as our best and brightest days on earth. We need have no concern as to what people will "say," if we maintain the "outside the camp" position, God will look after our characters. And His **work** will not suffer, through obedience to His **Word**.

W. J.

The Bruised Christ.

A MEDITATION ON THE WONDROUS CROSS.

THE celebration of the Lord's Supper in its sacred simplicity, as set forth in the Word of God, has as its chief object the fresh presentation of a bruised Christ, under the Spirit's ministry, to the hearts of the saints. "This *do* in remembrance of Me," is the Lord's own request for His peoples' keeping of the great feast of commemoration. "Ye do shew the Lord's *death* till He come," is the Spirit's own comment on love's response in the redeemed, to love's request by the Redeemer. Our meditations and our remembrances are to be centred especially on a Bruised Christ, who for our sakes "endured the Cross," and by way of its sorrows and sufferings passed up into the glories that were to follow, as the prophetic Scriptures (1 Pet. i. 11), as His own words concerning them, in Luke xxiv. 26 informs us. Very profitable it surely is for the saint, to muse and meditate on the Lord, as thus bruised, yet victorious; suffering yet triumphant, brought into the dust of death in order to gloriously rise above and beyond it, so securing to all His own that freedom from "fear of death" (Heb. ii. 14), and victory over it (1 Cor. xv. 55-57), in which they even now rejoice, and on which they will enter in richer and fuller measure, in the hour of resurrection or change, so sure and near.

The first mention of the Bruised Christ is found in Gen. iii. 15, after the entrance of sin and the fall of man. The remedy provided by God for the ruin, and the way of redemption and deliverance are declared

to be by the Seed of the woman bruising the destroyer's head, and in the conflict having to suffer the bruising of His own heel. The Conqueror was to become victorious through death, and the way of deliverance was to be through suffering. Through the ages that followed, this bruised Seed of the woman, this victorious though wounded Redeemer, was exhibited to faith in the types and shadows of the law. The dumb victims slain on Jewish altars, the sacred incense bruised and beaten small, to give out its virtue and impart its fragrance for acceptance with God, kept alive in men divinely taught, the meaning of the Eden prediction, that through the bruising of the Redeemer, the great redemption was to come. Later, the prophet's words in Isa. liii. 5, speaking the language of faith, and bringing what was still in the future, into present view of the soul, "He was *wounded* for our transgressions, He was *bruised* for our iniquities, and with His stripes we are healed," tell how, through this age of Gospel grace, one and another of the ruined race pass in single file through the door (John x. 9) of a personal appropriation of Christ, into the possession of a present and known redemption (Eph. i. 7), and a victorious deliverance from the power of Satan (Acts xxvi. 18) into the kingdom (Col. i. 13), there to share (Rom. viii. 37) the triumphs of the Son of God. Yes, blessed be God, the bruised Christ is the sinner's Saviour, the saints' Object, and the Song of all who know the virtues of His redeeming work, while they await in joyful hope the hour of His final triumph over Satan, in which the great adversary is to be

bruised under *their* feet (Rom. xvi. 30). It will be a sight of the bruised Christ, as He appears in His glory (Zech. xiii. 10), with the marks of the Cross in view, that causes repentant Israel to own Him King, and repeat in faith's own language the words of Isa. liii. In the overpowering scene of glorified saints depicted in Rev. v., where the beloved John weeps because no man is found worthy to claim the title to universal sovereignty and the right to redeem the inheritance, when the great silence seemed to indicate that earth's long cherished hope of redemption and liberation was to fail, then "a Lamb as it had been slain," bearing the marks of the Cross, stands forth in the midst of that circle of glorified beings, and by right of the bruises, that as Sacrifice and Redeemer He bears, claims His right and asserts His title, to reign, while heavenly hosts acclaim Him "worthy," and sing His praises as "the Lamb that was slain." And so throughout the eternal ages, in ways which are as yet to us but dimly traced, will God reveal and display the glories of His Son, as bruised yet conquering, as slain yet triumphant, through whom and in virtue of whose wondrous Cross, God will fill the heavens with a redeemed and regenerated people whose song shall eternally be of the victorious Christ. May it be ours now, in ever-increasing measure to become acquainted with, and meditate on this bruised Christ, and to sing in the deep joy of the heart—

I stand upon His merit;

I know no other stand,

Not e'en where glory dwelleth

In Immanuel's Land.

J. R.

Friendship with Christ.

A MEDITATION. BY J. G. BELLETT.

IN ancient times, God had among mankind, His "friends," with whom He walked and talked in terms of intimacy. In patriarchal days, *Abraham* was called "the friend of God" (Jas. ii. 23; 2 Chron. xx. 7). To him, secrets were committed and counsels revealed, of which the world knew nothing. At the tent door in Mamre, the Lord sat communing with him in perfect intimacy, of things that were hidden from all other men (Gen. xviii. 17, 18). With Moses, He spake "face to face as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Exod. xxxiii. 9, 11), of things concerning the camp in the desert, of which other men knew nothing, making known to him "His ways," while others only beheld "His acts" (Psa. ciii. 7). In the days of the Lord, *Lazarus* of Bethany was especially designated by Him "Our friend Lazarus," and sat at the table with Him (John xii. 3). Such are conspicuous instances of the Divine friendship with the elect. In John xv. 15, the Lord tells of this hallowed privilege, this place of intimacy, as belonging through grace in this age, to all His saints, for He says, "*Henceforth* I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father, I have made known unto you." This is truly wonderful. It is the place of nearness and of gracious intimacy, not as servants, but as friends. Commands from a master whom we serve, put us in the place of responsi-

bility; but communications from one to whom we listen as a friend, are heard in perfect composure, on the ground of personal confidence. Such is to be the character of our intimacy with the Lord. It is to this wondrous place His grace has called us, and for the enjoyment of it the Spirit has fitted us. But how slow in heart are we to rise to the enjoyment of this peculiar elevation, this unique place of privilege. Many seem content to stand in the courts of the Lord as servants, occupied with the *work* of the Lord. Others, with a bolder faith, draw near (Heb. x. 20), as His *worshippers*. Both have their place of excellence surely, as we see in David, as he *wrought* for the house of the Lord, and danced as a *worshipper* before the Lord, when the ark was borne to Zion. But when he went in and "sat *before* the Lord" (2 Chron. xvii. 16), receiving His secret counsels, as one who speaketh face to face, he was in the intimacy of a friend. Do we occupy this place in the experience of our souls? Is it our happy realised portion, as it is our holy privilege? Do we, like John at the supper, lean on the Lord's bosom, learning its secrets, proving in happy experience that love wherewith we are loved, and occupying that place of intimacy into which we have been called? Divine friendship is no new form of grace. It has been among the privileges of the elect from the beginning. But to us—as with all else belonging to the saints of this present time, it has a peculiar character, an intimacy which excelleth. And surely if God in His rich grace, has provided for us such a place of intimacy, it is ours to occupy it.

Jesus Christ.

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

III.—IN A SCENE OF SUFFERING

(JOHN V. 1-9).

BY WILLIAM HOSTE, B.A., LONDON.

THE soil of a sin-blighted world, is more congenial to suffering than to joy. Cana feasts are rare oases. Joy is an exotic. Sickness and pain are indigenious. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The great multitude at the pool of Bethesda, "impotent" and "waiting," is a fair sample of this world. What, then, was our Lord's attitude to suffering, during His earthly ministry? How did He interpret the Father? That He should come where sufferers were, says much, but once there, He could not be indifferent. Compassion was a keynote of His ministry. But what drew it out in Him, would repel others; a man full of leprosy (Mark i. 41); a man full of demons (Mark v. 19); a few full of enmity (Luke x. 33); a selfish crowd, whom He had served all day, breaking in on His rest. Here, toward the sufferers, lying in their filth and misery at Bethesda, he was no doubt moved with the same compassion, thus interpreting the heart of Him who is "full of compassion"—"The Father of mercies and the God of all comfort" (2 Cor. i. 3). For us, too, "His compassions fail not," "for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Heb. iv. 15). A feast was the occasion of the Bethesda miracle, one of the three great annual feasts, we may suppose, to necessitate our Lord's pres-

ence in Jerusalem, but which, is unimportant. Whatever it might be to the mass of the Jews, to Him it would be "a feast of Jehovah," and no doubt all the legal requirements of the day in their very spirit were observed by Him. In what house of feasting would He then be found? Rather in a house of mourning, the porches of Bethesda, "where lay a great multitude of impotent folk, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." Little enough of feasting had come their way, but now the Lord of the feast was present. His disciples had accompanied Him to the marriage feast; here He would seem to be alone, perhaps He could not trust them in such a scene. This "great multitude" may represent the religious world, especially Israel under law, helpless and hopeless, and dependent for blessing on irregular interventions of Divine favour, the visits of the angel of the Lord.* But a greater was present that day, unrecognised, but ready to bless, the Lord of the "angel." Had some sufferer been praying with the psalmist, "Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation!" the answer would have been doubly appropriate, "Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him." Jesus was in their midst. They need not wait. He could do for them, then and there, as for us, above their highest prayer and thought. And why

*The latter part of verse 3 and the whole of verse 4 are omitted by the Sinaitic and Vatican and Cambridge Uncial MSS, and some other weighty authorities, but are retained in the Alexandrine (London) and other Uncials, and some versions of good authority. The reply of the impotent in verse 7, is undisputed. What sense would this have, were the disputed words in 3 and 4 not genuine? He was in a great hurry to get into the pool when troubled, but it never was troubled!

was He there? Not to apologise for God for all the suffering in the world, nor to deny its reality with that spurious "science" falsely-called "Christian." Nor yet to preach the counterfeit gospel of future bliss by present pain, nor even to introduce improved hygienic conditions or schemes of social betterment (doubtless much needed) for the sufferers around the pool. Physical needs are not ignored by Christianity, but higher needs must be kept first. The world has copied the social activities of Christians, hospitals, orphanages, etc., while denying their motive power—the faith of Christ. Why then was the Lord there? First and foremost to do the will of the Father, in this work of mercy, symbolical of the excellence of grace over law. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son," could do. The law could point the moral of their sad estate, but was powerless to "raise the fallen, cheer the faint, heal the sick, or lead the blind." Christ alone could do all this, and He was there to do it, wherever there is human need. He is still at faiths disposal, near and ready to save and bless

The Glorified Son.

WE hail Thee! Glorious Son of God,
 Glorious in all Thy ways,
 Thou art enthroned in light divine,
 The light in which Thy saints shall shine,
 Through everlasting days.

Lord Jesus! blessed Son of God,
 Enthroned in glory now,
 We praise Thee for Thy wondrous grace,
 And gazing on Thy once-marred face,
 In lowly worship bow.

The Church in Two Aspects.

NOTES OF ADDRESS TO YOUNG BELIEVERS.

PART II. BY THOMAS LOUGH, BELFAST.

THERE is a second aspect in which "the Church" (Matt. xviii. 17), is viewed in the Word, namely, that of a company of the Lord's people gathered unto His Name, in any given place or locality—an assembly of those who have been "called out" from the world and "into the fellowship of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. i. 9). "There is one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13)—not many, but there are many "churches of the saints" (1 Cor. xiv. 23), each formed according to the pattern given in the Scriptures (1 Cor. iii. 9-11), which the Lord gave to be used all the time He was to have His churches on the earth. We have no right to form churches as *we think* best, or as people want. Our simple responsibility is to be guided in all things by "Thus saith the Lord." The churches of early time consisted of "saints" (see 1 Cor. i. 2; Col. i. 2)—not of mixed congregations of saved and unsaved as now. The names they bare were "church of God" (1 Cor. i. 2), for they were *of* Him. He called them into being. "Churches of Christ" (Rom. xvi. 16), for they were watched over and cared by Him. His Word was their only authority, His commandments their only rule (1 Cor. xiv. 36-37). They had no differing creeds and no human or distinctive names, such as the many "denominations" (so-called) have now. If the Lord has left for us His own pattern of what His churches ought to be, surely it is the individual

responsibility of all who are His people, and call Him their Lord, to find out what that pattern is, and then obediently to do what He has told us, not following the multitude, nor fearing the shame that attaches to the few, who, being willing to do His will, learn and do it (John vii. 16, 17, R.V.), and are blessed in the path of obedience.

It is this aspect of the Church that the Lord presents in Matt. xviii. 17-20, where a local assembly is in view—a definite company of persons who may be approached and *told* certain things, and who may speak, giving their mind and judgment on the matter—a company of saints who own the Lord, and seek to do His will in all that concerns their united as well as their individual responsibility. Many seem to think it does not matter where or how they worship, or who they are associated with in Church connections, so long as they individually follow the Lord and act as "becometh saints" (Eph. v. 3). But this is far from being what the Word of the Lord demands of His own. He says they are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. vi. 14), either in their social, or religious, or commercial life. They are to have "no part with an unbeliever" (ver. 15, R.V.), either in follies or his religion, and no fellowship with "the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. v. 11), of which surely a false profession is the worst of all. No congregation or company that receives and accords the place, privileges, and responsibilities of a saint to those who give no evidence of being born again, or—as in the case of many—even profess to be, is

a church of God, according to the pattern given in the Word. Nor should any true child of God be found there. To all who either ignorantly or wilfully are in "membership" in such congregations, the word is, "Come out from among them and be ye separate" (2 Cor. vi. 17). May the dear saints of God, who wonder why they are not happy, not spiritual, not fed with the pure milk of the Word (1 Pet. ii. 2, R.V.), not growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet. iii. 18), consider their ways, and ask for "the old paths" which are still to be found in God's Word, in which all who by grace humbly, yet steadfastly walking therein, find rest to their souls (Jer. vi. 16). And may all who have lately been converted to God search their Bibles prayerfully and diligently to find "the footsteps of the flock" (Song i. 8)—that "good way" in which saints of early years walked, and in which the presence and power of the Lord is still found, by all who in lowly obedience to the Word of the Lord, "go forth unto Him"—not to fellow-saints, not to a good ministry, not to a happy meeting—all of which may change, or fail, and so disappoint—but unto Christ Himself—"unto Him, without the camp"—the place of separation and of rejection—"bearing His reproach" (Heb. xiii. 12, 13), which is the path of honour and of blessing. These great truths are apt to fall into disuse in the ministry of God's Word, with the sure result that they cease to exercise the hearts of believers, and to claim that obedience that the Lord desires them to have always and everywhere among His people.

How to Make Friends,

BY MEANS OF THE MAMMON OF
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

W. J. McCLURE, CALIFORNIA.

THE Lord presses home the teaching of His parable by the exhortation, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles" (Luke xvi. 9 (R.V.)). This passage was to us one of the most perplexing that we know of in the New Testament. We knew that our title to a place in the house of "many mansions" was not in aught that we could ever do, but in the precious blood of Christ apart from anything that belonged to us. It was this, that made the verse so perplexing.

The Lord is speaking here to His own, not to the unconverted. He uses the illustration of the steward who was about to lose his position, and, in order to provide a home when out of it, became very generous with that which belonged not to him but to his master. In other words, he used the means with which he was entrusted for the present, with a view to the future. Certainly, he used them unrighteously, but this does not affect the point in the lesson, that our Lord here teaches us.

The believer is a steward. All he has, whether inherited or acquired, belongs to "another man"—to our Lord Jesus, who, by creation and redemption, has the right to all the material wealth in the world. For the time being, some of that wealth

He intrusts to the children of God, to be held and used for Him.

We will take an illustration. A servant of Christ is enabled through the practical fellowship of some steward, or stewards of His, to carry the Gospel of salvation into some place in which otherwise—humanly speaking—the simple message would never have been heard. Souls are led to Christ, and their joy and gratitude to that servant of Christ is great. Suppose they are told, that it was by means of the stewardship of another, from whose means the Gospel was brought to them. Can we conceive of them not feeling a great desire to see and thank that one saying, “Dear brother, but for you, we might have been still in our sins, and far from God? We thank you for being the instrument in God’s hand in sending us the Gospel.” It may be they will never know, or be able on earth to express their gratitude to that one. But they will know in heaven, and we may be sure will not be less grateful there, than they would have been on earth.

Again, there are suffering saints to whom a little of the abundance that we may have, has brightened their lives and eased the load that presses on them. If as stewards of what has been intrusted to us by the Lord, that help has been imparted and a little sunshine brought into the closing hours of some sorely tried child of God, we may be sure that their thanks await us when we reach the heavenly home.

Who would not like to have some to greet them then with, “Dear brother (or sister), I thank you for being the means in the hand of God of bringing me to

Christ,” or, “I thank you for the help you were to me when I was in poverty and trial on the earth—Welcome home.”

That our title to that blessed place is the blood, and that He, the Lord of that place, will Himself welcome us, in no way takes away from the joy that the welcome of these dear saints will give. Those who enjoy the Lord most on earth, are the most appreciative of every expression of the love of their fellow-believers. But we fear there are many who are doing very little now in view of that time.

But with this exhortation, the Lord linked a solemn warning in verses 10, 11, and 12, “He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much” (ver. 10). Some who have but little worldly means, and who do not give the Lord His portion of the little that they have, imagine that if they had more, they would be very liberal. They are only deceiving themselves. God is testing them with a little, and they fail in the test. Those who use faithfully what they have, will get more to give.

“If, therefore, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?” (ver. 11). The *true riches* is the knowledge of God, something more to be exulted in than earthly riches, as we see in Jer. xi. 23. That there is an intimate relation between the general lack of spiritual intelligence—which is, alas! too manifest in many—in the use of the unrighteous mammon, cannot be doubted. But the individual who fails in his use for God, of the un-“righteous mammon,” will not be entrusted

with the "true riches." He may read books and even give out what he has so gathered. Many who hear him may know little of the difference between such vapid talk and true ministry, but sooner or later, circumstances will arise, which will show it, and prove what is of God and what is artificial. To learn from God, and to grasp truths in an intellectual way, are not the same.

"And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own" (ver. 12). No matter how much or how little we may possess, not a penny belongs to us, it all belongs to the Lord Jesus. To fail in that which belongs to Him, will be to bar us from receiving from Him at the Judgment-seat that which would be our very "own."

In verses 11 and 12 we have two comparisons, "Mammon" and "true riches." By implication, money is false riches. How many have found that out to their sorrow. A slump in Real Estate, the bursting of a boom, the failure of a bank, and the Christian who fancied himself a rich man, has to begin all over again. "Wilt thou set thine eyes on that which is not? for riches certainly make to themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Prov. xxiii. 5).

"That which is another man's," and "That which is your own." When we came into the world we came empty-handed, and thus we will leave it, so far as carrying away any of its wealth. But the truth of God, which we learn from Him, is our own *for ever*. Let us use the truth we know and live it in practice.

The Lord's Own Land:

AS IT WILL BE DIVIDED AMONG THE
TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

THE "Land of Israel," as given to Abraham and his seed, extended from the Nile to the Euphrates (Gen. xv. 18), and from the wilderness and Lebanon to "the uttermost sea" (Deut. xi. 22), that is the Mediterranean—the "land afar off," or as Lowth renders it, "a far-extended land" (Isa. xxxiii. 17). This "land of the Lord" (Hos. ix. 3), He as Proprietor will divide as He thinks fit, and gives commandment how, in Ezek. xlvi. 13; xlv. 1; xlv. 11). No "Land Court" or "Allied Commission" will be required to fix its boundaries, or divide by vote or lot the portion and inheritance of each tribe. All is settled by Jehovah Himself, and here the title deeds are recorded and will assuredly be brought forth in that day when the "delightful land," the "glory of all lands," becomes the inheritance of Abraham's race for ever. There, the twelve tribes, restored, reunited, regenerated, and vastly increased in numbers, will be "planted" (Jer. xxiv. 6) as one nation—the head of all nations—there to abide before God for ever (Jer. xxxi. 36, 37). Neither man, with all his envy, nor the devil with all his craft, will be able to deprive the earthly people of that which God has reserved for them.

The order and arrangement of the twelve tribes, with the inheritance of each, is given in Ezek. xlvi. It is not the same as when Joshua divided the

land (see Josh. xi. 23; xiv. 2) at first, according to lot and conquest. Here all is of grace and by gift, for they had forfeited everything by their sin and Christ rejection. The lot of each tribe is to be in parallel lines, extending across the country from east to west, the boundaries thereof fixed by the Lord Himself. All "crooked places" will be "made straight" (Isa. xlv. 2), all "rough places smooth" (Isa. xl. 4), high places levelled and valleys exalted (Zech. xiv. 10), all by Divine power, bearing witness to the fact, that what God wills, He exercises His power to perform. In this peaceful and fruitful land, the earthly people will dwell in prosperity, under the benign reign of Christ, their Messiah-King, whose rule of righteousness will bring peace, and under whose sceptre, men will dwell together in unity, and beasts of the field and the forest lie down together. The earth will yield her fruit, want will be unknown, wars and idolatry will cease, and over all the earth there will be one Lord and King (Zech. xiv. 9), the once-rejected Nazarene, who, amid these very scenes, lived as a stranger.

In the midst of the land, having seven tribes to the north and five to the south (see map), will be the Holy Oblation, the Lord's Portion, having His Sanctuary in its midst (chap. xlviii. 10), with the land of the priests, the Levites, and the Prince of David's house, with the city and its suburbs enclosed therein. What a glorious city! All will be according to God, and all under the rule of His Christ. Wherever Christ has His place, be it in the heart, the home, the Church, or the State, THERE His blessing will be. But wherever He is

shut out and His Word and way disallowed, there will and must be trouble and sorrow.

Citizens of Heaven.

WE are citizens of heaven!
 And as one who has no ear
 For the turmoil of the journey,
 When the home he loves is near;
 One whose step is onward hasting,
 Where his heart went long before,
 We are now in spirit dwelling
 Where earth's discord all is o'er.

All our longing and endeavour
 Is to reach Him whom we love;
 'Tis Himself our minds are set on,
 Who first drew our hearts above.
 What alone we count as pleasure,
 Is to lean on Jesus' breast;
 All things here may fade and perish—
 We press onward to our rest.

'Tis the love of Christ attracts us,
 Like a magnet, to His heart;
 On the wings of faith borne upward,
 Lord! we see Thee where Thou art.
 All our joys and tribulation
 Now are open in Thy sight;
 All our life and conversation
 Soon shall be declared in light.

What, though men proclaim it madness
 Not to seek a portion here,
 Christ has taught us how to suffer
 Patiently the worldling's jeer!
 Thou didst give Thyself, Lord Jesus,
 From the world to set us free;
 We are citizens of heaven,
 We have but to honour Thee.

Could we pass along as "strangers,"
 With our mind on "things above,"
 Yet pursue what worldlings bid us,
 Caring not to "walk in love?"
 Rather let us pass through trial
 In the power of praise and prayer;
 And as strengthen'd by the Spirit,
 One another's burdens bear.

Oh, let nothing, blessed Saviour,
 Come between our hearts and Thee.
 Keep us walking in Thy footsteps,
 Heavenly let our converse be;
 Let not earth and her distractions
 Overpower our heart and mind;
 We are citizens of heaven,
 THERE, our proper joys we find.

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

GOD'S ROYAL WELCOMES.

All are Bidden (Luke xiv. 21)—None Excepted.
All are Welcome (John vi. 37)—None Rejected.
Even the Vilest (Luke xiv. 23)—Are Accepted.

THE SAVED SINNER'S BIOGRAPHY.

Convicted of Sin (John xiv. 8)—By the Spirit.
Cleansed from Sin (1 John i. 7)—By the Blood.
Death to Sin (Rom. vi. 2)—At the Cross.
Freed from Sin (Rom. vi. 18)—As a Master.
Indwelt by Sin (Rom. vii. 17, 20)—As a Principle.

GOOD THINGS TO KNOW.

That in me is no good (Rom. iii. 10).
That Jesus is the Saviour (John iv. 42).
The grace of our Lord Jesus (2 Cor. viii. 9).
That all believers have eternal life (1 John v. 13).
That they shall be like Him (1 John iii. 2).

CONCISE STUDIES ON BIBLE THEMES.

For Personal, Social, and Assembly Use.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

The Church, purchased BY Christ (Acts xx. 28).
The Church preserved FOR Christ (Jude i. 1, R.V.).
The Church presented to Christ (Eph. v. 27).

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESOURCES.

Beloved of God (Rom. i. 7).
Complete in Christ (Col. ii. 10).
Anointed by the Spirit (2 Cor. i. 21).
Led into the Truth (John xvi. 13).

CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIP.

Children of God (1 John iii. 1, 2).
Disciples of Christ (John xiii. 35).
Temples of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19).
Brethren of one Household (Eph. ii. 19).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Is it according to the Word of God, for one who is not severed from the world's denominations, but in practice goes to them all, to be invited to preach to and teach those who have come out at the call of God from all sects, to gather in the Name of the Lord, owning no name but His, and seeking to be guided in personal and assembly life by the Word of the Lord only? This is done in the assembly in which I at present am, and it evidently has been the habit of certain "chief men" to do so, without having or asking the fellowship of the assembly.

It is also a prevalent practice for these brethren to be found on the platform at Conferences and such like with parsons, recognised as such, in their clerical titles and attire. And sectarian preachers, who may be found in any denomination as its "minister," seeking to build it up and attract others to it, by whose means not a few—especially of young and untaught believers—have been led away from Scripturally gathered assemblies into denominations where various errors are taught, and worldly religions are sanctioned. Am I right or wrong in refusing to take part in this, and in refraining from going to Conferences and such like, where it is largely practised? I want to do exactly what the Word of God says I ought, in the matter.

With many, it seems to be a matter of simple expediency as to where they go, to whose ministry they listen, and what they help on by their presence and patronage. If God had left it to every man to follow his own inclinations, satisfy his personal tastes, and do "that which is right in his own eyes" (Jud. xxi. 24), much in the same way as he may choose his clothes, select his tailor, and rent his house, then no Divine principle is set aside, no commandment of the Lord disobeyed, no precept unheeded, if he visits any or fraternizes with all sects, and gives his service and support to everything that calls itself by the Lord's Name. But has He left it so? Is there nothing at all in the Book of God, giving direction to the Christian as to how, where, and with whom he is to worship and serve, from whom and from what he is to separate, to whose company and fellowship he is to adhere, with what object and unto what end he is to give his service and support? We believe that the Word of God is the supreme authority, and the final appeal on all these matters, that every neglect of and deviation from these commandments of the Lord is sin, and that God will sooner or later deal with all who willfully and persistently break the least of His commandments regarding these things, and teach others, by lip or deed, so to do (Matt. v. 19).

Take the following example, which lies before us as we write:—A Conference is announced to take place in a local town, in which it is said some have lately been converted. It is intimated by order in all assemblies in the district, and all are explicitly urged to go. The speakers' names are given. They are practically all men who go and come with all denominations. One is announced to preach on

Lord's Day at 11 a.m. in an interdenominational mission. Another is a leader in a Baptist congregation. The third is known to have spoken openly against the truth as to assembling in the Lord's Name, outside of all denominations. Yet these are the men set up to teach the young believers in that place, by their ministry, and more so by their example, how to follow the Lord personally and in Church association, according to His Word. Can they do it? Can either of them say to these young believers, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1)? "Those things which ye have . . . SEEN in me, DO" (Phil. iv. 9). Need it be wondered, if those who are taught more readily by example than by precept, are returning to the sects, and—what is worse—seeking to bring sectarian practices and devices into assemblies professedly in separation from all sects and their ways. Many who know and love the truth are grieved to see, but too sloven to denounce such doings, and, if need be, expose them. It was not so with the Lord, when He spake of the world's religion (see Matt. xxiii.). Nor with His servant Paul, when he had to deal with departures from the truth in doctrine (Gal. iii. 1), or in subtle practice (2 Cor. xi. 3, 4). There is no need to be censorious, no call to be fault-finding, but when one sees the Word of God coolly set aside, and the principles and practices of the world's religion brought in without a challenge, it is time to speak out for God, His honour, and His truth. The saint who accommodates himself to these, until they cease to "exercise" him, and allows things to drift, as if he had no responsibility in the matter, is unworthy of the Name he bears, and of the truth he professes to own, and will soon let it slip from him in theory, as he has already done in practice.

Answers to Correspondents.

PASTOR.—The best way to keep young believers from wandering about, hearing all sorts of mixed and muddled preaching is, to feed them well with the fresh and warm milk of the Word of God (1 Pet. ii. 2). If they do not relish that, you have good cause to doubt whether the life of God is in them.

T. G., ONT.—One extreme begets another. If, in order to prevent looseness in doctrine and laxity in practice, you go beyond the Word of God in exacting more than it demands, or in compelling what it does not command, you will find the result

to be the exact opposite of what is desired. The "right way of the Lord" (Acts xiii. 10) is, to be guided by the Word itself—not man's forced interpretation of, or his deductions from it.

P. D., ENFIELD.—A godly company of the Lord's people, walking in the truth, no doubt attract spiritual and hungering souls; but it is the firm conviction, formed by the truth, that the Lord, who gathers His own around Himself, keeps them there, that prevents those who have been brought out from sects, from returning to them in part, or whole.

MOTHER.—The best way to keep your young daughters from unwholesome associations and questionable company is, to provide them with interesting occupations, and teach them useful employments, under your own personal influence at home. Where parents are seldom in the home, and children are left to rove as they like, there is little wonder if they become ungovernable in older years. Whether social teas with gossip, or a continuous round of meetings occupy hours that ought to be spent in their homes with their families, prevent Christian parents from fulfilling their obligation to their households, they are "verily guilty," and should be instructed and exhorted to "first shew piety at home" (1 Tim. v. 4) before they go to discuss or teach it abroad.

A. M. D., FIFE.—These are testing times for all who desire to please the Lord, and own His authority over them in their daily lives, and as breadwinners for their families. The forecast of that day, when none will be allowed the right to buy or sell, who does not bear the Antichrist's mark (Rev. xiii. 16, 17) in his hand, to remind himself that he is his bondsman and can only work under his auspices, and in his forehead where others will see it, and so recognise him as a true "comrade," who alone has the "right to work," is already with us. The Christian artisan's hope is in God, who may test, but will never forsake His own, in the path of loss or suffering for righteousness' sake. But it surely is an awful position for a child of God to be found in, when at the call of his "Union" he has to "down tools," and refuse to work alongside his brother in Christ, because he refuses to defile his conscience, dishonour his Lord, and disobey the Word of God by being under such a yoke. Much prayerful and practical sympathy is due to the Christian employee, who stands true to what he regards as the "commandment of the Lord." And it is surely the first responsibility of his fellow-saints to succour and to

help him in the time of his distress. And, need we add, the Christian employer, who is not "fettered" by Trade Union threats, will see that he is not left to go idle while he has a job to give him. This is God's way of manifesting love (1 John iii. 17), not in glibly talking about it but "doing" nothing.

Letters to the Editor.

Assembly Bible Readings.

"In the assembly in whose fellowship it is my privilege to be a sharer for over twenty years, there has been a united week night Bible reading, for mutual help in the Word of God, which has been the means of much blessing to all in the assembly. I commend this form of mutual edification to fellow-believers everywhere. It is, as I think, one of the best forms of spiritual ministry, which is much neglected in our time, to our common loss. I know that some are afraid to begin it, because of its liability to abuse. And it has been abused by those who persist in speaking when they have nothing of an edifying character to say, and by others who would press their view on any given subject on all others, whether it commend itself to them or otherwise. But this need not be. Nor ought a Divine principle of mutual ministry, such as is clearly set forth in such Scriptures as 1 Pet. iv. 11; Rom. xii. 4-7; 1 Cor. xiv. 19, be cast aside as "unworkable," because some who are more anxious to hear their own voices, and drive their own points, than to speak that which will be for the edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Cor. xiv. 3) of all who are present. Our own experience in such Bible Studies or Scripture Readings goes to prove, that they can be so conducted so as to be a means of real instruction and godly edifying to fellow-saints, which no other form of ministry has in the same measure. Our own habit has been to take up an Epistle for say the year. We have for the present year **The Epistle to the Galatians**, divided into fifty-two Weekly Studies—one for each Wednesday evening of the year. A brother of some experience, who is able to communicate what he has gathered in personal study on the passage, and with what helps he has found in the oral or printed ministry of others, opens the theme in a short exposition, outlining the passage. Others follow briefly, each taking up a point. Some ask a question, or express a difficulty, and so draw forth help for all. But there is no debate or unprofitable discussion allowed. For where there is

liberty, there must also be godly rule. And whoever opens the subject, usually sums up at the close what has been found in the passage, and applies it. We expect to take up **The Epistle to the Ephesians** for the coming year, and to find much there for the help of a number of young believers lately come among us. I very warmly commend this form of Bible Study to fellow-saints, as one of the most helpful in assemblies, when well and wisely conducted.

J. A. W.

Gladsome Days of Ingathering.

"We have been greatly cheered during an effort to reach the unevangelised masses in this religious town, on seeing the hand of the Lord (Acts xi. 21), as in days of old, going forth with the Gospel unto salvation. We began with a week of prayer—earnest, believing prayer—in which practically all who form the assembly joined. A sense of the Lord's presence was felt, and there was a spirit of expectation among us. The second week, we went out two and two, distributing notices and invitations in all the houses in and around the town, describing the character of the meetings, and earnestly inviting all to attend. Previous to this, two brethren from a distance, 'whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the churches' (2 Cor. viii. 18), had offered their help to continue as long or short as the Lord might guide, without restraint on our part, all being ready to work with them as they were led of God. From the first night of the meetings there was blessing, real cases of conversion, never in large numbers, but always a few. There was no attempt made to hasten professions, no asking the people to raise hands, stand up, or other artificial means to number converts. The Word was simply and faithfully preached. Christ was uplifted as the sinner's Saviour, and there was power with the Word. Opportunity was given at the close, for seeking souls to speak with the preachers, and many were helped through their difficulties and doubts by this means. It was a great joy to see the old Gospel, in fresh power, doing its work. We had no solos, no music, no flare up attractions, simply God's own message, with plenty of prayer and expectation. A good number have been truly saved, as their lives testify. Quite a few baptised and added to the assembly, and more will follow. It has been a time of real reviving among the Lord's people, and we expect the effects to be a good time in the Gospel, and in teaching the young believers God's way, during the coming winter."

A. M. B.

Grace Triumphant :

ALL THE DAYS, AND ALL THE WAY.

IT was while encamped in the wilderness, on the last stage of their pilgrimage toward their Canaan home, that the Lawgiver and Leader of the redeemed and covenant people, spake to them in the familiar words, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee, these forty years in the wilderness" (Deut. viii. 2), and thereafter recited in their hearing the wondrous works of the Lord, which He had wrought on their behalf, throughout the long years of their pilgrimage. And what a story of Grace Triumphant it surely is, from first to last! It is well summed up in the words of the prophet, where he says, "In His love and in His pity He *redeemed* them, and He *bore* and *carried* them *all the days* of old" (Isa. lxiii. 9). What a record to call to remembrance! Loved, redeemed, borne, and carried all the days! Guided, defended, provided for, and led on safely all the way. Daily, the manna came down fresh from heaven around their tents. Water from the rock followed them through the arid desert. Light from the cloud shone on their path by night, and its shade was their shelter from a glowing sun by day. Their feet swelled not from the long journey. Their shoes waxed not old, nor did their garments wear out, throughout these forty years. It is a wonderful story of grace triumphant over sin, from first to last. On their part only failure, rebellion, and disobedience (Isa. xxviii. 8) for most of the way; on God's part, "great kindness" (Neh. ix. 17), and

the "multitude of His mercies" (Psa. cvi. 45). And this God is *our* God. All that He was to Israel in the wilderness, He is to us now, and a great deal more. For He has surely not only redeemed and delivered us from a "bondage worse than theirs by far," brought us out from under a power mightier than that of Pharaoh, led us on safely through a "great and terrible wilderness" more destitute of spiritual sustenance, and infested with more malignant foes than Canaanites, and defended us from more crafty wiles than those of Balaam, but loved us with the same love wherewith He loves the Son (John xvii. 26) and brought us into His own family and household (Eph. ii. 19), to have His companionship and care.

It is surely in season that, at the close of another stage of our wilderness journey, these great mercies of our God should be called to remembrance, and that, as we pass another milestone on the way, we raise our "Ebenezer" to the faithful God who has not failed or forsaken us, but borne us along, with garments fresh and feet unwearied, toward the country that we call our own, and the family home where loved ones gone before, whose pilgrim days are over, await us, in that holy, happy land. Let us call to remembrance the deliverances God has wrought, the mercies He has showered upon us, the patient love He has shown toward us, and the path of blessing along which He has led us, until our hearts swell with gratitude, and our lips burst forth in praise to the grace that has triumphed all the days.

"As saved by grace with joy we sing,
Till all the heavens and earth shall ring
With—GRACE TRIUMPHANT REIGNS."

Likeness to Christ.

BY CHAS. H. JORDAN, LONDON.

IN the first Chapter of the book of Genesis, verses 26 and 27, there are the following majestic statements, namely, "And God said, Let Us make man in our own image, after Our likeness. So God created man in His image, in the image of God created He him."

These statements are of immeasurable importance, but our familiarity with them has probably rendered us less able to appreciate their significance as fully as we might otherwise have done.

Nevertheless, it surely requires but little consideration to see how marvellous they are, and how they display the wondrous condescension and grace of the Creator in making man in His image and after His likeness; and in giving him beside, dominion over every living thing upon the earth. Upon man—the first Adam, was thus bestowed God's greatest honour. Oh, think of it, believer! What a glorious being, sinless man must then have been! In perfect fellowship and communion with God, having no desire nor inclination to do anything contrary to His will, but always doing those things that pleased Him, and constantly His delight!

But how brief was the period in which man possessed the image and the likeness! Sin came in, and in a moment they were destroyed. An awful change took place, and man, with a soul then dead in sin, became separated from God, and no longer fit to remain in His presence.

We pass to the fifth chapter of Genesis, and we find it stated there in verse 3, that Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." What an awful difference! The very words "image" and "likeness" are reversed in their order, which alone would seem to indicate that a change had taken place. No longer was it possible for man, born in the flesh, to possess the image and likeness of God.

But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. And thus it was that God, in His wondrous love and grace, provided a way in which fallen man could be redeemed. And so He sent forth His beloved Son, "made in the likeness of men" (Phil. ii. 7), and "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), thereby rendering it possible for sinful man by believing in the Son of God to obtain remission of sins, and to pass from a state of separation from God, into a condition of eternal union with Him.

The believer thus finds in Christ, the last Adam, a restoration of that which was forfeited by the first Adam, for He, the Lord Jesus, restored that which He took not away (Psa. lxxix. 4).

So, with blessed assurance, the apostle John says, "We shall be like Him" (1 John iii. 2). Like Him! Like whom? Like Him who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15); "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person" (Heb. i. 3).

The believer is further assured of this by the apostle Paul, who declared in his first epistle to the Corinthians (chap. xv. ver. 49), that "as we have borne the image

of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Again, in his epistle to the Romans (chap. viii., ver. 29), he says, "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." Dr. Mackay, in his delightful book on "Abundant Grace," says:—"We are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, and He will never be satisfied till we are so, and we shall never be satisfied till we wake in His likeness." Thus it is that the believer can through grace say with the Psalmist—"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness" (Psa. xvii. 15).

But in the meantime, during the little while between, what should be the attitude and the life of the believer? What is it that should characterise him? Can we not find an answer in Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, chap. iii., verse 18? There we have these words—"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now, what are we to understand here? First to be observed is, the "open face." There must be nothing between, for "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13). Our vision must be clear. Then the "beholding as in a glass," suggests that the object to be seen is that which is reflected in a mirror. By which we may understand that "the glory of the Lord" is to be seen reflected for us in the Scriptures. And by our meditation

therein, it will produce in us a likeness to Christ, "by the Spirit of the Lord;" "changed into the same image from glory to glory." There is here the idea of progress. This may be meant to apply to our life here, as illustrated by Prov. iv. 18—"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Or it may have reference to the beginning of apprehending the glory of the Lord here, with its full delight to be experienced when the answer is given to our Lord's prayer—"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me" (John xvii. 24).

Likeness to Christ in the believer is the result of companionship with his Lord. To be constantly in the company of another produces, as is well known, an agreement, more or less, in ideas, a conformity of character and a similarity in other respects, resulting not infrequently in likeness of expression.

To be like Christ, not only likeminded with Him (Phil. ii. 5), but to have His likeness expressed in our face, His image stamped upon our brow! What a privilege! What an honour! Oh, the grace of it! Oh the love of it! Think well about it, think much about it, dear fellow-believer. And by cultivating, through grace, a closer acquaintance with our blessed Lord and Master, seek to win such a heavenly distinction.

Sorrow and pain may leave their marks upon the face, but there will nevertheless be seen an expression that will reveal the

treasure within, possessed by the believer who is much in the company of his Lord.

How often, and with what joy it is, we recognise in the features of those who love their Lord, and are walking in true fellowship with Him, an evidence of the Divine likeness.

Now, the likeness to Christ in this life is a very real thing, and a very solemn thing too. For if we do not bear in our countenances some proof of our Divine relationship, our testimony for Christ may be marred, and our service for Him hindered. While it is true that we now bear the image of the earthy, yet, having been born again and thereby made children of God, there should surely be seen in us some manifestation of the change that has taken place. As the child so often bears the image of its earthly parent, in like manner there should be some traces of a likeness to Christ, not only in the life, but even in the countenance of the true believer.

It is well that we should most carefully and seriously consider this matter, the more so in view of the times in which we live; and also examine ourselves from time to time, in regard to our discipleship, our witness, and our service. We need to search our hearts, and see what are those things which are allowed in any way to rule and control our lives, apart from Christ. Are the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22-23) discernible in us? If so, there will assuredly be a reflection of them in our countenance. And above all, are we cultivating a close companionship with our Lord Jesus? For in so far as we do this, so far will there be seen in us a

likeness to Himself. The more we become acquainted with Him, and know of His love, so much the more shall we be conformed to His image.

But if this glimpse of love
Is so divinely sweet,
What will it be, O Lord, above,
Thy gladdening smile to meet—

To see Thee face to face,
Thy perfect likeness wear,
And all Thy ways of wondrous grace
Through endless years declare!

Sir E. Denny.

Christ's Work for His Own.

IN Ephesians v. 25-27 we read of three works of grace wrought by Christ for His Church—past, present, and future declarations of His unspeakable love. (1) The work that is past and finished—“having loved the Church, He gave Himself for it.” Such is the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins. He gave HIMSELF. Once and for ever, He offered the one sacrifice of Himself, which has “obtained eternal redemption for us.” (2) His present work, is He sanctifies, and cleanses His Church by the washing of water, by the Word. He loved the Church before He sanctified and cleansed it, and day by day, hour by hour, for nearly nineteen centuries, He has been the girded Servant used for the cleansing of His own. (3) His future work. He will present His Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but it should be holy and without blemish in that day of His espousals, and of the gladness of His heart.—*Frances Bevan.*

Jesus Christ,

THE INTERPRETER OF THE FATHER.

IV.—CHRIST AS THE HEALER.

WILLIAM HOSTE, B.A., LONDON.

THIS opens out an important enquiry as to the limitations imposed on our Lord's ministry of healing. Certainly there was no limitation as to power. Had not He who had "life in Himself," power over all disease and death? Must not all suffering therefore flee before Him? We do not find it so. His compassion and power did not express themselves in indiscriminate relief. The Son of God was manifested to destroy "the works of the devil" (1 John 3), but these must not be confused with the effects of sin. Sin and sins are the works of the devil; sickness and suffering are effects of sin, for the race directly, for the individual sometimes directly, but more often indirectly, as in the case of the blind man of the 9th of John, "for the glory of God, that the works of God might be made manifest in him." This should comfort those exposed to the erroneous teaching, that all sickness is a proof of unbelief, if not of positive sin in the sufferer. In such circles, bodily healing is the pivot of their religion, the hall mark of genuine faith. But this shows an ill-balanced grasp of the truth, a feeble sense of spiritual values. Physical healing was an accessory, not the essence of our Lord's ministry; a credential of His Messiahship, not like the resurrection, the crowning witness to His eternal Sonship. His miracles were a divine seal to His claims, and also to the testimony of His apostles,

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will" (Heb. ii. 4). Had He willed it, such signs would have continued. We have as a permanent witness, the record of them, as also of the Star of Bethlehem, the Herald Angels, the Resurrection, and the tongues at Pentecost. Far be it for us to discourage "faith in God;" we need more of it, in sickness as in health. But faith, based on a defective interpretation of the Word of God, easily becomes presumption and fanaticism. "Faith healers" seek to attach a Satanic stigma to all medicines by daubing them "drugs" and "not of God." Did Satan give to these their healing properties, or are they no less than the foods we eat "creations of God," to be received "with thanksgiving?" There is no antithesis between Divine healing and the use of "means." Even in James v. 14, the word "anoint" is the mundane word *aleithein*—not the sacred word *chriein* used for symbolical or religious anointings. Oil was and is recognised as a healing agent, in many countries. Was there ever a more direct Divine healing than that of Hezekiah? Fanaticism would have refused the fig plaster prescribed by Isaiah, but faith accepted and applied it. Now, some tell us, that if we use "means," we run the risk of denying the Name of the Lord as Jehovah-Ropheka—I am the Lord that healeth thee. But it has to be remembered that this promise was conditional—not on prayer and faith—but on obedience to Jehovah's commandments. And the promise was

not the cure of sickness when ill, but an immunity from it altogether. It is surely noteworthy that so radically anti-Christian sects such as "Christian Science," already referred to, while denying the Person and Work of Christ in any Scriptural sense, should appeal to New Testament miracles to substantiate their own claims to heal (Christ and His apostles did it, why not we? they argue), and so to be a divine revelation. But miracles may be Satanic, for the Antichrist will work miracles by the power of the dragon (Rev. xiii. 12-15). To remove by an act of power all the effects of sin, would neither be righteous or beneficial, and God nowhere pledges Himself to do it. That depends as far as man is concerned, on his attitude to God and his faith in Christ. In the dire effects of sin, we read its exceeding gravity. Suffering may lead sinners to God (Job xxxiii. 19-24), and if rightly borne, conforms the Christian to the image of Christ, and "yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness." The devil and his works have been judicially *destroyed by the death of Christ. It is only a question of time for this to be manifest to all. This disposes of the mistaken notion that sinning will continue for ever in the regions of the lost. The sinful nature will be unchanged, the will to sin as determined as ever, but never will one more commission of sin be permitted in the Universe, when once the lake of fire has closed on the impenitent. It would be a defective system, which

allowed criminals to commit in prison, the acts which brought them there.

Abel's Welcome in Heaven.

AS when the seeker findeth
 A pearl rich and rare,
 As when the reaper bindeth
 His first-reaped sheaf so fair;
 So bore they up to heaven,
 From Eden's sin-stained strand,
 The first by grace Divine forgiven,
 Home to his native land.

Up, from the place where martyr's gore
 Had stained the earth's green sod,
 Angelic hosts in triumph bare,
 To heaven, and home, and God;
 That first of Adam's fallen race,
 Redeemed by Jesus' blood,
 While seraphs gaze, in glad amaze,
 And learn the grace of God.

How warm the welcome he received
 In that celestial throng,
 Who learn the Gospel he believed,
 While listening to his song;
 And in adoring worship bow
 Before the heavenly throne,
 To own the great Redeemer's Name,
 And sound His praise alone.

They stand in robes unstained and bright
 Of creative righteousness,
 Unfallen from their place in light,
 And primal holiness;
 But he, redeemed by precious blood,
 By sovereign grace forgiven,
 Leads off a song unheard before,
 The sweetest song in heaven.

O sinner! saved by grace through faith,
 The first that grace to sing—
 And with the new redemption song
 Make heavenly arches ring;
 I soon with thousands more, shall stand
 With thee around the throne,
 To own in that bright heavenly land,
 Our title, Christ alone.

* Not annihilated, but annulled, that is, rendered inactive, innocuous, or of none effect (cf. Rom. iii. 3; iv. 14; 1 Cor. i. 28, etc.).

A Fixed Heart.

WILLIAM RODGERS, OMAGH.

TURN to Psalm cviii., the psalm of the fixed heart, and read it through. Does it not appear to be closely connected in every part? Nowhere is there a break in the sense, and had we only the internal evidence to judge by, we could come to no other conclusion than that it was composed as one united whole.

Now turn to Psalms lvii. and lx., and examine the latter portion of each. What do we find? That Psalm cviii., which was so apparently one, has been formed by joining together, almost word for word, the two pieces that end the former psalms.

It is interesting to note how easily this has been done, and how invisible is the joint between the two parts; but it becomes still more deeply interesting, when we examine the title words of Psalm lvii. and Psalm lx. respectively, and realise how different were the circumstances under which the two were written. The former, gives David's experience in the cave, when he fled from Saul. It was written at a period when he was a fugitive, in constant danger of his life, and when, in the eyes of men such as selfish Nabal, he was but a runaway servant. In Psalm lx., on the contrary, we find him in the midst of the greatest victories of his career. He had become king over the entire nation, and was being helped of God to subdue Israel's enemies.

Yet, in these two psalms, his heart experiences of trusting in God, and giving glory to God, are so similar, that they can

be brought together in this Psalm cviii., without the slightest jar in the harmony. Of another we read that "he was marvellously helped of God until he was strong, but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up." But we find the same humble, trusting, praising David, at the head of Israel's armies in 2 Sam. viii., that we have previously met with in the cave—in 1 Sam. xxii—a despised and rejected man.

Now, suppose we try to fit together in this manner, our own heart-breathings in the various circumstances of our lives. Would they form a modern Psalm cviii., or would they prove to be a sort of crazy patchwork of grumblings, and trustings, and boastings. Like David we, as we sometimes speak of it, have "our ups and downs." But do we always maintain our confidence in God when "down," and our lowly humility when "up"? Or do we, on the one hand, as in Psalm xxxi. 32, say in our alarm, "I am cut off from before Thine eyes;" and on the other, as in Psalm xxx. 6, say in our prosperity, "I shall never be moved?" It is very human to think and talk in these ways. But it is a poor testimony to our unchanging, all-sufficient God, who can uphold us when passing through the deepest waters, as easily as at any other time, and whose care we cannot afford to be without, even in our most prosperous moments. Let us see to it, brethren, that in every extreme, whether up or down, we can join with David in Psalm cviii. and say, "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory." This is surely well-pleasing to Him.

The Church in the Gospels.

FOURTH, AND CLOSING PAPER.

WE pass next in our closing meditation, to a point beyond Gethsemane, Calvary, and the tomb, and listen to words from the lips of the living Lord, as He stands in resurrection power in the midst of His own. He is about to ascend up where He had been before. But the testimony to righteousness in holy living, the testimony by mouth concerning God, and the testimony by mighty deeds to God's power, was not to be withdrawn. Brightly indeed had these things been seen in Him, and gloriously had God been declared by Him. But this testimony and this power were to be perpetuated in the world during His personal absence, by the Holy Spirit working in and through His Church.

In John xx. 21, we see that Church to be set up by Him under the figure of a candlestick (Rev. i. 20), to diffuse the light derived from Himself when He had departed. In His words, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you," we see it as His representative (compare John xvii. 18) left on earth, to declare Him in word (John xv. 27), and show Him forth in life (1 Pet. ii. 9), even as He had set forth the Father in word (John iii. 34) and in deed (John x. 32).

The Holy Ghost was breathed into them for only the Spirit of God is able to work in and through believers those things that are pleasing in God's sight. It was by the Spirit that the Lord Jesus Himself as Man did His "mighty works" (Matt.

xii. 28; Acts x. 38). The Holy Spirit also would be needed to guide them in dealing with difficulties and evils (cf. Matt. xviii. 18) that might arise in their midst. In the very striking incident recorded in Acts xiii. 8-11, the Apostle Paul, when charging Elymas with his sin, and pronouncing its punishment, was acting under the present filling and power of the Holy Spirit. And so, in solemn case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts v., there he was to the Holy Spirit indwelling the Church in which they were.

We have thus glanced at four things, borne witness to in the Gospels, concerning the Church. We have seen its formation, its investiture with the authority of the Name of the Lord Jesus, the fact that it is "His own" prized possession, His Bride, and that it is His representative on earth during the time of His absence. These four things have each a corresponding quality attaching thereto. The formation — the temple character — shows our wonderful *privileges*. The power of the Name our *dignity* and *holiness* in Him. The fact of being "His own" in our *joy* — a full one indeed; while to be the representatives of Christ here on earth tells the measure of our *responsibility*. Blessed, yet solemn, are the truths set forth in these earliest mentions of the place and portion of the saints of this present time from the lips of the Lord Himself, afterwards amplified and practically set forth in the Epistles. May our hearts be exercised by them and our experiences and testimony according to them, all the days of our sojourn here, "Till He come."

F. T.

The Temple and the Glory,

IN IMMANUEL'S LAND.

CLOSE on 2500 years ago, the God of Israel showed to His prophet Ezekiel, in vision, the frame of a city (Ezek. xl. 2), and gave to him the plan of a temple, both of which have yet to be seen, in the land of Israel. This will be the millennial city of Jerusalem, and the sanctuary described so fully in Ezekiel chapters xl.-xlii., which is to be filled with glory, the place where Jehovah will "dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever" (chap. xliii. 7). It will stand in the very centre of Immanuel's land, visible to all, "exalted above the hills," a house of prayer for all nations, and to it all nations shall "flow" to worship. That this is a literal city and temple need not be questioned, seeing their actual measurements are minutely given, and their position in the centre of the twelve tribes when settled in the land, so marked out by the Word of the Lord to the prophet. The city named "the Holy Jerusalem," described in Rev. xxi., is symbolic of the church in resurrection glory during the millennial reign, *above* the earth, yet within view of it, whose light streams down on this earthly Jerusalem *below*, in whose light its dwellers and the nations around shall walk, and their kings come to hail its brightness and call it the "city of the Lord." Then and thus shall the great prophetic declarations of Isaiah lx. 1-20 be literally fulfilled—not in "the enlargement of the Church," as the uninspired headlines of our Bibles tell us, but in Jerusalem, the earthly metropolis of Messiah's kingdom, in the land where once

He wandered a homeless stranger, where stood His rugged Cross, and the rock-hewn tomb in which His body lay. In "the Heavenly Jerusalem," as it was shown to John while an exile in Patmos, he tells us, "I saw no temple therein"—for there all is temple, and all is glory. The Lamb, who is the light and the glory of that heavenly city, shines equally through all, diffusing His light over the whole, and equally near to all. And Jerusalem below, upon which the glory of the heavenly city shines, and in which the nations walk has a derived light. It comes from the Lamb, who is its source, and is radiated through His glorified saints, who form the New Jerusalem, upon the earthly city. Then it is, the earthly people shall thereby learn the meaning of the wondrous words which came from the lips of the Lord, uttered under the shadow of His Cross, "The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them." The saints here on earth and now, ought to be as "luminaries" (Phil. ii. 15), "like stars in a dark world" (Moffat's Translation), shedding forth a heavenly light, but *THERE*, in their own native clime, transformed fully into the image of their Lord, with nothing between, nothing to mar or hinder, they themselves "having the glory of God," being filled with it to overflowing, shed it forth on the earthly people, in their city and their land, and thus the great prophetic word will be fulfilled—"the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." And thus, too, in fullest, grandest measure, shall it be known to all created beings, that

"The Lamb is all the Glory in Immanuel's Land."

The Preacher and Bible Students' Column.

OUTLINES OF EVANGELISTIC SUBJECTS.

CHRIST AS SUFFERING SAVIOUR.

Predicted and Promised (Gen. iii. 15 ; Matt. i. 21).
Presented in Type and Shadow (Exod. xii. 5. 9).
Portrayed in Prophecy and Psalm (Isa. liii. 4 ; Psa. xxii.)
Proclaimed in the Gospel (Acts ii. 22-32 ; x. 37-43).

THE VIRTUES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

He put away sin by His sacrifice (Heb. ix. 26).
He tasted Death for every man (Heb. ii. 9).
He made Peace by His blood (Col. i. 20).
He gave Himself a Ransom for all (1 Tim. ii. 6).
He obtained eternal Redemption for us (Heb. ix. 12).

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

It was Procured by Christ's death (Rom. v. 9).
It is Brought to man by God's grace (Tit. ii. 11).
It is Made Known in the Gospel (Eph. i. 12).
It is Received by faith (Eph. ii. 8).
It is Assured by the Word (Isa. xii. 2).
It is Enjoyed by the receiver (Psa. ix. 14).
It is Shown Forth in the believer (Psa. xcvi. 2).

CONCISE BIBLE THEMES FOR STUDY.

PETER'S THREE VITAL TRUTHS.

Redemption, by the Blood of Christ (1 Pet. i. 19).
Regeneration, by the Word of God (1 Pet. i. 23).
Resurrection by Almighty Power (1 Pet. i. 3).

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIESTS.

Appointed, at His Resurrection (Heb. v. 10).
Enthroned, in His Glorification (Heb. viii. 1).
Faithful, in His Administration (Heb. ii. 17).
Merciful, in His Dispensation (Heb. ii. 17).

CHRIST'S SHEPHERD CARE.

He Feeds His Flock like a Shepherd (Isa. xl. 11).
He Leads His Sheep in right paths (Psa. xxiii. 3).
He keeps and will not yield His sheep (John x. 28).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Would it be pleasing to God, for a group of young Christian lads to associate themselves as a choir, to sing at semi-secular, semi-religious tea-meetings, in which there is a little Gospel allowed, but also a good deal of frivolity and levity practised ?

Can " a group of young Christian lads," or any one of them, point to any part of the Word of God, where those who have been severed from the present evil world by the Cross of Christ, and set among the unconverted as witnesses for their absent Lord, are told to act as entertainers of the ungodly, and so help the devil to make them happy in their sins and on their downward way to the pit. It is claimed by those who go in for this half-religious, half-secular sort of thing, that they thereby " catch " large audiences to hear the Gospel. We have never heard of real, abiding work for God, having the seal of His hand upon it, in genuine conversions, resulting from such operations, nor do we expect to hear of them. God does not associate His Gospel with " frivolity," nor does the Holy Ghost use " levity " in doing His work in the conversion of sinners. He uses the Gospel preached and declared by the lips of clean and Spirit-filled men, through vessels " meet for the Master's use," but no other. Keep yourselves free and apart from all the half-religious, half-secular Saturday evening " teas " and " socials " which are supposed to act as inducements to non-churchgoers to attend the " ordinary menas of grace," but which, in actual fact, are the greatest hindrances in existence to genuine evangelistic work, and more effectually do the devil's work than openly ungodly cinemas and concert halls. If you want to reach the careless crowd with the Gospel, go to them with it. If you can gather the needy and hungry, providing them with a free tea, following up with a simple Gospel message, and some Gospel hymns declaring the way of life and peace—as has been done for long, with blessed results—go on, and God will bless your efforts. But have nothing to do with these mixed and mongrel entertainments, in which " the Gospel " is used as a flavouring to silly recitations and more than questionable songs with a " moral." We know of some sad cases of backsliding followed by open departure from God, which began in the atmosphere of these half-religious " socials " and the like, but not of a single case in which spirituality was increased, and godliness fostered among those whose habit it is to share in them. There is ample room for work, and plenty of scope and need for true Gospel testimony, in which Christian young men and maidens may share, on clean and Scriptural lines, where God can bless, and happily these are being taken advantage of in increasing measure, but NOT UNDER AN UNEQUAL YOKE with the worldly, or according to their ways, or those of its Babylonish religion.

Answers to Correspondents.

ALEPH.—"The faith" in its fulness has been "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3, R.V.). No part of it has become obsolete, nothing is to be altered in it, nothing added to it. It is ours to "guard" and "contend earnestly" for it, not to let it slip, or sit in idle indifference while it is dishonoured or disowned. He is a poor watch-dog who does not bark when his master's property is in danger.

W. G., CUMB.—Not all who call themselves Christians are to be accredited as such—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Hence the need for discernment, and information, before one who is an utter stranger is "commended" to an assembly of God's people. Yet, how often it is done, with ruinous results.

G. H. R., GLASGOW.—The "overseers" of an assembly "labour among" (1 Thess. v. 12) the saints, and the character of the rule they exercise is shepherd rule, feeding and tending the flock (1 Pet. v. 2), all personally known (John x. 14) to them. The idea of a selection from among these, acting as an inner circle, or Cabinet, is unknown to Scripture, and should be unrecognised and disallowed by assemblies. In spirit and character, all such super-rulers have their pattern in Rome.

D. S., DUBLIN.—"The Christian Sabbath" is not a Scriptural term. Nor can it be claimed—although it is often asserted—that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the "first day of the week," at the resurrection of Christ. The Jew keeps the Sabbath still; the Christian observes "the Lord's day" (Rev. i. 10), not as "under law," but in the liberty of grace, using its hallowed hours in worship Godward, good works manward, and in personal meditation on the Word of God for the refreshment of his own soul. Whatever would we do, if we had not the holy privileges of the Lord's Day? Set your face against all desecration of it. And give no countenance to any practice that tends to "secularise" it, not even the buying of a Sunday newspaper.

Letters to the Editor.

A Colonial Visitor's Testimony.

"I am in my native town in the Midlands of England, on a brief visit from Queensland. It is full twenty years since I left for the sunny South, and I find many changes in men and things. Most

of all in the spiritual kingdom, I see and feel there has been a great decline. The 'churches' are overrun with worldliness. The Gospel, in its simplicity, is hardly heard. Evangelical preaching is a rare thing indeed. Most of the popular preachers seem to be quite ignorant of what their hearers need, and the people, being tired of their worthless sermons and weary with their incessant begging for frivolous objects, have largely ceased to go to hear them. The one bright light in the place I found in a little group of simple, godly souls, who were in the habit of meeting twice a week to read the Word of God and pray together, in a working man's humble home. I casually heard of them through a relative, and went to seek them out. It was indeed a joy to meet these warm-hearted saints of God. They were seeking after God, and He was leading them on in His ways. Some of them had seen it to be the will of God to sever themselves from the world's religion, but they had not seen the way, or were afraid to launch forth in gathering as an assembly of believers in the Lord's Name alone, with no distinctive or sectarian name, without a minister, simply counting on the living Lord in heaven, and the indwelling Spirit in their midst on earth, to be unto them all they needed to enable them to carry out God's will as an assembly of His there in the place where they lived. I told them as simply and Scripturally as I could, how we began away in the Australian bush, to gather in the Name, how God blessed us, multiplied our numbers, and helped us to continue steadfastly "in His ways." They seemed greatly cheered, and to my unspeakable joy I have just heard, that about twenty now assemble outside of all sects, quite apart from the popular religious organisations of the town, in an upper room, where they seek to carry out the will of the Lord, in His worship and work, according to the teaching of the Word, telling out the Gospel to the unconverted, and testifying to all the truths they have learned from the Book of God. I believe there are many such, who just need a word of help and encouragement to take their stand for God, in separation from the world's religion, counting on the Lord to lead them on, in order to see such companies arise where as yet there are none. It is no question of forming new denominations, but of getting back to where the early Christians stood, with the Word of God in the hands, ready to follow where it leads, and to do whatsoever it commands. May it be ours to help on all such work for God.

S. M.

Retrospect and Reminiscences of Thirty Years.

It was in January, 1891, that the first number of **The Believer's Magazine** came into the hands of its subscribers—mostly young believers who had been converted to God, and brought into assemblies gathering in the Lord's Name, throughout the British Isles, Canada, the United States of America, and the Australasian Colonies. A remarkable and continuous work of grace, which had been in progress for a number of years, had brought thousands of newborn souls into God's household and churches, in need of food convenient for them—that warm, sincere milk of God's Word, whereby they grow, with sound and wholesome ministry of "All God's Truth to all God's people," excluding nothing that is found in the Book. It was to meet this need, and as we "assuredly gathered" at the call of the Lord, that **The Believer's Magazine** appeared, and received a warm and full acceptance from the *Lord's people, the wide world over*. *Ready helpers* took up the work of introducing and commending it in the assemblies. Able and accredited servants of the Lord voluntarily gave of their best to fill and to enrich its pages, each according to his line of things, and while there was in their ministry the utmost diversity, yet all was in perfect harmony, for all had been taught by the one Spirit, from the one Book. And so there was "one sound" (2 Chron. v. 13), and that of no "uncertain" (1 Cor. xiv. 8) kind, with the happy result, that a large measure of blessed oneness of heart and mind (Acts iv. 32), and of united testimony (Rom. xv. 6), was enjoyed in the assemblies of the saints during those years. Among our esteemed helpers and contributors to the Magazine in its early issues, were Thomas Newberry, J. R. Caldwell, Dr. Thomas Neathy, Donald Ross, Alfred J. Holiday, and others of blessed memory, all of whom have entered on their rest "with Christ." For nine years, the Magazine was continued in its original size, and then a desire was expressed by most of its contributors, and by many of its subscribers, to have it enlarged to its present size, affording greater space for its ministries, and adding quite a number of new features, including full and far-extending reports of the Lord's work, greater variety in ministry of the Lord's Word, and special columns devoted to the answering of Biblical questions, dealing with common difficulties in personal and assembly life, with wise counsel to young Christians on every day matters, concerning which they continually were seeking help. In this department the ever-ready counsel and help of W. H. Hunter, Dr. J. A.

Owles, W. R. Lewis, Wm. Hoste, and many others, was generously given, and very much appreciated by our readers. For twenty-one years more, **The Believer's Magazine** has held on its way, completing with its present issue its **Thirtieth Year**. Its circulation has continued to steadily advance without a single back-set. And it finds its way among new subscribers year after year, chiefly by the commendations of those who are in sympathy with its ministry, and who desire to see its message being placed in the hands of fellow-believers of their acquaintance, and in the assemblies where they are. We need scarcely say, that it has not escaped the common lot of all such testimony—the hostile criticism of those who "teach otherwise" (1 Tim. vi. 3). But we can assure those who have given themselves to this work, that they have not "injured us at all" (Gal. iv. 12), but on the contrary, *helped to bring the Magazine to the notice of some who did not know it, and thus assisted to increase its circulation, so that the word is still verified, "We can do nothing AGAINST the truth, but FOR the truth" (2 Cor. xiii. 8). With advancing years and diminishing vigour, we more than ever value and appreciate the hearty fellowship we so continuously receive from beloved brethren, who possess and use "the pen of a ready writer" in contributing fresh and seasonable papers to these pages: from "fellow-helpers with the truth" in every assembly, who seek to further our circulation; to those who supply us with reliable Reports of the Lord's work in their midst, and to the many who, in continuous prayer and intercession, keep us and this service before the Lord, when before the Throne of Grace. For we are well assured that if any fresh and vitalising word of ministry, any word of godly cheer, any rill of heavenly refreshing come to the souls of those who read these pages month by month, these must come along the course of that fructifying stream that "flows from the throne of God and the Lamb," the outflow of a ministry which is of and in "the Spirit of the Lord." With our greetings to, and good wishes for all our readers, the wide world over, we gratefully close another year.*

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.—As a convenience to those who may forget to send a renewal of their Orders for Magazines, before the January issue goes forth, we will send the same number as in 1920. Kindly let all permanent changes and new orders reach us, as early as possible.