HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith

VOL. XXXII.

NEW YORK
LOIZEAUX BROTHERS, BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

1 East 13th Street

1914

Printed at the Bible Truth Press, 1 & 3 East 13th Street New York

CONTENTS

A Letter on the use of Wine at the Lord's Supper	21
A Man of God	
A Warning to Parents	305
A Word for the Young	192
A Word of Warning	27
A Word on 1 Cor. 9: 27	245
An Ecclesiastical Trilemma 47, 66	3, 99
Answers to Correspondents, 28, 56, 82, 109, 139, 163, 193, 224, \cdot 250, 308,	, 330
Apostolic Faith Missions and the so-called Second Pentecost.	6, 35
"Be Careful for Nothing"	301
Editor's Notes, 1, 29, 57, 85, 113, 141, 169, 197, 225, 253,	309
"Every Word of God is Pure"	
Extract from a Letter	62
Fragment of a Letter to a Christian passing through Temptations Fragments	
-	
Gilgal, the Valley of Actor, and Bochim	
Growing up nuto Christ	189
How to Learn Truth	19
Inventions and Calamities	279
Letters to a Roman Catholic Priest 74, 132, 156,	180
Our Growth in Grace	326
Poetry:—	
"A Solitary Way—the Right Way"	
"Beloved of God"	
"Consider Him"	260

Poetry:—Continued.	
Guided	30'
"I have a goodly Heritage"	238
Living Water	15
"My Times Are in Thy Hands"	20
One that I know in Heaven	
Ready	14
Remember	63
"Sing aloud unto God our Strength"	319
Sunny Land	
The Light of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ	269
The Psalms	
The Young Christian	208
Readings on the First Epistle of John, 15, 42, 63, 93, 121, 147, 172, 201, 239, 262, 292,	320
That the Scriptures might be fulfilled	
That are peribentes undue pe tormica:	249
The Christian and the World	
	208
The Christian and the World	208 230
The Christian and the World	208 230 177
The Christian and the World	208 230 177 117
The Christian and the World The Closing Scene at the Spanish Inquisition The Heavenly Calling. The Lord's Speedy Return and the Gospel.	208 230 177 117
The Christian and the World The Closing Scene at the Spanish Inquisition The Heavenly Calling. The Lord's Speedy Return and the Gospel. The One Coming as a Thicf.	208 230 177 117 288 25
The Christian and the World The Closing Scene at the Spanish Inquisition The Heavenly Calling. The Lord's Speedy Return and the Gospel. The One Coming as a Thicf. The Ostrich and the Eagle.	208 230 177 117 288 25 216
The Christian and the World The Closing Scene at the Spanish Inquisition The Heavenly Calling. The Lord's Speedy Return and the Gospel. The One Coming as a Thief. The Ostrich and the Eagle. The Sufferings of Christ. When did the Coming of the Lord become an Any-moment	208 230 177 117 288 25 216

EDITOR'S NOTES

As we write, another year is well-To our llow-laborers nigh gone, and a new one about to To all our fellow-servants and iwn upon us. lpers of every kind in the service of this magane, we send with the new year our hearty greetgs. We feel like saying to each one, in the lanlage of the Psalmist, "The Lord hear thee in the y of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob dend thee: send thee help from the sanctuary, and rengthen thee out of Zion; remember all thine ferings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice. Grant ee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy unsel . . . The Lord fulfil all thy petitions" (Ps. : 1-5). Are not the wishes of Scripture more tisfying than all others?

The year 1913 has been full of encouragement, and e wish to make you sharers of it, for it renews surage to see the Lord blessing our labor. It has en truly cheering to hear from various parts of e land, and beyond, from persons who have reived special blessing through this or that number HELP AND FOOD, or through this or that special ticle in a given number. What a joy, beloved ethren, to be able, through grace, to feed the ck of God. It is well worth while to go through averful exercise about what we may choose as bjects best suited to the needs of that flock, and r ability to develop them to edification. Likeijah, who forgot none in Israel, but used twelve ones in building his altar, let us never lose sight the whole Church of God when we write.

it has pleased the Lord to make us His prisoner of

late. Not that we would compare our prison with that of the beloved apostle, for ours is under most loving care and happy circumstances. Nevertheless it has been confinement, and has prevented our usual course of labor. Recent years have been strenuous; weighty matters being added to the ordinary course of ministry, and the earthen vessel has called for rest. When questions arise involving either welfare or disaster to the people of God, how can one who loves them at all fail to pass through soul-exercise? Who can see, for instance, the present tendencies of church union without being stirred through and through?

The light that shined in the Reformation and formed a fresh testimony for Christ is fast going out. The proof of this is seen in the unconcern manifested in that union movement. It plays fast and loose with the idolatrous system of Popery, and cannot see the ditch into which Higher Criticism is carrying it. Like tendencies in narrower circles produce like exercises, only more keen as they come nearer to the great Centre of all truth.

How solemn is all this! How serious it ought to make us! Oh, young men, you who are strong, and in whom the word of God abides, throw away every frivolous thing and identify yourselves without reserve with the testimony of Christ. Accept its responsibilities and sorrows; live no more for yourselves. As to joys, God will see to it that they will not fail you under the burden, and how blessed in eternity it will be to look back upon a path where Christ was all—Christ, the only lasting blessing of man, though, alas, so much refused by man. You will be poor in that path, yet you will make others

rich, and in your poverty you will prove your heavenly Father's care in a way which will form sweet links with Him, and make His word so true in every jot and tittle that it will make you have deep pity for those who doubt it.

At the hour of writing, His good Hand in the prospective restoration of our health makes us rejoice at the thought of mingling with you again in the great and glorious conflict of this testimony.

Yet if one's sphere of service is curtailed by being a prisoner of the Lord, labor through the press remains, and we know how truly God owns it by the blessing which He gives through it. It was therefore no small pleasure upon returning to New York in a disabled condition to find the publishing work in fullest activity in every department of it. The Press can never take the place of the living voice, yet it fills a place which the living voice cannot fill. It goes everywhere, in palaces of kings, the dwellings of the poor, and in the cabins of woodsmen. It finds its way among the scattered farm-houses as well as in the towns and villages and cities. The very choicest of Christian ministry is thus made available everywhere at a very small cost, and, through Christian liberality, even free where needful. Each one of us has a responsibility, in prayer and in writing, to help keep it true to its name, "The Bible Truth Press." O brethren, what a treasure to keep, the Truth is!-to keep it for our own souls and for the testimony of our Lord in the world. Shall we not then all unite our prayers for the publishing work, that divine wisdom may be given to those in charge of it for the matter to be or not to be published?—for that

responsibility rests upon publishers. When our Lord comes again it will be no small matter to have had a share in what maintained His truth in the world.

Let us seek to write pointedly, and as briefly as is consistent with lucidity. It is good to have something to say for the Lord, and having said it to stop. Let not a multiplicity of words detract from what the Lord would use.

Finally, let us not shrink from the needed controversy necessitated by abounding departure from truth; but let us never forget that it is *positive* truth which builds up the souls of God's people, and preserves, or delivers, from error.

Ever yours affectionately in Christ,

PAUL J. LOIZEAUX.

WHAT IS LIGHT?

IGHT is one substance with three properties—the actinic, luminous, and caloric. In spite of the fact that the properties of light are distinct they cannot be separated from each other. Where the one is, the others are. Where the actinic is, the luminous and the caloric are, etc. The actinic can neither be seen nor felt. The caloric cannot be seen, but may be felt. The luminous is both seen and felt, and is the revelation of the other two.

What an absurdity it would be to reject any two of these properties and call the remaining one "Light!" Nay! light is one and yet three. It is three, and yet one.

And Holy Scripture says, "God is light."

God is one substance—one God, yet three Persons
—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In spite of the
fact that the personalities are distinct, they cannot
be separated from each other. Where the one is,
the others are. The Father can neither be seen
nor felt. The Spirit cannot be seen, but may be
felt. The Son can both be seen and felt, and is
the revelation and the expression of the other two.

What an absurdity it would be to reject any two of these Persons of the Godhead, and call the remaining One "God!" Nay! God is one, and yet three. God is three, and yet one.

And these three distinct Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are one God, in which we neither confound the Persons nor divide the substance. And these three in the one infinite Godhead work out, in their indivisible unity, redemption, right-eousness, and final glory in the name of Christ, and in their unity alone make Christianity possible.

A mystery! Beyond all question. And what would God be without mystery? What would God be whose infinity a finite mind could grasp?

-Extracted.

"LET one in his innocence glory,
Another in works he has done—
Thy Blood is my claim and my title,
Beside it, O Lord, I have none.
The Scorned, the Despised, the Rejected,
Thou hast won Thee this heart of mine;
In Thy robes of eternal glory
Thou welcomest me to Thine."

APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSIONS

and the so-called

SECOND PENTECOST

I N the month of April, 1906, a little band composed chiefly of colored people were praying together in a mission-hall on Azusa street in Los Angeles. Some of them had heard of a recent peculiar happening in Kansas, where a strange power had taken possession of a man and he had been apparently made to speak in tongues. Day after day and night after night these people, who thought they recognized in this a sign of a second Pentecost cried earnestly to God for a similar manifestation. and at last the "power" fell. One by one they were taken possession of by a superhuman energy that made them at times insensible to all around, and caused them to pour forth a torrent of strange sounds, often monosyllabic gibberish; and again somewhat connected expressions that seemed to be in strange languages. Their joy knew no bounds. To them had been committed, so they believed, the ushering in of the "Latter Rain" dispensation—the final Pentecost to close up the present age.

Excitement ran high, and from far and near mission workers, ministers and others came to investigate. For months meetings were kept up almost continuously, and hundreds received the same mysterious power. Many came in as skeptics, and went away convinced that they had indeed seen a marvelous manifestation of divine energy. Many came to scoff and ridicule, but were soon on their knees, beating the floor, crying in anguish and beseeching

God for a like gift; and of these great numbers spoke in "tongues."

Like wild-fire the movement spread in all directions. Through missions it was carried all over America and across the seas. In India and other heathen lands the same power was manifested and in the same way.

As time has gone on, thousands once in the full current of the movement have withdrawn from it; but thousands more fill their places. Those who have left tell various stories. Some say it was all nervous excitement, a mere hysterical condition with nothing supernatural at all. The "tongues" were no tongue, only a Callomania, a weird dervishlike excitement leading to wild incoherent utterances unlike any language known to man. Others say a tremendous supernatural power is working and they fear to condemn, yet dare no longer endorse it as they have seen such mixed effects from its presence. Many are certain they have been misled by the direct power of Satan, performing "lying wonders" in order to deceive if possible the very elect; and they now shrink from the whole thing in horror, feeling humiliated and deeply repentant as they think of ever having been ensnared in it.

Lately, divisions have been rife among the Pentecostal people, and the adherents of the various parties roundly anathematize one another, but they all have the same marvellous sign of speaking in tongues. Each party declares the "tongues" are of the devil when found among their adversaries. The warring sects stand for the affirmation or denial of special teaching. One party are annihila-

tionists; the rest are strong not only on the orthodox doctrine of everlasting punishment of unrepentant sinners, but often declare the eternal damnation of all who fail to receive the gift of tongues. One party is radical on the so-called holiness question, teaching the eradication of all inbred sin prior to the reception of the baptism of the Spirit. These set forth a definite statement of doctrines, to most of which enlightened Christians could subscribe, but with just enough of their own strange system to make them a very dangerous counterfeit, if not really of God. From the "Apostolic Faith," published in Portland, Oregon, I clip this doctrinal statement:

"We preach Christ, His birth, His baptism, His works, His teachings, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His ascension, His second coming, His millennial reign, His white throne judgment, and the new heavens and new earth when He shall have put all enemies under His feet, and shall reign eternally, and we shall abide with Him forever and ever.

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD—Acts 20: 21. Repentance is godly sorrow for sin (2 Cor. 7: 10; Mk. 1: 15).

RESTITUTION—The blood of Jesus will never blot out any sin that we can make right. We must have a conscience void of offense toward God and man. Restitution includes restoring where you have defrauded or stolen, paying back debts, and confession (Lk. 19: 8, 9; Ezek. 33: 15).

JUSTIFICATION is that act of God's free grace by which we receive remission of sins (Acts 10: 43; Rom. 5: 1; Rom. 3: 26; Acts 13: 38, 39; John 1: 12; John 3: 3).

SANCTIFICATION is that act of God's grace by which Hc makes us holy.* It is a second, definite work wrought

^{*} As to this I can here only refer the inquiring to my book, "Holiness: the False and the True." Same publishers.

by the blood of Jesus through faith (John 17: 15, 17; 1 Thess. 4: 3; Heb. 13: 12; Heb. 2: 11; Heb. 12: 14; 1 Jno. 1: 7).

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST is the gift of power upon the sauctified life (Lk. 24: 49; Matt. 3: 11; John 7: 38, 39; John 14: 16, 17, 26; Acts 1: 5, 8).

And when we receive it, we have the same sign or Bible evidence as the disciples had on the day of Pentecost, speaking with tongues, as the Spirit gives utterance (Mk. 16: 17; 1 Cor. 14: 21, 22). Examples—Acts 2: 4; Acts 10: 45; Acts 19: 6.

Healing of the Body—Sickness and disease are destroyed through the precious atonement of Jesus (Isa. 53: 4, 5; Matt. 8: 17; Mk. 16: 18; Jas. 5: 14-16). All sickness is the work of the devil, which Jesus came to destroy (1 John 3: 8; Lk. 13: 16; Acts 10: 38). Jesus cast out devils, and commissioned His disciples to do the same (Mk. 16: 17; Lk. 10: 19; Mk. 9: 25, 26).

THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS—The return of Jesus is just as literal as His going away (Acts 1: 9-11; John 14:8). There will be two appearances under one coming; first, to catch away His waiting bride (Matt. 24: 40-44 and 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17), and second, to execute judgment upon the ungodly (2 Thess. 1: 7-10; Jude 14 and 15 Zech. 14: 3, 4).

ORDINANCES. 1st. WATER BAPTISM BY IMMERSION (SINGLE)—Jesus went down into the water and came up out of the water, giving us an example that we should follow (Matt. 3: 16; Acts 8: 38, 39; Matt. 28: 19; Rom. 6: 4, 5; Col. 2: 12).

2nd. THE LORD'S SUPPER—Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper that we might "show His death till He comes" (1 Cor. 11: 23-26; Lk. 22: 17-20; Matt. 26: 26-29). It brings healing to our bodies if we discern the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11: 29, 30).

Srd. WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET—Jesus said: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you" (John 13: 14, 15).

THE TRIBULATION—Jesus prophesied a great tribulation such as was not from the beginning of the world (Matt. 24: 21, 22, 29; Rev. 9; Rev. 16; Isa. 26: 20, 21; Mal. 4: 1).

CHRIST'S MILLENNIAL REIGN is the 1000 years of the literal reign of Jesus on this earth. It will be ushered in by the coming of Jesus back to earth with ten thousands of His saints (Jude 14, 15; 2 Thess. 1:7-10). During this time the devil will be bound (Rev. 20: 2, 3). It will be a reign of peace and blessing (Isa. 11: 6-9; Isa. 65: 25; Hos. 2: 18; Zech. 14: 9, 20; Isa. 2: 2-4).

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT—Rev. 20: 11-14. God will judge the quick and dead according to their works (Rev. 20: 11-14; Dan. 12: 2; Acts 10: 42).

NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH—The Word teaches that this earth, which has been polluted by sin, shall pass away after the White Throne Judgment, and God will make a new heaven and new earth in which righteousness shall dwell (Matt. 24: 35; 2 Pct. 3: 12, 13; Rev. 21: 1-3; Isa. 65: 17; Isa. 66: 22.)

ETERNAL HEAVEN AND ETERNAL HELL—The Bible teaches that hell is as eternal as heaven (Matt. 25: 41, 46). The wicked shall be cast into a burning hell, a lake of fire burning with brimstone forever and ever (Rev. 14: 10, 11; Lk. 16: 24; Mk. 9: 43, 44).

No DIVORCE—The Word teaches that marriage is binding for life. Under the New Testament law, the law of Christ, there is but one cause for separation, fornication, and no right to marry again while the first companion lives (Matt. 5: 31, 32; Matt. 19: 9; Mk. 10: 11, 12; Lk. 16: 18; Rom. 7: 2, 3).

These are the doctrines that were revealed from heaven and preached in the out-pouring of the Spirit in Los Angeles, April, 1906. God has been pouring out His Spirit on the preaching of the full Gospel ever since, confirming the Word with signs following."*

^{*} Observe that in this whole confession Jesus is never called Lord, nor God Father.

Another large sect utterly repudiates the second blessing theory (and with these many of the original mission are connected) and loudly proclaims "the finished work." This sounds well, but the reader may be surprised to learn that the scriptural term "the finished work" does not, when used by them, refer to Christ's finished work on the cross, the basis of all our hope; but to a finished work in the believer whereby he is justified from his sins and freed from all inward carnality by one operation, and he is thus ready at once for the "pentecostal experience."

Some press baptism in water as a pre-requisite for the gift of the Spirit; others hold tongues may be given independently.

From the same paper from which I clipped the doctrinal statement above, I took the following warning against the "Finished Work" people. It illustrates the attitude of one section towards another; but, observe, the same signs follow in each case.

"NOTICE.—We feel that we should let our readers know, as there are many letters of inquiry coming in, that we have no fellowship with the so-called 'Worldwide Camp-meeting' in Los Angeles. It is not a part of this work. It is a compromise work that denies sanctification as a second work of grace, and covers up sin. We have no fellowship with any work that denies the second work of grace, or any other plain doctrine of the Word. The so-called 'new light' they have professed to receive, has wrecked many souls and led into fanaticism and wild-fire. The paper they printed and sent out entitled 'The Apostolic Faith,' is in no way connected with this work."

[†] I do not mean by scriptural here that it is used in Scripture, but that it is in accordance with it.

That many sincere Christians are, or have been, entangled with this movement there can be no doubt. It therefore demands our careful consideration that, even though free from complicity in it our-

selves, we may be able to help others who are in danger of being ensnared.

Desirous of looking into it at first-hand, I attended

in all about a dozen meetings in four different cities. I think I cannot do better than describe a little of what I saw and heard.

In company with a sober brother I went for the

first time in San Francisco. The place was crowded. A large fleshy woman was leading amid great excitement. Strangely enough, we were hardly seated when she cried out, "We need to pray. Two enemies of the truth have just come in. The Spirit tells me they are here to fight the truth. But I warn them they are fighting against God," etc.,

etc., ad lib.

The meeting went on: one and another testifying, and some in a fairly sober manner. One thing soon struck us forcibly. No one said Lord Jesus. No one cried Abba Father. Now inasmuch as these

are the two scriptural evidences that the Holy Spirit is in control we felt the incongruity of it all very soon. Much talk there was about the Holy Ghost. People spoke of "God," "God Almighty," "the Almighty," and of "Jesus," "Jesus Christ," and "Christ Jesus," but no one said "Father," or "our

Lord Jesus Christ."

Presently we were electrified by hearing, for the first time, the weird, piercing notes of a woman under the "power," speaking in tongues. I took

careful note of every syllable and jotted them

down. "Ku-ri-ah; Ku-ri-ah; Ku-ri-ah; Ku-ri, ah-ke.* This she repeated over and over till almost out of breath, while the rest shouted with delight at this evidence of the spirit's control!

She finished in an exhausted state, and from a corner came what sounded like the wail of a lost soul. Another woman, on her knees, began to intone in most melancholy accents, "La-a-a-la-a-a-a-ah-la-la-la-la-la-h-ah-oh-oh." This was all; but it was accepted as the great power of God.

At the close the leader came straight to us, and we withstood her to the face by meeting her declaration that she was living without sin with the counter declaration that we could give her chapter and verse for a direct command of Scripture she had been disobeying all through the meeting. She challenged its production, and we referred her to I Cor. 14: 34. As we read it she raved in anger, till I felt justified in asking the ironical question, "Are you not afraid you will lose your sanctification altogether if you get much angrier?" She cried out, "You are possessed with a devil!" and left us.

But five men followed us as we went out and plied us with questions, thanking us for opening their eyes as they had listened to our conversation with the woman. Needless to say we had seen nothing in this meeting to make us feel the Spirit of God was at work.

(To be completed, next issue.) H. A. I.

^{*} This is remarkably like "Kuriake," the Greek for Lord's Day. Kuria is the Greek word for lady.

READY!

HEN the Lord with a summoning shout will descend,

And the archangel strong will attend

At the signal of God, when His trumpet shall resound Far and near where the ransomed are found,

Will He find us unfolding the suitable word, Giving meat to the household of God,

As faithful and wise and with diligent ways We anticipate seeing His face?

Will He find us declaring the gospel of grace

To the sinful in every place—

In the power of God, as with changeless truth Extolling the merits and worth

Of the sacrifice made by the shedding of blood, We proclaim by the Spirit of God

The renown of the Lord, as He sits on the throne, While awaiting the kingdom to come?

For how sad it would be should we ever resort, Like the servant of evil report,

To slothful disregard of Christ's faithful Word And the claims of our long-absent Lord.

For he said in his heart that his master delayed To return very soon, as he made

A feast with the drunken, and smote with the rod At the men who belonged to his lord.

For how sad it would be, if neglecting to go To the lost in the grasp of the foe,

While arguing on points, and withering in soul; If the blast of the trumpet should roll

Far, and near, everywhere, and the shout of the Lord And the archangel's voice should be heard.

We were summoned from strife, or in slothful decay, To the Lord's holy presence to-day!

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Chap. 1: 1-4.)

(Continued from page 317, vol. of 1912.)

I F the Son of God become man united in His own person divine and human life, humanity in Him was a new humanity—in community of life with God. The Son of the Father become man was a Man possessing life in community with the Father. But if He thus raised up humanity into community of life with God, it is also true that He brought divine life down into a condition of human life. The life He had with the Father eternally was thus possessed in the human condition He assumed.

For Him to assume the conditions and limitations of human life, meant living dependently and obediently. This of course was an entirely new experience for Him, and for which it was necessary He should come into the condition of it (Heb. 5: 8). He could not experience creature dependence and obedience while in Godhead form and condition. To have that experience He needed to stoop down to the form and condition of man—of dependence and service.

To this He stooped, assuming a condition in which He lived dependently and obediently. He lived "by the Father" (John 6: 57), i.e., the living Father was the reason or ground of His life here below. But, living thus, there was no interruption of the divine and eternal intimacies as the eternal Son with the eternal Father in the unapproachable light.

Living here among men dependently and obediently, yet as possessing and enjoying the intimacies of Godhead community of life, He was the revelation of them for men. If men had had eves to see it they would have seen in Him not only the One who was personally the life with the Father. but also the activities of the life which habitually and constantly expressed itself in Him, both in word and work. (See John 3:11, 32; 5:19, 20, 36; 8: 26; 10: 15, 32; 11: 44, 45.) There never was a moment, save in the darkness of the cross, when the divine, eternal intimacies were interrupted: the Father finding in His Son, become man, His eternal delight; and the Man Jesus Christ, the Son of God, realizing His eternal rejoicing. His earthly life was a manifestation of the life of the divine Dwellers in light brought down into the condition of a dependent human life.

The true Life thus was shining, was manifested in its own proper activities; but men, blinded by the darkness they were in, had not eyes to see it. There had been rays of the light shining from the beginning of fallen man's history, but only in the Son of God become man and living here in the world did the light shine in its full power. It was shining for every man (John 1:9), but they hated the light thus manifested.

Still, through grace, there were those whose eyes were opened and who did see. From the garden of Eden, down the long history, there were those who saw and received the light so far as it was shining. So, too, when the Son of God was among men as the Light of men, there were those who through grace, saw it, welcomed it, received it—received

of its fulness, grace upon grace (John 1: 16). They saw in the One who was made flesh, a divine Person; for, as they contemplated His glory, they saw it was the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father.

I have said this was through grace; for it was by

the power of the Spirit that divine testimony laid hold of those who thus set to their seal that God's testimony concerning His Son become man is true (Jno. 3: 33). They thus became children of light and of God, through faith, receiving Him who had come from God. It was by believing on His name they were born of God—born of water and the Spirit. It was by believing on His name they were born from above, that is, from a higher sphere than the natural.

Of course, it was ever by faith that men, from Eden down, became children of God; but, though born of God, they were not granted the privilege of taking their place with God as children. They could not take the place of children until that place was made known; nor could they know the

blessedness of the place until it was revealed.

Hence, until the Son of God came into the world and revealed the children's place and its blessedness, the children of God died in faith—without full knowledge of their place with God. But the Son of God having come, the place was made known and the intimacies of it communicated.

To His children, the Father's name was made known (Jno. 17: 6, 8).

It was thus they became competent witnesses of the life eternal that was with the Father and was

the life eternal that was with the Father and was manifested here. They were qualified to witness by their personal enjoyment of the manifested life,

and testified to what they experienced of it (ver. 1). So far as they enjoyed the word of life they have declared it. What they saw, they have testified to (ver. 2). Their testimony is an announcement of the life eternal which was with the Father, but manifested to them here in the Son. Not only have they given us the testimony of the Son of God Himself—the testimony He bore as being the true Light of men—but they have reported what was their own enjoyed portion as those to whom He manifested the Father's name.

What this wondrous, blessed portion was, we shall consider directly, but I wish to emphasize the fact that John, as one of these qualified witnesses. representing and speaking for them, has authoritatively declared (Jno. 21: 24) what the testimony of the Son of God to the world was, and also His communications to the men given Him out of the world. In his Gospel he writes to all men, declaring the things that Jesus did and said to bring conviction "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," that by believing they might have life through His name (John 20: 31). In the epistle he writes to those to whom the Son has manifested the Father's name, unfolding the characteristics of the life eternally with the Father, that they may not merely have the life, but have it as inwardly understood (chap. 5: 13), as subjectively realizing what its character is, and what its accompanying blessedness.

Of this privilege, bestowed upon the children of God of this present period, we shall speak in the proper place. My object now is to fasten attention on the fact that John, as the divinely-chosen witness, has testified to the children of God,

as being himself in the realized enjoyment of it, the character of the life of which by faith they have become participants. What he saw and heard, what he thus inwardly knew, what he enjoyed of the manifested life, he has reported to us.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

HOW TO LEARN TRUTH

CONCERNING the apprehension of truth two things are most important:

rst. That moral nearness to God, and communion with Him, is the only means of any true enlargement in the knowledge of His ways and of the blessings which He imparts to His children, because it is the only position in which we can perceive them, or be morally capable of so doing; and, also, that all conduct which is not suitable to this nearness to God, all levity of thought, which His presence does not admit of, makes us lose these communications from Him and renders us incapable of receiving them. (Compare John 14: 21-23.)

2nd. It is not that the Lord forsakes us on account of these faults or this carelessness; He intercedes for us, and we experience His grace, but it is no longer communion or intelligent progress in the riches of the revolation of Himself, of the fulness which is in Christ. It is grace adapted to our wants, an answer to our misery. Jesus stretches out His hand to us according to the need that we feel—need produced in our hearts by the operation of the Holy Ghost. This is infinitely precious grace, a sweet experience of His faithfulness and

love: we learn by this means to discern good and evil, by judging self; but the grace had to be adapted to our wants, and to receive a character according to those wants, as an answer made to them: we have had to think of ourselves. In a case like this, the Holy Ghost occupies us with ourselves (in grace, no doubt), and when we have lost communion with God, we cannot neglect this turning back upon ourselves without deceiving and hardening ourselves. Alas! the dealings of many souls with Christ hardly go beyond this character. It is with all too often the case. In a word, when this happens, the thought of sin having been admitted into the heart, our dealings with the Lord to be true must be on the ground of this sad admission of sin (in thought, at least). It is grace alone which allows us again to have to do with God. The fact that He restores us enhances His grace in our eyes; but this is not communion.

When we walk with God, when we walk after the Spirit without grieving Him, He maintains us in communion, in the enjoyment of God, the positive source of joy—of an everlasting joy. This is a position in which He can occupy us—as being ourselves interested in all that interests Him—with all the development of His counsels, His glory, and His goodness, in the person of Jesus the Christ, Jesus the Son of His love; and the heart is enlarged in the measure of the objects that occupy it. This is our normal condition."

⁻Extract from "Synopsis" by J. N. D.

A LETTER

To a sister in Christ who objects to the use of wine at the Lord's Supper

DEAR SISTER IN OUR LORD:

You tell me that you "have been opposed to the use of wine or strong drink since childhood." This does not settle the matter, does it? For you have created nothing and you cannot therefore fathom the needs of creation. God who created all things, knew best, and He created wine. In His word, regulating creation, He warns men that there is danger in wine and strong drink, yet He gives them a most honorable place among the offerings of His altar. See Exodus 29: 37-42; Num. 6: 17; 15: 1-12; and chap. 28.

They must be holy things to be thus offered to the holy God upon His altar: they represented some aspect of the only perfect human life ever lived here—of our Lord lesus Christ poured out in obedient service to God: even as the lamb offered on the altar represented His holy person. The "temperance" movement, which is largely responsible for the thoughts which you express, insults God the Creator. It practically accuses Him of creating bad things, such as wine, etc. On the principle that wine is the occasion of much sin (which no one questions) and that it must therefore be destroved, we would also have to destroy money and women, for what are the crimes they have not occasioned? Is there any gift of God that sinful man has not abused? God's word warns us against the ill use of any of them, as well as of wine, but condemns none of them. 1 Tim. 4: 4 says, "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." Then in verse 6, "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ"-a serious thing for

Christ's ministers, is it not, if they fail to rebuke your principle? See also Deut. 14: 22-29, and learn how little God's thoughts agree with yours.

It is not that one contends for any selfish rights, "for meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse" (1 Cor. 8: 8). But God is being traduced, and that among His own people! How could we pass this by? From the Scriptures we have considered it is very evident that the sin is not in the material creation of whatever kind, but in man's will who makes abuse or ill use of every good thing.

You are opposed to wine, another to meat, another to marriage. God says they are all good, for He has created them all, and He will stand by all His creation, though woe be to him who abuses or misuses it. If you are against any part of it, you and He are face to face in the quarrel, and they who quarrel with God have not, and will not, come out victorious.

You quote Lev. 10:9 as a Scripture authority against the use of wine. Is this a righteous use of the word of God? Is it not stated there that the restriction is to the priests "when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation?"—lest their dulled, or exhilarated, senses should cause them to transgress before the Lord. In like manner would not Christians (the New Testament priests of God) who desire to exercise their Christian priesthood aright, guard against any excitement of spirit or surfeited appetite before prayer or ministry of the Word? But is this forbidding a right use of God's gifts? Let us not use God's word in a different sense or purpose than that intended, nor make it say what we wish it to say. It will never bend to us; we must bow to it.

More than forty years ago, I met a case like yours in Ottawa, Canada. It was a brother who had been a drunkard before his conversion. He sat beside me at the Lord's supper. When the bread came, he partook of it. When the cup came, instead of partaking of it, he described a half-circle with it at arm's length, and so passed it to me. It shocked me greatly. Calling upon him at his shop next day, I asked him the reason for his strange action. He told me he had been a drunkard, and that he feared the taste or even the smell of the wine would bring back his old love for drink. "What!" I exclaimed, "Could you think, brother, that the blessed Saviour, who suffered the death of the cross to put away your sins, would ask you to do what would make you sin?"

At the first glimpse of the insult he had been offering to the Lord, the dear man's eyes filled with tears, and, grasping my hand affectionately, he said, "Thank you, brother, for your faithfulness. I shall not again grieve the Lord as I have done."

One can only add that, were a case to be found where partaking of the cup of the Lord had carried one back to drunkenness, it would be very strong evidence that he had never really known the grace of God in his heart.

Turning to the scene when the Lord established His supper, how touching it is! How full of holy sorrow! In Mark 14: 22-24, the Lord at the end of His last passover-supper with His disciples, takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, gives it to them and says, "Take, eat: this is My body. And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them and they all drank of it. And He said unto them, This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." Had you been there with your present principle, you would have had to say, I know, Lord, that this cup represents Thy blood, by the shedding of which I am delivered from the everlasting hell into which my sins would sink me. You tell me to drink in remembrance of you in this proof of your wonderful love, but I cannot obey,

24 A Letter

for it is against my principles to drink wine. Does it not seem as if there must be something terribly wrong behind this?—the pride of an insubordinate will?

One feature of your letter adds to my fears: You seem to have made up your mind that the brethren who insist on the use of wine at the Lord's supper are in a low spiritual state. Those who refuse it, like yourself, are the spiritual ones. This, of course, will make it easy for you to see things as you wish to see them, and to hear what voice you wish to hear. There may be, as you complain, lack of good judgment in the choice of the wine to be used at the Lord's table, but even as to this, we do not come together to drink wine, but to remember our Lord in the institution of His supper with bread and wine according to His expressed desire. Alas, that any should dare to interfere with His institution. Let them restrict themselves as much as they like in their home life: refuse wine, meat, or anything they please, we will have nothing to say. It were doubtless better for many to be more abstemious in their eating and drinking. But to find fault with what the Lord Himself has put upon His own table for all His own is most serious indeed, and argues a state of mind which is an effectual barrier to spiritual progress. Under it, our gospel would become a gospel of the body, rather than a gospel of the soul-a Seventh-day Adventist gospel.

Consider well chapters 2 and 3 of Colossians; they reach the root of all this; they say you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world and you are risen with Him—in another creation of course. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." If we realize this heavenly place in which the grace of God has set us, we shall certainly not be taken up with questions about wine.

Trusting, dear sister, that you will heed the voice of the word of God on this subject—a voice which seeks your welfare and that of the whole Church of God, I remain your servant in Christ our Lord, * * *

THE OSTRICH AND THE EAGLE

The Ostrich
Job 39: 13-18

In this portion our attention is called to the lack of wisdom as seen in the ostrich; a creature having the form of a bird, but without power to leave the earth. When other birds take refuge in flight, this one when hard pressed, it is said, buries its head in the sand. How like the mere profession of such as have the "form of godliness" but deny the power of it in their lives, and when pressed as to matters of eternal judgment refuse to face the facts, and shield themselves by earthly things—the shifting sands of time. Such never see things from God's point of view, but only from man's.

As for the ostrich itself, so for its offspring: "She leaveth her eggs in the earth, . . . and forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them. She is hardened against her young ones as though they were not hers; her labor is in vain, without fear." Without "the fear of God," which is the "beginning of wisdom," parents who refuse to own their responsibility to God as to themselves, will also refuse to own it as to their children. Such build their "house upon the sand," and the storm soon to burst upon this scene will prove their "labor in vain." Such leave their offspring "in the earth" in danger of destruction by the evil walk of others who cross their path, or by

the subtle doctrines of that "beast" that "goeth about seeking whom he may devour."

The Eagle
Job 39: 27-30

In this portion God calls our attention to a bird having a God-given wisdom, typical of the true child of God. The

eagle also has power to leave earth and see things from lofty heights-God's point of view. "She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock." The "house built upon the rock" abides. From her lofty sphere "her eyes behold afar off," and foreseeing evil, she provides against it. To build her nest merely upon a rock would be to leave her offspring still accessible to the destroying "foot" or "wild beast;" but upon "the crag of the rock." a projection inaccessible except to the wing, she rears her young in safety. She herself feeds not upon carrion, but upon the "slain"—the death of another affording life to her and her offspring. In that separated place her young are made to know the value of the blood. "Her young ones also suck up blood," "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood," said our Lord, "hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6: 54).

In Ps. 149 we find those in whose "mouth" are the "high praises of God" have also "a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people... to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all His saints." Those who have valued the One who was slain and shed His blood for them are also the ones who will share in His rule when He comes to reign and to execute judgment upon the despisers.

J. E. H. S.

A WORD OF WARNING

In these days of increasing worldliness, young Christians who have taken the outside place in their church-position are particularly subject to the attacks of the enemy, who would have them forget that the world is crucified to them and they to it. In gatherings where there are only a very few young people, the temptation to be with worldly companions is very great, and calls for the exercise of much care on the part of parents especially, to prevent this desire from reaching fruition. In such cases parents and others in fellowship should be most judicious in expressing their sympathy for young people thus situated. Indiscreetly bestowed, this sympathy is likely to cause them to abandon their position "outside the camp" entirely, and give up their testimony to their rejected Lord.

The Word is full of examples of those who early in life were devoted to God and served Him faithfully, and were honored in so doing. What of Joseph, Samuel, David, Daniel, Timothy, and others? Surely the Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient to supply every need of the youthful life, be it lack of young company or any other necessity, real or fancied.

Paul's admonition to his "son Timothy" was to "Flee youthful lusts." Young Christian reader, will you allow the world, which "lieth in the wicked one," to gain an entrance into your heart to the exclusion of the One who gave up "all that He had" for you?

Is the world more attractive to you than Christ? Remember how short and uncertain your days are here even though our Lord Jesus should tarry, and that if you will save your life in attachment to this world, you will lose it; but if you will lose your life for His sake you will save it. "If ye love Me," said our Lord, "keep My commandments." "And His commandments are not grievous."

H. A. J.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

QUES. 1.—I was recently asked whether Christians are under obligations to give a tenth of their income to the work of the Lord. An answer in Help and Food might be of use to others besides my questioner.

ANS.—If we were Jews, and as such under the law, we would be under such obligations; but if believers in Christ, we are Christians, and as such, not under the law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). The Christian is not governed by the law as was the Jew. The Spirit of Christ dwells in him, and he is ruled by the Spirit (Gal., chaps. 3 and 4). Law treats those who are under it purely as subjects; grace treats them as sons, because it has made them sons (Gal. 4:6).

These great and fundamental distinctions lie on the very surface of Scripture, yet they are being lost by Christians through the neglect of the Scriptures. Law produces no change in man, but leaves him in his natural state. Grace, in converting a man, gives him eternal life, whose nature is love. It therefore trusts him, as law could not, for the fulfilment of his duties. The legal system and spirit soon have control, however, when unconverted men can establish themselves in a Christian congregation. Being strangers to grace, they can understand only law; and this, no doubt, is largely at the root of the present prevailing Jewish condition of Christendom, and of the success of such anti-Christian sects as rise up on all sides.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Church, EVERYBODY speaks more or less about what is It? the Church, and yet there is perhaps no subject about which there is more general ignorance. To many the Church is the building in which Christians assemble, and they look upon it as a Jew looked at the Temple which Solomon had built at Jerusalem. To others it is the clergy. To others (probably the most), it is an organized body of professing Christian people, after the fashion of an army, or a club, or a business company, to which others may join themselves. Officers are chosen, a minister is called, a building is erected, and membership to this is sought for.

All this is far from the thought of God as to what the Church is, or how it is formed. Yet, after the salvation of one's own soul and its relationship with God is established, there is perhaps nothing so important as to have God's thoughts in this matter. It greatly affects our growth in grace and Christian development; it affects all our relations with our fellow-Christians. False views as to it may plunge us into sectarianism, superstition, bondage to men and other evils. But the truth on this subject sanctifies, as all divine truth does; it enlarges the heart, produces love and nearness to all our fellow-Christians, and places us in direct intercourse with Christ, the Head of the Church of God.

To our question then, "What is the Church?" let us turn to the Word of God, for there alone can we find its true answer.

In Ephesians 5: 22, etc., the relationship of husband and wife is used to illustrate that of Christ

and the Church. He says: "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." In chap ter 1: 22, 23, He calls the Church "the fulness or complement of Him that filleth all in all." This carries us back to Genesis 2, when God formed out of Adam himself a companion suited to him. Adam said of her, as Christ says of the Church, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." Ephesians 5: 32 calls Christ and the Church "a great mystery." Romans 12: 4, 5, says, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." I Corinthians 12: 12, 13 says, "For as the [human] body is one, and hath many members. and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." All this shows that the Church is not a piece of religious machinery run by human hands, but a living organism formed by the living Spirit uniting in one Body those alive in Christ. None has ever of his own will joined that Body, even as a man's hand or foot has never joined his body, but have been joined by a higher Power. So, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body." It is not only the work of God to save our souls, but also to make us members of the Church which is the Body of Christ.

How elevating, how satisfying, and sanctifying to know and to realize that we, in common with every other child of God, have by grace, been made members of that Body.

There are vivid illustrations of the Church in the book of figures and types—the Old Testament. As

already referred to, Eve is the first and principal one. In her we have the origin of the Churchhow she was formed. So Christ must first die and rise again before the Church could be formed. The Acts gives us the history of this and of the coming down of the Holy Spirit to form the Church. In Matthew 16: 18, after Peter has confessed Him as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," the Lord calls that confession, or the One whom Peter confessed, "this Rock." He says, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." This tells: (1) that He is the builder; (2) that it was then yet a future thing; (3) that the powers of darkness cannot prevail against it. In Acts 2, the Lord having died, risen, gone back to heaven, and sent down the Holy Spirit, the Church was formed out of the believers then at Jerusalem, and so in chapter 2: 47 we are told: "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." He has been adding ever since, and is adding still day by day. Wherever a poor sinner turns to God confessing his sins, and to the Lord Jesus as his own personal Saviour, the Lord adds that person to His Church. He is a member of it, without any act whatever of his own. None but Christ could put him into it, and none can take him out of it. Should he sin so grievously as to call for discipline (which the Church is bound to exercise), he is not deprived of his membership, but of the fellowship which flows from that membership.

In Sarah, the wife of Abraham, we have the principle upon which the Church is united to Christ. She illustrates grace, and what but God's sovereign

grace could give to such as we a relationship to Christ, so great and so blessed.

In Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, the calling of the Church is illustrated. She is already a relation. So must we be children of God before we can be made members of the Body of Christ. Abraham's steward, type of the Holy Spirit, is sent after a companion for Isaac. By God's leading he finds her, and calls her away from her people, even as we are separated from the world for Christ; and she is led across the desert to Isaac, as the Holy Spirit, who is still here, is now leading the Church to Christ in heaven.

There are many other minor illustrations which the attentive reader will find in the Scriptures, confirming and adding to what has already been shown as the New Testament doctrine found in Paul's epistles—chiefly in Ephesians.

The hope of the Church is not to convert this world, as many have supposed; nor is her calling even to improve this world, though the light which shines by her if she is faithful, puts to shame the evil that is in the world. Her business here is to keep Christ before the world, to let her light so shine as to be a bright witness for Christ and draw men to Him. She is to keep in mind that He is coming after her to take her to heaven to be forever with Him. This is her bright to-morrow, as I Thess. 4: 14-18 shows, while for the present she is a stranger and a pilgrim on earth, waiting for the return of her Redeemer to take her home to Himself.

The people of God may, through sin, have formed numberless divisions among themselves, yet the Church which is the Body of Christ remains one, even as men may worship many gods, yet "there is one God"—only one. So there is one Body—only one: and to it every believer in Christ, to the ends of the earth, belongs. This man may join the Romish church, that man the Methodist, the other the Baptist, yet all of them be unconverted men; but every converted man is by the Holy Ghost made a member of the Body of Christ, and of nothing else.

Dear reader, are you a member of that Body? This is, of course, asking if you have been born of God and your sins forgiven you; for, as we have already said, the Holy Spirit puts only saved persons in the Body of Christ.

In conclusion religious organizations calling themselves the Church, or a church, may be headed by man, such as the pope of Rome, who is head of the Roman Catholic organization, or the king of England who is head of the Church of England organization, etc.; but these are only imitations of the Church which is Christ's Body. Christ alone can make us members of that, because He alone baptizes with the Holy Ghost. Imitations are not the real thing. In them are found, no doubt, many of the children of God. As soon, however, as they learn their membership in the Body of Christ, they cannot remain with a good conscience in the imitations, for they see it is disloyalty to the truth of membership in Christ's Body, already theirs through grace, by the act of God.

Nothing perhaps at the present time tests our obedience to the truth more than this. In days gone by the test was salvation by Christ instead of by the Church—by faith instead of by works. Now

34 Editor's Notes

lose caste among men.

it is something else. There is always something to suffer—some loss, in connection with Christ, and it requires "the joy of the Lord" in the soul to take the path of obedience, whatever that be, with all

that belongs to it. But "if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." It will be no small matter at the end to have been followers, *doers* of the will of God, in the face of human arrangements popular in this world, and to refuse which means to

What is a Priest?

and
Who are now Priests?

When God had redeemed
Israel out of the land of
Egypt, He commanded Mo-

ses to build Him a tabernacle for His dwelling among His people. He loved the praises and worship of their grateful hearts. In John 4 the Samaritan woman enquires of the Lord where the right place

to worship was. The Lord replies, "The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." He saves men to make worshipers of them. Those worshipers are priests. They can draw nigh to God and offer

to make worshipers of them. Those worshipers are priests. They can draw nigh to God and offer their thanksgivings and praise. In Jewish, typical times, God chose Aaron and his family to illustrate Christ and His people, who are the Christian priesthood (1 Pet. 2: 5, 9). The tabernacle built by Moses typified God's dwelling-place in heaven. The furniture in it illustrated Christ and His work on the cross as the means of approach to God. The priests

typified God's dwelling-place in heaven. The furniture in it illustrated Christ and His work on the cross as the means of approach to God. The priests came in there to burn incense, which prefigures the prayers, praise and worship of God's people. The epistle to the Hebrews defines all this for us: Christ is the Great High Priest, and all His own, "the children which God has given Him," form the priestly family of the New Testament, as has already been shown in 1 Peter.

The priesthood must not be confounded with the

The priesthood must not be confounded with the ministry (We shall look at the ministry later on, D. V.). The priesthood, as already mentioned, has to do with worship, with drawing nigh to God where He is, and pouring out to Him the grateful praises

of our hearts because of His grace to us. Ministry has to do with service, with going about on God's errands to men, with caring for His people, or anything else which has to do with His affairs on earth. The Levites, in Judaism, illustrated this. While related to the priests, being of the same tribe, they were servants to the priests, even as the Christian

ministry now is servant to the Christian priesthood.

APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSIONS

and the so-called

SECOND PENTECOST

(Continued from page 13.)

In Portland, Ore., another brother went with meto the Burnside Street Mission. What we saw and heard beggars description. The excitement was nerve-racking. As many as a dozen prayed—rather screamed—at one time. "Tongues" were much in evidence, and here there were interpreters too. A man rose and muttered some incoherent syllables speaking about half a minute. A woman

too. A man rose and muttered some incoherent syllables, speaking about half a minute. A woman rose, and in a high-keyed voice fairly shrieked, "Glory to God! I have the interpretation. The brother says, Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye, I am Jesus the crucified. I speak to you, my children. You must give up the world; you must be free from the carnal mind; you must get your baptism; there's only a little time; I am coming soon!" and so on for nearly five minutes; till we were led to wonder at the amazing condensation of a "tongue" that could express in half a minute what took ten times as long to interpret. At the close there was an "altar-service," or "upper-room service," as some designated it, which was a perfect bedlam. We could scarcely believe such scenes were possible outside of a lunatic asylum; and even there the keepers would not permit such goings-on.

Almost at our feet a man fell over on his back, writhing and foaming as in an epileptic fit. I suggested getting him out of the close, hot room, or at least getting water, or calling for a doctor or a policeman. "Keep your hands off God's ark," some one shouted: "This is the Holy Ghost." For forty minutes, by the clock, he writhed there on the floor, and at last fell back limp and lay as though dead. Then a "worker" jumped on his breast, put his mouth to the unconscious man's nose, and cried, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost!" and blew powerfully into the nostrils. This was repeated over and over—a most disgusting spectacle. Finally the man opened his eyes, rose, and sat quietly on a chair, weary and with no apparent result.

Several spoke with us. We asked especially how such a scene compared with the word, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." They grew heated and angry. A colored man shouted, "You are making

the confusion; you hinder the Spirit; you are possessed by a devil." And so the wretched farce went on till we left it, sick at heart to think that such things could be in a land of Bibles.

I was told afterwards of seven persons sent to insane asylums from that mission; and I saw and conversed with a bald-headed girl of about seventeen, who had contracted brain-fever through the unnatural excitement, and had lost her hair in her illness.

To tell of other meetings visited would be needless. The details are wearisome, and the general tenor always the same. After having seen and heard, I can only say if there be a spirit working, as seems to me evident, it is not "the spirit of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7), which is one of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit of God.

As for the "tongues," I have heard perhaps threescore persons speak under the "power," and I never heard anything more connected than I have given above. The tongues of the Bible were definite languages in which men heard the gospel in the speech to which they had been accustomed from birth. I have failed to find anything like this among any branch of the "Pentecostal" people. It is true they claim isolated instances of the kind, but even though they could openly produce them, that would not prove the movement to be of God. The same claim was made by the "Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit" in the Black Forest of Germany in mediæval times, as they roamed about in Adamic nudity and indulged every unholy passion. "Tongues" have from the first been found among the Mormons, and spiritualists of all ages have peeped and muttered (Isa. 8: 19) when under some strange control. Therefore such phenomena in no wise prove the working of the Holy Spirit. It is rather the confession made as to our Lord Jesus Christ that will let us know the source of all these strange happenings.

As to this, I wrote to various editors connected with the movement to ascertain their views. In each case I put this question: "What does the spirit now working among you reveal as to the true nature of our Lord Jesus Christ?" And, in answer, I discovered a startling thing. This movement is apparently everywhere based upon a false declaration as to Christ.

A Mr. Dunham, then of Chicago, now of Los Angeles, sent me a marked copy of his publication. It gave an account of a message professedly given by revelation, which I regret to have lost, but the gist of which I distinctly recall. This was the teaching: Jesus before His anointing was a man who had no more power than others. At His baptism, the Christ, which is the divine Spirit, took possession of Him, and He could then accomplish His mission! The application went on, that if a holy man like Jesus needed the anointing with this Christ-Spirit, how much more do we, etc.

A paper from a Mr. Argue, of Winnipeg, contained a similar statement made under "the power."

From the "Apostolic Faith," now before me, from which I already have taken two cullings, I also take the following: "If Jesus Christ needed the anointing of God to do the work that he was called to do, surely we must be anointed from on high to do the

work God has called us to do,"—and with them the anointing is to be able to speak with tongues.

Now here is a threefold cord. Does my reader realize the seriousness of it? Here is plain, open blasphemy, yet so expressed that the ignorant read it without apprehending its meaning. An old gnostic heresy is here revived, and it is clearly a lying spirit who is propagating it, and attesting it with "all deceivableness of unrighteousness," "with signs and lying wonders."

Baldly stated, this is the doctrine: Jesus was a man—a holy man, but only a man. He was called to do a great work, but He could not do it till He received the divine Spirit to control His human spirit. When baptized in water the Christ was identified with the divine Spirit descending upon Him. Now for the first time He had the Holy Spirit. Now He could do the work He was called to do.

The same error is set forth in "Christian Science"—falsely so-called—and is prominent in the whole "New Thought" movement.

But the word of God teaches us that the Lord Jesus was the eternal Son who in grace became man. He was God the Son from all eternity. The Son of God, the Eternal Word, became flesh, was born of a pure virgin by the direct power of the Holy Spirit—was a Man of an entirely different order to every other. His anointing was not as adding anything to Him, but marking Him out as the Messiah (the Anointed), as inducting Him into His threefold office of Prophet, Priest and King. It was the Father's attestation of delight in His beloved Son. In His humiliation, as the One come in the form of a servant, the Lord Jesus did

all things in the power of the Holy Spirit; but this is in no wise to say He could not do thus and so until passing through certain experiences.

The system now before us lowers the dignity of the Son of God to exalt self-righteous men who glory in their fancied supernatural powers.

And now I revert again to what I have before touched on. The spirit working in this movement habitually and continuously neglects to own Jesus as Lord and God as Father. I have just read carefully through, three times, the twenty-third number of "The Apostolic Faith." It is a four-page sheet of about average newspaper size. It contains twenty columns of closely-printed matter -testimonies, sermons, attempted exegesis and warnings. In all its twenty columns Jesus is never used with the title Lord, though it is used scores of times alone. Throughout it is "Jesus." "Jesus Christ," "Christ" and "Christ Jesus." Not once are the scriptural terms "Lord Jesus," "Lord Jesus Christ," "Christ Jesus our Lord," or any other similar ones used. And this in the organ of what credits itself with being the greatest work of the Spirit of God on earth to-day. Again: in these twenty columns I find the word "God" used several hundred times, and "God Almighty." "Almighty God," occurring again and again; but "Father"—the Name our Lord Jesus came to reveal, and which we cry by the Spirit—not once.*

^{*} I refer to their usage. Once Matt. 28: 19 is quoted, and once 1 John 2: 15, 16. Also John 13: 14 is used containing the word Lord; and so several times they speak of doing the Lord's will, etc. But my point is they never call Jesus "Lord," nor call God Father."

And this from people who profess to be born of God and to have the Spirit of adoption!

Unhesitatingly I say, the spirit that is working in this movement does not say "Lord Jesus," and does not cry "Abba Father." What spirit, think you, can this be? I do not doubt but that individuals among them confess both, but I have never heard them; and what I have been concerned about is what is characteristic of the whole system. It is especially when speaking under the mysterious power that one notes the utter absence of the confession that Jesus is Lord, and the cry of the Spirit "Abba," Father.

I need not dwell on other marked incongruities, such as the insubject and Scripture-defying attitude usurped by women in these meetings. Alas, that is so prevalent to-day as to be scarcely noticeable any more, though it is a serious enough sign of the times, and shows where the Church is rapidly drifting. But I be seech any who are becoming entangled with this unpentecostal imposture to try the spirits by the only safe test-a true confession of Jesus Christ come in flesh. The spirit energizing the so-called "apostolic faith" people has declared that Jesus came in flesh, but that Christ was the Spirit that anointed Him at His baptism. Is more needed to show the source of these mani-H. A. I. festations?

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Chap. 1: 1-4.)

(Continued from page 19.)

THE witnesses' testimony concerning the manifestation of the life eternal has come down to us. If in their day they tested orally by divine inspiration, their testimony was put into permanent form to be handed down. We of this 20th century have their personal testimony of the life of our Lord upon earth. Through the divine testimony and power of the Spirit they saw His glory; they believed Him to be the Son of God; and what they saw and heard, they testified to.

Now, in John 17: 20, 21, our Lord prayed for those who should receive the testimony of these witnesses, that they might be participators in this divine community of life with the Father and the Son: "That they also may be one in us" (the Father and the Son), i.e., should share in their community of life and nature. It is in this light we must understand what the apostle says when we read: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Through faith in Him they had come into the community of life of the Father and the Son.

I speak of course of the fact, not of the measure of their apprehension and enjoyment. But, as is said, their fellowship was truly with the Father and the Son. It was a fellowship of life and nature—in divine community—and those who believe through their word share with them in it: "That ye

may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ," affirms this. The apostle is speaking of the fact. The measure of its enjoyment is another matter. Whatever be the measure in which we are enjoying it, the fact is and abides, and we know it by divine revelation. The Son has come and manifested its nature and character, and believers now are made acquainted with the fact of their participation in what has been manifested.

Here I must pause to consider some questions that have been raised and variously answered. Some think the possession of this blessed privilege, this participation in the divine community of life, is the result or consequence of attainment, of reaching a certain stage of intelligence, of believing some testimony beyond what is received when new birth is effected in the soul. But it is the one who believes on the Son that possesses the life eternal (John 3: 36). As an unbeliever, instead of being a sharer in the life, he is under the wrath of God. This is a state of death out of which he passes through faith. By faith he is born into the divine community of life. He must first be in the life before he can make attainments in it. In Leviticus (chap. 1) we learn that the one who brought turtledoves or young pigeons for a burnt-offering was accepted as fully as the one who brought a bullock. The one of the feeblest apprehension as well as the one of the greatest is made accepted in the Beloved. So with the life received in new birth; it puts one into this community of divine life with the Father and the Son.

Another question has also been raised. It has

been asked, "Did the Old Testament saints have fellowship with the Father and the Son?" I reply, As regards the fact, they did; but as regards the knowledge of it—since it had not been revealed to them—they could not know that they were partakers in the divine community of life. Unquestionably, however, as born from above by the power of the Spirit, they were in reality partakers of the divine nature—had eternal life.

In Old Testament times God did not give His children the place and privileges of children; consequently He did not reveal to them the true nature and character of their relationship to Him. They were truly His children, but He did not tell them they were. They in fact were possessors of His life, of His moral nature and character, but He did not reveal it to them. They could not have understood it if He had told them; to understand what divine, eternal life is, it had to be manifested. The Son has come and manifested the life, and along with its manifestation comes also the revelation that God's children are sharers in it. As born of the Spirit they have eternal life, and are in community of life with the Father and the Son.

This explains the difference between the Old Testament saints and us as regards eternal life. God not having revealed it to them, they knew not that they had it. We have it and know it, because God has declared it to us. In saying we know it, I remind the reader again that I am not speaking of the measure of our enjoyment of it. This is, as already said, a different matter, and is not the Spirit's subject in verse 3. If any should say that I am overlooking it, or that I am forgetting the prac-

tical side, I answer that I am simply reserving its consideration till we come to those parts of our epistle where it is treated of; but here the Spirit's thought is that of our participation in the divine community of life.

There is another question I must not overlook. We are sometimes told that fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ is the only fellowship Scripture ever speaks of, and thus it is taken to mean Church fellowship. This is a serious mistake. It is true there is no real participation in Church fellowship unless there is participation in the fellowship of the Father and the Son. To be a sharer in the ecclesiastical community or unity really (not merely professedly), one must be a sharer in the community of the divine life; but they are different things. This should be evident from the fact that there are those who share in the latter that do not share in the former. The children of God of both the Old Testament and millennial times participate in the divine community of life, but do not in the Church community.

For Church fellowship, whether ideal or practical, we must turn to those scriptures where it is spoken of; but we do not find it here. Here, the apostle speaks of the life that is common with the Father and the Son. The incarnate Son has life in community with the Father (John 5: 26). Those who receive the divine testimony are brought into that community of life. The apostles and others in their day participated in it, and all those who receive their testimony share in it now. It is a community of life, of nature, of affection, of love, of which God is the source, which the Son of God be-

come incarnate has manifested here, and which through infinite grace, fallen men who believe are granted the inestimable privilege to participate in.

What unspeakable blessing! How little are we in the practical enjoyment of it! How amazing the grace that has made such a rich portion ours! We, who have forfeited even merely human life, being laid hold of by this life from above, are raised up, not merely out of the death and the judgment due to our sins, but to oneness in life and nature with God! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God!"

A word of caution here may perhaps be needed by some. We are not brought into oneness of essence with the Father and the Son. To say that would be serious error; in fact, blasphemous. We do not become what God is in the essence of His Being. To be children of God does not mean or imply that. The unity into which by grace we are brought is not a unity of essence, but of life and nature. We are not made participators in His Being and attributes, but in His moral nature and character. Fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ is not community of being, but of life.

We must now notice verse 4. If faith comes by hearing and hearing by a report, and the believer is thus brought into community of divine life, the unfolding of the nature and character of the life thus participated in makes the joy complete.

By inspiration of the Spirit the apostle thus wrote, authoritatively unfolding the blessing which divine testimony brings to believers to make their joy complete. The saints of old had joy surely, but

their joy was not full, complete. It could not have heen under the then conditions and circumstances. But now, the true nature and character of the relationship in which the children of God stand to Him, having been made known, how much the joy has been enlarged. Our joy, as compared with theirs, as measured by theirs, is fulness of joy. It is not that we are better than they; it is not that we are more worthy than they, but in the wisdom of God the time has come for the children of God to take practically the place of children. To this end our revelation is immensely larger than theirs. The revelation given to us, beside revealing the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, also reveals the fact that the children are in community of life with them, and that this blessedness is ours.

What richer, fuller joy can there be? What is there beyond and above God? We now know Him, His moral nature, His character, His life, and we are made partakers of them! This is fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN

AN ECCLESIASTICAL TRILEMMA

A N eminent theologian once said that we were fairly in possession of all doctrinal truth, except that the doctrine of the Church was still not clearly understood. Without laying claim to knowing anything yet as we ought to know it, or boasting of our fuller knowledge of the great doctrines of the word of God, we may truly admit the second part of the statement: we do need a clearer, simpler apprehension of God's thought and revelation as to His Church, the Assembly of God.

the great foundation truths of the Assembly. Those for whom it is written realize in good measure its unique place in the counsels of God, in the Mystery, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5).

It is not the purpose of this paper to enlarge upon

pose—into the searching out the character, extent, organism, responsibilities and future of the Assembly. It is only one portion of this great truth at which we are to look:

This would carry us far beyond our present pur-

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY AND THE CHURCH AT LARGE.

As indicated in the title of our paper, there are

three views as to this relationship, respectively accepted by many who otherwise hold much precious truth in common. Because of divergence of views upon this matter, there is necessarily divergence of practice, resulting almost necessarily in alienation

practice, resulting almost necessarily in alienation and mutual division among the beloved people of God. If therefore we can take up each of these views, ascertain as exactly as we can its nature, and test, by the word of God, recognizing all that is of God in it, refusing all that is contrary to, or that fails to accept any feature of divine truth—if in addition to this we seek to gather any other truths from the word of God bearing upon this subject—may we not hope to arrive at some stable and broad foundation upon which we may with confidence invite all the saints of God to take their stand.

Let it not be thought that any claim is to be made of some new and wonderful discovery, any revolutionizing theory to disturb the beloved saints, our examination. May He who is the Head of His Church graciously lead us by His word and Spirit into His truth more and more fully.

The three general views of assembly relation-

this will become apparent as we proceed with

An Ecclesiastical Trilemma

ship which are to be examined—with no desire to brand with any offensive epithet—we will speak of as: (1) Local Sufficiency; (2) Metropolitan Control; (3) Local Independency. The first and third of these need a further characterization to distinguish

r. Local Sufficiency.—This view of the local assembly claims that its actions are bound in heaven, and therefore bound upon the people of God everywhere; that as the Lord is in the midst of His assembly, whatever is done has His authority and

them, which will appear as we proceed.

assembly, whatever is done has His authority and must be bowed to; that there is no appeal from the decision of the assembly. While absolute infallibility is not claimed, absolute authority is; so that an assembly action, even if wrong, is to be obeyed.

The Scriptures used to support this view are in general such as the following: "Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18: 18); "For where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of

18); "For where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18: 20); "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (Jno. 20: 22, 23); "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15: 28); "In the name

of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered to-

gether, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan" (1 Cor. 5: 4, 5); "To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also" (2 Cor. 2: 10); "The house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15). Other scriptures are doubtless made use of, but these will suffice to show the general thought.

Let us now ask what elements of truth are there in this view. It is manifest that just in so far as the scriptures just quoted do support the view, that view is correct. We may be sure at the outset that no error is attractive to the Spirit-taught soul. Therefore there is frequently, we may say always, some element of truth in every system of error. It is the truth which attracts the child of God.

The Church is the house of God, the depository of His truth: "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor. 3:17). The Lord's presence in the midst of His gathered saints is a reality. Their acts as so gathered are under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and have all the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a great responsibility entrusted to the Church, and a correspondingly binding authority connected with its carrying out of those responsibilities. He who despises, despises not men, but God.

Have we not, then, reached a conclusion at the very outset of our examination? Let us then seek to carry it out. But we add a word which modifies all that has been said. It is as so gathered that the saints have the Lord's authority and the Spirit's guidance. This is no mere formal, external gathering; it means a true subjection of heart and will to

our Lord and His word; it means lowliness, and refusal of the flesh. To assume an authority without this is the very opposite of godliness.

The theory we are examining claims some inherent authority in the Church, apart from righteousness and subjection to the word of God. All authority rests upon God's word, which is the expression of His mind and will. No claims, however great, no numbers, no succession, no gifts—nothing can for one moment take the place of the word of God, which is righteousness. To attempt to link the Lord's holy name and authority with unrighteousness is iniquity. This is what marks Rome.

The primary attitude of the Church to Christ is obedience: "As the Church is subject unto Christ" (Eph. 5; 24). How monstrous then is the thought of claiming His authority for disobedience. It claims infallible authority for the Church, for fallible man, and thus fosters pride and paves the way for all manner of tyranny and oppression. It puts a premium on carnality, and does away with the necessity on the part of every one to be exercised in the presence of God. Instead of this, the conscience is brought into the presence of man, and bondage instead of freedom is the result. No words can too strongly characterize the system of which we speak. Thank God that even where some elements of it may exist, there is a good measure of subjection to God and following His word, which partly neutralizes the effect of the principle. But if the principle is held, it will assert itself, and that of which we speak will be manifest.

We conclude therefore that the principle of local authority and sufficiency, has elements in it which tend

to promote haughtiness, intolerance, clericalism, and above all, to set aside the supremacy of Christ alone, and the sufficiency and binding authority of His word, and thus to have the conscience under the power of man rather than of God.

2. Metropolitan Control.-Few, if any, who know at all the truth of the one Body, would contend for absolute local supremacy. There has therefore arisen, in a gradual way, the practice of a kind of oversight by leading and gifted non-resident brethren, who in this way seek to guide, and in some measure review the actions of the local assemblies. No doubt this originated in a desire to secure uniformity of action, especially in crowded cities or thickly-settled sections. Beginning in a simple way, with the thought of fellowship, prayer and counsel, it gradually became part of a regular order. The doctrine of "the church in a city" was formulated, and quite a complete system of oversight was established. The doctrine in question is that there can be but one assembly in a city, although there may be many in a district or province. The local assembly therefore is not competent, according to this, to act without the concurrence of all the other assemblies in the same city. And this united action constitutes the Assembly's decision.

In a less definite way, brethren of weight and experience would naturally be consulted about matters in the vicinity where they might be, and gradually all, or many, local matters might be taken to a place where there were a goodly number of such brethren. It is easy to see how such a practice might result inwhat we have called metropolitan oversight.

Let us now see what scriptures were used to sup-

port this view. As to the general oversight of which we have spoken, all such scriptures as speak of the "multitude of counselors" are applicable—the unity of the body and of the Spirit (Eph. 4). Perhaps the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) might be considered as authorizing "elder brethren" to exercise a general supervision, while, as has been already said, the doctrine of "the Church in a city" has been formulated with great exactness and strictness. It has been claimed that we read of "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2); of Judea, (1:22); of Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:1); of Asia (1 Cor. 16:19), etc.—but never of the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, etc. (see salutations in the various epistles of Paul).

Space forbids us going at much length into this interesting subject, but we point to a few truths which lead us to guard against accepting in toto any view which establishes what this practically is—an oligarchy.

Most certainly we have not a word to say against the manifest fact that many of the scriptures used to impress us with the unity of the body of Christ, and the necessity of endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, are most important in that connection. We also heartily accept the principle that age, experience and piety are most valuable and necessary for the help of all the assemblies of God. But when a formal doctrine is promulgated that in a city there is but one assembly (no matter how many meeting-places there may be), we question whether the scriptures used to establish this really do so.

A local assembly is, "Where two or three are gathered to My name." Such a company most cer-

tainly has all the functions necessary for carrying on all the activities, and meeting all the responsibilities of the assembly. There is no higher act than properly remembering the Lord in the breaking of bread. This presupposes the company has judged itself both individually and collectively. If any wickedness has been present, it must be put away; if any godly persons, scripturally entitled to reception, are present, they must be received. Any company therefore competent to break bread is competent to exercise all assembly functions.

It will be asked. What about the scriptures which speak of but one assembly in a city, and of many in a province? We reply that there doubtless was but one assembly in a city, as they were not such immense places as we have now, and God's work had but just begun. Each assembly would at first include all the saints in the city; and even if later need called for two or more places of meeting, each of these, as representing all the Church of God, would be called the Assembly in that place. Indeed in Romans (chap. 16) there are indications of separate companies meeting at different points (see vers. 5, 10, 14, 15). There can be no spiritual significance in the bounds of a "city." A company near the outskirts may be far closer to another company a short distance beyond than to a meeting on the other side of the city. Of course, if for any reason counsel is needed, there should be the utmost simplicity and freedom in giving and receiving it. But at this we will look presently.

In this connection, we must also speak further of an assembly order which while not based on the doctrine of "a church in a city," is quite similar to it. This has been spoken of as a "committee of delegates," composed of older and experienced brethren in the general vicinity or elsewhere, who are called in to decide as to local matters. We can only repeat what has already been said, that the local assembly is a distinct unit, responsible for the administration of matters committed to its care.

Let us now ask in a little more detail what elements of truth there are in this theory of metropolitan oversight. First, in whatever measure it recognizes the unity of the Spirit in the whole Church of God, and seeks to carry out His leadings, it is right. The fellowship of the saints is not an "inside" and an "outside" fellowship, but one and the same throughout the whole body. In whatever measure also in which the gifts of pastor and teacher are seen to be for the whole assembly of God, and the counsel of men of experience is welcomed—in such directions this doctrine has elements of truth which none can ignore.

But, as a system of doctrine, there are marked unscriptural features which we cannot accept. It is practically a form of Presbyterian oversight, in which little or no room is left for the individual conscience, save of the leaders. With the best motives, this fails to exercise the whole assembly, and leads saints to look for some decision from without rather than to the Lord alone. The effect will eventually be seen in a general legislation, rather than the simplicity of each assembly acting in the fear of God and in the unity of the Spirit. Room is given for private influence rather than public exercise, and leaders have an undue prominence, which savors of clerisy. S. R. (To be continued.)



關 ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS



QUES. 2.- We all acknowledge that new birth is the very first beginning of spiritual life in any man. It is evident from John 3 that our Saviour makes the brazen serpent of Numbers 21 the figure of Himself on the cross, and looking on Him by faith the means of being born again. Why then does not the brazen sernent occur at the beginning of Israel's journey instead of at the end?

Ans.—Because it was only by their experience across the wilderness that the need of new birth could be manifested. There is nothing in all the word of God which declares the absolute deprayity of man like the decree that he must be born again if he would enter the kingdom, and Israel's history from Egypt to Canaan is a painful proof of that depravity. Even in the New Testament, the statement as to new birth does not occur till after the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke have borne witness to the desperate evil of man, shown in the way he has trented the Son of God. John's Gospel, coming after this, pronounces therefore the real condition of man by saving he must be born mew. It is as if a physician said to his patient, I have used all my skill and all my remedies to cure you, and you are no better, but only There is no hope for you. What you need is an entirely new constitution. The physician, it may be, knew from the start what the end would be, but his kind heart would defer saving it to his patient till its truth could be evident to that patient himself by the experience of the treatment. God certainly knew the end from the beginning, but His loving heart deals with man a long time before He tells him the hopelessness of his condition. thus prepares him for the only remedy.

Well do I remember my own misery when John 3 took hold of If one must be born anew, was there a sure way of knowing it? Yes, there was. If John's Gospel stated the need and the means of new birth, John's first epistle, chap. 5:1, stated the proof of its having taken place. It said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Applying it to one's self, sincerely believing on Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, the passage gave as much assurance as to being born again, as Rom. 3: 21-28 concerning the clearance from the guilt of our sins. What a book is the word of God! It but needs to be read honestly to prove itself as from God : it carries its own credentials .

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Bible in the Public Schools The following request has recently come to hand: "Seeing the vast importance of suitable environments,

especially for the young, and knowing the influence of the word of God in producing the very best, would it not be well for such of God's people as are interested in the matter, to make it a subject of special prayer that the Bible may be recognized throughout the land as having a national place in the Public Schools? It must, of course, be left with you, whether or not to give this suggestion publicity through your magazine. If thus given, it might lead not a few to be exercised and to unite in prayer to that end."

We gladly give publicity to the suggestion. By virtue of his heavenly calling and of the holiness which becomes him in all his ways, the Christian may not mix with politics. He cannot oppose the enemies of the Bible therefore in a political way. This does not mean, however, that he is indifferent to the national welfare, in which welfare the Bible has, doubtless, the most prominent place.

The Christian's power is in God his Father, to whom he goes in believing and persevering prayer. If the people of God rightly interested in the welfare of the nation, and therefore in the character of its rulers and governors, were to make the subject a matter of earnest prayer, they would doubtless see their sphere of influence far more fruitful and honored both of God and of men than by taking part in politics, as many do. The world knows the chasm which exists between them and

the people of God. It may resent the Christian consistency which makes them feel that chasm; but when the consistency is not in one thing alone, but in the whole life, they will in their hearts honor the man who abides in the Christian path. Christians on their knees before God may control national matters far more than all the politicians together, though unseen, unheard and unnoticed. What disasters, what bloody wars, what miseries, may already have been avoided in the history of nations through the prayers of a few godly souls! And at the present time, what Christian heart has not felt like praying for wisdom to be given to the President of the United States concerning Mexico?

We know God's chief interest on the earth now is in His Church, but if He takes interest even in the sparrows, how much more in what may be for the welfare or for the misery of a whole nation of human beings.

Who can tell how much of the peace and welfare of this favored land—for many years a refuge to multitudes of the needy and oppressed of other lands—is the result of the place the Bible has had in it? What is it that makes the vast difference to-day between it and its southern neighbors, South America, Central America and Mexico? Their natural resources are not a whit less than those of the United States, but under the yoke of the Roman Catholic Church, they have been deprived of the Bible. They were, instead, furnished with images, crosses, candles, etc., for idolatry, to their moral and national ruin.

Human nature is no better here than there, but the holy influence of the word of God has led to the formation of a very different moral and national character. Our own father and mother, of sweet and revered memory, refused the tempting advantages offered them in 1853 by their home government to induce them to emigrate to one of its colonies. They chose to give up those inducements and suffer many of the hardships of pioneer life in the United States in order to have their family in environments formed by the Bible, and they never regretted it, but repeatedly expressed thankfulness at the step they had taken. The teacher in the log school house may not always have been a very pious man, but a chapter from the Bible every morning spoke to him as well as to the scholars, and what a beneficent influence!

Since those early days, however, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, that well-known and relentless enemy of the Bible, has crept in, and, as is her wont, has set out to seize the reins of government, to get the Bible out of the schools. She calls the public schools irreligious; then makes them religious after her own fashion—substituting for the noble and holy teaching of the word of God a mass of foolish traditions and doctrines of men, and Mariolatry and worship of images instead of the true and only God. If people forget or are indifferent to the rivers of blood shed by Popery, of those faithful men and women who laid down their lives to keep the word of God, they may at no distant day find that Rome's boast that "she never changes," is only too true.

Dr. Ellot A newspaper clipping has been sent us, giving some recent utterances of Dr.

Eliot's, the President Emeritus of Harvard University. If it were some erring Christian, one could, with the courage of love, seek to help such or his followers out of error; but Dr. Eliot is not an erring Christian. His flat denials of the plain facts revealed in the word of God, and daring to contradict God to His face, proclaim him aloud an apostate from the faith; and what Heb. 10: 26-29 tells us concerning such does not warrant, we believe, discussing what they say. The sayings themselves are the greatest possible warning to others not to follow them. But what a deep, deep pity that the youths of the land should ever be under such influence!

Some months ago we came in contact with a few youths of the Yale University, who are under the same kind of influences, and the moment they were touched by the word of God, they became not only discourteous, but insolent. How little such know that they are the very ones who prove the word of God true, for it has abundantly foretold about them.

Brazil A recent letter from our brother J. P. Ribeiro who, with his wife, is laboring in the Word in Brazil, speaks of the work where they are as very encouraging indeed. They especially desire the prayers of God's people here, speaking of the assurance that they are remembered at the throne of grace as one of the most cheering things in their pathway. They are now in the upper reaches of the Amazon. Their address is:

J. P. RIBEIRO,

Seuna Madureira, Alto Purús, (Telegrafo Sem Fios) Amazonas, Brazil.

REMEMBER!

EMEMBER, Christian, what thou wast, When guilty and undone, Before God's Spirit picked thee up, And led thee to His Son.

Remember, Christian, whose thou art, And how thou hast been saved; Thou art the purchase of His blood, Who death's dark billows braved.

Remember always thou art His, And His forevermore; The threatenings of the judgment day Shall trouble thee no more.

Remember too that thou art here To live for Him who died, That by thy stay upon the earth, He may be glorified.

Remember, Christian, that this world Against thee stands arrayed; If thou dost in the battle stand, Thou must by grace be stayed.

Remember also Satan's power, And ever watch and pray; Distrust thyself, but trust in Christ, He'll lead thee all the way.

Remember, Christian, too, thy flesh Doth seek thine overthrow; But keep it in the place of death, And humbly onward go.

Then learn to cherish His own words, Before He died for thec: He blessed the bread and wine and said, "This do, remember Me!" Remember, Christian, He will come, And take thee to His home: Then, in this dreary wilderness, Thy feet no more shall roam.

Remember, Christian, thou wilt be Forever with thy Lord;
Then may thy whole demeanor here With these great truths accord.

C. C. CROWSTON.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

"What a wonderful life was the Lord Jesus Christ's! Every moment filled up; every act having God as its object, and therefore right, and performed rightly! How precious to God too! No wonder it is preserved before Him. In the golden pot the manua was laid up before Jehovah for a memorial. In that golden psalm (16th) again that life Godward is preserved, and in what marvellous language!-perfect confidence in God; no assumption of equality (though there) as Man; perfect delight in the excellent of the earth, the saints; absolute separation to God; with joy and praise and hope, even though the path of life lay for Him through death!

"Again that life is preserved before God in Leviticus 2 by a covenant of salt for ever. It has been lived despite of Satan, sin and death, and is always a delight to God, so that we may take our handful from the meal, or the cakes, or the firstfruit offering, with all the frankincense and offer it as a sweet savor to God, owning thus we are not it, but enjoy our portion of it as "priests in the holy place."

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Chap. 1: 1-5.)

(Continued from page 47.)

In verse 5, the apostle who had been a witness of the earthly life of the Son of God gives us the message which, by word and work, He had communicated to them, making God known to them in His nature and character as *Light*, without a shade of darkness.

No doubt John gave our Lord's message orally to those to whom he could thus speak, but here he puts it in permanent form that it may be the heritage of all believers. If, then, we have received the message concerning the moral nature and character of God, it becomes us to seek to realize the import of the message.

We may best do this perhaps by considering three statements—"God is spirit," "God is light," and "God is love."

When our Lord tells the woman of Samaria that "God is spirit" (John 4: 24), He is teaching her that while the substance of God is immaterial and invisible, it is of the nature of spirit: He is not characterizing the spirit substance in God, not distinguishing it from the spirit substance in other spirit beings. There can be no doubt that the spirit substance of angels is not identical with the spirit substance in God, which is uncreated, underived, subsisting from everlasting to everlasting. Not so in angels. In them it is a created substance. But this distinction or difference is not the point in our Saviour's conversation with the Samaritan woman. He is emphasizing the fact that

God being of a spirit substance, it is unsuited to worship Him with material things, with shadows. He should be worshiped in spirit and reality.

Returning to our verse, when the apostle says, "God is light," he is not speaking of God's spirit substance merely, but of His moral nature as well; He is declaring what one of the qualities is by which His moral character is distinguished.

Light and love describe God's character. Light is used here symbolically: a beautiful symbol it is. In the first place, light, constituted as it is of three distinct rays, is in itself a trinity in unity, and suitably symbolizes God as a unity of three distinctions. God is a trinity of one common substance.

But this is not all that light speaks of. The distinctions in the Godhead are distinctions of personal relations. The three Persons constituting the Trinity are not only a trinity of one common spirit substance, but also of one common life, of one common moral nature and character. To say, "God is light," is not only to say the Trinity is of one common spirit substance, but also of a common moral nature, since the distinctions in the Godhead are distinctions of moral relations. The distinctions of Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinctions of individual and personal moral relations. As light is unchangeable, always the same, it beautifully symbolizes God as the unchangeable One, both in substance and moral nature.

Again, light is self-manifesting and therefore symbolizes the capability in God of manifesting Himself, of putting Himself in the light. The second person of the Godhead eternally was its power to manifest itself, whether partially or fully. The

fully revealed God—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—revealed their moral nature. It is in this sense that the Son of God is the light of men. In Him become Man the invisible Father is seen. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (Jno. 14:9). God the Spirit is able to make men sensible of His unseen immanence, that He is near even if invisible, but the Son not only manifests His nearness, but makes Himself visible—puts Himself in

Again, as the symbol of what God is, light is

the light.

partial revelations of God have been by the Word; through His incarnation and earthly life He has

transparent, perfectly transparent. It is thus the symbol of intrinsic purity, of God's moral character. To say "God is light," is to say He is holy; not only relatively, but absolutely so. His holiness is essential, intrinsic. This means He is able to preserve Himself as He is. As light is unchangeable. so is God incorruptible, untarnishable; it is impossible for any moral poison to come into His moral nature. No evil, no sin can ever originate or be in Him. What He is in moral nature and character He has ever been and must ever be. He cannot be deceived: "cannot be tempted with evil" (James 1: 13). "God is light" tells us His moral discernment is absolutely perfect. It is a moral impossibility for God to look complacently upon sin. He cannot behold iniquity (Hab. 1: 13). If, then, His perceptions are unerring, His moral discernment absolutely perfect, His judgments must be right. He must perfectly resent everything that is con-

trary to what He is in His own nature. He can never compromise with what is against or in op-

position to His character. That He is light is the assurance and guarantee of all this.

And light is an active agent. It is not a passive thing affected by outside influences. Darkness may hinder its being seen; but seen or unseen it is ever the same. It is not moulded by powers outside itself. It is ceaselessly, uniformly active, symbolizing thus the active energy in God by which He ceaselessly and uniformly asserts or expresses His moral character.

We see, then, that in saying "God is light," the Spirit uses a most appropriate symbol, whether we think of God as a trinity of Persons, or community of spirit substance, or moral nature and character.

In chapter 4 the apostle says, "God is love." If light expresses the divine energy in manifesting the stainless and unstainable purity of God's moral nature, "love" expresses the energy of God in asserting and maintaining the absolute perfection of His goodness. Necessarily these two distinguishing qualities unite in God. If He were not absolutely "light" He could not be absolute goodness; and if He were not absolutely "love"—perfect goodness—He could not be unsullied light.

We return now to the thread of the apostle's argument. He has shown that the Son of God become Man has by word and work, especially by the cross, manifested the life eternal in its fulness and power; and that believers on the Son of God participate in the life thus manifested; that believers now not only share in the life but may know it, and so have the full joy which that knowledge gives. Then he declares the spotless purity

of God's moral character as manifested in the Son come from God, that the participators in God's moral nature may apprehend and understand the character of the life and nature in which they share.

This is used to test the reality of the profession as to possessing this divine life—whether the profession be our own or others'. The qualification to test whether the profession is real or not is the knowledge of what God is in His moral nature. But this knowledge must be, not only reliable, but authoritative. It is reliable, because the Son of God Himself has come and made known the truth about God. It is authoritative, because He was sent of God to reveal Him.

Again, the knowledge we possess of God's perfect moral nature is reliable and trustworthy knowledge, because it has been communicated to us by those who were personal witnesses of its revelation in and through the Son of God. These witnesses have borne testimony to what they heard Him declare. It is His revelation that they have announced to us, and were commissioned by Him to make.

Let us notice also the form of the announcement. It is stated both positively and negatively. "God is light" declares what He is positively. The negative statement is, Darkness is not at all in Him. Through the Son of God become Man, God is in the light. Faith knows what He is morally as revealed in His Son. Of this life, through grace, the children of faith partake.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL TRILEMMA

(Continued from page 55.)

3. Independency. At first glance this view may seem identical with that of local sufficiency, but there are a number of radical differences. However, extremes meet, and this is illustrated in the elements of similarity between these two views.

The characteristic feature of Independency is, as its name indicates, that the local gathering is a unit, whose association with other gatherings is very slight. It is competent not only to decide as to local matters, but as to matters which are not local. Thus the fact that a person has been received or excommunicated by a neighboring gathering does not decide it for other gatherings. Without dictating to the other gatherings, they will decide upon the case afresh, and act accordingly—it may be in opposition to the other gathering. But this divergence is not a ground of separation; the independency permits them to go on together, in a general way, with one who is allowed at one place and refused at another.

Growing out of this is a denial of a "circle of fellowship," various assemblies recognizing one another as holding the same truth and having the same order. They claim that all fellowship is of individuals with Christ—that this individual fellowship with Him is also the fellowship of His Church, the only link and title to be recognized. That in this sense there is no real local assembly, but only the general fellowship of the whole body. Closely connected with this is the teaching that the possession of life is the only title to fellowship, and that

we can only debar those who are not really Christians. This is held only by some, and has been modified so that those under scriptural discipline are also excluded.

It is somewhat difficult to cite scriptures adduced for these views from their very vagueness. All scriptures which speak of the common life and blessings of the people of God are given (and rightly) as a reason for there being a common fellowship. But if these are given to the exclusion of those scriptures which speak of responsibility in walk and ways, in testimony, doctrine and association, they are put out of their place. They urge such a scripture as, "Wherefore receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Rom. 15: 7) as proving that if Christ has received one, so we should also. In contrast they cite 3 John as an illustration of ecclesiastical narrowness and domineering which would cast godly saints out of fellowship, even for receiving beloved servants of Christ. They point to the fact that there is "one body," and that there can be no circle of fellowship which is narrower than the limits of the Church of God. Reminded of the need of scriptural discipline, they would urge that at least we are bound to "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. 2: 22), claiming that if one is evidently sincere we must follow after the things of God with him: in other words, recognize him as in the path of fellowship.

Let us in all love for the people of God, whoever and wherever they may be, examine these views. If they are of God, let us accept and act upon them unfearingly; if not, let us as firmly refuse them. But first let us ask what elements of truth they contain, "for we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Truth is of God wherever found and by whomsoever owned. Let us therefore not be found to fight against truth.

There is no mistaking this, that whoever recognizes all the people of God as His is right in that, whatever else he may be mistaken in. Let us ever be on our guard against the sectarian spirit-"He followeth not with us." All the Lord's people are dear to Him, no matter how great their ignorance or unscriptural their position. He who would be in the current of the thoughts and affections of Christ must be in the spirit of John 17-"That they all may be one." Further, that spirit which leads to special dependence upon God, which realizes that we cannot receive from man but are in subjection to God, is surely most proper and commendable. Where this exists there will be a corresponding lowliness and an absence of pride which is so blighting upon a true and godly testimony, whether doctrinal or ecclesiastical.

We must however point out those elements in this view which are either contradictory to Scripture, or so one-sided as to result in error. Let us speak first of the truth of the unity of the body. It is right to say that the primary thought of the unity of the body teaches us that there should be "no schism in the body." But if each local assembly is independent of all others, if its discipline is only for itself, is there not at once an ignoring of the very unity which is being contended for? Does not the truth of there being but one body neces-

sitate a practical unity in order and discipline, if we are to keep or guard the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

Let us look also at Matthew 18, a passage full of divine meaning in this connection. Here is a case of discipline which has come up, from the personal treatment of one who wishes to gain his brother, to the point where all his efforts have failed, and the brother has refused to listen even to the assembly. He is therefore let alone by the brother who has sought to gain him. The assembly has taken the matter up further-we may suppose-and dealt with the wrong-doer in full discipline. This need not be the case, for it may not be ripe for full assembly discipline; but if the assembly does act according to God and His word, it is a binding action-bound even in heaven. Is it not then bound on earth, in every company of Christians who own the truth of God? If therefore the action has been of God, to ignore it would be a direct dishonor to Him, We cannot think of His deciding the same question in two ways: therefore independency here means independency of Him.

This has all the greater weight when we see the divine provision for ascertaining the Lord's mind when any act of discipline has been presented for another assembly's action. If there is question about it, there is but one course—to raise the question with those who have acted, and with them to go afresh into the whole matter until the mind of the Lord is clearly ascertained. But to re-open a case away from where it has occurred and decide it as we may believe best is a sure way of not keeping the unity of the Spirit.

We need hardly point out how such acts would weaken all discipline. Instead of bowing under the chastening hand of God, one has his case taken up by those who know comparatively nothing of it, and all sense of the Lord's dealing with him is lost. Similarly the saints, instead of looking upon one who is thus under discipline as a "wicked person," question the action, and thus that exclusion which is God's way of leading a soul to repentance is rendered a weak and ineffectual thing.

Besides this, the identity of saints is lost sight of; the reality of the Lord meeting with, guiding and upholding His saints in a company is forgotten, and we attempt to do in a partial way what has been done more carefully. And if the saints in one locality have not been guided, what ground have we to claim guidance for ourselves? Thus that which weakens a "circle of fellowship" weakens the local gathering, for it is as really a circle as the larger one.

Further, if there is an ignoring of corporate unity and responsibility, we have no scripture to authorize our separation from the systems or denominations all about us—unless we brand them all as wicked. While it is only too sadly apparent that worldliness and false doctrine have largely leavened the various denominations, we have separated from them for the two-fold reason of their insubjection to divine principles of order, and the lack of holiness in walk and doctrine. The looseness of principle opens the way to all manner of association with evil, and it is this that every one who nameth the name of the Lord must depart from. But if the principle of independency is accepted, we re-

ceive apart from separation from association with evil, and therefore are schismatic in having taken a place of outward separation.

This independency also lowers the sense of evil, as the apparent antagonism between gatherings weakens the sense of the actual sin which may be in question.

There is also the danger of thus having some party "shibboleth" which is pressed in an unscriptural way. It is worthy of note that an ignoring of the manifest word of God in some important truth is often accompanied by undue strictness in some minor detail. We are all too prone to strain out the gnat and to swallow the camel.

But enough has been said to call attention to the unscriptural character of much of this teaching. While avoiding what is not according to God, let us freely own what is His truth.

One principle remains however to which we must call attention: that past questions may be settled by ignoring them. Time does not alter the moral character of an action. The sin of our first parents is present with us to-day. The principles involved in an action are always abiding, and unless these are judged the whole tone of an individual or a company is influenced by it. Questions which are ignored will come up again. The only right way is to go back and face these questions and decide them in the light of God's word. We can then go on happily, with our lessons learned. Otherwise we are in danger of making saints the centre instead of our Lord and His truth, and thus under the plea of unity we may foster its opposite.

LETTERS TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

EXPLANATORY NOTE.

These papers are just what they profess to be, personal letters addressed to a parish priest of the Church of Rome.

While journeying on the railway some years ago, I made the acquaintance of the Rev. A. M. S.—. A day spent in friendly discussion drew my heart out to him, as I recognized his apparent sincerity of purpose and evident desire to glorify God. On his part, he was kind enough to say that he appreciated greatly the spirit manifested toward him, and had been deeply interested in the consideration of the subject before us. A courteous and cultured gentleman, with whom it was a real pleasure to converse, he also was, I trust, a genuine lover of our Lord Jesus Christ, and a man of true piety. When we parted, he accepted from me a little volume dealing with a portion of Holy Scripture, concerning which he afterwards wrote me a very appreciative letter.

This opened the way for a somewhat desultory correspondence, covering a period of several months, which was at last interrupted by a serious illness on my part, which, with much pressing work afterwards, for a long time hindered my again writing him. Two years or more, in fact, elapsed ere I again addressed him. Of the earlier epistles I have kept no copies, but the latter ones were written in duplicate, and are now published with the hope that they may prove helpful in establishing believers in the glorious doctrines recovered at the Reformation and since, and check, in ever so small a degree, the progress Romeward of seeking souls who have not yet found settled peace; and lead to rest and assurance of acceptance with God honest Roman Catholics whose hearts long for it, but which their Church and its teachings have failed to supply. H. A. I.

LETTER I.

Rev. A. M. S.---

DEAR SIR: You may wonder, after the lapse of so many months, that I should again address you: but I have not forgotten our former correspondence, nor the courteous way in which you responded to my letters at that time. I still have on hand your two last lengthy epistles, which I had no thought of neglecting so long; but, shortly after receiving the latter one, I was obliged to make a lengthy journey, and, while far from home, was taken ill with a sickness from which I did not fully recover for a number of months. Since that time I have been so occupied with other matters that I have hesitated about renewing the correspondence. Another thing: I wished to familiarize myself more fully with Roman Catholic teaching and history. To this end I have read largely, in the months that have passed, on both sides. Newman and Chiniquy, Gibbon and Littledale, the "Catholic Encyclopedia," and Protestant historians; the Fathers, Pre- and Post-NICENE; and mediæval and modern theologians have alike been drawn upon, in order to take up with you the questions at issue, absolutely without prejudice, and, I trust, without misrepresentation. I think I have to-day a much more kindly feeling toward sincere Roman Catholics than ever before; while, you will pardon me if I say, that my researches have given me a more intense detestation of many Romish dogmas than I had previously possessed.

In the measure in which Rome confesses the doctrine of Christ, I rejoice. Her martyrs and confessors, mine as well as hers, I honor; but wherever

she teaches for doctrine the commandments of men, I most surely dissent. I, too, am a member of the Catholic Church, the one body of which Christ alone is the Head, exalted at God's right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour. Every believer in Him upon the face of the earth is, through the Spirit's baptism, a member of that one body; hence, belonging to the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church in the fullest and truest sense. But I feel, more strongly than ever, that the Bishop of Rome, and the faction who acknowledge his authority, have largely perverted the gospel of Christ; preaching, instead, "another gospel, which is not another;" and you know the solemn anathema pronounced by St. Paul against all such. What a fearful thing if the Roman Pontiff, while calling himself the Vicar of Christ and the earthly head of the Church, were found himself beneath that fearful curse (Gal. 1: 6-9).

In your last letter to me you say, and rightly so, I believe that "the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament is the pivotal point on which all turns." "Is then Christ really present in the Blessed Sacrament, as we Catholics believe?" you ask, "Or is it only a figure?" And here you confidently say: "I call all History and all Antiquity to testify against you."

Now, my dear sir, these are very strong words; and I must confess that I am greatly surprised at the temerity that could permit you to use them. Surely you are as familiar with the Fathers and history as I am. Nay, I cannot but believe you are far better acquainted with the writings of the former than I; therefore, you must know that the pre-Nicene Fathers nowhere teach the doctrine you

allege. It is only years afterwards that anything approaching it is found. It is nothing to me that the Roman Church for more than a millennium has held this doctrine; nor yet that the Eastern Church holds the same; that Luther himself taught something similar; that certain Anglicans, from Henry the Eighth down, largely agree with Rome. These are all comparatively modern. Antiquity, in this case, decides absolutely against them. When I speak of Antiquity, it is not the writings of fallible men to which I refer, but to "that which was from the beginning "-the authoritative records of the inspired apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. I purpose, then, putting before you every inspired account of the Lord's Supper found in the Holy Scriptures; and I ask you, as an honest man, to weigh them well, forgetting, so far as you can, every construction that has been put upon them by post-Nicene theologians, and ask yourself if the scriptures in question can possibly bear the interpretation Rome has given them.

In St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. 26, vers. 26-29, we read: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." St. Mark's account is very similar, but I quote it entire, as found in chap. 14, vers. 22-25: "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is My body. And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them: and they drank all of it. And He said unto them, This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

St. Luke confines his account to the space of two verses, chap. 22:19, 20—verses 17 and 18 clearly referring to the passover cup preceding the institution of the Lord's Supper: "And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

St. John, as you will recollect, furnishes no account of the institution of the Christian feast at all. His sixth chapter we will consider in a later letter.

St. Paul, in 1 Cor. 11: 23-29, gives us the only remaining account: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said: Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when they had supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till He come. Wherefore who-

soever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh a judgment to himself, if he discern not the Lord's body."*

I know of no other direct reference to the Lord's supper, save 1 Cor. 10: 15-21, which I will refer to later, and those passages in the Acts which speak of the "breaking of bread," but give us no particulars as to mode or doctrine connected with it. 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8 might be cited as a case in point, but even supposing the feast therein mentioned is what you call the "Eucharist," it proves nothing, one way or the other, as to the real Presence. Neither does Phil. 4: 6, which some read: "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with Eucharist, let your requests be made known unto God."

Now I ask your attention to the Lord's words in regard to the cup, in the passage quoted. In St. Matthew He says: 'Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Was He speaking literally or figuratively? It seems to me the simplest way to answer this question is just by asking another: Had His blood been shed at that time or not? His words are very plain, "This is My blood which is shed." It is an offence to our God-given intelli-

^{*}The Scripture quotations are from the 1911 Oxford Version, the only edition of the Bible I had on hand when writing, but neither the Douny nor the A. V. differ materially.

gence, to insist that the words, "This is My blood," must be taken literally; while, when He added. "which is shed," it must be acknowledged that He was speaking anticipatively. Furthermore, in the following verse He calls the liquid in the cup, "the fruit of the vine," which is absolutely absurd if it had been changed by the divine Presence into His actual blood. Both these propositions, I believe, apply with equal force to the quotations from St. Mark's Gospel. And St. Luke makes our position even stronger. He tells us that our Lord said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." Would you say He meant us to understand literally that the cup contained the new covenant, and that when you drink it you are drinking the new covenant, or is the expression clearly figurative?

With Luke's account Paul agrees, and we shall examine his words in a moment. But if it be clear, and I see not how it can be denied, that our Lord speaks figuratively of the cup, by what rule of logic can we suppose He speaks literally of the bread when He says, "This is My body, which is given for you?" Some manuscripts read, "broken for you;" but in either case, the meaning clearly is, "Put to death." Had His body already been broken, given, or sacrificed for us, when He instituted the Supper? If not, He certainly speaks in a figurative way. So St. Paul takes it; and in 1 Cor. 10: 16 he writes, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" And he immediately adds, "For we are all partakers of that one loaf." So that the one loaf not only sets forth

figuratively Christ's literal body, but it also is a figure of His mystical body—the Church.

And so it was held by all the apostolic churches: nor was any other meaning attached to it until the predicted apostasy had begun. The Romish dogma of the body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ being present under one species, and the consequent denial of the cup to the laity, is in itself a complete and perfect annulment of the dogma of the Real Presence; for in the Lord's Supper, as instituted by Christ, it was of the loaf alone that He said, "This is My body," and it set forth His body as given in death; hence the cup set forth His blood as separated from His body, though that separation had not yet actually taken place. Now if you tell me that in partaking of the loaf alone I still receive the blood of Christ, as though I had partaken of the cup, you completely vitiate the Roman theory itself. For manifestly, if a violent death has taken place, I cannot receive both body and blood in one kind. To tell me I can, is to deny the fact of the separation of the blood from the body at death, or else to deny the Romish dogma of the Real Presence, and to acknowledge that I receive both in a figurative sense.

It is true St. Paul tells us, "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup." It is still the bread, and still the cup. No change has taken place in the elements; faith alone can see in the loaf and the cup a symbol of the crucified Saviour.

And now I ask you, dear sir, in all seriousness, can you see anything in the Roman service of the Mass that answers in any sense to the beauty and simplicity of the Lord's Supper, as set forth in the scriptures we have read? There you have no pompous hierarchy separated from the laity, as though of a superior class, but a company of Christian brethren gathered to partake together of a simple memorial feast, each one eating of the loaf, each one drinking of the cup, in reverent and hallowed remembrance of the Lord and His death. As to the denial of the cup to by far the greater majority of communicants, I must write on that later, time and space forbidding now.

In closing, let me say that there is a deep and precious sense in which I acknowledge the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of His redeemed people, not only when gathered together to remember Him in the breaking of bread, but when gathered to His name for prayer or praise. For He Himself has said: "Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst." But this, of course, involves no transubstantiation of elements in the Lord's Supper.

Sincerely yours,

H. A. IRONSIDE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Ques. 3.—What is the force of John 11: 25, 26? Does our Lord

QUES. 3.—What is the force of John 11: 25, 26? Does our Lord refer to the time of His coming again?

ANS.—We cannot do better than quote from a communication just at hand, in which reference is made to this subject. The

writer says: "Is it not that the Lord, in making Himself known as 'the Resurrection and the Life,' takes His position as standing between the then past and present from that time on. For those who had believed on Him before His coming, there had been the dread shadow of death (Heb. 2:15)—life and incorruptibility had not been brought to light. The believer needed an Interpreter of death. He had now come; so He could say, 'He that believes on Me, though he have died, he shall live,' and consequently the living ones who believed on Him would never die: that is, the dread meaning of death had gone, the fear was dissipated, and death was, to such, no longer a dreaded enemy. Indeed it is not death any more in its real character, but being 'put to sleep.' Furthermore, the Lord is not speaking of His coming again in any part of the context, so that to apply it to this seems forced, to say the least."

QUES. 4.—Is "the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5: 5; 1: 22) the Spirit Himself? Is it the same as in Ephesians 1: 13, 14?

ANS.—Yes, it is the Spirit Himself who is both the "earnest" and the "seal." As the earnest, He is God's pledge to the believer of all that which is to follow—the inheritance with Christ (Rom. 8:17) to be manifested at His coming again. As the seal, He is the pledge that the believer will be preserved and kept for that glorious inheritance (see Eph. 4:30). Thus all is made sure in the gift of the Spirit: the inheritance for us, and we for the inheritance.

QUES 5.—Is 1 Corinthians 11:5 to be enforced when God's people come together for prayer or ministry? Some hold the Church comes together in its Church capacity only at the meeting for the breaking of bread, and that only there, therefore, the above passage should have force.

Ans.—The passage has no reference to the assembly at all, for when the assembly in its assembly capacity is come together the order is, "Let your women keep silence in the assemblies: for it is not permitted unto them to speak . . . for it is a shame for women to speak in the assembly" (1 Cor 14:34). The passage in chapter 11 has to do with headship—that which abides, even in the greatest privacy, as verse 10 shows, where only angels may see the person. In the secret of his closet a man would not kneel in prayer with his hat on his head. Why? Verse 7 tells us.

Contrarily, the woman, in the same secrecy, would cover herself. Why? The end of the same verse 7 also tells. Every part of creation has its God-appointed order, and the word of God refers even to the angels looking down and expecting to see that order carried out among the people of God, who profess subjection to Him. Furthermore, to say that the meeting for the breaking of bread is the only one in which the assembly meets in assembly capacity is, we believe, beside the mark. Any meeting known to be intended for the assembly, where every member of the assembly is free to attend, is in that capacity, we believe. Also, is not the Lord's presence with those truly gathered to His name what gives them the character of His assembly?—and He has promised His presence even to two or three thus united for prayer (Matt. 18: 19, 20).

Let us guard, however, against the legal, hard spirit, which pushes such matters beyond the limits intended of God—turning, perhaps, into a formal assembly meeting what might partake more of the family meeting in some private house. To be blessed with good sense is a happy adjunct to true and sincere piety.

QUES. 6.—Was the epistle to the Hebrews written to Hebrews as such, or to assemblies of Jewish Christians? And, are there not lessons for us to learn out of the Old Testament?

Ans.—To Jewish Christians, surely. In the first verse of the epistle he refers to the Hebrew fathers, and in much of it afterward to the types and ceremonials of the system which God had established in Israel, and which now, by the Holy Spirit, are shown to have been ordained as figures of Christ and the blessings we now possess in Christ. This makes it clear the epistle is addressed to This answers your other question concerning Christian Jews. the Old Testament. We would suggest "C. H. M.'s Notes" on the five books of Moses as most helpful in the understanding of the Old Te-tament. Also the "Numerical Bible:" its first two volumes cover from Genesis to end of 2d Samuel. It unfolds the treasures of the Word in a way that makes one love and value it as never before. We are quite convinced indeed that there is not an incident related in the Old Testament from which we may not learn some lesson-in example or some principle. Of course the New Testament is the teacher, and the Old chiefly illustrates.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Christian Ministry What is It? In a late number of our magazine (February), we were inquiring as to What is the Church? We

saw it is not a human organization, such as an army with a general as its governing head, but a divine, living organism formed of people who have been saved by the Lord Jesus, and who, in consequence, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and by Him united to Christ in heaven. Christ is thus the Head of the Church—in the sense of the head of a human body with which every member in that body, great or small, noticed or unnoticed, is linked in a living way, and is guided by it to fulfil its proper functions.

We also saw that all the members in Christ's body, in their character as worshipers, are the Christian priesthood, with Christ above as Great High Priest.

The Christian ministry is quite another thing. It is the same people, but viewed differently—not now, as in their priesthood, with faces toward God offering their praises and thanksgivings to Him, but, as servants, their faces toward men who need their service, each doing what is his or her appointed task—the foot for one kind of service, the hand for another, the eye, the ear, etc.—each and all fulfilling the task which belongs to each one severally. Among them are some who are called to special work requiring special gifts, such as evangelists, pastors, teachers. Any one possessing such a gift is responsible to exercise it in responsibility to Christ who has imparted it, and especially prepared the vessel for it. The evangelist, by virtue

of his gift, is to go and preach the gospel every. where and to everyone. The teacher, by virtue of his gift, is to instruct the children of God in the word of God, wherever he finds them and as far as they will let him, unfolding to them what the Holv Spirit has already unfolded to him of the truth. The pastor, by virtue of his gift, is to care for the sheep and lambs of Christ, watching over them. seeking their sanctification and welfare, not as though they belonged to him or to this or that party. but as belonging to Christ, to whom every one of us will give an account of how we have used His gift. Everything is under the headship and direct control of Christ. In the present condition of things in Christendom, Christ is largely treated as if He were too far away to have anything to do with the affairs of His house on earth. Instead of His order, as above stated, each denomination has schools of theology of its own, where young men intended for the ministry are taught according to the views of that denomination, then "ordained" to minister to it what they have been taught, which often leaves them still in great ignorance as to the word of God. This cannot but produce spiritual dearth, as it largely ignores the fact that when Christ went from earth back to heaven, He sent down the "Holy Spirit to link all His own with Himself above. and thus put them in living relation with Him, to act here as His members in the same living, natural way as the members of our body act livingly and naturally under the guidance of the head. Human organization, being of man, has no life or spiritual power in it. It is a mechanical thing, the most perfect of which, and most pernicious, is the Papist

organization, which, with fearful loss of truth, has the greatest human success and the greatest spiritual dearth. But no organization can equip any man for the divine task of feeding the flock of God. Peter declares that is done "by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (1 Pet. 1:12).

When God called His Jewish flock out of Egypt, He chose men to minister to them, but neither those men nor the whole flock were permitted to make arrangements which might stand in the way of the Pillar of cloud and of fire which conducted them all the way from Egypt to Canaan, This "Pillar" which accompanied them was the figure of the Holy Spirit who dwells with us since He came from heaven on the day of Pentecost, and will abide with us till all the Church of God has reached her home in glory.

Let any one read the ninth chapter of Numbers, from verse 15 to the end, and he cannot fail to see how the least arrangement by Moses or the people of Israel could have easily been in direct opposition to the leading of the Cloud. For instance, what more natural than to have made a rule that the people be ready to march every morning at 8 o'clock. march a few miles, and stop during the heat of the day. It would have been so convenient that it would have pleased the mass of the people far better than to be at any moment of the day or the night liable to be called to go or to stay. But this would really have been ignoring the presence of God among His people, and avoiding His schooling, for it is thus He does school His people—never in an arbitrary way, we need not say, but in relation

to their present state and future welfare. What a loss therefore to give up such a guidance for human arrangement, no matter how good. No doubt, it originates in the right and true thought that without organization there cannot be an orderly or efficient condition of things; that there must be some ruling mind to control and combine the service of all concerned. This is as true in the army of the Lord Jesus as in any other army. There must be a Controlling Mind which rules every other. But the One who controls in the army of the Lord is the Holy Spirit. He is here to attend to all the interests of the Lord Jesus; to show to His people their way through this great desertworld; and to teach them subjection to all the world of God, as well as intelligent understanding of it.

According to God, the Church has no power to provide the ministry which she needs, for the very good reason that she can impart no gift for that ministry. Neither has she the right to select what she likes. All she is required to do is to receive such gifts from the Lord as He is pleased to provide and to send her. If she is in communion with Him she will readily recognize and receive those whom He sends, and refuse those who profess to be sent without being so. This is her responsibility (Rev. 2: 2), and it keeps her awake.

As previously mentioned, this ministry was, in Old Testament times, illustrated by the Levites. As the Levites were servants to the priests, so is the Christian ministry a servant to God's worshipers. All true service is to make Christ more precious to the hearts of His people, and this is what produces worship—worship "in spirit and in truth."

There is much confusion in the minds of many as to worship and service; the two being often confounded. Service ministers to the hearts of God's people. Worship is what comes out of their thankful hearts towards God. To confound these leads to much error. A servant of Christ assembling the people together to preach to them, is not worship—though it leads to that if the ministry be true.

Converted and unconverted may both be served by the ministry, and therefore assemble together for a common purpose; but in worship, none but truly converted people can possibly have a share. If unconverted persons are at such a meeting, they are only lookers-on; they have no share or part in the worship. At such a time, even the offering of money is a part of the worship: from their hearts, and in praise to God, His people are offering Him of their substance for whatever purpose may be to His praise. Christians who confound service and worship largely lose their priestly character. What a vast difference between a servant of God standing in the midst of an audience to instruct them, and Christ the Great High Priest carrying out these words of Heb. 2: 12, "In the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee." How unspeakably higher is the latter! As much higher as the Master and Lord is higher than the servant. It is Christ Himself in the midst of His priestly family leading their praises to God, presenting those praises and prayers as illustrated by the high priest in Israel with the golden censer in his hand offering sweet incense before God in the holiest. No sermon, however good; no choir, however skilful; no vestment or ceremonies,

however sensuous, is this. It might all do for a *lewish* worship, but *Christian* worship must be "in spirit and in truth." It can come only from human hearts attuned by the Spirit of God—that blessed Spirit whose presence here is to exalt Christ and to endear Him to every believer.

Fragment of a Letter to a Christian passing through Temptations

God gives us in Israel an outline of His ways with His people.

First: In Egypt Israel had to face the righteousness of a holy God who hates sin. They were sinners, and the blood of the Lamb is provided to be put between them and the holy judgment of God.

Second: Come out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, the flesh, their flesh—what is in them, is the great obstacle, which they learn to hate, to judge and turn away from.

Third: Having passed the wilderness and entering the promised land, the dwellers in Canaan have to be encountered. For us, Canaan is the heavenly inheritance, such as we take possession of now by faith. There it is we meet Satan. The truth puts us in the company of our Lord Jesus, and there also it is that Satan will oppose, and we have to resist him. In Ephesians the riches of our heavenly possessions—our inheritance in Christ, is mostly developed, and it is there we are warned against Satan's assaults and wiles, and God's armor with which to meet Satan is detailed. Satan's temptations of our Lord Jesus brought out His perfections in obedience and fidelity to God. In us they are to subdue our

will and render us dependent, submissive and obedient to God—happy in His will. Highway robbers attack not a poor man who has not a penny. They lay wait for the wealthy. Thus Satan, the liar and murderer, the opposer of the truth, is not concerned about the worldling or the worldly Christian; his efforts are against those who possess the truth, who actively pursue it and conform their life to it.

Our Lord has overcome Satan. Let us resist him by the word of God, and he will flee away. Our Lord said to Satan, "It is written." Let us do the same, using the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

ONE THAT I KNOW IN HEAVEN

When our beloved sister, Mrs. S.——, was about to pass into the presence of the Lord, she was asked by her nearest and dearest, "Do you know me?" She answered, "Yes." When asked further, "Do you know anyone in heaven?" she replied in a very pronounced voice, "Yes, there's One, the Lord—Jesus—Christ!"

THERE is One that I know, up in heaven,
He's the brightness of heaven to me,
The Lord Jesus Christ in the glory,
Heaven's worthy, thrice worthy One, He!

He's the light of that "excellent glory,"
Whose lustre no cloud can alloy,
The pulse of its exquisite rapture,
The song of its shadowless joy!

I will not then go as a stranger,

For I know that the first I shall see

Is the very same Jesus "Who loved me, And gave Himself"—even for me.

Enough! till the light of the morning

Shall the song and the rapture complete
In the bliss of that wonderful moment
When the Bride and the Bridegroom shall meet!

Ah, many a painter is ardent,
And many a poet excels,
Portraying the scene of that glory
Where the One that I know ever dwells:

But hush! there's a family secret
That only to children is told,
A precious love-secret, far brighter
Than visions of crystal and gold,

'Tis the knowledge that into that glory No angel our escort shall be, For the One that *I know*, up in heaven, Is the One that is coming for me!

Oh, height of unspeakable gladness!
Oh, depth of unuttered delight!
The Lord Jesus Christ in His beauty
That moment shall burst on our sight!

He'll raise the frail casket all-glorious,
And change the "vile body" that day,
And we "shall be caught up together,"
For the partings have all passed away!

All joys of unsearchable sweetness
Will that long-looked for moment afford,
But oh, for the crowning completeness
Of seeing, of meeting, the Lord!
J. M. G.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Chap. 1: 6-10.)
(Continued from page 67.)

We have seen that God has put Himself in the light. The invisible God has made Himself visible in His Son become Man. Faith owns Him thus.

If then, for faith, God is in the light, believers are in the light also. On the authority of the divine testimony they can say that they know God. They can truthfully affirm that they have community of life with the Father and the Son. It is not a question of development in the knowledge of God: it is true of the babe in Christ. Though their acquaintance with God may not be based on long continued companionship with Him, they have an apprehension of what He is in His nature and character.

This apprehension is, in greater or less measure, in every soul that sets to its seal that the testimony of God is true, i. e.—in every soul that is born of God. Feeble as his intelligence and apprehension may be, he is not speaking falsely when he says he knows God and has fellowship with the Father and the Son. He is in the light where he sees God—what He is. He is not in the darkness; he does not belong to it; he has passed out of it as surely as he has passed out of death into life. He is now one of those who live to Him who died and rose again (2 Cor. 5:15); he lives and walks in the light.

It is necessary to notice here the expression "Walking in the light." It is important to apprehend the mind of the Spirit. The expression refers to a fact—not to the degree in which that fact is

realized. The expression denotes the moral condition in which the children of God are by virtue of their new birth and the manifestation of the life they have been born into. The apostle is not speaking of their practical consistency with the light, but of their essential and necessary relation to it. They are in the light. It is the moral sphere to

They are in the light. It is the moral sphere to which they belong, with which they are connected. How far they are faithful or unfaithful is not in question here.

Now, for an unbeliever to say he is in the light,

Now, for an unbeliever to say he is in the light, or to profess that he has community of life with God, is to make a false claim. He is in relation to the darkness, belongs to it, does not know God, has not the life eternal. He is not practising, not even feebly, the truth. He claims to be in relationship with God, to be His child, to be a sharer in His nature and life, but the claim is not true. Now that the light has come and is shining, those who are in it can judge and denounce as untrue the boastful professions of those who are not in it.

Verse 7 is a precious text for every child of God. There are two things affirmed in it of those who are in connection with the light. First, those who walk in the light with God now manifested, are now in the light with Him, participating in life with Him. They are one family. What a bond! What a blessed tie! How intimate and close the relation of one child of God to every other child of God. It is a relation of nature and life, always subsisting, abiding forever. Here again the apostle is speaking of the unchanging fact, an abiding fact, whether

we are faithful or unfaithful.

Of course, if we are faithful or unfaithful has

FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN much to do with our practical enjoyment of the

common tie is often interfered with through what violates its distinctive character, but the tie once formed abides. It is an eternal tie; He who lives from everlasting to everlasting being the source of it, and in which, through grace, we have been brought.

The rest of the verse is the declaration of a most

ever subsisting bond. The normal outflow of the

important truth. Every child of God, every one born of Him (who is thus a participator in the life eternal) stands before the face of God in all the value of the priceless blood of Christ. The light in which God has put Himself shows that. What a blessed revelation! God Himself is in the light; the sin in us is in the light; and though we see it to be utterly abhorrent to God, yet the same light that shows this manifests how God removes all the defilement there is in us. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son is shown to be God's provision for it, and it is a perfect provision. The light itself can discover no sin in us for which that blood is not an

absolute remedy. Here I would make a practical observation. Those who come to the light, drawn there by the power of the grace of Him who is light, find the light manifests their deeds. Now this manifestation is not simply for the moment in which we first come to the light. It is a continuous work: the light constantly detecting in him the contrarieties to the light; but in this searching of the heart, the light shines as well on God's remedy for the contrarieties detected, and manifests its absolute perfection as

a remedy. This sustains the soul before the light.

No sin can possibly be discovered by the light for which God has not provided, or for which He is not perfectly sufficient. Hence the child of God can say, No matter what evil in me may be searched out by the light in which I walk, my abiding standing there is secured. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, in its infinite value and eternal efficacy, is what cleanses me before God. In the consciousness of this I may say, Let the defiling evil in me be searched out: nothing can possibly be brought out to light that can alter the abiding place of favor and blessing in which God has put me on the ground of the merits and value of the blood of Christ.

What peace! what rest! A sinful creature in myself, put before the face of One who makes me realize as I abide with Him how unlike Him I am, but to realize also that He who is thus constantly searching out the defiling evil that is in me is ever looking upon me as perfectly and eternally cleansed from it! May God grant to His beloved people to have an ever-deepening sense of this.

But to return. In verses 8 and 9 the apostle deals with another pretension which the light manifests to be untrue. What characterizes those who through grace have come to the light is the confession of what that light manifests. It shows that men are sinful, that sinners practise sin. For any man to say he is not a sinner is to deny the truth; it is resisting the testimony of the light. The very claim makes manifest that those who make it are not in the realization of the truth. The truth is not in them. They are deceiving themselves.

It must be kept in mind the apostle is not here

contemplating failure in the children of God to fully realize the truth. While it is true that the child of God may have such a feeble sense of the truth that he may be betrayed into similar language to that of the mere pretender, it is not characteristic of him as one who is in the light. John is reasoning in the abstract, not concrete. He is speaking of what is characteristic, of principles, not persons.

It is not characteristic of one born of God to deny that in himself he is a sinful man (see Luke 5: 8), or pretend that he does not sin. The measure of his realization of what he is in himself is quite another matter. Speaking characteristically, as John does, he sets to his seal that the testimony of God is true, he accepts the truth, he owns as true of himself what the light has shown to be the truth.

To acknowledge oneself a sinful man is to acknowledge the commissions of sins. And if the confession of having a sinful nature is characteristic of a child of God, it is also true, speaking still characteristically, that he confesses his sins. It is not simply that he confesses his sins when he first comes as a sinner seeking a Saviour, but as he walks in the light he owns the continuous exposures of his sins. The light in which he walks is constantly detecting them and manifesting them.

But then as a child of faith he is the heir of God's promise: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31: 34). The believer is a son of Abraham and has the privilege of appropriating the promise to himself. The God who gave the promise is faithful; therefore, characteristically speaking, the believer has the divine assurance that his sins are forgiven.

But it may be asked, Are not his sins a violation of righteousness? and do they not defile? The answer is, God is just in fulfilling His promise of forgiveness and remembering the sins no more. has provided a remedy—a way of cleansing. He has given His own Son to bear the due of sins. Purification of sins has been made (Heb. 1: 3), and the Maker of it has the right of cleansing all who believe on Him. It would be unjust to Christ if God did not apply the purification to the one who believes on Christ Jesus. The believer, then, whatever the record of his sins, and however conscious of being sinful in himself, has the divine assurance that in the sight of God he is perfectly cleansed, and stands before His face eternally forgiven. As identified with the interests of Christ here on earth he is subject to divine discipline, correction or reproof. He is not exempt from the government of God. But as in Christ, he is cleansed from every unrighteousness.

Again, as stated in verse 10, if men claim they are not sinners by practice they contradict the testimony of God who declares that all have sinned. The light in which believers walk shows the claim is absolutely false. Any one making the audacious pretension that man is not fallen, has not the truth of God dwelling in him. All believers, characteristically speaking, set to their seal that God's testimony is true. The word of God dwells in them; it may be often in feebleness, very defectively realized, but as a class what marks them, all of them, is submission to what the light has made manifest, i.e., that man without exception is a sinner both by nature and practice. These haughty

pretenders, then, are in and of the darkness which comprehends not the light (John 1: 5).

But the children of faith—being born of God and in the light, while confessing that grace has cleansed them from all defilement, do not deny that in themselves they are sinners both by nature and practice. The degree in which all this is realized is not the apostle's subject in these verses. This we must keep in mind to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL TRILEMMA

(Concluded from page 73.)

The Scriptural Position. Having looked at each part of the "trilemma," we ask now, Is there a path for the people of God, or must we admit that we are left helpless and deserted? To ask such a question is to answer it, for has our Lord not said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee?" We take it for granted therefore that God has a path for His people, no matter how great our failure and the consequent confusion about us; let us then seek to find that path.

A glance at the constitution of the Church as laid down in Scripture will be well; as this, after all, is the abiding principle which is to govern the saints of God.

The Mystery which was committed to the apostle Paul was, we may say, a twofold one, although one was the basis upon which the other rested. "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will... that in the dispensation of the fulness of times,

He might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:9, 10). "By revelation He made known unto me the mystery . . . which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men . . . that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3: 3-6). Here we see Christ as Head over all things to the Church which is His body—a unity as complete and absolute as it is possible to conceive. In the light of this, not only are all sects and parties forbidden, as in I Cor. I, but the unity of the body is a circle of life and of fellowship in which every member has a divinelygiven place and part, and where the thought of schism in the spiritual body is as foreign to the truth as in the natural body. Thus in whatever way we look at the Church, whether locally or universal, this truth of the one body is the ruling principle in all activity, teaching and government.

Applying this truth to that phase of the assembly which is before us, we see that the action of the Spirit of God in one place is for all saints everywhere. Mark, we say the action of the Spirit, not of man; for men may act, even as an assembly, contrary to the word of God, and this cannot be bound upon the people of God. But there is, we may say, a presumption that the act of an assembly is according to the mind of God, unless it is proved not to be so. The unity of the Spirit is co-extensive with the unity of the body, and were the Church in a normal condition, the fellowship resulting from this would be as complete.

But alas, the Church has failed to maintain this truth or meet its responsibilities. The result is that

false doctrine, worldliness, and fleshly lusts have sapped its strength. Without being critical, we cannot close our eyes to the sad fact that the professing Church is a mixture: it is no longer the "house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," but has become a "great house," with all kinds of vessels, some to honor and some to dishonor. The scripture just partly quoted marks the path of those who would be faithful: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use."

There is, then, laid down in God's word a path of separation from that which is contrary to Him: "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity." This iniquity may be moral, doctrinal or ecclesiastical, or any of these combined. It may refer to individuals, or to association with that which is not of God. If it does not refer to associations, then it does not warrant separation from a disorderly system.

Acting upon this scripture, many of the Lord's people have seen it right to withdraw from the various religious denominations in Protestantism as well as Christendom generally, and have sought to act upon the simple directions of God's word, both those which provide for a day of failure, and the more general provisions for the Church as a whole. More and more clearly have divine principles shone out, and more and more thoroughly has God tested what has been done.

These testings have brought out the weak points in the testimony, at some of which we have already been looking. There have been testings as to whether the Spirit of God was truly the leader and the power for saints as gathered for worship; as to whether clerisy was to have a place, or whether there should be absolute freedom for the Spirit of God, according to His word. There have also been further testings as to whether the honor of the Son of God was to be maintained or not—whether His person could be degraded by unsound teaching.

There have been further testings, in which the danger has been in the direction of undue severity. At some of these we have been already looking. In general, we may sum them up under several heads: 1. There must be forbearance in the matter of doctrine when fundamental doctrine is not involved. 2. There must be liberty of ministry both written and oral, with like limitations. 3. Righteousness alone is binding upon the consciences of the people of God. There is no such thing as an ecclesiastical authority when it is contrary to the word of God. We may have occasion to enlarge upon these a little later, but this must suffice for the present.

These testings have resulted in various divisions among saints professedly gathered in the simplicity of divine truth to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever fundamental truth has been involved, deeply as we deplore the necessity for it, we can thank God for those who have departed from iniquity rather than bring dishonor upon our Lord's name. But wherever there has been no such issue, a division has contradicted the truth and marred the testimony of God. With whomsoever the responsibility rests of making such a division, a sectarian spirit or position will be found

directly contrary to the word of God. Such a division may have been produced through ignorance. Indeed we are slow learners at best, and need to be led on in God's truth. Where there is willingness to be thus led, there should be no difficulty in applying Scripture to the past, and judging what has not been according to its truth.

It must be further evident that it is a matter of first importance to gather the true principles of a scriptural testimony; for if we are not clear as to our principles, we cannot expect our practice to be scriptural.

We must remember one most important point: truth must be recognized wherever we find it. If we forget this, we shall probably find ourselves antagonizing truth because it is connected with something that has also elements of error in it. We have already sought to point out the various scriptural elements in the positions we have described. These elements are binding upon us. We are to recognize and adopt them for our guidance in seeking to maintain a scriptural position.

Our task then ought to be a very simple one. We have simply to take everything that is scriptural in each of these positions, and combining all that we thus find, together with any other scripture bearing upon the subject, we will have that which God's word approves, and in which faith can walk.

1. We select therefore the same scriptures which have passed before us. From Matthew 18, we learn that the Lord has promised His presence to those gathered to His name. We therefore seek to own that Name, to be subject to that authority alone. As thus gathered, and acting according to that

word and authority, we know that all done is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit; what is "bound" on earth—by the word of God—is bound in heaven. Sins remitted or retained by a little company acting in obedience to the authority of our Lord, as expressed in His word, are recognized as so remitted or retained by all who own that authority.

- 2. We recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the house of God (r Cor. 3: 16), and seek to give Him •His place to lead and to apply the word of God. We know that He ever acts according to that Word, and that He encourages the examination of everything in the light of that Word. We thus recognize the assembly of God as the pillar and ground of the truth. All this therefore we take: not refusing it because it is also held by those who claim divine authority for their acts, whether in accordance with the word of God or not. We refute what is wrong in their position by the very scriptures they hold.
- 3. Similarly, we welcome the scriptures presented by those who urge a metropolitan or presbyterial control. We recognize with them the importance of a multitude of counselors; that we are members one of another; that the unity of the body and of the Spirit are to be our guiding principles as well as theirs.
- 4. Nor must we hesitate to own the binding force of Scripture presented by those who hold to local independency. When they tell us that the Church is composed of "all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours," we gladly acknowledge its truth. When we are exhorted to "receive one another as Christ also

hath received us," we accept the scripture in the full sense of its meaning. They too with ourselves claim the truth of the one Body and of the one Spirit. Indeed, if we are to be in the current of the Spirit of God, we must welcome and hold fast all His word. Thus only will we be guarded on the right hand and on the left; then only kept from the extremes to which we are so prone.

It is not with Scripture that we are to contend, but with faulty interpretation or wrong application of Scripture. It has been said that "All error is part truth:" there are elements of truth in every Christian system; and we readily admit it. It has also been said that erroneous views are "right in what they affirm, wrong in what they deny." If affirmation means the affirmation of Scripture, it is certainly true. It is true that denials are usually what is wrong. The Unitarian—to use an extreme case—is right in saying Jesus was a man; he is fatally wrong when he says He is not God.

So in the various positions we have examined, they are right in their affirmations of scripture truth, but wrong in their denial of other scripture truth. They who claim "local infallibility" are right in affirming that what is bound (truly) on earth is bound in heaven; but they are radically wrong when they deny that righteousness is the necessary test of every action. The advocate of metropolitan oversight is right in affirming brotherly care and counsel; wrong in denying that this care extends to the whole assembly throughout the world. He who pleads for independency is right in affirming the local responsibility, but wrong in denying the link that binds together the whole

Church, and makes each assembly a participant in the discipline and order of each other—responsible therefore to consider all questions in a godly way that may arise as to any action. And so we might go on, selecting everything that is scriptural and true, refusing everything that is not.

The result of this prayerful, godly consideration will leave us with a mass of precious truth, sifted out from what mars or counteracts it. This truth—all of it—will be added to as our knowledge of God's word is enlarged and co-ordinated by the Holy Spirit; later aspects of truth may modify earlier ones—the mind must be kept open. But we shall have, through grace, eliminated what has marked each of the positions we have considered—and others possibly—as unscriptural. We still find, as we go on, that while we shall ever need grace and love to walk aright, the aspects of things become clearer, and that a true scriptural position is possible.

What then will this position be? Having already pointed out the unscriptural features in the three positions examined, we will now briefly state what will mark a true position. We confine ourselves to the questions directly connected with assembly order and fellowship.

First, the local assembly, as gathered to the name of our Lord, may count upon His presence and guidance through His word and Spirit.

Next, as linked with the people of God everywhere, and as united in a common recognition of God's order with other assemblies gathered similarly with itself, the local gathering is acting for all other assemblies. It must therefore be open

for the fullest examination and counsel from the Lord's people elsewhere. Often, when there are local difficulties, the presence, prayers and counsel of saints from a distance is necessary. Such presence should be asked for by the local assembly, or if offered, should be promptly accepted. There must be no barrier between the assemblies, no feeling that brethren from elsewhere are "intruding." This is most important.

Third, where there is a question as to the act of a local gathering, such question can only be raised and decided at the place where the original act took place. There is no such thing as appealing from one assembly to another, as taking the matter out of the hands of the first. All appeals must be made to an assembly, and every effort made to enlighten or deliver them if wrong.

Fourth, the one infallible standard is, not Church authority, nor the plea of "the Lord's presence," or of being "gathered to the Lord's name," but righteousness as laid down in the word of God. If they speak not according to this, the action is to be refused, though supported by a majority, even by all.

Fifth, the greatest patience, longsuffering and forbearance must be observed. Haste may often stumble the weak, and turn their minds from the true point at issue to some minor detail.

Sixth, when every effort to reach a right judgment has failed, when every protest has been exhausted, it is the manifest duty of saints to separate from unrighteousness which they cannot control. There should be no hesitation or uncertainty. It is as much the path of faith as when the face was

first turned to the Lord from any "system" which was contrary to the word of God. But let it be remembered that God has provided a divinely-suited means for reaching and helping in local disorders. It is the unity of the Spirit which leads saints from elsewhere to come to the help of their brethren. If this provision is ignored, we need not be surprised that divisions easily occur.

Seventh, above all and in all, let the spirit of faith and prayer be encouraged. "Without Me ye can do nothing." In times of trial and difficulty, Satan often seeks to turn saints from faith and prayer. If these are lacking, we need not be surprised to find ourselves drifting into unscriptural harshness and ecclesiastical pride, or an equally unscriptural indifference to the truth of God and His order.

May He, indeed, who loved the Church and gave Himself for it, guide our hearts and feet into His ways.

It is believed that in what has been before us, we have a principle to guide us not merely in the present, but to enable us go over the past and detect the causes of much that has been a grief and shame to our Lord. If we see the truth, it enables us to judge all that is not according to it, and to act in the simplicity of faith.

If it be asked, What is that action? We reply, to "Cease to do evil," to cease to maintain unscriptural principles, or to uphold unscriptural practices. It means to "learn to do well;" to begin—slowly and carefully, but firmly and happily—to act upon all that we now see to be the truth.

It is most important to see that God has not

established a succession, except the succession of truth; that we have no "ground" to maintain, but to stand upon the ground of truth; no "table" to uphold, but rather to seek to walk worthy of the table of the Lord.

Doubtless, it will be a relief to acknowledge where there has been failure in the past, and this should be made fully and simply-not "grudgingly or of necessity," nor as a hard exaction, but rather as a relief to the conscience, and as due to the Lord. After all, it is not so much apportioning of blame to one company or another, but rather all uniting in a common lowly judgment of self and of the pride and worldliness that has hindered our seeing more clearly the mind of God, and walking more simply to our Lord's praise. May the time past suffice for those things which have grieved Him, and may the little time remaining be devoted to a united prayerful endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

S. R.



QUES. 7 .- Is there nothing to be learned from the fact that Christ did not commence His public ministry until He was thirty years of age? and is there no significance in this other fact that He fasted forty days, and that the number forty occurs repeatedly in Scripture?

ANS.—Surely there are lessons to be learned from these facts. Thirty years was the God appointed age for the Levites to enter upon their service (Num. 4:3); it was at that age our Lord was presented to Israel and entered upon His ministry (Luke 3: 23).

A man is not fully formed until about thirty, and our Saviour, though God as well as Man, never used His deity to shield Himself from youth's lessons of patience on its way to manhood. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." Such an example, prayerfully considered, would check impatience in Christian young men who may be in danger of too much haste to enter public ministry. Nothing is more dangerous to a Christian young man of manifest gift than to push himself forward in ministry before reaching his years of manhood. He is apt to be admired and petted because of his youth and precociousness, and this may mar his life even in after-years. We do not say this to discourage young men, but only to gather profit from our Lord's example.

As to the number forty, it is unquestionably one that has special instruction, being, as it is, linked with our Lord's history and that of others. The "Numerical Bible" gives substantial help in this line. A 10c. pamphlet, "The Witness of Arithmetic to Christ," is an extract from it; to be had of our publishers

QUES. 8.-Would you kindly explain 1 John 5:16?

ANS.—"Life" and "death" here are only as to the body, in relation to the government of God—having to do with time—with this life, not eternity. 1 Cor. 11: 30-32 is of the same character. The expression in that passage, "and many sleep" (that is, have died), shows there had been none in the assembly at Corinth able to perform the service mentioned in the passage about which you inquire. They came behind in no gift (1 Cor. 1:7), but gift is not all that is required for service of this kind. It takes the love of a true shepherd—one who values Christ's sheep by what Christ had to suffer to get them—to seek an erring brother and lead him out of the wrong he is in.

The ohief difficulty of the passage may be how to discern what is sin unto death from what is not that. The true shepherd-heart knows, however, that all sin finally leads there. He will not wait therefore till the end if he perceives it in its beginnings. Love will urge him at once to wash the offender's feet.

The same difficulty appears in verse 14 of the same chapter, "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us," etc. How can we be sure of His will? There is no rule for this; it depends on our state of sout. It is only in communion with God,

in abiding in Christ, in the heavenly sphere where He is gone and where grace has put us in Him (Eph. 2: 4-6), that we acquire the necessary discernment to judge with God. His Word fills us with His mind if we too can say, "Thy words were found and I did eat them," and, filled with His mind, all is simple and natural.

This brings the thought, How important that we watch jealously against whatever may interfere with a holy state of soul.

QUES. 9.—The passage in Luke 18:19 puzzles me. Will you kindly help? The Lord objects to being called good by saying God aloue is that. But was He not Himself God? And does not Scripture itself call various men good?

ANS.—The Lord's objection to being called "good," is because the "ruler" who approaches Him looks at Him as a mere man like himself. He is testing this young man. Only God is essentially good, as was manifested in Jesus. When good is found elsewhere, it is only derived. The source of it is in God.

QUES. 10.—Kindly explain Matt. 24: 22. In what sense are "days to be shortened?"

Ans.—In the sense that "the great tribulation" which the Lord had just predicted, and which is yet to come upon the Jewish people, will not be allowed of God to go on till all the faithful ones who refuse the Antichrist are put to death. The enemy would lengthen it till he has accomplished his desire to destroy them utterly, but God will say, Enough, and the persecution must cease. Then will be fulfilled the promise of verses 29-31.

QUIES. 11.—What does 2 Cor. 5:3 mean? Is one thus spoken of a saved man or not?

Ans.—To be found "naked" in Scripture means, we believe, being lost. To be "unclothed" is to be out of the body. To be "clothed" is the resurrection state.

There was a low state at Corinth; so, while the apostle ever maintained the truth of the grace of God intact, he puts before the conscience the solemn fact that not profession but possession of Christ can avail in that day—he expresses doubt as to the state of some among them. While establishing the true and sincere in the grace of God, he seeks to arouse the untrue or self-deceived.

QUES. 12.—Are the tree of life in the midst of the garden of Eden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, mentioned in Genesis 2: 9, two different trees?

Ans.—Most assuredly they are. They are both mentioned in the verse to which you refer as distinct and separate. The tree of life illustrates Christ; the other, man's responsibility, under which he broke down and incurred death. At that tree, as he put forth his hand after the forbidden fruit, he said to God, as it were, I will no more be subject to you. He became a rebel, and this is the very essence of sin. His only hope now is in the other tree—the tree of life.

QUES. 13.—Is there more than one word in the original for our word baptize, or baptism? And is the original word equivalent to our word dip or immerse?

Ans.—The one original word for "baptize," "were baptized," "shall baptize," "to be baptized," "am baptized," and other similar English forms of the verb is baptiso.

For our word baptism, the one original word is baptisma.

As to its meaning being the equivalent of dip or immerse, he who says so must be wiser than the translators, for they found such difficulty in the translation of the word that they did not translate it at all; they only Anglicized it, that is, gave it an Engglish form; and translators in other tongues have done the same. Had they been satisfied that the Greek word was equivalent to our word dip, or immerse, they would no doubt have so rendered it. Nor have revisers of the various translations made any change. In Mark 7: 4 they give it as "the washing of cups, and pots;" in Hebrew 9: 10 as "meats and drinks and divers washings." They call the forerunner of our Lord, John the Baptist. To call him John the Dipper, or Immerser, would be unwarranted liberty, which only Baptist extremists would dare to take. No one who reads the word of God without prejudice can fail to see that John and others baptized by immersion, and the doctrine attached to Buptism shows its form to be immersion, but to make Immersion and Baptism equivalent terms is a very different thing, and is not true.

EDITOR'S NOTES

A 20th Century Report comes from the Philippine Auto-da-Fé Islands of the burning of a quantity of Bibles and Testaments by a Roman Catholic priest in the public square of Vigan, a town on the north-west coast of Luzon. The American Bible Society, publisher of the burnt books, is said to have received confirmation of the report from its agent there.

What will Rome's apologists think now, who, when warned against her present encroachment with a recounting of her frightful history, appeal to the change which has taken place in the times. would never do now, they say, in these enlightened times, what she did in the dark ages. Yet here, under the government of the United States. is proof plain enough that, whatsoever change there may be in the times, or in her tactics. Rome's character has not changed. Her past hatred of the Bible is still the same; the light of the 20th century has not restrained her from burning it; nor would she have less delight at burning as well such as love and obey it, as was her wont when she sat upon the "scarlet colored beast," that is, when she controlled and used the Roman Imperial Power. The Reformation and subsequent events threw her off the saddle, but her political intrigues never cease in their endeavor to regain that place, for it is only by the mastery over governments that she can fulfil her Satan-inspired desire.

Think for a moment on this spectacle: A man going from the United States to the Philippines, representing himself as a servant of Christ, going there to instruct heathen, then burning before their eyes in a public place the Book which ministers Christ, from which alone Christians know Christ! That Book, once burned, what is there to be given to those benighted people? What guilt, what deceit, to pose before the world as "the Church," "the spouse of Christ," and destroy the precious word of God, either in public where their priests dare so to do, or in a more subtle way decry it or withdraw it from the people!

But a rekindling of its fires might prove a blessing in disguise. It might arouse the dead souls of a multitude of so-called Protestants who are on the brink of apostasy; who possess little or nothing more to protest for, and therefore little or nothing more to protest against. So "broad-minded" and "charitable" have they become that they can get on very well with both light and with darkness. with truth and with error, with Christ and Belial. What difference is it to them if Christ is given up for Mary; the full, ever-efficient atonement of the Cross which provides an eternal salvation, for an idolatrous, blasphemous Mass which exalts the priest and degrades Christ, giving the willinglyduped people a lie for the truth, and doubt in place of the blessed Christian assurance! For who ever saw a devotee of the Mass able to join with Paul in "giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1: 12-14). So absolutely worthless is

. ...

their "Mass" that on the tombs of its devotees the passer-by is even begged to pray for the repose of their soul! Alas, unconverted "Protestants" do not mind whether we have a divine Saviour upon whom to pour out the adoration of our grateful hearts, or images, crucifixes, relics and dead men's bones; to have a Father's bosom into which to honestly confess our sins, and be cleansed from them, or a Confessional, with a sinner like ourselves in it, as incapable to cleanse and forgive the sinner as to create a world. The Book, God's Book, what is it to such dead souls who know or hear something of it only when there is a funeral in the house?

Modern Evangelism has shed some rays of light in the midst of the darkness, and one thanks God for that, but it has aimed at monster gatherings, and to that end has used means entertaining rather than instructive, and has therefore not improved things much. What lack in Sunday-schools also to furnish the young minds with the precious word of God! Geography, history and morals, well and good in their place, are not the word of God which lays hold of heart and conscience and prostrates man before God. Where that is lacking, the soul is not held fast, but is liable to drift with every wind of doctrine that may come along.

One of old said, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them" (Jerem. 15: 16). Only thus are we furnished by it for every emergency. Only thus are we able to overcome all the foes of our souls. It was by this Luther dethroned Popedom. Brandishing the Book in his hand, and eating its words in his soul, he became invincible, and his stand

impregnable. O friends, let us return to the word of God, as little children receiving in faith its holy teachings, and spiritual energy and power will not be wanting for the needs of our times. With that Book in their hearts our aged men will insist that things at home be in keeping with it, and will pour out their substance to send a hundred where one has been burned. Our aged women will "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands" (Titus 2: 4, 5). What a change this would make in the conditions of Christendom!

Our young men also, with the Book in their hearts, will readily offer themselves to carry it on their backs and in their lives in the dark parts of the earth, whether at home or abroad. The favor and the power of God go with it, and wherever it goes and takes root, it transforms, changes, beautifies everything.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Ps. 119: 11).

On Giving Request has come to us to write on the subject of giving. It is alleged that assemblies of the Lord's people here and there, now slack in the matter, would surely reap blessing if they but realized their responsibilities in it. We confess that, to us, it has always been a delicate and difficult subject to treat of. Yet it has an important place in the word of God, and cannot be neglected without loss. We hope to take it up in our next issue.

THE LORD'S SPEEDY RETURN AND THE GOSPEL

"Encouraging one another.. as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10: 25, N. Trans).

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

One often hears persons speak of the apostasy of the end, of the day of small things, etc. in such a way that it leads one to ask: Is the approaching end a time for such Elijah-like discouragement?

Elijah's words and attitude were wrong; it is significant that his otherwise noble and honored testimony was in consequence superseded by that of Elisha. In reading Mr. Kelly's smaller book on Revelation, I was struck with his remarks on the bride's sweet answer to the Lord's twice repeated declaration: "Behold, I come quickly." With beautiful suitability she first says, simply: "Come" (not "Come quickly," as in the A. V.). Again, it is simply: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Why do not the Spirit and the bride say, "Come quickly?" Well, how sweet it is to have real fellowship with the heart of God and the patience of Christ—that long-suffering patience which, while waiting for His bride and kingdom when His enemies shall be made His footstool, is coupled with yearning love for perishing men. "The long-suffering of our Lord is salvation," Peter says. Selfishly occupied with our blessing, we often grow impatient; while the "Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

And so it is nearly two thousand years since He said, "Behold, I come quickly." But in God's reckoning of love, if need be, "a thousand years is as one day." Some may think it slackness, but it is His long-suffering love—love that still yearns and holds open the door of grace, for love finds judgment its "strange work." Love is still blessing while it still finds souls to bless.

Our Lord may come at any moment. How that quickens the pulse and gladdens and sanctifies the heart! With responding, longing love, the bride says with the Spirit-COME. But the Holy Spirit came to gather others also to our Lord Jesus, and to wait for Him. So in the same breath, as it were, she speaks again, "Let him that heareth say 'Come.'" No narrow selfishness there! She wants the chorus to swell in the welcome of her Lord. Oh, for more hearts to say "Come" to Him. So to such hearts as may be concerned in the great destinies that lay before the souls of men she repeats that precious word "Come." If they can not say "Come" to Him, she will plead "Come" to them, -whosoever thirsts; whosoever will, let him "come," and "take of the water of life freely."

It is the message that was brought from heaven to earth by that gracious One whose lips made sweet that word "Come." And the Spirit of Him who said "Come unto Me" is in the bride, and the message is now to us a precious trust. The Lord's coming, then, should make us faithful stewards of the gospel.

There are indeed other good reasons for the Church being left down here in the world, but it is certain that the day of grace has been lengthened, so to speak, for one great purpose: the salvation of souls through the gospel; and it continues for the same reason (2 Pet. 3: 8, 9).

Therefore the work of salvation will go on until the end, whether through us or through others. Shall we be so occupied with evil prophesied of, and now around us on every side, that we begin to forget the grace of God to ruined man? "Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down!"

"Thou hast a little strength," says He who has the key of David, and "Behold, I have set before thee an open door which no man can shut." That open door surely is a door of opportunity and testimony including the gospel. The precious opening up of God's word is not for ourselves only to enjoy, but involves a responsibility to communicate to others—saved and unsaved.

If the Spirit is hindered now from working in larger ways, still He is working. And there is much to encourage in various fields, both at home and abroad, spite of human failure and much of the flesh in it. We can thank God, for example, for the wonderful working of His grace in "the Hermit Kingdom"—Korea, where 200,000 Christians are said to have been gathered out since 1886. Or in a lesser way, in the present work among the primitive tribes of western China. Can we not be thankful for the opening up of the Spanish-speaking countries to the gospel, and for the share which some of our friends have in it? Prayerful study of the mission fields would doubtless give us much cheer.

But have we prayerfully and earnestly striven, unitedly, or separately, for the gospel in our own

communities? Perhaps in the failure to find large results, we have overlooked the possibilities of quiet, persistent individual work which may even be large in the aggregate. One of the prime conditions in having blessing in service is in faith expecting it in the Lord's way, which is usually starting small, and growing. Are we reaching out to fields near by like the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1:8)? Are we doing what we can to support those who can go further than we and who are giving their whole time and energy to the gospel?

May we be warned, while intelligent as to the "last days," not to let our hands hang down as if there was nothing more to be done. The "last days" were already present with the apostles, inasmuch as failure had already come in the Church; but God's blessings in grace have continued to be poured out ever since, and through many dark periods.

The Hebrew Christians could already "see the day approaching" (Heb. 10: 25). They not only knew of it, they could "see" it from the signs then present. That was just the occasion to "exhort," or rather, "encourage one another." As we see the day approaching, let us, too, encourage one another.

H. I. M.

Unless our souls are living in communion with God, the Scriptures will not yield us their strength and nourishment.

If any child of God is of blessing to others, let us remember the source of such blessing must proceed from God.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 99.)

(Chap. 2: 1, 2.)

T T should be noticed that the apostle changes his style of address in the first verse of chapter 2. In verses 6-10, of chapter 1, he uses the expression, "If we say," three times, "If we walk," once; and, "If we confess," once. It is plain he is speaking on the broad ground of profession. The profession may be real or it may not be, but the difference between the real and the unreal needs to be clearly defined. Having done this, he addresses himself in chapter 2: 1 to those with whom the profession is a reality. He has said of the profession which says "we have no sin," or "we have not sinned," that it is pretending to what is not true; but now the apostle would guard all true believers against making a wrong deduction. Because we have sin we must not conclude that therefore we must sin. Because we have a fallen, a sinful nature in us, it will not do to settle it in our minds that necessarily we must more or less practise sin. "My children, these things" (referring of course to what he has just been saying), "I write unto you, that ye sin not," safeguards the children of God against drawing the wrong conclusion we have mentioned.

One often hears this false reasoning; but Scripture, neither here nor elsewhere, allows it. It is not reasoning with the Spirit of God. But while the apostle here authoritatively pronounces against such reasoning, he does not forget the believer's liability to sin. Surely as long as we are in this

body, with sin dwelling in it, we are liable to sin. If we have in us a sinful nature, we are of course predisposed to sin. The tendency to sin is there. But even so, that does not mean that the believer must sin. It is one thing to hold that there is in us a tendency or liability to sin, and quite another to believe we must necessarily sin. The former is the teaching of Scripture; the latter is not.

But if there is in us a tendency to sin, we should not ignore the fact or forget it. To do either is to expose ourselves to an ever-present danger. We need to be constantly in a state of watchfulness against our predisposition to sin lest it manifests itself in an actual outburst. The apostle, then, would remind us of a danger to which we are exposed through our having in us what makes us liable to sin.

We are not to conclude that John and Paul are in conflict because Paul tells us, "Sin shall not have dominion over you" (Rom. 6:14), and John reminds us that we are liable to sin. Paul teaches that the body is still a mortal, sinful body, and so recognizes the liability to sin; while John, on the other hand not only recognizes the liability, but supposing an actual outbreak of sin, gives the provision which God has made for it in grace. Mark, he says, "If any one sin." He is looking at it evidently not as a necessity, but a possibility. God has given us deliverance from the power, from the rule, of sin, but we are not yet delivered from its presence in us; hence the liability to sin. It is an ever-present liability.

But even so the apostle would not have the thought of our liability to sin, to destroy the sense in our souls of the abiding, unchangeable character of the place of favor in which divine grace has established us. It is not only that the flow of communion with God the Father is intercepted if we sin—that is true of course, and there is need of recovery—but that is not exactly the apostle's subject here. The point here is, if an actual outburst of sin has occurred, what will be the effect of it on our relationship with God—on our position before the face of the Father?

Now if we are born of God we are abidingly His children, and since the Son of God was in the world the children of God have had the right to take their place as that before God. It is now their privilege to think of themselves according to what they are as being in Christ; and this is always maintained by Christ. That is abiding; it is unchangeable. Christ is ever before the face of the Father. He is our Advocate there. What we are by grace. as in Him before God, is unchangeable, and our interests are in His hands. He has a righteous claim to be our representative there. Beloved brethren, do our failures, our sins, in anywise alter what He is there for us before the face of God? What He is there is what we are, not of course in ourselves, but as being in Him.

It may be needful perhaps to explain what is intended when I say, What He is before the face of God is what believers are. Let it be remembered that is distinctly what the word of God teaches. It is not a mere inference that I am drawing. In chapter 4: 17, we read, "Because as He is, so are we in this world." In what sense then is this true?

Our standing before God is not according to what we are in ourselves. By the grace of God we have been made partakers of Him. This participation in Him is a reality. We have His nature, we partake of His life. As having it, for God we are characterized by it. What the nature and life are in Him determines what they are in us. Our bodies are yet to be conformed to His body. In this respect we are not yet "as He is," but as regards the life that has been given to us it is even now, while we are still in this world, what it is in Him. If we speak of ourselves as characterized by the life that has been imparted to us we may say, "We are as He is;" that is, simply saying, we have community of life with Him.

But if we are participators with Him in life, the abiding character of that life does not depend on us. Whether we are faithful or not, the character of the life we have is unchangeable. We ought not to sin; there is no excuse for sinning; provision has been made sufficient to preserve us from it, and that notwithstanding there is in us the tendency to sin. But if on account of this tendency we are in the fear of falling into sin, there is great comfort for us in knowing that our possession of the life that is in Him cannot be affected, its character cannot be altered. To destroy our life, He who is the Source of it to us must be destroyed first. Nor can the character of the life given us be altered, as it cannot be altered in Him. The sins of believers have no such power. If we sin, He remains the same, and the believer, however troubled he may be about his sins, has the privilege of looking at Him and to say, By my sins I have

falsified the life He has imparted to me, but in Him it abides in its perfect, eternal character. He is before the Father's face for me, my Representative there, my Advocate. In Him my relation to the Father is maintained in righteousness.

It will be asked: What then is the effect of sin in a believer? The answer is, It hinders the intercourse, the flow of fellowship. It limits the measure of the enjoyment of communion. But this is not the apostle's theme here. Nor is he speaking of the discipline needed to arouse the conscience, and awaken exercise and repentance and confession, nor of the priestly activity of Christ in cleansing the believer from the sin into which he has fallen. His subject here is the fact that the believer's life is maintained inviolate in the Person who is its source, who is uninterruptedly before the face of the Father—the believer's constant representative.

As regards our sins, then, our Advocate with the Father is propitiation. This does not mean that He has to make propitiation for our sins. He did that on the cross. He does not need to make any further offering concerning sins. When He offered Himself it was once for all. He is not now making propitiation; Himself is the propitiation.

I shall have to inquire here, In what sense is He propitiation? The attentive reader will observe He is propitiation in a two-fold way, or perhaps better, in a two-fold relation. He is, first, propitiation in relation to the sins of believers; and, second, in relation to the sins of the world.

The statement, "And He is propitiation concerning our sins" naturally follows the statement we

have just now been considering. If Jesus Christ, the righteous One, is our Representative and Advocate before the face of the Father, we can readily understand that He is in the place of favor. In thinking of this we must not limit it to Himself. It is true of course that He is personally the object of the Father's favor. He was always that. He was that from eternity. But what I am now referring to is the fact that He is appearing "in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9: 24). He is in the place of favor for us. This means that God's attitude towards us is based on Him. We are the objects of the favor of God as being in Him. No doubt God takes pleasure in our faithfulness, but it is not on the ground of our faithfulness that God has taken us into favor. It is solely as being in Christ that we are in His favor. Having put us in Him by making us participators in the life that is in Him. He ever sees us as in Him. Christ then is His satisfaction concerning our sins. It is not that He does not abhor them; He surely does; but Christ having glorified Him concerning sins has an undisputed claim on Him for being looked upon as full appeasal respecting the sins of those who through grace have come to be in Him. He is thus propitiation concerning their sins—the sins of all for whom He is an Advocate, and whom He represents as appearing in the presence of God.

What joy to the believer who has the knowledge of this! What comfort in knowing, when I have been ensnared and overcome, that as I turn to look upon my representative before the face of God, His gracious attitude towards me has not been affected; that He still looks upon me, not according to what

I am in myself, but according to the One in whom He has accepted me.

We must turn now to consider the sense in which Christ is propitiation in relation to the sins of the whole world. I must first observe that the apostle does not imply that there is any need now of propitiation being made for the sins of the whole world. Since the cross, it is no more a question of making propitiation concerning sins. That was done then, done once for all, and it was done for the sins of all. Now it must not be inferred from this that all are saved from the due of their sins. That is not the fact. The making propitiation for the sins of all does not by itself save anybody. It provides a righteous basis on which salvation can be bestowed on all—on all who submit to the one condition on which it is offered, faith. Only believers are actually saved; but the propitiation concerning sins made at the cross was the ransomprice paid in behalf of all. It is not now the time of making propitiation, but the time of testimony. The gospel, which is for all, is a proclamation of an accomplished propitiation as a righteous basis of an offer of salvation, received by the believer. So, then, during this time of testimony God is not imputing sins to men. He is, by us, beseeching them to be reconciled (2 Cor. 5: 20).

Here we may ask, How is it that God has been content to wait so long on men to repent? How is it that He does not cut men off suddenly, and without mercy, who have refused His gospel and rejected the salvation He has offered them? The answer is: "Jesus Christ, the righteous" is before His face with a just claim on Him for a time of

forbearance and long-suffering. He is thus Himself "propitiation concerning the sins of the whole world." God's present attitude towards the sins of men is based on Christ. It is because His eye is resting on Christ that He exercises patience. Christ is so fully His appearal, His satisfaction, that He is content to show long-suffering still, even though His mercy in it is despised.

I cannot leave this subject without a few further remarks. In what I have expressed above I have avoided errors that prevail in certain quarters to the injury of souls. The limitation of the propitiation, made at the cross, to the sins of believers, necessitates a limited provision. If that were the truth it would follow that salvation has been provided only for believers, whereas, in truth, it has been provided for all. All are invited to come and get it. None lose it because it is not for them, but because they decline to receive it.

Again, in this view, the evangelist can proclaim the gospel without any reserve. He can boldly tell men—all men—Christ died concerning your sins. He can unhesitatingly say, God has been so glorified about your sins by Christ's death, that on the ground of it He is now offering you salvation and is beseeching you to come and take it. You cannot refuse on the plea that the provision for salvation is only sufficient for a limited number. Every man can be told that the provision is for him, and that if he refuses it he can never say he perished because salvation was not provided for him. It is a misrepresentation of the gospel of God to say God has provided salvation only for those who actually believe. God is willing to save all, and

has put no limit to the number who can be saved. He has made provision so that all can be saved. While all thus can be saved, none are saved except they repent and believe the gospel.

Once more: When I insist that the provision for salvation is unlimited—is as truly for those who miss it as for those who get it—I am not teaching universal salvation. I am teaching universal provision—provision for all. But while all are provided for, many will not get what has been provided for them. Their not getting it is not because provision has not been made for them, but because of not availing themselves of it. The provision is for all; faith gets what has been provided; unbelief misses it.

The distinction to which I call attention is between Christ making propitiation concerning sins by the death of the cross, and His being propitiation now as appearing in the presence of God. I would ask the prayerful meditation of the Lord's people on this subject. It supplies the key to the right understanding of the passage at which we have been looking.

It is also important to consider the two-fold sense in which Christ is now propitiation. If this is clearly apprehended there will be no difficulty in realizing that Christ's being propitiation for the sins of believers before the Father does not in any wise make light of their sins. It does not show that they are not a very serious matter, or can be treated as of light importance. How humiliated we should feel every time we think of them! And as regards His being propitiation for the sins of the whole world, if we rightly understand it we shall

not be involved in applications which have no place in the mind of the Spirit of God.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

"EVERY WORD OF GOD IS PURE"

A HUNDRED years ago most of the infidelity and unbelief were outside of the professing church. If a man did not believe the word of God he was not looked upon as a Christian at all; he had his proper place outside the church and was recognized as "an infidel," or "unbeliever."

In our day much of this is within the bounds of the *professing* church of Christ. Men who are paid by the congregations to preach the word of God, preach that which undermines it. Men who are paid to teach others how to become preachers of the gospel, instil into the young minds committed to them, doubt and unbelief.

In no field is this more apparent than in current teaching concerning the inspiration of the word of God—our Bible. And yet the Scripture claims a unique place. It is either God's word, or it is not. Its claim is, "Every scripture is given by inspiration of God." The man who doubts God's word in one place will soon doubt it in another. The man who refuses the Pentateuch as from God, soon doubts the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Doubts as to Moses soon lead to unbelief as to the Incarnation, Atonement and Resurrection. As our Lord told the Jews—"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5: 46, 47).

God has testified of His word. "Every word of God is pure" (Prov. 30: 5)—purified, or refined, like silver is refined in the fire, when all the dross is burned away. The Lord Himself testified to the everlasting stability of every jot or tittle (Matt. 5: 18), or as we would say, "The dot of an i, and the cross of a t."

So pure and refined is every word of the Bible, so carefully selected by the Spirit of God when inspiring the writers of the various books, so completely over-ruled by God were they in writing them, that an entire argument often turns on a single word, yea, even on a letter. In Gal. 3: 16 the immense difference between Law and Grace is shown to depend on one letter—s. In Luke 1: 47, two letters—my, refute the worship of Mary. She confesses herself a sinner like the rest of us, for she calls God my Saviour.

Surely here are most important truths that are greatly affected by a letter or two. How carefully then should we read the Holy Scriptures, and how particular should we be that no human theories of "dynamic" inspiration (that is, inspiration of thoughts only, and not of words), or any other teaching of unbelief, have place with us for one moment.

Seeing then how every word of God is purified, or chosen according to God's wisdom, and He has given it to us as He would have it, we may well hold fast, love and cherish it, search it, meditate upon it, bow our heart and mind to it, and direct our steps in keeping with its instructions and commandments. Christ is the theme of its pages. Satan ever seeks to overthrow it, that we may be

left as vagabonds, with no aim, no purpose no compass to guide us, and put back in midnight darkness, groping and crawling as do the denizens of night.

All Scripture centers around Christ. Both Old and New Testaments lead on to Him. Searching and believing them will therefore draw us to Christ. "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2: 3).

LETTERS TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

(Continued from page 82.)

LETTER II.

My DEAR SIR:

As intimated in my previous letter, I now desire to animadvert a little on Rome's denial of the cup to the laity. And here I can, without any fear. turn your own words back upon yourself, and call all history (up to very recent years) and all antiquity to witness against you. You know as well as I that the canon enjoining communion in one kind was only passed on June 15, 1415, and that at a time when the Roman Church was without a head. For the same council that enacted the decree, had deposed Pope John XXIII., on May 29th, 1415, and his successor was not elected until November 11th, 1417. Yet Roman apologists declare that the Pope has authority to change the order of the Lord, who gave communion in two kinds (the bread typifying His body, the wine His blood), to communion in one kind only, on the part of the commonalty, priests alone being permitted to observe the original order. Now this decree of the council of Constance is a direct contradiction to Roman canon law of the centuries preceding. Pope Leo the Great, in inveighing against the Manicheans, says distinctly: "They receive Christ's body [which to him, of course, was the communion loaf] with unworthy mouth, and entirely refuse to take the blood of our redemption [referring clearly to the cup, according to the Roman interpretation]; therefore we give notice to you, holy brethren, that men of this sort, whose sacrilegious deceit has been detected, are to be expelled by priestly authority from the fellowship of the saints" (quoted from his 41st Homily). But Pope Gelasius I. is stronger yet, for in a letter addressed to the Bishops, Majoricus and John, which has been embodied in the canon law of the Romish Church, he says: "We have ascertained that certain persons having received a portion of the sacred body alone, abstain from partaking of the chalice of the sacred blood. Let such persons, without any doubt, since they are stated to feel thus bound by some superstitious reason, either receive the sacrament in its entirety, or be repelled from the entire sacrament, because a division of one and the same mystery cannot take place without great sacrilege "(Corp. Jur. Can. Decr. 3. 11, 12). And with this agrees the decree of the council of Clermont, personally presided over by Pope Urban II. in 1095: "That no one shall communicate at the altar, without he receives the body and blood alike, unless by way of necessity, or caution." In the next century (A. D. 1118), Pope

Paschal II. wrote to Pontious, Abbot of Cluny, referring to the teaching of St. Cyprian: "Therefore. according to the same Cyprian: in receiving the Lord's body and blood, let the Lord's tradition be observed, nor let any departure be made, through human institution, from what Christ the Master ordained and did. For we know that the bread was given separately, and the wine was given separately, by the Lord Himself, which custom we therefore teach and command to be always obscrued in Holy Church,* save in the case of infants and very infirm people, who cannot swallow bread."

Now what title has the Church of Rome to declare itself unchanged, Catholic and Apostolic in its practices, as well as doctrines, when a council without a Pope can deliberately overthrow the teaching of four Popes on a matter of this kind? The fact is Rome has completely annulled the words of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as to this, at least, teaches for doctrine the commandments of men.

And this to a Catholic is a most serious thing. For when our Lord in John 6 speaks of "eating His flesh and drinking His blood," Romanists implicitly believe Him to be referring to participation in the Eucharist; yet his church forbids him to drink of the cup, unless he be one who has taken priestly orders.

But does the much contested passage in John 6 have any reference to the Lord's Supper, or is it intended to set forth a great spiritual truth? In deciding for the latter, you will accuse me of using private judgment. This I confess; but on your

^{*} Italies mine throughout. .

part, when you decide to accept the teaching of the Roman Church as to the same passage, you too are using private judgment; though you may decry it. Your private judgment leads you to accept the Church's teaching. My private judgment leads me to repudiate it, as against both my God-given reason and holy Scripture's teaching, which is to me far more reliable authority than any interpretation that the Church may put upon it. Our Lord, in John 6, was addressing Jewish disciples, before the Christian Church had been established or the Lord's Supper instituted. He told them at that time to "labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed" (ver. 27). They answered Him: "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" He replied: "This is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." To believe on Him, is evidently synonymous with receiving the meat that endures unto everlasting life. Cavilers among them directed His attention to the account of the manna eaten by their fathers in the desert, desiring Him again as on yesterday to provide them with literal bread in the wilderness. He answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven . . . that giveth life unto the world." In response to their cry, "Lord, evermore give us this bread," He answers: "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."

Again, beginning with verse 47, He says: "Ver-

ily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manua in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the Bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living Bread that came down from heaven; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the Bread that I will give is my flesh, that I will give for the life of the world." Unbelieving Tews strove among themselves at this, saying: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man. and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in Him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me. This is that Bread that came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth of this Bread shall live forever" (vers. 53-58).

Now this is the teaching of our Lord as to eating His flesh and drinking His blood, and suggests that He was referring to something that man might do at that time, namely: live by eating His flesh and drinking His blood. His blood had not been poured out upon the cross, nor His flesh wounded in death, but those who came to Him, trusting Him as their Saviour, were already recipients of the new life which He came to give.

That the eating and drinking were spiritual and not literal is clear from verse 57, where He speaks of living by the Father, in the very same way that they who were eating Him, lived by Him. And how did He live by the Father? Clearly as a Man of faith. "I will put My trust in Him" expressed the continuous habit of His life, and as we who believe in Him thus live by faith in Himself, we eat His flesh and drink His blood. He says in verse 63: "It is the Spirit that giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

What further proof have we need of? I think it plain that the Lord Jesus was referring, not to a sacrament yet to be instituted, but to a spiritual reality, known even then to those who believed upon Him. And all the councils of Rome cannot annul His words as to this.

His disciples at that time, who were such in very

deed, not merely by profession, were already living by Him, yet had never partaken of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And we may rest assured that wherever, and whenever a repentant soul turns now to Christ and trusts Him as the Saviour who has given His life for the world, he both eats His flesh and drinks His blood, and thus has life eternal—something the Romish sacrifice of the Mass, so-called, does not even pretend to give. For what intelligent Romanist really believes he has eternal life—a life in Christ that can never be forfeited—through participation in the Mass? Is it not a fact that this, as all other Romish sacraments, leaves the participant uncertain and anxious still as to the final outcome? But it is otherwise

with him who rests implicitly on the words of the Son of God: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me натн everlasting life."

May I, without giving offence, or without appearing to be unduly forward, or impertinent, press some questions home upon you, my dear sir? Have you this great gift, promised by our Lord Jesus to all who believe in Him? Are you certain that you have everlasting life? After all your years of devoted service in the Church of Rome, your careful, conscientions obedience to her decrees, are you now at rest in your soul as to the question of your sins? Do you know them all forgiven and put away, through the offering of Jesus Christ once for all upon the cross? Have you been justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus? Are you a happy possessor of a life in Him that can never be forfeited, because eternal, and dependent not upon your faithfulness, but upon His? Oh, my dear sir, if you cannot answer simple questions like these in the affirmative, is it not time to stop and ask yourself how it is that the system to which you cling has not given you that certainty and peace, which clearly were, and are, the portion of all found in the enjoyment of Apostolic Christianity? Is it not possible that you have missed your way? Yea, that the whole church to which you belong has in some manner, perhaps to you unaccountable, fallen from the simplicily of apostolic days into grievous apostasy?

In my next letter I purpose to consider the sacrificial character of the Mass in your Communion.

I remain, dear sir, Yours respectfully,

H. A. IRONSIDE.

Ques. 14.—Is it possible to commit the "unpardonable sin" now in our time, as mentioned in Mark 3: 28-30?

Ans .- We searcely like to have such a subject put in such a radical way. We have along our course repeatedly had to show to self-occupied persons who thought they had committed that sin because they could not get peace with God, that they were in error, for they had neither seen the Lord's miraculous works of power, nor maliciously ascribed to Satan the power of the Holy Spirit required for such nots. Thus far we could go freely, but we would fear to speak in the sweeping way your question suggests.

It is for a different reason, we own, yet with the same end, that the warnings in Heb. 6: 4-6 and Heb. 10: 26-30 are given. We must not nullify the solemnity of these warnings. It is a fearful thing to sin against light.

Ques. 15 .- When, in John 13, the Lord washed His disciples' feet did He also wash Judas' feet, and did Judas participate in the Lord's supper?

ANS .- This is not a matter of interpretation, but purely of Scripture statement, and if Scripture has made no clear statement as to it, it is because God, no doubt, thought it best not to tell us. As to what doctrine there may be back of it, we see no more difficulty in Judas partaking of these favors than in his not partaking. This is not the day of judgment, but of grace, when God deals with men in grace. When the time of judgment comes, then He will separate the true from the false, and the judgment on the false will be the more severe for the benefits they enjoyed but did not profit by. The Lord knew Judas as well at the beginning as at the end, but He made him known to others only at the end, when his state had ripened into full fruition. Meanwhile He bore with him in grace and gave him the freedom of all His favors.

Quits. 16.—Why do we not now fast, as for instance in the early days of the church; also in 1 Cor. 7: 5?

Ans.—Because we have decreased in piety. But perhaps, in a

quiet unnoticed way, more continue the practice than appears to men, and thereby win victories in their Christian life which are recorded on high. We are creatures of extremes: many, in ignorance of God's way of salvation, have fasted and starved themselves to obtain it—all in vain, of course, for it is "not of works, lest any man should boast." But when they have discovered this they are liable to despise those ways of piety which they used in a wrong way. God did not despise Cornelius' pious ways, as we see in the account of Acts 10. There was no virtue in them to procure salvation, but they expressed a mind in dead earnest, and God loves such a mind, not only when salvation is the matter of interest, but anything which is for the glory of God and the good of His people. A man, or a company of people, having some divine object in view, and so earnest about it that they fast and pray over it, are not likely to be disappointed. Refusing food, in a hearty way, proves we have an object of more value to us than our comfort, and by it we are enabled to humble ourselves more deeply before God.

Self-righteousness may plume itself with it as having done something very meritorious, and which puts God in our debt, but shall we deprive ourselves of its benefits because it has been wrongly used?

The mind of the day is against it. To be happy, to sing, to throw off all sorrow, to make life a joyful ride through a lovely scene, seems the prevailing mind of the times. But this was not our Saviour's course, and "If we say we abide in Him, we also ought to walk even as He walked." We need scarcely say that we have little else than disgust to express concerning the pretended fasting of the "Lenten season"—a fasting which longs for the end of it that sinful pleasure may be indulged in again.

Real fasting—such as God takes notice of—is from a heart anxious over some important matter, and desirous to give itself to prayer and supplication about it. It helps us, if done in sincerity, to present ourselves before God in brokenness of spirit, an attitude ever becoming to us in the presence of God.

Some answers remain for next No. of Help & Food

FDITOR'S NOTES

On Giving

As mentioned in our last issue, a request has come to us to write on the subject of Giving, which we feel in duty bound to accept, looking earnestly to the Lord to do it acceptably to Him, and effectively to His beloved people who, in the parts mentioned, are especially dear to us. It was in those parts we began our life and labor in the Lord, and sweet beyond expression are the remembrances of those early days, when truth was pouring into our own soul like a flood day by day from the pages of Holy Scripture; then the joy of imparting it to others; the bitter opposition from the modern "scribes and Pharisees." and the corresponding love and fellowship from those whose hearts God opened to let in the truth. The preaching-places were in country school-houses. in farm-houses, under clumps of trees, anywhere; often amid great camps, with horses, wagons, and vehicles of all kinds from miles and miles around. What scenes and seasons of divine grace to look back to when all who partook of them are gathered together around their Saviour in the glory! But, turning to our task, the request says:

What you wrote to-, as to responsibility in giving for the carrying on of the Lord's work, confirms a truth that is being felt by some of our brethren. More than once I have wished that the subject might be taken up at one of our General Meetings in a Bible-reading or a lecture. Now I write to ask that you accept the task, and give us a comprehensive article on the subject in Help and Food. I fear this line of truth has not been sufficiently gone into among the younger

believers of our Western States. Should not the collection each Lord's day be as sacred and as much a part of the worship as the giving of thanks, singing of praise, etc? In some assemblies the collection is not much thought of except when there is a General Meeting, or when one of the Lord's servants is laboring among us. Some make no preparation beforehand, but give what they happen to have with them, and others not at all. This produces laxity in handling collections, and so one feels more like giving individually than with the assembly. I believe right views correcting such practices as to giving would re-vive various assemblies spiritually. There are many dear young people in our own assembly, and nearly all of them need to be stirred up as to this. I believe that you, knowing as you do, the realities and needs of the path, and of the Lord's work, could perhaps do this task more effectively than one in different circumstances. What we have received of the ministry of Christ to our souls through HELP AND FOOD has been of such value as cannot be measured with silver and gold. May the Lord enable you to keep it up.

Sincerely yours in Christ our Lord,

We are creatures of extremes. We are no sooner pulled out of the ditch on one side of the road than we drift to the one on the other side. Truth keeps the middle of the road, and if we walk with it we will be kept there too. The abject begging, so often witnessed in Christendom under plea of the cause of Christ, becomes so repellent to such as have learned God's mind and way of carrying on His work, that they are liable to consider all matters of money as out of place among spiritual things, and under that sentiment they are in a measure ashamed of having anything to do with it.

They cannot free their minds from the idea of begging when money is spoken of, and so it is unclean to them. They have not taken in the Christian thought that "to do good and to communicate" (give of their substance) are by God called sacrifices, and that "with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13: 16). And note, in the previous verse He has just called "praise" and the "giving thanks to His name" with our lips, "The sacrifice of praise." The same name, sacrifice, is used for money. The poor widow who had but two mites, and gave them both, offered to God a greater sacrifice than the rich who had plenty left. If this truth is taken in, it will end all carelessness with regard to the collection; for the basket passing from hand to hand, as did the bread and the cup, will find us as worshipful in putting our contribution into it as we were in eating of the bread and drinking of the cup. And henceforth it will be a sanctified offering, not money begged by any one from any one, but a free-will offering presented to God from His redeemed people, for whom He gave even His only Son, and to whom He gives this opportunity to express their gratefulness. What difference then is in these: Begging for Christ humiliates Him and says He is still in poverty; offering to Him puts Him in the place of honor and majesty—His dues. A careful reading of 1 Cor. 16: 1-3 will show the

A careful reading of 1 Cor. 16: 1-3 will show the delicacy of the apostle in treating of this subject. He asks that the collection which was being made for the needy saints at Jerusalem be all finished before he comes. He, in his apostolic authority, has ordered it to take place among the assemblies, but it must not be as if he were begging of them.

It must be as a free-will offering, for no other could be acceptable to God.

Then he tells them how to carry it out suitably; "Upon the first day of the week (their assembly day) let every one of you (not a few rich ones) lay by him in store (set apart) as God hath prospered him." Mark this well: "As God hath prospered him." God does not demand of us so much per cent., as once by the law. We are under grace, and the per cent. we give of our weekly earnings or incomes must come from our hearts. Am I free to give 1, 5, 10, 20 or 50 per cent. of what I get in the week? Let me settle it with holy purpose before God, and on the first day of the week deliberately set it apart as belonging to God. From this treasury then I shall draw as occasion in my judgment calls for. I am not now dispensing my own funds but the Lord's, and this will enable me to be liberal. Then mark what he adds, "And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem." The assembly has contributed that money, and the men who will dispose of it must be men trusted and commended by the assembly. The "liberality" of the assembly must remain under its control.

All this is beautiful, and commends itself at once to every upright mind. And, beloved brethren, if we follow these instructions, we shall, at the end, be astonished at what has been accomplished, though we may be, in large majority, a poor people.

The servant of Christ, if rightly minded, will do as all servants do: they look to the one they serve for their pay, whoever may be his paymaster. So if they are servants of Christ they will look to Christ—not even to His people; far less of course to the world. He has told them: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body what ye shall put on . . . neither be ye of doubtful mind . . . Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Luke 12: 22-30). If they spend their time and strength in faithful service to Him, He will prove to them that every word of His mouth is true and reliable. The servant's path of dependence on his Lord and Master alone is made here very plain.

The Lord speaks also to His people who are served, however, and their path is also well-defined. He says to them, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," and, "The laborer is worthy of his reward" (I Tim. 5: 18).

One of the sweetest books of Scripture is the epistle of Paul to the Philippians. They were the firstfruits of his labor in Europe, reaped in much suffering. A special affection existed therefore between them, and the apostle expresses it thus: "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel [in those parts] when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity" (chap. 4: 15, 16). Then follows the heavenly principle which governs him, "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." The law principle of hiring and paying the minister could never produce such fruit as this in the apostle's soul.

But think, dear brethren, of this dear man in necessity while laboring away from Philippi, suddenly

seeing one of his beloved Philippians reach his door and deposit in his hands an abundance from Philippi. His necessities relieved were something, even to a man who had learned to be content with whatsoever circumstances he was in, but what was that compared with the love and fellowship of that company of saints he loved as his own soul! He was thought of by them. They could not be with him, but they would do the thing next to it: They would stand back of him sharing their substance with him. What encouragement to him! What a holding up of his hands!

Well, they who heed Paul's words, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ," more or less share his circumstances in that path; and assemblies which collect and minister only on some great occasion when being served, lose all this exercise and experience of divine love, and also the spiritual development which flows from it. And if narrowness of heart becomes chronic, the Lord, after His wonted patience, has to use severe measures. He did so at Corinth, where they seemed to have little or no gratefulness toward the beloved apostle who had served them so faithfully.

Having fulfilled the task laid upon me, I would only add that the necessary expenses of the assembly should first of all be met of course. Right-eousness is always first. Every one should know what those expenses are, as a just proportion belongs to each, and whether present or absent, should conscientiously discharge this responsibility according to his ability.

Some assemblies make it their practice to set apart one Lord's day in the month, whose collection

is sent to whoever the assembly has before decided to make its recipient. When the collections are large, they are sometimes divided between two, that the ministrations may thus be more frequent, bringing most happy communications between the assemblies and those engaged in the Lord's service throughout the world. It keeps us in touch with the Lord's interests, and our hearts are enlarged and taken out of their natural egotism. We would strongly advise all assemblies to adopt the same course of action, ever remembering these great principles: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6).

A mind formed by Scripture will not give grudgingly nor spasmodically, but with deliberate purpose before God.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 130,)

(Chap. 2: 3-11.)

BEFORE I proceed to consider the teaching of chapter 2: 3-11, a few words of an explanatory nature are required. In the portion we have examined, the children of God are authoritatively informed that they have community of life with God, with the Father and with the Son; that through the blood of Christ the stains of their sins

no more attach to them; and that the life they are partakers of, and the cleansing that is connected with it through the blood of the cross, are abiding and unchangeable realities, infallibly maintained in the person of the One who is the believer's Representative in the presence of God. This knowledge is a matter of revelation. However true it all might be as a fact, we could not know it to be true of us if God had not made it known.

Thus far, then, we have been occupied with the objective reality—with what is objectively presented, or set before us. In saying this, I must warn my reader that in thus speaking, I mean, of course, objectively set before us as being true of us, i.e., of believers, and not merely as being something that has been established in Christ, and is true for us to be appropriated by us. I repeat, it is true of us. It is what God in His blessed grace has given us. It is what we really are in Christ.

In chapter 2: 3-11, there is an unfolding of the subjective side. The apostle now speaks of what is inwardly realized. Every believer is conscious of operations going on within himself. He may not necessarily understand or be able to explain them, but he is quite conscious of their presence in him. He knows something is going on within himself that never took place there before he was born from above. He has quite new desires, new aspirations, new hopes. He has new thoughts and feelings. He knows these things are not natural, but the result of a new power outside himself altogether. It is not simply a new power acting on him, but working in him. A new life has been received, and it is making itself felt.

Now, as he speaks of these new activities in his soul he is simply saying, I know God; I am in Christ: I am in the light. It is not that he has apprehended the full import of these expressions, but the things he is conscious of mean that what they imply is true of him. He is a new creature, he has divine, eternal life; the true light is in him. so that he is in the light and has thus the knowledge of God; feebly it may be, yet, in whatever measure of power, it is true knowledge. He now knows that he is in relationship with God in a new way, though he has yet to learn the full blessedness of the relationship. He thus possesses the two-fold testimony that he is a child of God-the direct testimony of God (in which the truth and reality of what he has become through grace is objectively set before him), and the testimony of his own consciousness of what he realizes to be going on within him.

We must now look at the way in which these inward activities are manifested as being there; the way in which the believer takes note of the reality of their presence in him. He experiences in his heart the desire or spirit of obedience to God, and a love that makes others instead of self the centre of interest.

As regards the spirit of obedience, its presence in the soul is displayed in two ways. First, in submission to what God has expressly commanded; and, second, in treasuring up and keeping the communications of God's mind, of His will, of His heart. These two things exist together in the soul. I speak as distinguishing, not as separating. Wherever the one operation is found, so is the other. It is true,

of course, that one may be more plainly discernible than the other, but wherever there is the spirit of submission to what God has commanded, there is also in greater or less measure the appreciation of what may not be an express command, but an expression of what is in His heart, of some purpose or counsel.

I turn now to the portion before us. The apostle says (ver. 3), "And hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments." He is speaking of what every soul born from above realizes to be in operation within himself. He is conscious of the presence in him of the spirit of submission to what God has enjoined. He has heard the voice of the Son of God. He recognizes its authority. He is conscious of holding as binding on him what that voice has enjoined. It is not that

he observes no activity of the insubjection to God that is natural to him, but he sees an operation within himself that is unnatural-an activity that he thus realizes to be the result of a new power from outside himself coming in and producing

within himself what was never there before. He is conscious that now the spirit of submission to what God has commanded is in his soul. The strength of this new principle working within him is not what the apostle has under consideration here. He is not occupying us here with the measure in which this spirit of submission to what God

has enjoined is developed. That is a distinct matter, and is not the apostle's point. What he is here directing our attention to is the fact of the presence, in the soul of one born from above, of this spirit of submission to what God commands. Every truly in greater or less degree; but whatever the measure, greater or less, it is there, and the consciousness of it.

Now this consciousness is the witness that we

know God. For us to say, "We know Him," is no pretense. It is no false profession; even though they see and recognize much inconsistency in them-

FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

selves, they are not speaking falsely. The false professor is one who claims to know God with no spirit of submission whatever. The truth, the light is not in him (ver. 4). There are many things in Scripture which God expressly and positively commands to be done; many things He expressly and positively forbids; and to the soul in whom the spirit of submission dwells, these have the weight

spirit of submission dwells, these have the weight of divine authority. Where this spirit of obedience is not, their authority is not owned and God is not known.

If the spirit of obedience is manifested in submission to what God has enjoined, it is also seen in

mission to what God has enjoined, it is also seen in the esteem in which the various communications are held. If God has rights over us which He requires us to maintain, it has been also His good pleasure to treat us as His friends (Jno. 15: 15). As being His servants, He commands us; as being

pleasure to treat us as His friends (Jno. 15:15). As being His servants, He commands us; as being in the position of friends, He communicates to us His thoughts. He reveals to us what He wishes us to know. Very many of His revelations are like the communications of one friend to another. They are not commands—something expressly enjoined,

but expressions of His love. The child of God prizes these communications, and sees in them inti-

mations of God's mind and will, and he observes them as carefully as he does that which God has expressly commanded.

The character of this form of obedience is of a higher order than simple obedience to a positive command. It is doing God's will, even though He has given no command. It is of this form of obedience the apostle speaks in verse 5. He calls it keeping God's word.

The soul to whom God has become an object of love, will find in that love a divine authority for all that God commands. It is, however, in prizing and keeping the word of God that this love for God gets its full character: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." By this the apostle does not mean that the character of obedience, which I have called submission to commandments, is ever found without the other character of obedience. They go together. What the apostle means is, that the element of obedience exemplified in keeping God's word, is what gives to the love of God its perfect or full character. To "keep His commandments" is one side of the character of the love of God; to "keep His word." is the other side. This latter side makes manifest that the love of God is perfected in the heart.

But we must avoid the mistake of supposing that the love of God is present in its full character only in advanced Christians. It is present thus in every Christian. It is present in the soul from the moment the new birth has taken place. As soon as a soul is born from above he possesses a new nature. This new nature is an active nature. Its activities, its operations, are the expression of its character. From the moment the new life has been imparted (which immediately operates in the soul), it has a distinctive character of its own. All the elements of its character are there. I do not mean there will be no growth, but that the growth is the development of what is already present—the growth of the love of God already in the soul, as not lacking any of its characteristics.

We have seen that the consciousness of keeping the commandments of God is a witness to the soul in whom this consciousness exists, that he knows God. So, also, to be conscious of keeping the word of God is to know "we are in Him," The child of God is making no false profession when he speaks of knowing God, or of having community of life with the Son of God. As born of God, he lives by a life through which he dwells in God. Our Lord declared this to be the truth: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you" (Inc. 14:20). I am aware of the use some make of this passage, but our Lord is not singling out some special class among the family of God who were to know that they would have community of life with Himself in the day of the Spirit's presence on earth. He is declaring this knowledge to be the common heritage of all the children of God in the day to which he refers. He is not speaking of the extent to which they would enjoy the fact he is revealing. He is simply saying, When the Spirit is personally present on earth He will enable the children of God to realize that they are such. He will enable them to be conscious of being in the Son of God.

We have been considering the way in which this

consciousness is proved to be in the soul of every believer: the consciousness of knowing God and of dwelling in the Son; in realizing that the spirit of obedience operates in his soul. This is made manifest to him—the desire to keep the commandments and word of God-which was not present in him as an unregenerate man. He sees resisting tendencies, and is conscious of a conflict going on, but he knows a new force is at work in his soul which he attributes to God. He knows the God of the Gospels and of the Cross has put it there, though the full significance of its presence may not vet be comprehended.

We must not forget that responsibility goes with the possession of a new nature—with being born from above. We are professing to possess the same nature and life that are in the Son of God if we profess to know Him and to be in Him-a nature and life which had its fullest expression in Christ's walk of unwavering obedience to God when He was in this world. He kept perfectly the commandments of God. Most earnestly, most heartily, He kept God's word. His life, His walk of perfect obedience, is our example and standard (ver. 6). It is in His steps we are walking, if we are in Him. True, we have to confess we are not walking perfectly, as He did, but our walk is the same in character as However far He has outdistanced us in the path of obedience, if we are following Him in the path He trod, we must not be discouraged, but press on after Him. May the Lord grant us steadfastness of purpose in seeking for His steps!

LIVING WATER

Wandering on in earnest seeking
Where to dwell,
Came I to the Master sitting
On the well;
'Twas the well of living water,
Whence He drew
Full supplies for all who sought Him,
Cool and new.

From its living depths He brought it
Bubbling up,
And to me who faintly sought it
Gave the cup.
Life was in the draft He gave,
Springing life to help and save.

All my way grows green and blooming
As I go,
For the streams of living water
Onward flow:—
For the understanding, wealth;

Thirsting traveler, will you try it?
Still it flows—
Still the Master, sitting by it,
Holds to those
Who in earnest quest would sup

For the will, the glow of health.

Who in earnest quest would sup Living water in the cup.

From your arid deserts turning,
Pause and drink:—
Calm the striving, cool the burning
At its brink:
Here find healing and repose
Where the Living Water flows.

LETTERS TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

(Continued from page 138.)

LETTER III

REV. A. M. S.

My DEAR SIR: According to promise, I shall now endeavor to put before you what seems to me to be the unscriptural teaching of the Church of Rome as to the so-called sacrifice of the Mass. This you hold, as I understand, to be a continual unbloody sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, and you are very insistent that it was ever offered throughout the Church's history by anointed priests on literal altars, "as early, at least," you say, "as the second century." And you ask: "Had the Church of Jesus Christ erred so early as this, on her chief doctrine, the doctrine on which her whole system centred? Or did the infallible God produce, in His masterpiece, only the crazy institution that could not be kept within the bounds of truth, even for half a century after the death of the last of the apostles? What became of His promise: 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against her,' and 'I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age,' and again, 'The Spirit of Truth will remain with you,' etc. ?"

As to this, I am not at all perplexed to find the answer. It is undoubtedly the fact that while Christ's promises abide, and the Spirit of Truth dwells in His own and guides each subject soul into the truth; and that Christ does and will remain with His chosen to the end whatever the vicissi-

157

tudes they are called to pass through; and while eventually it will be manifested that the gates of hell have not prevailed against what was really of God: nevertheless, even in the apostles' own dayslet alone fifty years afterwards-error had come in like a flood. Witness the stirring letter of St. Paul to the Galatians. The Galatian heresy was the adding of legal works to the covenant of grace, and abides with us to this present day in spite of the apostle's strong protest against it. In fact, as one has well said: "The heterodoxy of the first century has become the orthodoxy of the present." Where to-day is the religious communion found in which this Galatian error has not gained headway? What church is free from it? Certainly not the Church of Rome. For there, as nowhere else, Galatianism has swept all before it; so that the doctrine of justification by faith, which is the key-note of the epistle of which we are speaking, came as a new discovery in the stormy days of the Reformation, and has been opposed strenuously ever since.

Then, again, note the errors creeping in at Colosse. In the second chapter three grave departures from the truth of God are noticed, and it is evident that each one of these had already gained sway over the minds of many professed Christians, and this during the life-time of the apostles. I refer to rationalistic philosophizing beginning to supplant divine revelation; of legality, supplanting the truth of grace; and, even more striking, of a vast ritualistic system involving the worship of angels and the humiliation of the body by self-imposed penance in place of holding fast the Head: and I ask you, as an honest man, can you deny the

presence of every one of those systems of error in the Roman Church to-day?

But the first and second letters to Timothy likewise witness the rapid growth of error; and it is noteworthy that before the death of St. Paul, he has to sorrowfully exclaim: "All that be in Asia have turned away from me." So even supposing the Christian churches elsewhere were still holding fast the faith, those in Asia, where the oldest assemblies had been established, had in a measure at least apostatized from the truth. The seven apocalyptic letters make this very evident.

We need not be surprised, therefore, to find an altar and sacrifice at a very early day in many churches, taking the place of the Lord's table and its simple memorial feast. But this by no means proves it to be either scriptural or apostolic, nor in any true sense Catholic.

But on the other hand, we find no evidence of a reliable character to show that as early as the second century the altar had succeeded the table, and the sacrifice of the Mass usurped the place of the Lord's Supper. Certainly the pre-Nicene Fathers, who have written on the subject, would leave no such impression on the mind. Justin Martyr describes the weekly meeting of Christians on the Lord's day more fully perhaps than any other; and, as you know, he makes it very clear that the early Christians partook together of a simple meal of bread and wine in commemoration of the Saviour's death. While the well-known letter of Pliny, addressed to the Emperor Trajan. affords proof positive that such was still the case in his day. He assures his patron that he could

find no evil against the Christians; no evidence whatever of sacrilegious or criminal proceedings. His spies only found that the Christians met together to read the holy Scriptures, to pray, to sing a hymn to Christ as God, and to partake of a very simple meal consisting only of bread and wine.

It was in a later day that the departure from early simplicity came in, when the truth as to Christ's one offering and His finished work had been largely lost sight of: when in accordance with the solemn prophecy of St. Paul, grievous wolves had entered in among the sheep of Christ, not sparing the flock, and even of their own selves had men arisen, "speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." The only resource upon which he casts the faithful is "God and the word of His grace; " not the church's authority, nor the voice of councils, nor the infallibility of the Pope. To that holy Word of God therefore let us turn, and inquire whether, according to Scripture, it is still possible to offer to God an acceptable sacrifice for the sins of either the living or the dead?

As to this we need do nothing more than carefully consult the 9th and 10th chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews. There the one offering of the Lord Jesus Christ, never to be repeated, is placed in vivid contrast with all the many sacrifices under the law (which were but a figure) when gifts and sacrifices were offered "that could not perfect him that worshiped, as pertaining to the conscience." In these there was a continual calling of sins to mind, as indeed is the case in every Roman church where the sacrament is offered up daily, and sins are never really put away. "But Christ having come as

160

High Priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands (that is to say, not of this creation), neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." And so great is the efficacy of that one offering, that through it the believer's conscience is "purged from dead works to worship the living God."

Now you insist that there is nothing incompatible with all this and the continual sacrifice of the Mass. For in your letter you say that "the Victim of the Sacrifice is the body and blood of Jesus Christ; the same body that was nailed to the cross: the same blood that was shed on Calvary. In other words, the same Jesus Christ who was crucified for us is the same that we offer on our altars." And you add, "The sacrifice of the Mass is offered to God alone, to acknowledge His sovereign greatness and our dependence. It is true, that we offer the Mass in memory of the saints, but we never offer the sacrifice to them. The sacrifice of the Mass is offered on our altars by the ministry of priests who receive in their ordination the power to offer it. But Jesus Christ is the principal Offerer. It is He who presents Himself to the Father, by the hands of priests; it is He who changes the bread and wine into the body and the blood." But, observe, this is the very thing that is denied in the epistle to the Hebrews. Note carefully chapter 10: 11-14: "And every priest [that is, Jewish priest] standeth daily ministering and offering often the same sacrifices [as Roman Catholic priests do today], which can never take away sins; but He.

after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." And again, in the previous chapter, verses 24-26 are absolutely conclusive: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often [the very thing which you insist He does], as the high priest entereth into the holy places every year with other blood than His own; but now, once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Language could not be stronger to declare the abiding efficacy of the one irrepeatable sacrifice of our Lord Tesus Christ-so perfect, so complete, so fully satisfying to God, is that one blessed, finished work of His that He will never offer again. He has sat down as token that His work is finished; and because He has made purgation for sins, the seat He has taken is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. Depend upon it, He never descends from that exalted place to offer on Rome's altars, or any other; for of such sacrifice there is no need. The sins and iniquities of all who believe in Him are eternally remitted, on the basis of that one all-sufficient work, and "where remission of these is, there is no longer an offering for sin" (Heb. 10:18). And were this otherwise, an unbloody offering could be of no avail, for "without shedding of blood is no remission."

All the reasoning in the world could not change the force of this. Christ's one offering is all that is needed for the purgation of sin, or it never will be. Scripture distinctly declares it is. Rome, tacitly at least, declares it is not. Which am I to believe? Which do you accept? You cannot acknowledge both, for one destroys the other.

I observe, in looking over your letter again, that you deny the term "the Lord's Supper," as having reference to the sacrament at all. You say it referred alone to the love-feasts of the early Christians—a common meal, where they met together in Christian fellowship. But you evidently have forgotten that the apostle Paul in the very passage in question, after rebuking the Corinthians for their abuse of the Lord's Supper, immediately gives them clear instructions as to how that Supper should be observed; while in the previous chapter, 1st Corinthians 10, he makes it plain that it is at the Lord's table we partake of the cup of blessing, even the communion of the blood of Christ, and the broken bread, the communion of the body of Christ. Surely it is the Lord's Supper which is partaken of from the Lord's table. But if you insist that both of these are very different to your sacrifice of the Mass, then I grant you are indeed correct. The Lord's Supper is not to be confounded with the Romish Mass, nor the Lord's table with the Roman altar. One speaks of Christianity, and the other of a mysterious mixture of Judaism and Paganism, and a perversion of apostolic teaching. For of the Mass, as such, there is not one line in Holy Scripture.

I do not wish to prolong the discussion of this solemn theme. If what I have already written has no real weight, I can only suppose that a further attempt to elucidate what seems to me so clear,

would only leave us where we began—you looking at everything from the standpoint of Roman Catholic theologians, and I, from that of one desiring alone to be taught by the word of God. And so I bring this letter to a close, beseeching you to search the Scriptures daily whether these things are so, and praying that God in His rich grace may give you such a sight of the perfection of the one offering of His blessed Son, that your soul set free through faith in Christ alone, will never more feel the need of any additions to the work of His cross.

Very sincerely yours,

H. A. IRONSIDE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Ques. 17.—Why did God allow polygamy in Old Testament times?

ANS.—If you mean in the world at large, He allowed it in the same way as any other result of the Fall—to let man learn by his evil ways that he was indeed a fallen being.

If you mean in Israel, the special sphere of His rule at that time, which we judge is in your mind, it was because Judaism, while established of God for a timely purpose, was not yet the shining of the true light, and could not therefore penetrate into all the corners of the darkness to shame out of countenance a practice so contrary to the order of God in creation. When Christ, who is the Light of the world, came, He traced things back to their original order at the beginning, as He made them, before men had spoiled them, and thus reproved the evils. Christianity (true Christianity) since Christ went back to heaven, is the light of the world, being the expression of His mind in everything, whether creation, or new creation. It alone therefore makes manifest the unnaturalness of the practice of polygamy, and gives marriage its true place.

Mark, however, that there is not a single command in the New Testament (the Book of Christianity) against polygamy. It him 1 Cor. 6:19).

chases evil away, not by commands or prohibitions, but as the sun chases away the darkness by the power and energy of the light which is in it. None could serve as bishops or deacons among Christians who had more than one wife (1 Tim. 3: 1-12; Titus 1:

5-7). This at once branded polygamy with God's displeasure, and this is enough to govern the true Christian—the man in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9); for the Christian is not ruled by law (not being under law, Rom. 6:14), but by the new life which he has received, and the Spirit of Christ who dwells in

Judaism was only for a time (Heb. 9: 10), to prepare the way (Gal. 3: 25) for that which was in God's bosom for man from before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1: 4-7), and now shines out as the sun at noon-day. Every shade of sin therefore (much of which Judaism could not manifest and reprove), is now manifested and reproved by Christianity.

QUES. 18.—Were Ananias and Sapphira, of Acts 5, only professors, or were they real Christians under God's government for their evil ways?

ANS.—We sincerely hope it was the latter, for it is far better to be under God's government in *time*, no matter how severe that may be, than to be *forever* "in the outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth"—the state of mere professors in eternity, as well as of outbreaking sinners.

QUES. 19.—Kindly give us as full instruction as you can concerning the blessed Trinity. Are there three distinct divine Beings to be recognized? And if so, to whom should we address our prayers and our worship?

prayers and our worship?

ANS.—Scripture, from beginning to end, tells us there are three distinct Persons in the Deity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—yet so absolutely one in nature, mind, purpose, way and end, that together they form the one, true, eternal God, who is, had

that together they form the one, true, eternal God, who is, has been, and eternally shall be; the One to whom prayer, praise and worship are addressed by all that are born of Him since the beginning. Of this, as of nearly every other doctrine, it is in the New Testament that the full, complete revelation is made; yet, the Old incidentally said enough to establish the matter for those who had not yet the New. We cannot, in our limited space, take it up

in detail, but only point to a few passages.

Elohim, the plural form of Eloah. It suggests at once a trinity in the Being who created all things. In the second verse the Spirit is named. Psalm 2 plainly declares the Son, and if there be One who is the Son, another must be the Father. Proverbs 30: 4 is very plain, and so is Proverbs 8: 22-36. No Old Testament believer, if instructed in it, could ignore the three Persons existing

in the true God. As to the New Testament, the doctrine of the Trinity is woven with every part of it. Christ was here, declaring Himself the Son, addressing His Father, the Spirit alighting upon Him in the form of a dove. The initial ordinance of Christianity (baptism) is "in

the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28: 19). As to prayer and worship, if we address God as God, it includes, of course, the three Persons. We do not distinguish them. however, we do distinguish them in our address, as Scripture

gives us the fullest liberty, there seems to be no passage which

leads us to address the Holy Spirit. In all the teaching of the Word, He (the Spirit), dwelling in the Christian, directs all the desires and longings of his heart to the other two Persons-the Father and the Son; his prayers usually, though not exclusively, are to the Father in the name of the Son. If we think of our weakness and dependence we call upon God-the Almighty One. If we think of our blessed relationship as sons, we call upon Him as our Father. If we think of our service, we call upon our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Thus the character of our address is formed by the thoughts which possess our souls at the time. In general, we may say: The child's address is to his Father, the

But it may not be well to make sharp lines for this sacred intercourse between the believer and his God, his Father, his Saviour and Lord. It is better to have our hearts gradually, and, shall we say, unconsciously, trained by a growing familiarity with the word

servant's, to his Master,

of God. We might learn the various seasons of the year by the scientific method of the almanac, and vet know little of their differing joys and blessings; but living and growing among them we become formed by them. They are as natural to us as our very So here, definitions, though helpful in a measure, are never like what we learn in intercourse with God through His Word, and the practical walk with Him. We have seen

Christians who had only recently been set free by Christ, address Him altogether in their requests and worship. It revealed their infancy and need of growth. Then we have seen Christians, with plenty of knowledge, address God, or the Father only—never the Son; it revealed a puffed-up mind without corresponding love in the heart. It is refreshing to hear babes, no matter how little they know, if only they are humble enough as newborn babes to "desire the sincere milk of the Word," that they may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2: 2). It is edifying to hear fathers, if they have gathered knowledge in communion with God, and Christ is therefore the sum and substance of their speech and practice.

QUES. 20.—Is it right for God's people to attend theatres, shows, and the like? Is it not a violation of the word in 1 John 2:15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world?"

Ans.—Surely so. A true Christian (a man in whom is the Spirit of Christ), attending such places for his pleasure, knows in his conscience that he is not in the company of his Lord there—knows he is defiled in his spirit by it. The world itself knows he is not in his right place, and therefore loses confidence in his Christianity.

If we realize, as the apostle, that "He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20), it will not be hard to take His yoke upon us. Our hearts will not need the theatre or the show for their enjoyment. It is really reproaching Christ for a Christian to be found in such places, for it is saying that Christ has not satisfied his heart.

Ques. 21.—In my neighborhood a minister preaches that it is when we reach heaven that we are born again. Others say it is here on earth this has to be if we are going to be saved at all. Others again preach that we have here on earth to suffer the penalty of our sins. Having already received help through your publications, I would greatly appreciate a word from you in your magazine.

ANS.—The first and last of these teachings are false. The first is Seventh Day Adventism, which is materialistic, and knows nothing of the present work of the Spirit in those who are of faith. If spirit is only a form of material organization, as they claim, a surgeon who can dissect the body knows all that can be known of man. The new birth with them is but a change of outward form

and circumstances. As there is no such change till the Lord comes and takes His people to heaven, there is no new birth till then.

The last is Universalism or Unitarianism, both of which have largely corrupted the orthodox denominations. Ignoring the division which God makes between believers and unbelievers, they apply to all alike the discipline which the Father lays upon His children for their sins, if they judge not themselves. 1 Cor. 11: 31, 32 makes this very plain, telling us that God chastens His children here and now, that they "should not be condemned with the world " The world then is going to be condemned. Why? Recause of their sins. Believers are not to be condemned with the world. Why? Because Christ was condemned on the cross for them, and they, as guilty sinners, have received Him as their Saviour. Now, being the children of God, they are expected to be "followers of God, as dear children." If they are not, they are disciplined by Him, even as we discipline our children when they do wrong-our children, mind you, not strangers.

But here seems to be the place to show that those who preach that it is here on earth we must be born again, are right. If it is His children God disciplines, how have they become His children? By new birth: and it is as to this the Lord gives instruction to Nicodemus in John 3. False teachers, contradicting the word of our Lord (see Jno. 8: 42-44), say that all men are by creation children of God. They talk of the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," and thereby overthrow not only the faith of some, but also the governments of nations. Closing their eyes to man's condition in sin, in rebellion against God and every authority which He has set up, they cry Peace, peace, while evil is active, and thus give it vantage ground till rulers can no more control it. God declares man's condition to be so essentially evil, that a man must be born anew before he can have any true intercourse or living relationship with Him. The new birth is an internal work, in which the person receives from God a new life (eternal life), whose nature is holy, and finds comfort and pleasure only in God's holy things. It thus destroys in its possessor the practice of sin. All over the world the children of God are one in this; they can be recognized by the world as men who practice sin no more, but live in holiness. Indeed it is by this manifest oneness of new life and nature that the world is to be led to faith in Christ (Jno. 17: 20, 21).

When this life is over it is too late to be born again (Luke 16:

24-26; Heb. 9:27). The whole word of God teaches that this is the day of grace, that now is the day of salvation, and that if men do not, during this time of grace, appropriate the provision He has made for their salvation, they are lost forever. The Roman Catholic Purgatory, out of which there is hope after this life, and Russell's "Millennial Dawn" or "International Bible-Student" Second chance after death, are contrary to all Scripture teaching—both equally efficient means of fleecing people who love to hear pleasing lies.

QUES. 23.—Why is it that all manner of sin and blasphemy is forgiven, but the one against the Holy Spirit cannot be?

Ans.-In carefully considering the circumstances under which the Lord pronounced this sentence, in Matt. 12: 22-32, or Mark 3: 1-30. one cannot but be impressed with their solemnity, All manner of miraculous healing was done before their eyes by the Lord with the result that they plot against Him to get rid of Him. Not only were the physical results of man's fall removed by Him. but unclean spirits were cast out, proving that He is superior to the evil "principalities and powers," whose prince had deceived man, and his subordinates enslaved many in various ways. To cast out these demons required a power greater than that of Satan. their master. The Lord's opposers knew that perfectly well, and in their consciences they knew it was by the Spirit of God that Christ cast out the evil spirits. But their wills were made up. Light, conscience, all was silenced to satisfy their will, so they ascribe to Satan the power which in their conscience they know This is fatal. Such blasphemy cannot be forgiven: was of God. not because of any pre-eminence of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity. but because it is His work to produce conviction and light in man's soul, which is the root of all intercourse with God; being trampled under foot, He does not renew it. Other sins and blasphemies we might compare to the dead branches of a tree, with the tree not necessarily dead; it may grow again. Not so with the root. If that dies, it cannot grow again. These are most serious things, against which they who know and value the grace of God will watch, as the master of a ship watches against the sunken rocks, however strong and well equipped the ship may be. Hebrews 6: 1-6 and 10:19-31 are no idle words. They are there for every one to take heed. They are not given to disturb our peace with God, but to prevent trifling with evil.

Some answers remain for next No. of Help & Food

EDITOR'S NOTES

Greetings Yes, beloved friends, greetings, with a new meaning to the word. For a while

it seemed as if the sweet relations of teacher and taught were to be severed, but God has answered the prayers of His beloved people who seem in many places to have pleaded for our continuance with them, and how can God fail to answer the prayer of faith? Acute suffering has not been wanting, but the Lord has sustained and proved His tender compassions. Such sweet relations has grace formed with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, that every circumstance of life becomes a means of precious intercourse. In the sufferings, God's stamp of death upon the flesh has been realized afresh, while the soul has answered Amen with sincerity. What a rich blessing to have been brought early in life to agree with God against our flesh; to take sides with Him against every form in which it can manifest itself; to have escaped the delusion that it was eradicated from our being; but that though present in us, it was no longer a part of us. The cross of Christ had parted us from it forever, henceforth to serve the Lord in freedom, while in the daily judgment of it.

The work of our little monthly has linked us in heart with thousands of Christ's sheep in various parts of the earth, and the thought of continuing still with them makes one truly grateful, as with a measure of returning strength we turn to our task—substantially helped, however, by others, in preparing this number.

Oh brethren, what a path of praise belongs to us! Our sins forever blotted out by the blood of Jesus;

no guilt upon us any more; justified as fully from all our sins as Christ is justified from them, and He Himself our righteousness there before God, giv. ing us our place there; possessors of eternal life too, and thus able to have fellowship with God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord in all their thoughts and glorious purposes! Besides all this. having for the closing of our day here on earth "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit. 2: 13). What a glorious sunset this is for us! And nothing between it and the present moment. It is the immediate hope of our hearts. The sweetness of the tie between us, also, is that it is not some Shibboleth, or some pet doctrine, but Christ Himself. the Shepherd of the sheep and the Bishop of our souls. Our soul truly sings with joy as we think of this tie, formed upon earth, but never to cease! The better we know Him the closer we are drawn together; for the flock thus formed is not sectarian, but divine and holy. Let us ever remember one another at the throne of grace.

THE PSALMS

This book is like the harp that David played, 'Tis strung by human hand, Yet overstrung by God. 'Tis rich in deepest tones of melody, Low chords of grief inwrought

With precious notes of joy.

'Tis like the human heart, in nature strung, Then overstrung by God, And tuned to suit His will.

While ever and anon the human cry
Breaks forth, still God controls
The hand that sweeps the strings.

What depths of sorrow! Mournful, broken chords, As from the human heart When overpressed by grief!

What agony unspeakable for sin Confessed to Him who loves

Confessed to Him who loves To hear His children call,

And graciously restores the soul again, And wakes once more the song of victory! (Ps. 51.)

What agony of soul poured out by Him Who bore the weight of sin—Your sin and mine—in love.

The Sinless for the sinful—oh what grace!

Made sin for us, God's Lamb,

Who knew no sin indeed. (Ps. 22.)

What tones of sweet dependence wake the strings!
What notes of trustfulness
And sweet security!

What vindication of the Almighty One Who loveth mercy, and Will ever honor faith! (Ps. 62.)

And hear the wondrous closing of the book—
The final joyous burst
Of Israel's pent-up praise!
No heart could ring, no harm could play like to

No heart could sing, no harp could play like this,

Except the hand of God

Had touched it first in love.

Then let our hearts be tuned, as harps o'erstrung

With golden strings of faith, And love, and joy, and praise;

Then we shall sing: "To Him that loveth us And washed us from our sins In His most precious blood;"

And give Him glory who hath won for us

Eternal life with Him

By virtue of His Cross.

H. Mc D.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 154.)

.(Chap. 2: 3-11.)

IN considering the import of verses 7 and 8, it will be necessary to refer to chapter 12 of John's Gospel. In verse 49, our Lord says, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." He is here speaking of the testimony He has been giving from chapter 1: 35 to chapter 12. This testimony He calls "a commandment," because it is what the Father had enjoined on Him as sending Him into the world. The Father had commanded Him what He should say—what He should speak. His testimony then—the word He had spoken—was the commandment of the Father.

Now what the Father had enjoined on Him to speak was the revelation of life eternal both in its principle and its constant activity. The eternal life that was with the Father had been declared, testified of, precisely as the Father had enjoined it to be done.

John was a representative of those who had heard the testimony the Son had given. He knew the word the Son had spoken—the word, the testimony, which was the revelation of life eternal.

As we have seen in verses 3-6, the apostle has been writing of the activities of eternal life in the

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN 173

souls of those who through grace have become the recipients of it. In verse 7 he assures the children of God that he is not writing a new commandment -something different from what the Father gave to His Son as sending Him into the world. He is writing what they had heard from the lips of the Son of God Himself. He is writing of the life that is in the Son-the nature, character, and activities of which were fully manifested in His life upon earth.

Writing then of the old commandment - the Father's commandment to the Son-he is not introducing any new commandment; he is not speaking of some new revelation in advance of the Christian revelation; not of some progress beyond the revelation given by the Father through the Son.

But if it is of the old commandment he is writing. of what is "true in Him;" there is a sense in which it may be called a new commandment: for the thing that is "true in Him" is also true in those who are born from above. The same life that is in Him is in them. They are in community of life with Him, participators of the life in Him-the life eternal. Once they were in the darkness-belonged to it, were a part of it -but they have been laid hold of by the light that shines in the darkness. They are following Him who is the light of life (John 8: 12). They are in the light, and the light is in them. The darkness is thus passing away. They are delivered from the darkness by the light of life; and those who have the light of life dwelling in them are not walking in the darkness, but in the light. The same thing that is true in the incarnate Son is true in them. The light that

is in Him is in them; the life that is in Him is also in them. In principle, it is the same thing in them as it is in Him.

It must be borne in mind that I am speaking of the nature and character of that which is "true in Him and in them," not of the degree of its manifestation. The manifestation of it in Him was perfect. There was nothing in Him to cloud and obscure its manifestation. How much, alas, there is in us to hide or check this life that is in us! The life that has been communicated to us is covered over to a large extent by the activities of the life that is natural to us, so that the characteristic activities of the imparted life are not seen in us in the perfection that they were seen in Him.

But even so, having what is "true in Him" within us as a divine deposit, we are in the light, though the display of it in us is not full and perfect as in Him, what display there is in us is the display of the same thing that is in Him. It is in us through the light that is in Him laying hold upon our souls. The light in which He is is the light in which we live and walk.

To profess to be a child of God, to claim to be born from above, to say, We know God and dwell in the Son, is to profess to be in the light—the light of life. But the profession may be made when the reality of the thing professed is wanting. The professions made therefore have to be tested, and the test of this claim is very simple. If there is no activity of love to those who are fellow-partakers of a common nature and life, the claim to be in the light is a false claim (ver. 9).

As we have seen, the love of God dwells in those

who are born of Him—with the elements of His nature, therefore. Love in God is active. It is His nature to love; and this activity of love is in those who have become partakers of the moral nature of God. This activity of God is displayed in His children in loving the brethren. Loving the brethren is the mark of the presence of divine love in the soul. Where it is not present, the soul is still in the darkness.

The one in whom divine love is abides in the light. It is not an intermittent thing; sometimes there and sometimes not, but is dwelling there. However much its manifestation may vary on different occasions, the love that is of God is permanently and abidingly in the soul, and the soul is permanently and abidingly in the light—does not become a scandal (ver. 10).

Alas, how many scandals there are! How many are turning away from the truth! How many are giving up the faith! They are thereby manifesting themselves as not having the light of life in their souls. The profession to be in the light is mere profession—not a reality, but a scandal. The love that is of God is not in them; they are yet in the darkness; they know not God, and walk in the darkness. The light of life is not in them.

These apostates from the truth not only lack what marks one who is of God—the love that is of God—but there is enmity in the soul towards those professedly their brethren. The apostle calls it "hating his brother" (ver. 11). Loving the children of God is the fruit of knowing God; hating them is the fruit of not knowing Him—the fruit of man's fallen nature. Those marked by enmity to

176

the children of God are therefore in the darkness. They live and walk in the darkness; blinded by the darkness in which they walk, they know not whither they are going. The light of the Christian hope and prospect does not shine upon their path; they have not in their souls the cheer of trusting Christ as "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The light that is in them is darkness, and how great that darkness is!

Before passing from this portion of the epistle. I wish to guard against two mistakes which are often made. When the apostle says, "He that loveth his brother," he is not thinking of the measure in which that love is manifested, not speaking of the perfection of its display, but of the fact of its existence in the soul as an active principle—a principle abidingly present and continuously operative, though it may be in varying measure as regards our observance of it. We must not therefore make the mistake, as is sometimes made, that failure in the display of that love proves its absence in the soul. If there is any measure of its display, the love is there. Indeed, only One has displayed it perfectly. All others must confess to coming short of the perfection seen in Him.

When the apostle says, "He that hateth his brother," we must not understand him to be speaking of the outbursts of the flesh in true Christians. Sad, unnecessary and unjustifiable as these are, the apostle is not fixing our attention on them here, and we must not make the mistake of some who take them to be proofs of the absence of love.

The love that is of God, however feebly exhibited, marks those who dwell in the light. Antagonism to

those who walk in the light, displayed in varying measures, marks those who are of the darkness. This is what the Spirit expresses here by the apostle.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Heb. 3:1).

"The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth " (John 4: 23).

"By faith Abraham . . . sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country . . . for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11: 8-10).

THAT man, having proved himself incapable of continuing in Eden, and in Canaan, should be made fit to dwell forever in heaven, is a surpassing wonder of the grace and power of God. Bearing as we do the elements and image of the earthy, though by faith made new creatures in Christ Jesus, no wonder we need continually to remind ourselves of our calling on high.

In keeping with this thought, I have lately been impressed by the simplicity of the ordinance of the Lord, wherein He has desired His own to remember Him, and thus show forth His death; for it is His death which has opened heaven to us. No words could be brought together of such significance as "The Lord's death," nor could anything be more simple than "This do in remembrance of Me." The

weakest intellect, taught of God, may most heartily respond: at the same time, the highest powers of thought cannot exhaust the significance of what is therein set forth. Bread is what has been ground and passed through the fire; and wine, the outpressed blood of the crushed grape. The one loaf, the oneness of the Church, which is the Body of Christ; broken, His body is given for us. The cup. the memorial of His blood shed for us, and also the joy of salvation; while we look back in remembrance of His sorrow, we know Him as now risen, ascended and exalted to the Father's throne. Besides, He vouchsafes His presence among His own gathered to His name, and thus brings in a halo of heavenly glory. While so significant and suited to the purpose, could anything instil within us a slighter hold on earth?—especially as we have it through Paul from a glorified Christ, and linked with His coming again for us.

How thankful it becomes us to be, for having had recovered to us, in these last days, the first ways of the Church of God on earth. Everything committed to man by God has been spoiled, and surely nothing has been more encumbered with human thoughts than this ordinance, so that little of its real meaning is left. Indeed in Romanism, as all know, a flat contradiction is substituted. In the Mass, the stronghold of that dark system, a pretended sacrifice is offered, and as one has remarked, their saying that the wafer contains both the body and the blood, "recoils on themselves," for the word is, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

God gave indeed an earthly system of ordinances

to His earthly people to illustrate the eternal and unseen things. But as soon as Christ came and introduced the eternal things, the earthly order was brought to an end. It was made up of shadows, and now the reality had come. But with what tenacity man clings to what appeals to his senses. How slow the Jewish disciples were to relinquish the sensuous worship of the Temple for the one "in spirit and in truth" brought in by our Lord. And in spiritual declension, Christians have ever drifted toward ceremonials, whether Jewish or Pagan.

I think there is significance in the incident of the eunuch coming that long journey to the city of God. Apostles were there, but we are not told that he saw any of them. He was returning unsatisfied: but God saw it and sent Philip, from the midst of successful evangelizing, to meet this seeking soul in the desert way, and to tell him that the One led like a lamb to the slaughter, was Jesus, on whom believing he would be saved. The unnamed eunuch believed, confessed, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing without requiring any material thing, as Naaman of old did, to worship God in his African home. The nominal church has fastened her roots in the earth, and reared the monuments of her shame to the sky, forgetting her true calling to strangership on earth, and her life and home in heaven. Midst all this, the Lord knows His own, and regards every worshiping thought, and every sigh for something better.

There is no thought of holiness attached to any material thing on earth to-day, except the bodies of saints, to be rendered a living sacrifice to God, as is due. Our bodies are not "vile," as our com-

mon translation has it, but bodies of humiliation, looking to be changed by our Saviour to the likeness of His own. For this may all we be found waiting; for though it seems long delayed, it is ever nearer, and never so near as now.

B. EMSLIE.

LETTERS TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST

(Continued from page 163.)

LETTER IV.

My DEAR SIR:

I desire on this occasion to go briefly into the subject of Mediatorship and Advocacy. As to this, nothing could possibly be simpler and plainer than the truly lucid affirmation of holy Scripture: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). And if we are to believe the statement found in the Homily of Adam and Eve, commonly attributed to St. Chrysostom: "That may not be considered Catholic, which appears contrary to the statements of Scripture," then surely we should have no difficulty in judging whether the doctrines of the Roman Church on the matter in question are really Catholic or not. "Faith in Scripture," says St. Augustine, "is the most Catholic of all." And Scripture distinctly declares that there is one Mediator, and knows of no other. Now if the Roman Church teaches contrary to this, it cannot be the Holy Catholic Apostolic Church.

You yourself say: "Christ is the one Mediator—the one possible of grace and redemption. We can have many advocates and mediators of intercession. In this sense is St. Joseph especially a mediator by reason of his great holiness and merit with God." We do not find in the Scriptures the distinction that you have drawn, however; and indeed, while recognizing your honesty of purpose and evident desire to harmonize the teaching of the Papal Church with the word of God, I cannot but question whether the distinction you make is to be understood even in the doctrinal and devotional works of Roman Catholic theologians.

Certainly the place given the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord, is that of a mediator of grace and redemption, and that in the fullest, highest sense. What else, for instance, am I to understand from the following expressions, which I quote on the authority of Littlefield, from the Raccolta—a collection of prayers said to be specially indulgenced by the Popes, and which you will therefore acknowledge, I presume, to be in the truest sense authoritative:

"Hail, Queen, Mother of Mercy, our Life, Sweetness, and Hope, all Hail! To thee we cry, banished sons of Eve; to thee we sigh, groaning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, O our Advocate, thy merciful eye to us, and after this our exile, show us Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb, O merciful, O love, O sweet Virgin Mary."

"We fly beneath thy shelter, O holy Mother of God, despise not our petitions in our necessity, and deliver us always from all perils, O glorious and Blessed Virgin." "Heart of Mary, Mother of God, . . . Worthy of all the veneration of angels and men . . . Heart full of goodness, ever compassionate towards our sufferings, vouchsafe to thaw our icy hearts . . . in thee let the Holy Church find safe shelter; protect it, and be its sweet Asylum, its tower, its strength . . . be thou our help in need, our comfort in trouble, our strength in temptation, our refuge in persecution, our aid in danger . . ."

"Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation."

"Leave me not, my Mother, in my own hands, or I am lost; let me but cling to thee. Save me, my Hope; save me from hell."

And surely no one could dream after reading the following quotations from Liguori's "Glories of Mary," that she was not supposed to be, without any reservation, a mediator of Grace and Redemption.

"Mary is our only refuge, help and Asylum. In Judea, in ancient times, there were cities of refuge, wherein criminals who fled there for protection were exempt from the punishment they had deserved. Nowadays these cities of refuge are not so numerous; there is but one, and that is Mary."

"God before the birth of Mary, complained by the mouth of the Prophet Ezekiel that there was no one to rise up and withold Him from chastising sinners, but that He could find no one, for this office was reserved for our blessed Lady, who withholds His arm till He is pacified."

"Often we seem to be heard more quickly, and be thus preserved, if we have recourse to Mary, and call upon ner name, than we should be if we called upon the name of Jesus our Saviour."

"Many things are asked from God and are not

granted; they are asked from Mary, and are obtained."

"At the commandment of the Virgin all things obey, even God."

"The salvation of all depends on our being favored and protected by Mary. He who is protected by Mary will be saved; he who is not will be lost."

"Mary has only to speak and her Son executes all."

And is it not a fact that the last words which the Roman ritual puts into the mouth of the dying are: "Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of Mercy, do thou protect me from the foe and receive me in the hour of death?" How different to the last words of the first martyr Stephen: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"

And returning to the *Raccolta*, what words could be more unscriptural than these?

"I acknowledge thee, and I venerate thee, most Holy Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Lady and Mistress of the Universe, as daughter of the eternal Father, Mother of His well-beloved Son, and most loving Spouse of the Holy Spirit. Kneeling at the feet of thy great Majesty with all humility I pray thee, through thy divine charity wherewith thou wast so bountifully enriched on thine acceptation into Heaven, to vouchsafe me favor and pity, placing me under thy most safe and faithful protection, and receive me into the number of those happy and highly favored servants of thine, whose names thou dost carry graven upon thy virgin breast."

You instance St. Joseph as an example of the intercession of which you speak; but what am I to

think of the two following quotations likewise from the Raccolta prayers, addressed to Joseph by those seeking his advocacy?

"Benign Joseph, our guide, protect us and the Holy Church."

"Guardian of Virgins, and Holy Father Joseph, to whose faithful keeping Christ Jesus, innocence itself, and Mary, Virgin of virgins, were committed. I pray and beseech thee by those two dear pledges. Iesus and Mary, that being preserved from all uncleanness, I may with spotless mind, pure heart. and chaste body, ever most chastely serve Jesus and Mary. Amen."

One might go on quoting indefinitely from Roman Catholic books of devotion to show that the one Mediator of God is completely set aside in favor of a multitude of saints and angels who are evidently supposed to be more approachable than our blessed Lord Himself. And yet St. Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 200, wrote: "Since there is only one good God, both we ourselves and the angels supplicate from Him alone." St. Athanasius, that doughty champion of the truth, A. D. 370, writing against the Arians, ridicules them for applying such scriptures as "The Lord is the Refuge of the poor," to the Lord Jesus Christ, if they denied His God-head glory. He goes on to say: "But if they say that these things are spoken of the Son, which would perhaps be true, let them confess that the saints did not think of calling on a created being to be their helper and their house of refuge." And in this he is evidently fully in accord with the Scriptures of Truth. St. John has written, "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father. Jesus

Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world."

What need we then of any other? Christ by His bloody sacrifice upon the cross has settled the question of sin to the satisfaction of God; maintaining the righteousness of His throne and the holiness of His character, so now God can be "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus," and those who have confided in Him as their Saviour need no other mediator than Himself. For He is ever available: His heart is as tender as when here on earth: His love ever flowing out to all His own; needing no other intermediary, neither His mother after the flesh, nor any saint or angel to entreat Him on our behalf; but He Himself forever abiding, so long as His people have need of His intercession, the one great all-compassionate High-Priest with God, our Advocate with the Father, our one Mediator, excluding every other.

In your letter you seek to put the prayers of believers on earth, one for another, in the same category as the advocacy of saints in heaven. You write, "You yourself say to me at the end of your most charitable letter, I will not cease to earnestly pray for you, my dear fellow-believer in Christ. Oh do, I beg of you, be my advocate, my mediator with the Father through your prayers and intercessions."

I shall, indeed, my dear sir, continue to pray the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ on your behalf, but neither as a mediator nor an advocate in the sense to which these words are applied to our Saviour and the Holy Spirit of God alone; but as

186

a Christian I make intercession on your behalf, and on behalf of all men, not expecting an answer on the ground of my personal merit or holiness, but praying only in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is surely a very different thing to what you had in mind, when you preached the sermon on the intercession of St. Joseph, which you sent me to read.

Scripture itself bears witness to the care with which our blessed Lord guarded against even so much as the using of devotional expressions in regard to His mother. When the woman cried out invoking blessing on His mother, He answered: "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." This is the blessing, dear sir, that I desire; a blessing which I know would be forfeited forever were I to forsake the one Mediator for the host of lesser intermediaries set forth by the Roman Church.

P. S.—I have seen a photograph, taken by a missionary laboring in Central America, of a Roman Catholic Church which has over the main entrance a Latin inscription, the plain English of which is: "Come unto Mary, all ye who labor and are burdened, and she will refresh you." Is not this meant to show that she is held up to the people as a mediator of grace and redemption? What a fearful perversion of the precious invitation of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in Matt. 11; 28!

Sincerely yours,

H. A. IRONSIDE.

A MAN OF GOD

In the New Testament "the man of God" supposes one faithful in the service of souls; but the term is by no means confined to Christianity, being rather in itself a familiar Old Testament expression. By it we may understand a believer who has the moral courage and the spiritual power to identify himself with the Lord's interests, and to maintain the good fight of faith in the midst of perils and obstacles of every sort. Such a testimony is incompatible with yielding to human principles and the spirit of the age.

We must not suppose however that fidelity in such a day as ours wears an imposing garb. An appearance of strength is out of course when declension has come in and judgment is approaching. God will have a state of ruin *felt*, and His testimony must be in keeping. When He calls to sackcloth and ashes, He does not give such a character of power as has price in the world's eyes. Thus one of the truest signs of practical communion with the Lord is that at such a moment one is heartily content to be little. This is reality; but it is only a little strength. The expression of this, therefore, is according to the mind of God.

But that which attracts the world must please and pander to the self-importance of man. The world itself is a vain show, and likes its own. Consequently there is nothing which so carries the mass of men along with it as that which flatters the vanity of the human mind. It may assume the loveliest air, but sinful man seeks his own honor and present exaltation. But when a servant of God is thus drawn into the spirit of men, he naturally shrinks

back from fairly facing the solemn call of God addressed to His own, loses his bright confidence, and gets either hardened, or stands in dread of the indement of God. When Christians lose the power and reproach of the cross, philanthropy has been taken up, which gives influence among men; and general activity in what men call "doing good" replaces the life of faith with the vain hope of staving off the evil day-in their time at any rate. One need not deny zeal and earnest pursuit of what is good morally; self-denial too one sees in spending for religious or benevolent purposes; but the man of God, now that ruin has entered the field of Christ's confession, is more urgently than ever called to be true to a crucified Christ. And as surely as He is soon coming to take us on high, He will in due time appear for the judgment of every high thought and the fairest-looking enterprises of men. which will all be swallowed up in the yawning gulf of the apostasy. .

W. K.

In the details of life, the troubles may be between us and God, or God between us and the troubles. In the one case, we break down like Job; in the other, we endure afflictions according to the power of God.

"The waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee; they were afraid" (Ps. 77: 16). So saith He, "Winds blow not; seas, rage not; fire, burn not; lions, devour not; sun, move not; clouds, rain not; devils, hurt not; waters, overwhelm not; sword, destroy not;" and they all obey.

S. R.

GROWING UP UNTO CHRIST

T is the beauty of the gospel that it does not consist of a great mass of doctrines which have to be understood and assimilated before a soul passes from death unto life. If it were so, salvation would be only for the wise and learned. Christianity is centred in a Person, and receiving Him, the believing sinner receives all that pertains to life and godliness. The thought of "appropriation" may be misleading. The moment a sinner believes upon Him who died for our sins and who is now in the heavens, the exalted Saviour, all things are appropriated to him. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you." "It is God that justifieth." "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."

Such scriptures as these show that we are blessed, not according to our apprehension of all that is in Christ, but that God appropriates to us all things according to His knowledge of Christ and the results of His redeeming work.

If it were not so, who could have peace? Where could the line be drawn which assures one that he is really in the full possession of everything that he will need through all eternity? The effect would be to turn one within, upon himself, instead of engaging every faculty of his being with the fulness of Christ for him as revealed in the precious word of God.

"If Christ is mine, then all is mine, And grace and glory too." We do not possess because we know; we know because we possess. It is a wonderful relief to see this, and leads to thanksgiving instead of uncertainty.

Having said this much, we shall not be misunderstood when we say that the great and characteristic lack at the present time among the people of God is the failure to apprehend the fulness of our blessings in Christ and to enter into the enjoyment of them in a practical way. "When thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein" (Deut. 26: 1). It would have been meaningless for Joshua to have exhorted the children of Israel at Gilgal to come into the land, for the simple reason that they were there already. It was quite proper, however, and necessary for him after the preliminary conquests, to say to the seven tribes who had failed to take possession of their inheritance, "How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" (Josh. 18: 3).

If an apostle could say: "Not as though I had already attained," shall we say less? What a perfect standard and goal for faith is set before us: "Holding the truth in love, that ye may grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." There is no room for self-complacent ease which leaves the soul unexercised, and therefore stunted. Never, so long as we are in this world, can it be said that we have reached our goal. Each day sees the earnest soul gird itself afresh for the race. "Forgetting these things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, let us press on."

We do not ask, "Have you attained?" We know you have not; but we may well ask ourselves, "Are we seeking to make progress?" Even here, "Not he that commendeth himself is approved." We should not care to hear a Christian say he was growing; but others can see, and we at least should have the consciousness of genuine purpose of heart.

Have we a hunger for the word of God, and are we feeding upon it daily? Have we a clearer view and a firmer grasp of all the great truths of the word of God, particularly those which relate to our own blessings? Are we more persistent in prayer, more simple in faith, more diligent in the service of our Lord? These are the things which mark a growing up unto Christ. Let us never be satisfied unless they can be truly said to mark us. The family of God is made up of children, young men, and fathers. What kind of a father would he be whose grey hair was a badge of a feebler apprehension of Christ than he had when younger? What sort of young man is he who, instead of conflict with the world and victory over it, has succumbed to its attractions, and is less devoted than he was formerly? And even in the babe, how pitiful it would be if the knowledge and enjoyment of the Father grew feebler! May the Lord awaken His beloved people! Declension is all about us. It presses upon us. While avoiding all pretension, let us be exercised as to our growth unto Christ.

A WORD FOR THE YOUNG

T is a matter of great joy that so many young people have been led not only to accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour and to confess Him as such, but definitely to accept the responsibilities which go with this. They have identified themselves with the testimony of the Lord as to Church fellowship; they have thrown themselves into Sunday-school, tract, and gospel work. We bless God for every dear young Christian of whom this is true.

Young people do not relish fault-finding, nor do they wish always to be hearing advice. Indeed, constant criticism and advice may fail, from their repetition, to secure the very result desired. We trust that these few words may not be looked upon as criticism nor taken as mere exhortation. In the language of the Apostle, we may say:

"Rejoice in the Lord alway." God has made every provision to make His children happy. A sour visage misrepresents the very grace of God: "Let us eat, and be merry." If anything interferes with our happiness in the Lord, we may be sure that something is wrong.

"Watch and be sober." Life is an intensely sober thing. Who that thinks of the destiny of the world, the condition of the professing church, the needs and sorrows all about us, can spend his days in empty levity? Youthful spirits are one thing; trifling, worldliness, folly, should have no place in the Christian's life, however young.

"Be strong in the Lord." It takes a good deal of courage to say "No" to a tempting invitation; to

confess Christ publicly; to bear witness against sin, or to invite an unconverted person to the Saviour. If we are to be of any service, however, to Him who humbled Himself to serve our need, we must be ready to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

"Search the Scriptures." No one can rejoice in the Lord who is ignorant of His Word; no one will be truly sober whose thoughts are not filled with that Word; nor can one be strong unless the word of God dwells in him. A daily, regular reading and study of the Bible consecutively is therefore

indispensable.

"Continue in prayer." Prayer always accompanies a true feeding upon the word of God. We feel our dependence and helplessness and turn to Him who alone can meet it. There are dear ones whose salvation we desire: Christians whose blessing we wish; guidance, wisdom, grace—thousands of things to pray for. Dear young Christian, do you pray—perseveringly?

S. R.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Ques. 24.—The word of God bids us, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." In my business I have frequent dealings with another who is in the same line, and who is an ungodly man. Is this being unequally yoked?

Ans.—Not at all. (See 1 Cor. 5: 9-13.) The Christian would give his preference to godly men in business, no doubt, though not to the detriment of the ungodly, to disparage Christianity in their minds. The Christian pathway is a narrow one. To please and honor the Lord Jesus Christ being the prominent object of the Christian, simplifies the way much. We have only Him to please

in all this world, and this is much easier than trying to serve two masters, at which no one ever succeeds.

QUES. 25.—In John 3: 5, "Except a man be born of water," the reference in my Bible is to Mark 16: 16. Is it water-baptism then the Lord points to for new birth?

Ans.—Not at all. Water-baptism has nothing whatever to do with new birth. Water here, as in other passages of Scripture, is used figuratively for the word of God (see 1 Pet. 1:23; Eph. 5:26). The Spirit of God in sovereign grace, and the word of God received by faith, are God's way of begetting children. Assurance of being such is given to all who believe on Christ, in such passages as John 5:24; 1 John 5:1, and many more. You must not forget that the teaching by references in our Bibles is human teaching, as to which the believer must ever be on his guard.

QUES. 26.—From the parables of Matthew 13, it would seem as if the kingdom of heaven were composed of false as well as true; that is, mere professors. What then would you say is the meaning of the Lord's words concerning John the Baptist, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he?"

ANS.—"The least in the Kingdom" is not a mere professor, but a real child of God whose place is greater or less than another (see Luke 19: 12-24). It was great honor indeed put upon John, that he should be the forerunner of the King, but it is a greater honor to be in the Kingdom itself though one be least there. It is positional greatness, not intrinsic; as a prince, though a child and feeble, in position is greater than the chief statesman.

QUES. 27.—Would you kindly give us help on the subject of Letters of Commendation? Suppose a brother under a cloud for his moral course in one place goes to another: is any one, or are any number in the assembly justified in giving him a letter to the assembly at the place where he goes without the united voice of the whole assembly which he leaves?

ANS.—Letters of Commendation have for their reason the holiness of Christian fellowship, and their object is to establish immediate confidence between such of God's people as are strangers to each other. Even in a respectable family, no one is admitted to its intimacy without being known and his character acceptable. How much more necessary and important in the family of God. The "lellowship of saints" is as real as our "fellowship with the

Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Fellowship on earth is the foretaste of heaven. They who know and value it therefore are jealous of anything which would mar it. An unconverted person introduced would mar it, for he can know nothing about fellowship till he knows what it is to be washed from his sius by the blood of Jesus. A Christian living in an unholy way would mar it, for he grieves the Holy Spirit thereby, and it is by the Holy Spirit that this fellowship exists. A Christian holding evil doctrine would mar it, for evil doctrine offends against the truth as a false balance sheet dishonors a bank. A Christian in unholy associations would mar it, for to associate with the evil is to encourage it and make ourselves partakers of it.

Seeing the holiness and preciousness of Christian fellowship, no Christian who knows and values it would ever think of presenting himself for it where he is not well known, or among such as he does not know well; for there can be no Christian fellowship apart from Christian confidence, and confidence is either by adequate knowledge of each other, or adequate commendation to each other. Christian assemblies which know each other as faithful to Christ, commend to each other persons from among them going where they are not personally known. It is not a piece of "ecolesiastical machinery," without which the person cannot be received. It is a moral necessity among God's people who practise holiness—a means of making the person known where he is not known, that he may without delay enjoy the same confidence and fellowship among those to whom he goes as among those from whom he comes, who know him well, and can conscientiously recommend him.

Understanding the object of letters of commendation, you will see how needful it is that they be thoroughly reliable. If not uniformly and perfectly true, assemblies would lose confidence in each other, to the weakening of true fellowship.

If the brother is under a cloud which cannot be removed before he goes away, it should be honestly stated, that his entrance in the new place be on the same status as his exit from the old.

No brother or set of brethren can be justified in giving a letter of commendation to one in the circumstances before mentioned without the voice of the assembly as a whole. No right-minded person would do so; for, if done in the name of the Assembly, it would be criminal; if done in their own name, it would be schismatic, and to be refused by those to whom it is addressed.

Where there is no question, a brother or two giving a letter as

from the Assembly, do so in the full confidence that they have the fellowship of all in it, and this is the spirit in which God's people should ever be; yet the fact should be announced to all, that everything may be manifestly in the light, and the acknowledgment of what is due to all for the maintenance of the holy fellowship in which we walk.

Scripture gives us cases of individual letters of commendation (Rom. 16:1, 2; Philem. 10-12). Circumstances will often arise now calling for such. For instance, a brother living where there is no assembly, is well known by a pastoral brother who visits him from time to time, and who by letter or word of mouth would introduce such an one where he is not known.

In conclusion then: a brother in the fellowship of an assembly, if going elsewhere, will carry with him a letter from the assembly which he leaves to the one where he goes. If he lives where there is no assembly, some brother who knows him and is known by the assembly where he goes, commends him. A brother going where he is not known, and without commendation, will be refused till he procures a satisfactory one, or by sufficient acquaintance commends himself to his brethren. As the fruit of redemption, Christian fellowship is indeed holy, and carelessness as to it reveals an unholy condition. On the other hand, requiring a letter though the brother be well known, is ecclesiastical machinery, destructive of the Christian mind.

Only as holiness is suitably safe-guarded can Christian confidence and true fellowship exist. Without such fellowship, what an arid desert this world would be to the Christian who is sincerely orucified to the world and the world to him! It is worth maintaining and cultivating therefore, and to be guarded from whatever tends to destroy it. May each and every one of us contribute to its establishment and growth. Let us not forget that even the most secret part of our life either builds it up or pulls it down.

Before going to press, a communication comes to hand, from which we quote the following: "In reading recently in the family 2 Cor. 8:23, 24, we were struck with the noble and honorable commendation the apostle gives there to the brethren mentioned. As to himself, the Corinthians and the assemblies in general were his commendation everywhere (chap. 3:1-3). If others, unknown, needed commendation, he did not; and to have asked it would have been absurd."

Some answers remain for next No. of Help & Food

FDITOR'S NOTES

Thirst Let us Christians never forget that whatever be the inventions of men gotten up to satisfy, there is in the world a great thirst—the thirst created by sin. As a fever creates thirst in a man which nothing but cold water will satisfy, so sin creates a moral thirst in man which nothing but the living water flowing down from the smitten Rock (Christ crucified for sin) can satisfy. Christians, whose thirst has been satisfied, are in danger of forgetting this, and thus to let opportunities pass by in which blessing may be ministered to others.

If we do not live in real and abiding fellowship with our blessed Lord Himself, we shall surely lose the remembrance of our own thirst and the sense of the world's present thirst; and instead of breaking through the inventions by which they seek to satisfy it (by doing which we incur their displeasure), we shall fall into them ourselves. and thus cease to be God's witnesses; we shall be salt which has lost its savor and is fit for nothing. What a sad, sad condition! How important then, how supremely important, that we abide at our Saviour's feet in the enjoyment of His love and grace, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." The service for Christ flowing out of such a condition will not be Martha-like, restless, and selfimportant, but Mary-like, worshipful and natural, free from self-consciousness.

We often now-a-days hear the cry, "Why are the churches empty?" and a vain attempt is made at remedying this by introducing worldly amusements,

by musical feasts, by lime-light entertainments, and what-not. Nothing avails. Men thirst. Young men and women feeling the beginning of the pangs of sin, thirst. Old men and women, looking back on lives where sin has pursued and overcome them, thirst. Their souls cry for "a cup of cold water," and they are offered anything and everything else. "Jesus only" can satisfy them, and Jesus is carefully kept out! His atoning sacrifice alone can quiet their restless souls, and they are offered human righteousness instead. Oh, the guilt of the leaders! Oh, the folly of the led! All hasting together into the ditch, while Eternal Love still cries out: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" (John 7: 37).

Reader, if you are of those who thirst, go to Him who not only quenches thirst forever, but gives rivers of water flowing out to others. Who else but Jesus could say, "Come unto Me, and drink?"

20th Century Romanism THE apologists for the Church of Rome with their constant plea that she would not at this late day re-

peat her past history, must have received a rude shock by the late news from Spain.

A Protestant convention, under the auspices of the Christian Endeavor Society, was being held in Barcelona, Spain. The use of the Palace of Fine Arts had been given them for their sessions, and everything seemed to proceed without cloud or hindrance. A dark plot, however, was being formed at the same time by certain Romish priests, who had chosen for the executors of their plan a secret society corresponding (if we are rightly informed) with the Knights of Columbus in this country. These were to be well armed, get up into the gallery, and at the signal-cry of Long live the Catholic Church, were to fire upon the audience below without regard to age or sex; continuing their fire upon the terrified people as they fled out of the hall. Outside, groups of the murderers were to be posted, where they could continue the massacre.

Through God's mercy, the plot came in time to the ears of the governor of the city, who then acted promptly and resolutely: six or seven hundred police and military surrounded the building, took positions in the gallery near by the suspects, posted themselves outside, so as to enclose the murderers there, and thus completely frustrated the horrible plan. But for this prompt action and God's care over His people, the St. Bartholomew of the sixteenth century would have been repeated in the twentieth century.

Let all who can learn, learn the lesson which this teaches.

It is serious enough for this country, where Romanism is making strenuous efforts to establish itself and hold the reins of government—the neverceasing object of that great political organization, decked with a religious cloak.

[&]quot;Providence does not guide us—it guides things, and thereby controls us: very precious as regards the hand of God over us; but this is not the guidance of the Spirit."

"MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND"

(PSALM 31: 15)

"MY times are in Thy hand!" 'Tis precious this to know, I'm under Thy protecting care as I journey here below. I am not left to fate and chance, to wander in a maze, But thine unfailing presence guides through all earth's tangled ways.

"My times are in Thy hand!" Thou hast the oversight.

Dark clouds may close my pathway in and seem to shut
Thee out,

But thine unfading beams will pierce the heavy midnight gloom,

And on my upward pathway falls the light that leads me home.

"My times are in Thy hand?" "I'll guide thee with mine eye,' Is Thy sure promise to thine own who travel to the sky. I have no wisdom of my own, or strength for such a road; The power and guiding must be thine till I reach Thy blest abode.

"My times are in Thy hand!" I dare not trust to sight,
And conscience is a feeble guide which may not lead me right.
Ten thousand devious paths there are which leave the narrow way,

And every voice but thine alone would lead my soul astray.

"My times are in Thy hand!" To men I cannot trust; They are but mortals like myself, they are but breath and From fathers great and wise, from sages of the past, [dust. From priest and parson I must turn and on Thyself be cast.

"My times are in Thy hand!" Thy book is my sure guide; It is my chart and compass too through time's dark surging tide.

It shows the dangerous rocks, the quicksands and the shoal; It steers me through the straits of life and feeds my hungry soul. "My times are in Thy hand!" I find my all in Thee. Both temporal and eternal things are portioned out to me. Thy goodness in profusion flows around me day by day, And tidal waves of blessing roll to bear me on my way.

"My times are in Thy hand!" I soon shall see Thy face, And praise Thee through eternal day for that unbounded grace

That led Thee from a world of light to this dark world of woe, That I might all Thy glory see, and joys unending know.

C. C. CROWSTON.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 177.)

(Chap. 2: 12-27.)

WE enter now on another division of the epistle. Before unfolding the characteristic features of eternal life in the children of God, the apostle pauses to show that he is addressing them expressly on the ground that they are children of God. If he is exposing false profession, it is not to raise doubts in the minds of those in whom it is a reality. If he contrasts the false and the real, it is not to make real children of God question whether they are such. He would have them know that they have eternal life (chap. 5: 13), that their sins have been forgiven for Christ's sake.

The forgiveness of sins is the common blessing of all who have faith—all who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. It is not a question of how far they are in the realization or enjoyment of it, but of a fact which is true of those who are the

subjects of the regenerating power of God. This blessed fact could not be known if it were not revealed; but God has revealed it; and those who are born of God accept the revelation. There may be varying degrees of faith in laying hold of the revelation, but it is the common faith of all saints that God has blessed them thus for Christ's sake.

All the children, then, every one born from above, every one who believes in Christ, has the right to consider himself as included in the number to whom the apostle writes. The merest babe in the knowledge of God is entitled to regard himself as not excluded. But if the apostle writes thus to the family of God as a whole, he does not forget or ignore the different degrees of development in which the children of God may be found. Hence in verse 13 he defines the different stages of growth existing among the people of God.

First, there are the "fathers," those who have matured in the experimental knowledge of Godthe fruit of experience. Walking with God in practical subjection to His word as used by the Spirit, acquaintance with God has developed in them the realization of the unchanging character of "Him that is from the beginning," the apprehension that He is the one and only-abiding reality. As that, He is the object that stands out distinctly before them. attracting their thoughts and satisfying their hearts. Outside of Him there is nothing to desire; apart from Him there is nothing worth trying or seeking after. He alone can and does satisfy both mind and heart. Such are the fathers. Alas, how few there are! How few have so matured in the knowledge of Christ, that it is a practical reality that He is everything! But what wise counselors are the real fathers! What safe leaders and guides! May God grant us more of them.

Second, the "young men" are those whose experimental knowledge of God is less advanced than that of the fathers, though not inexperienced. They are overcomers. They have had conflicts and have overcome. Through conflict they have gained in strength. They have acquired skill in the use of the word of God; they have learned their dependence on the Spirit of God in resisting error and defending the faith. Their experience has given them knowledge; and knowledge thus obtained is of great value. It is a knowledge of Christ, yet not maturity in that knowledge. Though faithful workers and earnest defenders of the faith, they are not yet necessarily safe leaders and wise counselors. Their knowledge of God needs rounding out through continued companionship with Christ and deeper practical intimacy which gives maturity in wisdom and knowledge. In contrasting the "fathers" and "young men," the apostle is not writing depreciatively of the young men. He is not calling the fathers spiritual and the young men unspiritual; but the experience of the "fathers" has given them greater maturity. It must not be understood to mean that they have reached a stage where they have no more to learn, but that Christ has been experimentally proved to be the one abiding reality and satisfaction for the heart, in which, however, there is ever growth and development.

Now as to the "babes"—I say "babes" because, as is well known, the word for "little children" in verse 13 in the Greek is not the same as in verse 12.

The word in verse 12 is comprehensive, embracing the entire family, the whole household of faith. In verse 13 it is a restrictive word, applicable only to a specified part of the family. The babes are the experimentally undeveloped—the inexperienced in the practical knowledge of God, the knowledge of Christ. The apostle is not speaking disparagingly of those he calls "babes"—not as unspiritual, not as in a wrong state of soul. He does not look upon them as not having all Christian privileges and full Christian blessings. Nay, they are entitled to, and have, everything that goes along with the forgiveness of sins—that goes with faith in Christ. But he is thinking of their practical knowledge, i. e., the knowledge they have acquired through experience.

In "babes" experience is beginning. They have had little or no experience in service or in conflict, consequently have not gained the knowledge that is acquired in those ways. Not that they are absolutely without any experience, but it is what I may call the initial experience of Christians-knowledge of God as their Father. Every one born from above has to do with God, according to the revelation He has given of Himself in different dispensations. From new birth the child is having to do with the Father, is having some knowledge of Him, and is learning of Him. Hence of all children of God, however little service they have seen, however little conflict they have had, it can be said, "Ye have known the Father." They need to acquire fuller knowledge of Him, but they are not altogether destitute of experimental knowledge of the Father.

It is clear that it is in reference to experimental

knowledge that John divides the family of God into these three groups—not in respect to revealed Christian blessings. Life, forgiveness, the indwelling Spirit, adoption, union with Christ, membership in His body, the Church, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, and more, are blessings common to all who belong to the family of God in this dispensation; but it is not in reference to these blessings the apostle speaks of "fathers," "young men," and "babes." These terms have to do, as we have pointed out, with development in experimental or acquired knowledge.

If in respect to experience and practical knowledge the children of God are divided into three groups, we may well expect that the apostle has something special to say to each group. Let us proceed to consider what it is.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN

"Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 18: 13).

The little world I know!
The little world I know!
The innocent delights of youth,
The things I cherish so!
Tis true, I love my Lord
And want to do His will,
And oh, I may enjoy the world
And be a Christian still!

I love the hour of prayer, I love the hymns of praise, I love the blessed Word that tells
Of God's redeeming grace,
But I am human still;
And while I dwell on earth
God surely will not grudge the hours
I spend in harmless mirth.

These things belong to youth,
And are its natural right—
My dress, my pastimes, and my friends,
The merry and the bright.
My Father's heart is kind;
He will not count it ill
That my small corner of the world
Should please and hold me still.

And yet, "outside the camp,"
'Twas there my Saviour died!
It was the world that cast Him forth,
And saw Him crucified.
Can I take part with those
Who nailed Him to the tree?
And where His name is never praised
Is there the place for me?

Nay, world! I turn away,
Though thou seem'st fair and good;
That friendly outstretched hand of thine
Is stained with Jesus' blood.
If in thy least device
I stoop to take a part,
All unaware, thine influence steals
God's presence from my heart.

I miss my Saviour's smile
Whene'er I walk thy ways;
Thy laughter drowns the Spirit's voice
And chokes the springs of praise.

If e'er I turn aside
To join thee for an hour,
The face of Christ grows blurred and dim
And prayer has lost its power!

Farewell! Henceforth my place
Is with the Lamb who died.
My Sovereign! While I have Thy love,
What can I want beside?
Thyself, dear Lord, art now
My free and loving choice,
"In whom, though now I see Thee not,
Believing, I rejoice!"

Shame on me that I sought
Another joy than this,
Or dreamt a heart at rest with Thee
Could crave for earthly bliss!
These vain and worthless things,
I put them all aside;
His goodness fills my longing soul,
And I am satisfied.

Lord Jesus! let me dwell
"Outside the camp," with Thee.
Since Thou art there, then there alone
Is peace and home for me.
Thy dear reproach to bear
I'll count my highest gain,
Till Thou return, my banished King,
To take Thy power, and reign!

MARGARET MAURO.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD

In the world, but not of it (John 17:11-14).

I T is safe to say that there is nothing more ensuring and ruinous to the Christian's testimony than world-bordering. In view of the importance of the subject, let us search the Scriptures of truth as to it, for there alone can we hope to find certainty as to what the world is, and what is the Christian's relation to it.

It is unquestionably little understood, even by many Christians, that the world is at enmity with God: so much so, that "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4: 4). The origin of this breach is not hard to find. Man. in the very beginning of his history, thought by harkening to Satan he would himself become as God (Gen. 3: 5, 6). Instead, he found himself Satan's dupe and slave. Then began a condition of things which is called the world, of which Satan, the usurper, the liar and murderer, became the god and the prince, demanding both its worship and its submission. Man is therefore expelled from paradise as a rebel under sentence of death, and as such becomes father of the whole human race who, born of him and like him, are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2: 3). Man, therefore, is by nature an enemy of God, needing to be reconciled to God before any happy intercourse can exist between them. Deferring the execution of the sentence. God has in sovereign grace been bearing with the heirs of wrath;

but that *mercy* is their only hope surely ought to be plain; and the fact that men have been so many centuries in learning their *need* of mercy is additional proof of their utter alienation from God, on the one hand, and of the riches of God's mercy the other. But if man needs mercy—feels his need of it—mercy he will surely find, and abundantly.

As we take up scriptures which refer to the world, somewhat consecutively, we shall see exactly what the world is, and what is the Christian's attitude towards it.

In the beginning of Matthew's Gospel we see the devil in full possession of his usurped domain, and the use he makes of it. "Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4: 8, 9). He holds out the world as a bait to draw worship to himself. He covets what belongs to God alone.

"Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. 5: 14). Here we see clearly that the world is darkness; Christians (real ones) are its light. The contrast between the world and Christianity could not be more strongly stated, but if Christians are hiding their light by assimilating with the world, what becomes of the light? "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matt. 16: 26). An unanswerable question. But what a paltry thing the world must be in God's sight if one could have it all and still be the loser—infinitely the loser!

"Woe unto the world because of offences!" (Matt. 18:7). Offences must need come, and they will come from the world, but woe unto the world because of them. How solemn to think of some of God's people sharing, in any measure, in this woe!

"All these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Luke 12:30). It is perfectly natural for the world to seek after present things, things which bring ease and pleasure now; this is its one object. The Father knows what His children need; how blessed then to lie in His arms, trusting Him for all, making His interests their one pursuit!

"The True Light was that which, coming into the world, lighteth every man; He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (John 1:9, 10). There is no greater contrast than that between the world and Christ. So thoroughly alienated is the natural man from God, that he does not know his own Creator, even when presented to Him "by many infallible proofs." Even His own people (the Jews), to whom He came in strict accord with, and in fulfilment of, the prophetic Scriptures they had in their hands, did not receive Him. This does not refer to the ignorant rabble merely, but to the leaders of the people, the chief priests and scribes, the leaders of religious thought; these were foremost in their rejection of the Messiah. But the alienation was on man's side, not on God's; "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but

have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). So pronounced is this alienation, that when light came, they refused it, loving darkness rather than light, since in the darkness they could go on in their sins (ver. 19). The true nature of the breach between God and man is apparent in chap. 6:51: "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Life is what is needed by the world, and this agrees with the sentence pronounced upon man in the very beginning (Gen. 2: 17).

"The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil" (chap. 7: 7). One must indeed be blind not to see the awful danger of being linked in any way with that which hates Christ. The world will not hate Christians so long as they affiliate with it, but if they walk in separation from it, in the spirit of 2 Cor. 6: 16, 17, and in loyalty to their Master, they will find the hatred of the world. (See John 15: 18-21.) The reason for this is abundantly plain in chap. 8: 23: "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world: I am not of this world."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (chap. 12: 24, 25). Such is the dreadful break between God and the world, that death alone can meet the need. Life really can be had only as identified with Jesus on the other side of death—His death. To seek it on the human side is to lose it, since that would be to seek life in the domain of him who is

judged, and soon to be cast out (ver. 31). Incorrigible indeed is the world, since it cannot receive the Spirit of truth (chap. 14: 17), and how awfully serious must be the condition of a Christian who is seeking his pleasure in this world! See 2 Tim. 3: 4, 5: "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

In chap. 14: 30 the prince of this world comes to the Lord only to find nothing for him to act upon—no door open to him. With us, alas, how often Satan finds easy access! The way to keep the door effectually barred against him is to be like the bride in the Song of Solomon, chap. 2:3: "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste;" or, as the margin gives it more literally, "I delighted and sat down." Herein lies the grand secret of keeping out the wily foe—to have the heart satisfied with Christ.

Chap. 16: 8 states that the Spirit of God now in the world shows that the world stands convicted of the murder of the Son of God. Jesus was here as God's representative, and the world cast Him out. God has received Him back into heaven, in proof of which He has sent the Holy Spirit to be with and indwell those who have received Christ. In chap. 16: 20 believers weep and lament while the world rejoices over the absence of Christ; but what a shame for a Christian to be sharing in the joy of those who have rejected his Saviour! Verse 33 tells us the world is the scene of our tribulation, not of our rest; a scene in which we are to be overcomers—not affiliated with it; and for our encouragement

we are assured it has been already overcome by our Foregunter.

In chap. 17 we find the most pronounced contrasts between the world and Christians; it may be called the holy of holies of John's Gospel. In verse 6 we learn the blessed truth that Christians are given by the Father to Christ out of the world; but what a pang to the heart of Christ to find His own affiliating with the world out of which He has taken them! He was not of the world, consequently His own are not (ver. 16). He was sent into it from a higher sphere, and in the same way Christians are sent into it, to be the light of it (ver. 18)—sent into it in grace to carry on the ministry of reconciliation which the world sought to stop when it crucified the Saviour. (See 2 Cor. 5: 19, 20.) What an honor thus to stand between the living and the dead; but what a shame to be truckling to the enemy!

Christ's kingdom is composed of those who have been "born from above," brought out from darkness to light, and from Satan's kingdom to God (18:36), while the whole world lies under the power of the wicked one (1 John 5:19). It may have its wisdom, but it is foolishness with God, for "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10), and the world with all its wisdom does not know God.

How incorrigibly astray must the world be, for God to be the One to do the beseeching, while man refuses to hear His voice (2 Cor. 5: 19, 20). It is man who is alienated from God by his evil heart and deeds; so much so, that he could crucify the One who came to reconcile him to God; Christ, being in Himself the expression of God's love seeking

man, and which is still carried on through Christ's servants who proclaim this ministry of reconciliation by the gospel.

In what a dreadful condition is the world in God's sight! Beginning with the head of the race surrendering to Satan under the notion that in so doing he was himself becoming as God; then filling the earth with violence and corruption in Noah's time, so that God must purge the scene with a flood; then Sodom and Gomorrah give us a glimpse of what what was going on after the flood; later, God's judgment had to fall upon Egypt; then the inhabitants of Canaan in Joshua's time had to be swept away; later still, there was Nineveh, Babylon, and all the nations which have figured in history; and the culmination of it all was-the rejection of the Son of God when He came among men, not imputing their trespasses unto them, but, as God, reconciling the world unto Himself! Such is the course of this world, and we all were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. This sweeping arraignment of Eph. 2: 2, 3, includes every child of Adam, however civilized, however refined, cultured and religious, who is not born anew by the power of the Holy Spirit. God's worthies have found little beside persecution in this world; the world had no place for them, though it was not worthy of them (Heb. 11:38), but God had a place for them, though they had to wait in patience for it.

Much is said now-a-days about religion, but how many desire the genuine thing? "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1: 27). This is quite in contrast with chap. 4: 4; "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." This dalliance with the world, which so many professed Christians are ensnared with, is in God's word called spiritual adultery. 1 John 2: 15 is very similar: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Let this search the heart of every one who professes the name of Christ, "The world passeth away . . . but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (vers. 16, 17). But blessed if "unknown" by the world it is because of our identification with Christ.

If we walk in the enjoyment of our privileges in Christ, and in the current of His thoughts, we shall look upon the world with true compassion, and seek to pull precious souls as it were out of the fire.

Faith gives present victory over the world, and to such the Lord says: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God—new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and my new name" (Rev. 3: 12). Reader, are you an overcomer?

J. B. J.

^{*} So read the best manuscripts. It points to that unfaithfulness to Christ represented by the term "adulteresses."

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

In the two epistles of Peter we seem to get parallel lines of truth. For instance, there is the incorruptible inheritance, the incorruptible word of God, and the incorruptible, unblemished Lamb of God. There is the precious blood, the precious stone, the precious promise, etc., and in the first epistle "the sufferings of Christ" are similarly presented. We have

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST:

Testified	l be	for	eh	and			chap. 1: 11	Ī
For us							" 2;21	Ī.
For sins							" 3:18	3
We are p	bar	tak	ers	of			" 4:13	;
We are	vit	nes	SE5	of			" 5: I	:

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST TESTIFIED BEFOREHAND.

In chap. 1: 11 we learn that the prophets inquired and searched diligently of the grace which the Holy Spirit showed them was coming to us: "When He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." The cross of Christ was not an afterthought with God when man had failed. All through the writings of the Old Testament we have these sufferings pictured in type, prophecy and history.

In psalm 22 we find the very words uttered by our Lord on the cross, when in the darkness of distance from God, bearing the awful load of our sin, He cries, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Take again the familiar passage in Isaiah 53: Stricken, smitten and afflicted; wounded, bruised, chastened, oppressed; despised, rejected,

sorrowing and lightly esteemed; cut off out of the land of the living, and His very grave appointed with the wicked. Could the sufferings of Christ be more plainly foretold? In fact, so far was this from the glories that should follow, that the Jews, looking only at the glories, conceived the thought of two Messiahs.

And so all through the Old Testament, from the bruising of the heel (Gen. 3: 15); the sacrifice of Abel (Gen. 4); the offering of Isaac (Gen. 22); the tabernacle ritual; on to Zechariah 12:10, where "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced," the sufferings of Christ are told out.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FOR US.

While the Prophets could only look forward to the sufferings of Christ, we can look back to Calvary and exultingly say, in the language of chap. 2: 21, "Christ also suffered for us." We look at Him who hung on the cross in suffering and agony, and delight to own Him "the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2: 20). There we see the love of God who "spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Rom. 8: 32). There we see Him who knew no sin made sin for us-the Christ of God wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. There we see the chastisement of our peace laid upon Him, and realize that with His stripes we are healed-that God hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. There we see Him delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification. There was no need for Him to die for Himself. It was only our need, our vileness, our wretchedness, that brought Him there.

Oh, my soul! let me revel in such love—the holy Son of God suffered for me! And let me ever bow in adoring praise and thanksgiving to Him who loved me and gave Himself for me. Let me praise God who so loved me as to give His only begotten Son, the treasure of His bosom, who in the outer darkness was made a curse for me, that having put away my sins I might be made fit for His presence.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FOR SINS.

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (chap. 3: 18).

The sufferings of Christ were of two kinds: one at the hands of men, for righteousness' sake; the other, at the hands of God, as an atonement for sin. The first were largely physical; the second took hold of His very being in such a way that in Gethsemane's garden, in anticipation of this suffering, He sweat as it were great drops of blood, and prayed in agony. On the cross, alone, the unique Sufferer bears the awful load of our guilt. It is the Christ of God who is suffering, and who by Himself purged our sins—He who is "God over all, blessed forever." It is He who is "Jehovah's Fellow," who in eternity was in the bosom of the Father, His delight, the centre of heaven's glory; and yet to show the love of God to guilty sinners, was given to bear the sin of the world, to take the guilty sinner's place in the outer darkness!

> "Oh, what a load was Thine to bear, Alone in that dark hour; Our sins in all their terror there; God's wrath and Satan's power!"

There on the cross was One who hated sin with a perfect hatred; to whom the very presence of, and outward contact with, sin brought suffering; One whose holy mind and heart had nothing in them but a perfect answer to all the light and holiness of the throne of God. One who knew no sin—was apart from it in every sense of the word; and yet on whom fell the judgment of all the iniquity, the guilt and wretchedness of this world's sins! In a word, One who was made sin for us, and was thus judged; having descended into the horrible pit and miry clay in order to give us a perfect standing before God.

And so the gospel is: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3); and John the Baptist could point to Him and say, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); and Paul could preach that "through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:38, 39).

And He suffered "once"— not a daily or oft repeated sacrifice which could not make the comers thereunto perfect; but "once in the end of the ages He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 9: 26). After He had offered one sacrifice for sins, He forever sat down on the right hand of God, the seated Priest, signifying a completed work of atonement for sins. We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once, and by His one offering we are sanctified in perpetuity. Therefore as worshipers our conscience is purged from all sins (Heb. 10: 2, 10, 12, 14).

for sin by the holy One? It was, "That He might bring us to God." By nature and practice we were far off from God; without God, without hope (Eph. 2). And what is more, we could do nothing of ourselves to better our condition. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight (Rom. 3).

And what was the glorious result of this suffering

It was in this condition the Spirit of God found us—without Christ, without hope, without God—and, directing our hearts to a crucified Saviour, as we by faith look upon Him, we are brought to God; out of our distance and darkness and ruin, we are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and so draw nigh in full assurance of faith, having

our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.

His sufferings are over. He was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." As soon as atonement was accomplished God began to honor His Son. Having been forsaken by God for us, and all being now "finished," He cried with a loud voice, and as sovereign Lord, dismissed His spirit (Matt. 27: 50, Greek). Men had appointed His grave with the wicked; but God placed Him with the rich in His death (Isa. 53: 9). He was put to death in

in His death (Isa. 53: 9). He was put to death in the flesh (the only way in which He could die), but quickened by the Spirit, and thus in resurrection all who are in Him find their justification. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4: 25). We rest secure from any thought of death and judgment therefore, because they are behind us; nothing but grace and glory are before. We have, in the per-

son of our Substitute, passed out of the first Adam state of guilt and condemnation; now we are beyond the tomb, risen with Christ. The old life as a judged and condemned thing has met its true desert, in Christ; and He being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him, therefore none over us who are in Him. Our business now is to walk according to this resurrection life, in the Spirit; and in this new life we are permitted to be partakers of Christ's sufferings.

WE ARE PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

We cannot of course be partakers of His atoning sufferings for our sins, as some blasphemously teach. In no way can we, poor sinners as we are, bear the sins of the world. To think so is blasphemous. But as soon as the cross is passed and we are on resurrection ground, we are permitted to have fellowship with Christ, and be partakers of His sufferings for righteousness' sake (chap. 4: 13). The one who is identified with Christ must stand against an ungodly world and receive its persecutions, suffering thus for well doing (chap. 4: 14-16). Whether we are called to be faithful unto death, or only to receive the sneers and jeers of men, or loss of earthly gain, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution; and in this world, our Lord has told us, we shall have tribulation. As Satan cannot touch the Lord Himself he would seek in every way to injure those who love Him. Therefore everything that the malice and hatred of Satan can suggest he directs against us through various means. The restraining hand of our God permits Satan only to go so far as is for God's glory and our good (Job 1); but God does

permit us, and privileges us, to have fellowship with Christ in suffering for righteousness' sake, therefore we should count it all joy when we fall into diverse trials; we should rejoice and be exceeding glad, knowing that the prophets before us were so persecuted, and the same afflictions are being likewise accomplished in our brethren that are in the world. The first thing shown to Paul after his conversion was "how great things he must suffer" for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unto him and unto us also is the privilege given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him. but also to suffer for His sake; and so the apostle gladly suffered the loss of all things for Christ, and counted them but dung, that he might know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings. But we are not to suffer as

enough. When our blessed Lord was here, as He came into contact with sin and its evil effects, His whole righteous being suffered. He wept, He groaned in spirit, He sighed as He felt the miseries of those

evil-doers, nor are we to seek persecution and oppression, but to follow Christ through an ungodly world, and the sufferings will find us quickly

He came to bless, and felt the dishonor done to God by sin. Would that each one of God's dear people felt this latter more! When we hear blasphemous,

vile talk, we naturally shrink from the awfulness of it; but would to God that the refinements of sin -the polished, cultured sin-were more felt by us in the dishonor done to Him who is thus set at nought!

In the first days of the Church's history, as the apostles were beaten and bore suffering and indignity for Jesus' sake, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5: 41). It was a privilege and joy to suffer for Him who had given Himself for their sins. Not many of us in these days of freedom of conscience will be called upon to undergo inflictions of pain. But if our walk and fellowship is with Christ, we shall face a world which hates Him, and therefore will persecute us.

But we are joint-heirs with Christ: if we suffer with Him, we shall be glorified together (Rom. 8: 17, 18). So that the sufferings of this present time are unworthy of comparison with the glories which shall be revealed in us. We are to rejoice now for all in which we are permitted to bear any part in suffering with and for Him, and when He is revealed we shall be glad also with exceeding joy.

Last of all, Peter tells us he was a

WITNESS OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

A witness testifies to what he knows or has seen. Peter having walked with Christ was an eye-witness of His sufferings. That is more than we can say, but we can witness of Him to a world of lost sinners going on to judgment. We can "speak what we do know" of Him in our hearts, and from the word of God of His sufferings for us. As Paul say, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the

first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26: 22, 23). In having thus the word of God to present unto a lost world, we have that which is even of more power than our own eye-witnessing testimony would be; "for the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4: 12).

Oh, for a truer witness of the word of God to lost men! F.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

QUES. 28.—It is (aught by some that Luke 6: 29, 30, and like scriptures, are Kingdom truths, and not for the saints of the present time. Is this right?

ANS.-No, not at all. "Kingdom truths" are for all who are born of God, inasmuch as none can be real subjects of that kingdom except they be born again (John 3: 3, 5). Because the kingdom has a future aspect, which cannot be till the King returns from heaven, some fail to see that it has a present aspect, just as real as the future, and that a true Christian is as truly a subject of this Kingdom as a son in the family of God, or a member of the body of Christ. The establishment of the Church did not annul the kingdom in its present form. One relationship does not destroy another, nor annul its responsibilities. Paul prenched, not only the gospel for the salvation of men, but "the kingdom of God" (Acts 28:31), that is, whatever is due to God among men. God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" (Col. 1:13), it becomes us to conduct ourselves according to the character and principles of that kingdom.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The Lord and the Law

THE Lord had given a beneficent law to Israel, incorporating in it a day out of seven—the seventh—for

complete rest. The good of man was in His mind. In the third chapter of Mark they are watching whether that same Lord will heal a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath day, that they may be able to condemn Him for violation of the law. The very thing He had given them for good, they are now ready to use against His doing good. This is always the mind of the Pharisee—the legal mind. The Lord, bent upon the good of man, is against that mind. He first calls up the precedent of David eating the shewbread, which it was not lawful for him and his men to eat, but of which in their need they had nevertheless eaten. Then, while His wounded love is angered at their hardness of heart and want of sympathy toward a suffering neighbor, He boldly asserts His superiority over all law by commanding the man, "Stretch forth thy hand." The legalists may be angered and plot together to destroy Him, but grace has triumphed over law, and love has had its own way in spite of difficulties.

And so it is still. It is easier to press some passage of Scripture to the bitter end than to search patiently into all the mind of the Lord as revealed in the Word concerning the circumstances through which we may be passing. There is no need of spirituality or prayerful mind for the first; there is for the other.

"Pastor Russell"

THERE was recently left at our door in Plainfield, N. J., an ad-

vertising sheet which, because it professes to be Christian, demands Christian examination and judgment. It presents a picture of the American continent emerging from the waters, and, most prominent of all, the picture of "Pastor Russell" himself as the showman in his "Photo Drama of Creation." Beneath his picture are the following printed words:

PASTOR RUSSELL

NEW YORK-BROOKLYN-WASHINGTON LONDON

World-famed as editor, author and lecturer; forty years on the public platform; a profound Bible scholar; the world's most famous "Anti-Hell-fire preacher."

His writings on the Divine Plan of Creation cover more than 5000 pages, and record the labors of a life-time.

You can reap the benefit of all this in a few hours by seeing the Photo-Drama of Crention.

International Bible Students' Association, London, England; Brooklyn, N. Y.

We have little comment to make. We read in Scripture of two striking characters. Of one it is said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2: 6-8).

earthly things with him. Even in the eternal state, he knows nothing more than a restored Edenic condition, with all its earthly bliss. Nor is his conception of Christianity, as expressed in the advertisement of his show, out of keeping with this. Listen to it: "Brains, time and money invested for you. Free exhibitions; an education in one day."

God takes our lifetime to educate us by His Word and Spirit, and through many trials and exercises of heart and conscience. This man can do it all up in one day by a "movie." Surely the U. S. can boast of celebrities! Since the advent of Joe Smith they have followed in quick succession.

Our readers will find on the last page of this number a series of pamphlets, laying bare the devious teachings of this "pastor." We recommend a wide distribution of them.

Wars and The "friends of peace," whose rumors of Wars hope has been so to educate men

as to make an end of wars, must feel cast down at the present conditions in Europe. Those who believe God and are governed by His word, know that instead of the world moving on by human training toward a millennium of peace, it is nearing day by day a deluge of blood. When the disciples asked the Lord concerning the signs of His coming again, He told them plainly that they would "hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;

and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the

beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24: 6-8). If men believed the word of God how undeceived they would be. How it would prevent their running after phantoms.

Unprecedented wars and catastrophes are then to take place at the close of this dispensation, introductory to the establishment of the kingdom of the Son of Man. The "gospel of the kingdom," that is, the announcement that the Lord as King of kings is about to return from heaven to rule this world from east to west and from pole to pole, will be made throughout the world, and then shall He appear. Thank God, throughout that season of dire distress in the earth, the Church (the company of all redeemed people), will be safely sheltered, being, before the worst comes, translated to heaven, where her home is-where Christ has gone and prepared her a place. "Wars and rumors of wars" therefore need not put us in anxiety, though we may well pity this poor world, and especially the Jews, who will be the chief sufferers in the coming tribulation, and pray for them.

It is doubtless out of the chaos produced by such a dreadful conflict of mighty nations that the first Beast of Rev. 13 comes forth—a man of extraordinary powers who, with the second Beast of the same chapter, are the devil's exponents of his hatred of God and the testimony for God in the earth. They cause "the great tribulation," of which the Lord warns the Jews (Matt. 24: 21), and hids them hide from its violence (Matt. 24: 16-20). Immediately upon this the Lord Himself appears and takes all in hand (Matt. 24: 29, 30). How near must be the rapture of the heavenly saints!

entreaties.

Solemn and sweet are these closing days. We have waited long, but our hope is about to be fulfilled. Then too, like the Lord, over Jerusalem, we may weep over the fields which we have evangelized and which have turned away from God's

THE CLOSING SCENE AT THE SPANISH INQUISITION

As Described by an Officer in Napoleon's Army

The Emperor Napoleon had issued an order on Dec. 4, 1808, to exterminate the terrible institution of the Inquisi-

tion in Spain. The following account of the accomplishment of this work of destruction is given by Colonel Lehman-

owsky, one of Napoleon's officers:

I WAS in Spain in 1809, attached to that part of Napoleon's army which was stationed at Madrid. While it had been decreed by the Emperor that the Inquisition and the monasteries should be suppressed, several months passed away and the decree was not executed. I used to express my opinions freely among the people respecting the

priests and Jesuits of the Inquisition, and one night as I was walking along the street two armed men sprang out from an alley and made a furious attack upon me. While struggling with them I saw at a distance the lights of the French patroles, who carried lanterns and rode through the streets of the city at all hours to preserve order. I called to them, and as they hastened to my assistance, the assailants took to their heels and escaped—not, however, be-

fore I saw by their dress that they belonged to the guards of the Inquisition.

I went at once to Marshal Soult, then governor of Madrid, told him what had taken place, and reminded him of the decree to suppress the institution. The troops required were granted, and I proceeded to the Inquisition, nearly five miles from the city. It was surrounded by a wall of great strength, and defended by a company of soldiers.

When we arrived at the walls, I addressed one of the sentinels, and summoned the Jesuit fathers to surrender to the Imperial army, and open the gates of the Inquisition. The sentinel, who was standing on the wall, appeared to enter into conversation for a moment with some one within, at the close of which he presented his musket and shot one of my men. This was the signal for attack, and I ordered my troops to fire upon those who appeared upon the wall.

It was soon obvious that it was an unequal warfare. The walls of the Inquisition were covered with the soldiers of the "Holy Office;" there was also a breastwork upon the walls, behind which they partially concealed themselves as they discharged their muskets, while we were in the open plain and exposed to a destructive fire. We had no cannon, nor could we scale the walls, and the gates successfully resisted all attempts at forcing them. We could not retire and send for cannon without giving them time to lay a train for blowing up our troops. I saw, therefore, that it was necessary to change the mode of attack, and directed that trees should be cut down and trimmed, to be used as battering-rams. Two of these were taken

walls with all the power they could exert, while the troops kept up a fire to protect them from the shots that were poured upon them. Presently the walls began to tremble, a breach was made, and the Imperial troops rushed in.

up by detachments of men, as numerous as could work to advantage, and brought to bear upon the

Here we met with an incident to which nothing but Jesuitical effrontery is equal. The Inquisitor-General, followed by the father-confessors in their priestly robes, all came out of their rooms as we were making our way into the interior of the Inquisition; and with long faces, and their arms crossed over their breasts, their fingers resting upon their shoulders, as though they had been deaf to all the noise of the attack and defense, and had just learned what was going on, they addressed themselves in the language of rebuke to their own soldiers, saying: "Why do you fight our friends, the French?" The intention was no doubt to make us think that the resistance was wholly unauthorized by them; and if they could have succeeded in making a temporary impression in their favor, they would have had an opportunity in the confusion of the moment to escape. But their artifice was too

placed under guard, and all of their soldiers to be secured as prisoners.

We then proceeded to examine the stately edifice.

shallow, and did not succeed. I caused them to be

We passed from room to room, and found all perfectly in order. The apartments were richly furnished, with altars, crucifixes and wax candles in abundance, but no evidence could be discovered of iniquity being practised there—none of the peculiar

features which we expected to find in an Inquisition. Splendid paintings adorned the walls; there was a rich and extensive library. Beauty and splendor appeared everywhere, and the most perfect order on which the eyes ever rested. The architecture, the proportions were perfect. The ceiling and floors of wood were scoured and highly polished. The marble floors were arranged with a strict regard to order. There was everything to please the eye and gratify a cultivated taste; but where were those horrid instruments of torture which were reported to be there, and where were those dungeons in which human beings were said to be buried alive?

The search seemed to be in vain. The "holy fathers" assured us that they had been belied, and that we had seen all, and I was prepared to abandon the search, convinced that this Inquisition was different from others of which I had heard. But Colonel de Lile was of a different mind, and said to me: "Colonel, you are commander to-day, and as you say so it must be; but if you will be advised by me, let this marble floor be examined. Let water be brought and poured upon it, and we will watch and see if there is any place through which it passes more freely than others." I replied to him, "Do as you please," and ordered water to be brought accordingly. The slabs of marble were large and beautifully polished, and when the water had been poured over the floor, much to the dissatisfaction of the Inquisitors, a careful examination was made of every seam to see if the water ran through. Presently Colonel de Lile exclaimed that he had found it. By the side of one of these marble slabs the water passed through rapidly, as though there was an opening beneath.

All hands were now at work for further discovery; the officers with their swords and the soldiers with their bayonets cleared out the seam, and endeavored to raise the slab; others with the butt-end of their muskets struck the slab with all their might to break it; while the priests remonstrated against the desecration of their holy and beautiful house. When thus engaged, a soldier who was striking with the butt of his musket hit a spring, and the marble slab flew up. The faces of the Inquisitors instantly grew pale, as Belshazzar's when the handwriting appeared on the wall.

Beneath the marble slab, now partly up, there was a staircase. I stepped to the altar and took from the candlestick one of the lighted candles. four feet in length, that I might explore the room below. As I was doing this, one of the Inquisitors laid his hand gently upon my arm, and with a very demure and sanctified look said, "My son, you must not take those lights with your bloody hands; they are holy." "Well," said I, "I will take a holy thing to shed light on iniquity; I will bear the responsibility." I took the candle and proceeded down the staircase. As we reached the foot of the stairs we entered a large square room, which was called the Judgment Hall. In the centre of it was a large block, and a chain fastened to it. On this they had been accustomed to place the accused, chained to his seat. On one side of the room was an elevated seat, called the Throne of Judgment, which the Inquisitor-General occupied, and on either side were seats less elevated for the "Holy fathers" when engaged in the solemn business of the "Holy Inquisition."

From this room we proceeded to the right and obtained access to the small cells, extending the entire length of the edifice, and here such sights were presented as we hope never to see again. These cells were places of solitary confinement, where the wretched objects of inquisitorial hate were confined year after year, till death released them from their sufferings; and there their bodies were suffered to remain until they were entirely decayed, and the rooms had become fit for others to occupy. To prevent this being offensive to those who occupied the Inquisition, there were flues extending to the open air, sufficiently capacious to carry off the odor. In these cells we found the remains of a number who had paid the debt of nature; some who had been dead apparently but a short time; while of others, nothing remained but their bones, still chained to the floors of their dungeons.

In other cells there were living sufferers of both sexes and of every age, all in a state of complete nudity, and all in chains. Here were old men and aged women, who had been shut up many years Here, too, were the middle-aged, and the youn; man, and the maiden of fourteen years old. The soldiers immediately went to work to release these captives from their chains, and took from their knapsacks their overcoats and other clothing, which they gave to cover their nakedness.

We then proceeded to explore another room on the left. Here were found instruments of torture of every kind which the ingenuity of men or devils could invent. The first was a machine by which the

victim was confined, and then beginning with the fingers, every joint in the hands, arms and body were broken or drawn, one after another, until the sufferer died. The second was a box in which the head and neck of the victim were so closely confined by a screw that he could not move in any way. Over the box was a vessel, from which one drop of water fell upon the head of the victim every second, each succeeding drop falling in exactly the same place, by which the circulation was soon suspended, and the sufferer had to endure the most excruciating agony. The third was an "infernal machine," laid horizontally, to which the victim was bound, the machine being then placed between two beams in which were a score of knives so fixed that by turning the machine with a crank the flesh of the sufferer was torn from his limbs in small pieces. The fourth surpassed the others in fiendish ingenuity. Its exterior was an immense doll, richly dressed, and having the appearance of a beautiful woman, with her arms extended ready to embrace her victim. A semicircle was drawn around her, and the person who passed over this fatal mark touched a spring which caused the diabolical engine to open; its arms immediately clasped him, and a multitude of knives cut him in pieces while in the deadly embrace.

The sight of these engines of infernal cruelty kindled the fire of indignation in the bosoms of the soldiers. They declared that every Inquisitor should be put to the torture. They began with the "Holy fathers." The first was put to death in the machine for breaking joints. The torture of the Inquisitor that suffered death by the dropping of water on his

head was most excruciating; the poor wretch cried out in agony to be taken from the fatal machine. Next the Inquisitor-General was brought before the infernal engine called "The Virgin." He was ordered to embrace her, but begged hard to be excused. "No," said the soldiers; "You have caused others to kiss her, and now you must do it." They interlocked their bayonets so as to form large forks, and with these they pushed him over the deadly circle. The beautiful image, prepared for the embrace, instantly clasped him in its arms and cut him into innumerable pieces. Having witnessed the torture of four of the barbarous Inquisitors, I sickened at the awful scene, and left the soldiers to wreak their vengeance on the other guilty inmates of that prison house of hell.

In the meantime the news had spread to Madrid that the prisons of the Inquisition were broken open, and multitudes hastened to the fatal spot. Oh, what a meeting was there! It was like a resurrection. About one hundred and fifty who had been buried for many years were now restored to life. Fathers found their long-lost daughters; wives were restored to their husbands; sisters to their brothers and parents to their children. The scene was such as no tongue can describe.

When the people had retired, I caused the library, paintings, furniture and other articles of value to be removed, and having sent to the city for a wagon-load of powder, a large quantity was deposited in the vaults beneath the building, and a slow match placed in connection with it. All having withdrawn to a distance, in a few moments the walls and turrets of the massive structure rose ma-

jestically in the air, impelled by a tremendous explosion, and then fell back to the earth an immense heap of ruins. The Roman Catholic Inquisition of Spain was no more!

"I HAVE A GOODLY HERITAGE"

(Psalm 16: 6.)

"HAVE a goodly heritage"
Beyond time's changing scene,
A portion in the glory
By mortal eyes unseen.
No poisonous breath of sorrow,
No curse, no blight, no sin—
No pain, no death, no sighing,
Can ever enter in.

"I have a goodly heritage;"
My Lord has made me rich.
He raised me up for glory,
He took me from the ditch.
He took away my rags of sin
And clothed me in the best;
He banished my distress and woe,
And gave me joy and rest.

"I have a goodly heritage,"
Earth's gourds may wither up;
Though all the trusted Niles run dry,
I have a brimming cup.
The palmer-worm may eat the corn,
And adverse winds may blow;
Earth's hopes may all be shattered,
But want I shall not know.

"I have a goodly heritage;"
The fig-tree may not bloom.
The vine and olive too may fail,
And fields yield famine gloom.

No flock may stand within the fold, No herd be in the stall, But I have rich abundance In Christ my all in all.

"I have a goodly heritage;"
Let nations clash in strife,
And hungry swords of mighty powers
Regale on human life.
When tribulation smites the earth
And afflicts both great and small,
I'll be in mine inheritance
Far, far beyond it all.

"I have a goodly heritage;"
A boundless wealth of bliss,
Eternal ages filled with joy;
What can compare with this?
The earth and all that is therein
Shall melt and disappear,
But my fair portion shall abide—
With Christ in yon bright sphere.

C. C. Crowston.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 205.)

(Chap. 2: 12-27.)

VERSES 14-27 give a special message to each grade in which the apostle has divided the family of God. In these messages John reaffirms the character he has already given to each grade; a character based on practical experience, as we have seen.

In addressing himself again to the "fathers," nothing is added to what he first said. The reason

of this is plain. The experience of the fathers has been such that Christ—" Him that is from the beginning"—is the one absorbing Object of their hearts. They have become so engaged with Him that everything else has ceased to have value in their eyes. He alone now attracts them, and they are not in need therefore of special warnings. There is no necessity of pointing out snares and dangers to them. It is sufficient therefore to mention them as being in this practical knowledge—as fathers in the family of God.

But in the case of the young men, not having as yet this advanced knowledge of Christ, there are dangers to which they are exposed. The apostle shows them against what they specially need to be on their guard, and in verses 15-17 indicates the true way of escape.

We first notice that in describing their character here the apostle adds to his previous characterization of them. He had spoken of them as having overcome the wicked one; he now adds, "Ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you." I judge he refers to the experience through which they have passed in conflict over the word of God. The wicked one has sought to wrest it from them; to weaken their faith in it; to induce them to give it up. But they have withstood him; have stood firmly for the faith; have fought for it. The result of the conflict is seen in the strength they have developed. They have acquired ability in service; have learned how to convict gainsayers, and to stop the mouths of those who oppose. They are earnest in maintaining the truth as revealed of God-the word of God is in power in their souls; it abides in them. The apostle

recognizes their devotion and approves their zeal. He rejoices in the result for them of the conflicts in which they have approved themselves. They have come through them with great gain in strength, in skill, in experimental knowledge.

But while thus occupied in conflict, their attention has not been drawn to the allurements and fascinations of the world. Now that they have become proficient in the word of God, with ability to meet and answer the assaults of the enemy upon the truth of Christianity, they are less likely to be the objects of the enemy's direct attacks. The world now offers an opportunity for the exercise of the ability and power thus manifested, and will seek to enlist in its projects those on whom they look as men of success.

And here are temptations for such as are full of energy! - movements designed to advance morality, to help and elevate the unfortunate, to reform those who have fallen into evil ways, to correct social and civic evils, are especially alluring; and the energetic and zealous Christian is in danger of being drawn into them. They seem to offer opportunity for the exercise of gift and knowledge. To many, such opportunities are very attractive. It is said, Here is a chance to do good; and, on this ground, joining such movements is justified. It is argued: Is it not right to help men to be better? Is it not serving Christ to help on such movements as are designed for the betterment of men? Ought we not to do all in our power to aid plans and schemes that aim at the moral uplift of the unfortunate, the degraded, the fallen?

From the standpoint of the world such move-

ments undoubtedly are justifiable; from the standpoint of Christianity it is quite a different matter. That they benefit the world will not be denied: that they promote the interests of Christ is much more than doubtful. The world, not Christ, is their object. The world seeks its own things, not the things of Christ. It is the love that is of the world. not the love that is of the Father, that characterizes all its projects. It is the glory of the world that is sought, not the glory of Christ. But Christian love is the love that is of the Father. The activity of the love that is of Him should mark the Christian, not the activity of the love that is of the world. Hence, the apostle exhorts the young men not to love the world, or the things of the world. He puts the two things-the love of the world and the love of the Father-in direct contrast, as being diametrically opposites. He would not have the young men entangled in what is opposed to the love that is of the Father. It is against entanglement with the world or its things that he is warning them.

And to help them escape entanglement he points out the three principles which underlie everything that is in the world. He is of course not speaking of the physical world, but the world of which fallen, sinful man is the centre, the world which has been built up around the failed first man. Everything in his world is characterized by three principles—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These three things mark every scheme that is of the world. Every worldly project or movement is stamped by these three principles. Now the love that is energized by these principles

is not the love that is of the Father. The Christian, then, when enticed by the world or some worldly project, has but to ask, What are the ruling principles to which I must subject myself? Is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life what characterize the movement he is desired to connect himself with? If so, he may know it is not of the Father.

What a simple rule! What a certain safeguard! Am I asked to take part in any movement in which the desires of the flesh are ministered to? I may unhesitatingly decline. It may be pleaded it is benevolent, but it is not the love that is of the Father. I may be told of a certain scheme which, if I will link myself with it, will afford me opportunity for advancement in the world; will make life in this world more enjoyable; will provide me with avenues to gain, to the possession of things seen; but that is the lust of the eyes-not the love that is of the Father. I may be assured too that I will be greatly respected and honored, but that is the pride of life. It is not of the Father, who would lead me to honor Christ-not to seek to be honored where He was dishonored.

No, the energy of the Christian is not to be spentin furthering the interests of this world. He is to be in the world for Christ. For Christ, and not for the world or self. If the Christian loves not the world or the things in the world, he will find Christ to be every way a satisfying portion. What experiences will be his—experiences of Christ! What lessons of Him will be learned! What pleasures will be realized! What possessions of wisdom and knowledge will be discovered! How much there is

in Christ to glory in and boast of! As Christ is thus learned, how the world grows dim! How the things of the world lose their attractiveness and power, as what Christ is is practically experienced!

How great, alas, is our loss in diverting our energies into channels in which the profit is merely in present things—not the eternal things. The apostle is here showing us how to escape suffering this loss. The Spirit of God would have us spend our strength in seeking the things of Christ. We will find, if we take His way, it will mean rich gain in experimental knowledge.

But the apostle has yet one more word for the young men. He says: "The world is passing away and the lust thereof." Another apostle has said, "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away " (1 Pet. 1: 24). For the Christian to be ensnared in the love of the world or the things of the world, whatever present worldly advantage he may gain, in the end it will be a sad experience. The stamp of death is on the entire present scene, and the world of the fallen first man is under the judgment of God. It must pass away. It will not abide. But the one who practises the will of God will abide for ever. He is born of God-of the abiding word of God; has in him the abiding nature and life of God. It is eternal life that is dwelling in him. In so far as such an one turns aside from the things that minister to the life that is of God, to participate in what builds up the world, he is exerting himself in what is passing away, not in what abides.

May the gracious Lord stir up His beloved people

be zealously active in that which is the will of d to energetically seek the things of Christ! av we be characterized as those who desire to vance in experimental knowledge! Let us reember that the way to acquire this knowledge is heed the apostle's warning, "Love not the world. ither the things that are in the world."

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

A WORD ON 1 COR. 9:27

Lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

HE word "castaway" is, in the Greek, adoki-mos, and is used eight times in the New Testaent. The word is really the Greek noun dokimos, ith the prefix a, which negatives the meaning of ie word to which it is prefixed, as "not" or "with-1t."

Dokimos is used seven times in the New Testaent. The following table gives the places where lese words are used, and their translation in our ing James' Bibles:

Adokimos.

Dokimos.

om. 1:28 = "reprobate" Rom, 14: 18 = "approved" Cor. 9: 27 = "castaway" Rom. 16: 10 = "approved" Cor. 13: 5 = "reprobates" 1 Cor. 11: 19 = "approved" 2 Cor. 10: 18 = "approved" Cor. 13:6 = "reprobates" Cor. 13: 7 = "reprobates" 2 Cor. 18: 7 = "approved" Tim, 3:8 = "reprobate" 2 Tim. 2: 15 = "approved" 'itus 1:16 = "reprobate" Jas. 1:12 = " tried" Ieb. 6:8 = "rejected"

It is plain that adokimos, which is rendered "cast-

away" in the verse quoted at the head of this paper, would be better rendered "not approved," and so in every passage where it occurs. It will be noticed that in every instance it refers to the person, never to his work or service or walk: that is, it refers to the runner, not to his running.

Romans 1: 28 gives an excellent play upon the word, using both the verb and the noun; "And according as they did not approve to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a non-approving mind." They did not approve of God, and so God gave them up to that sort of mind, to let it work out to full ripe fruit. 2 Cor. 13:5 affords another instance of the use of the verb and noun: "Approve (prove) yourselves . . . except ye be non-approved."

It is plain that here, as in all the other passages, the word applies to persons. They are either of the approved or of the non-approved; of one class or the other. Let them settle it now, as to which class they belonged; and this, of course, any Christian can do in an instant. Verses 6 and 7 show that the word applies to persons, and is of present application. They could determine whether he were one of the class or not. 2 Tim. 3: 8— Jannes and Jambres were not approved as to the faith—not believers, not in the approved class. Titus 1: 16—these also were not in the approved class, from whatever point viewed.

In Heb. 6: 8, the ground is not approved; but of course it represents persons. The soil is bad, the thorns and the briars do not make it bad; they show that it is bad. No doubt, the primary application here is to Israel after the flesh; they are not yet

cursed, but "nigh unto" it; if they do not enter the "approved" class, cursing will be their portion.

The original use of the word dokimos will throw much light upon its meaning. It was used in connection with the Olympic games. If one qualified to enter the lists as a runner or a wrestler, and was accepted, he was "dokimos;" but if for any reason anyone neglected or failed to qualify, he was "adokimos," his name did not appear on the lists. It was not a question of his running or of his wrestling at all; he was not in the game. One who qualified prepared himself by training for the contest he was to engage in, by abstaining from everything which would be likely to hinder the proper development of his powers; by due exercise of these faculties and powers which would be in demand in the coming struggle, etc.

No doubt the apostle, in 1 Cor. 9: 24-27, has before him these games as a pattern. He buffets his body and keeps it in subjection, as every one who is in training does. What would be thought of one who had entered for these important games, if he were to allow his appetites free rein, or waste his time in sloth? He would prove by that very fact that he was not really in the race—that he was adokimos. So the man who does not bridle his lusts may be safely set down as a hypocrite—as no Christian at all.

The apostle had no fears as to the result; there was no uncertainty with him: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainty; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." Nor does he say, "Lest by any means I should become "adokimos." One cannot become

adokimos; he is of necessity that if he is not "approved." Those who most commonly quote this passage quote it as if it read, "Lest I should become;" or if the word "become" is not used, their reasoning requires it.

A certain edition of the Bible, recently put into my hands, has a note on the passage under consideration, in which the writer states positively that the apostle is not speaking of himself as liable to be rejected, but of his work, although the inspired Word expressly says, "Lest I myself," and the word adokimos, as we have seen, invariably applies to the person. Thus the writer just referred to flatly—though unwittingly, surely—contradicts the word of God. And his note, being in the Bible, will be considered by simple souls as almost settling the interpretation of the passage.

Alas, how many are "running" who are not in the race at all! To how many this may apply: "I have preached to others," and whose names are not in the Lamb's book of life. "Preaching to others" does not enter one upon the lists of contestants for the prize. "Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name 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. 7: 22, 23). J. B. J.

When a man's own will is at work, it leads to strife and separation. When the Holy Spirit is at work, He may lead different individuals in various ways, yet in harmony; and the glory of Christ is the object.

"That the Scriptures Might be Fulfilled"

(Matt. 26: 56.)

This verse has been of great help to us. We think of our Lord approaching the most sorrowful hour of His life: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." On entering into it, when He was arrested like a thief, and in all that followed after, how could He enjoy so immense a peace?—a peace then as when He was at the sweet home of Bethany—all because some parts of the Scriptures were then getting their fulfilment!

All that we have of the wonderful life of our Lord has been handed down to us in four little and similar narratives, which imply that it is a resumé, a very precious condensation, every word of which was intended to afford us some great instruction bearing on the many necessities and occasions of the pathway of faith. Thus, the other day, when a letter of good wishes for the New Year was returned to us by the husband of a most esteemed sister in the Lord, with an appended note: "My wife is not to communicate with destroyers of the faith," my wife said, "This is hardly bearable!" It might indeed be if it were not in fulfilment of Scripture. So, as we remembered the little verse indicated at the head of these lines, the event was made to work out a joy in our hearts such as we had seldom felt before. These fulfilments of "the reproach of Christ" should be very dear to us (Matt. 5; 11, 12).

I can never forget these words of the late Mr. Kelly: "The reproach of Christ is a strange thing nowadays, and few are those who know it."

Brazil. J. P. RIBEIRO.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Note.—All persons sending communications for this department of our magazine, are especially requested to sign their names in full, and to give their P. O address. One reason is that we can often find, and would send them, some publication in our Publishers' Catalogue which answers the question asked better and more fully than we can do in our limited and often over-crowded space. Another reason is the necessity of guarding sorupulously the integrity of the purpose of this department.

Editor.

QUES. 29.—In the 10th chapter of Luke, vers. 25-27, in reference to eternal life, was it long life on earth, or did it mean more? Could one speak of eternal life as long life on earth?

Ans.—Your difficulty seems to us to arise from not noticing the entirely different term our Lord uses from that of the lawyer: "This do (keeping the law), and thou shall live." He does not say, Thou shall have eternal life. If a man kept the law without any violation whatever, he would live and continue upon earth, but that would not be "eternal life." Eternal life is the gift of God bestowed on every one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not a continuance of our human life indefinitely, but a new life imparted which is called in Scripture "the life of God" (Eph. 4:18), constituting therefore every possessor of it a child of God. In John 3 the Lord opens up the subject to Nicodemus, teaching him both the need (chap. 3:3) and the way (3:14, 15) of new birth, with its blessed result—eternal life; possessing which, He declares he shall never perish. 1 John 5:1 affirms what is held up to faith in John 3.

In Luke 10 the Lord is testing the lawyer, and when He does that we need to exercise spiritual discernment.

QUES. 30.—So much has been made of late years of the doctrine of a "circle of fellowship" (which is new to me), and I would like to ask what truths are necessary to be held in order to be in such "circle?" and who has authority to say who is in or out of said "circle?" Do not the boards of the tabernacle represent individual members of the body of Christ, indwelt by the same Spirit? Would not such a doctrine tend to great positional pride and con-

sequent looseness of walk and practice? I can find no scriptural solution for any body of Christians being in any degree above their brethren elsewhere in the eyes of God; does not godliness, with humility and self-judgment, constitute the highest place wherever found? It seems to me that the time has come to hear the last call of our Lord to individual testimony (Rev. 3:20). It must be a blessed place for those who have faith to take it, and who cannot conscientiously go on with the worldliness and unrighteousness that they have to go on with in the professed assemblies of God today. If wrong, I am willing to be shown.

ANS.—How does it come that you know that "so much has been made of late years of the doctrine of a circle of fellowship," and that it is 'news' to you? Is it like the Bible to many, who know that "much luss is made about it," and yet know nothing of it? In some things ignorance is a virtue; in others it is guilt.

But to your questions one by one.

First of all, let us say with sorrow, that had not the Church gone astray, there would now be seen all over the world but one circle of fellowship, that of the Church of God. But she has gone astray to such an extent that it has been said her annals were "the annals of hell," What formed the "Protestant" circle of fellowship? It was the abominations of what called itself "the only and true church." And since Protestants have formed a new eircle of fellowship, by separating from Rome, what causes have they not given for necessary circles of fellowship out of them also.
Would you remain among a people where "Higher Criticism" makes God a liar-substituting their dictum for His Word; denying the Deity and virgin-birth of Christ, the atoning sacrifice, and the resurrection of our Saviour? If you did, you would in the end become like them; for the word of God says: "Evil communications corrupt good manuers," and the word of God makes no mistakes. If you did not, you would find yourself separated from them. 2 Tim. 2:15, et seq., treats of such conditions, and gives us instruction how to meet them. Verse 20 gives the corrupted conditions; verse 21 the remedy for such as desire to be faithful; verse 22 gives the newly-formed circle of fellowship, which extends to those in the same path. As you see, it is not "what truths are necessary to be held in order to be in such circle?" is a divine path accepted, which places one with others who are of a like mind, willing to accept the reproach of Christ.

Such a circle will not pretend to be the Church, the body of Christ, but it will confess "there is one body," and that it is as members of it they assemble together, separated from others only to avoid the evils from which the word of God bids them to be separate.

That there is danger here of "positional pride" we know but too well. Is there any less danger in what you mention as "the last call of our Lord to individual testimony?" We have never met with greater pride than with individuals who can associate with no one. Of course in any case it must be individual faithfulness, or else I am only following others—a miserable thing, bringing shame and grief in the end. But, in faithfully taking the path appointed of God, if we are humble, we soon find ourselves in the company of others.

You ask, "Does not godliness, with humility and self-judgment, constitute the highest place wherever found?" You confound state with place. A man may be in the highest place, but in a bad state. Israel were by the grace of God set in the highest place among the nations of the earth, and they fell into the lowest state.

We do not know what is your ecclesiastical place, but we pity any one who has to go on with the state you describe among "professed assemblies of God to-day." Even the apostles found in their day plenty of evils to correct among the assemblies of God, but the word of God ministered by them was heeded.

QUES. 31.—"Scripture tells us that we shall see our Saviour's face in glory, but does it say that we shall recognize those who were dear to us on earth among Christians?"

Ans.—Does not the immediate recognition of Moses and Elias by the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration give an affirmative answer? The Lord also says to the unbelieving Jews: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28). Does it not imply full recognition there? And why should we think our capacities then less than they are now?

EDITOR'S NOTES

The "Pan-American Mass" et seq. EVIDENTLY goaded by the success of Roman Catholic craft, and anxious to put a check upon it, the

Reformed Church Synod when in session at Asbury Park, N. J., last June, passed a resolution to the effect that the Protestant Churches of Washington join hands together to have a joint service on Thanksgiving Day, which the President and high functionaries of the U. S. Government be invited to attend in the same fashion as they have been invited and have attended the Roman Catholic "Pan-American Mass" in past years.

A double cause of pain at once presents itself here to every thoughtful Christian.

First: That the President of the United States, whom no one would suspect of having any conscientious convictions in favor of the idolatrous and superstitious rite of the Mass, should let political matters so influence him as to be found there. Some of us Christian men, seeing the high principles which governed him, when in the face of opposition and ridicule he refused to recognize in Mexico a government founded on treachery and assassination, prayed for him most earnestly, for we realized he had come to a peculiarly difficult task. But what a blow came upon our heartiness by his yielding to the ambitious and selfish ends of the Romish hierarchy in attending their Mass!

And what of the Secretary of State, who has in past years made such a beautiful confession of ex-

perimental Christianity? What interest could he have in a performance which, in its institution and corruptions of the truth, sets at naught the very foundations of that Christianity?

This course has been objected to by very many i this nation on the ground of its being un-America—as opposed to American institutions. We g much further. It was un-Christian. If it was no conviction, but under political pressure, it was asking the King of kings to bend the knee to Political and take a second place.

This is a great sin for Christians. We speak hum bly, conscious we are speaking of the highest dignitaries of the land, and that we owe them genuine reverence, but if Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan, and others implicated in this matter, are true Christians—men redeemed by the blood of Christ—they belong to the same brotherhood as we do: the brotherhood in Christ, of which it is said, "Love the brotherhood." In this divine circle, social distinctions have no place, and if one of us soils his feet by the way, the Master's voice to all the rest is, "Wash one another's feet" (Jno. 13: 14). To do this then is not impertinence but true Christian love.

Second: On the other hand, it is also a reproach to Christianity to see the Christian men of the Reformed Church Synod advocating for themselves what they condemn in the Roman Catholic Church. We do not believe this is a principle they are adopting, but only a means to counteract an evil. But why emulate Rome? She is a thing of earth; she glories in earthly things—in wealth, in show, in pomp, in everything which gratifies man's lusts, and contradicts the holy character of

Christ. She calls herself the only true Church, out of which there is no salvation, because this gives her a power over superstitious consciences which she can use to her own advantage; but if the Bible is to determine the character of things—by which we may recognize them—no one who knows the Bible and the Roman Catholic Church could recognize in her the traits of the Church of Christ at all. What reader of the word of God ever heard of "princes" and "monsignori" in the Church, distinguished from their fellow members by red hats and purple, and silk, and scarlet garments?

These are the things which mark her that is described as "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth "-"the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17: 5, 6). What a contrast to the Church of the living God, where the lowly character of our Lord Jesus Christ shines out everywhere! All good things have a counterfeit in this world, and Rome is the counterfeit of the Church of God. To emulate her, or even to oppose her by ways like her own, is but to dishonor Christianity. The Churches of the Reformation never committed a greater mistake than when they imitated Rome, and sought and obtained State recognition. Luther, Calvin, Zwingle and others of their spiritual leaders, who zealously fought for and recovered the truth of salvation by grace through faith, never recovered the truth as to the Church of God. They did not see that that Church is composed only of men who have been born of God and indwelt by the Holy Spirit who unites them to Christ in heaven; that it is therefore a heavenly, spiritual body, whose resources are altogether in God and not from earth or earthly things; whose hope is not in any earthly attainment, but in the coming again of the Lord Jesus to take her away from earth into heaven; they did not realize that the third person of the Godhead—the Holy Spirit—had been sent from heaven, not only to gather all the members of the Church from out of the world, but also to take charge of her in her journey through the world—a lovely type of which we have in the Pillar of cloud and of fire sent to take charge of Israel from Egypt to Canaan.

Not having recovered this most important truth, they had no divine constitution to guide them, and therefore could not proceed in God's way for the establishment and guidance of Christian assemblies. They still went on in that matter with the principles of Rome, more or less modified by the light which the reopened Bible could not fail to give them. As they became recognized by the State, and received its favors, they came to be under the same yoke. And what an unequal yoke for a people born of heaven, linked with heaven, and journeying on to heaven!

And how could the State, whose calling is earthly, understand the true calling of such a people? By coming under such a yoke, the Church soon lost the sense of her calling. Samson-like she lost her eyesight and her strength, and like him too became the maker of sport for the world, as everybody can now see. The world's idea concerning the Church is that she should reform mankind, and produce a condition of things after the pattern

of Eden, that the world might live here in peaceful pleasure. The blinded Church accepted this. and lost her true mission; so now she is made accountable for the mad wars which disappoint and devastate the world. Oh, that the Church, like the Lord, had always been willing to be a sufferer here while walking as He walked, apart from the world, bent only on doing His Father's will in His Father's appointed way. The world could not bear the presence of Christ among them. His character and ways and words condemn them, so they killed Him and thought they were thus rid of Him. But God raised Him from the dead, took Him into heaven, and sent down the Holy Spirit to dwell in the Church, thus by her testimony to bring back, as it were, the presence of Christ in the world again.

Association with the world could not fail to annul the testimony of the Church, and lead her to take up with what the world would allow. Hence her downfall. She boasts of being "rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," while heaven's judgment is, Thou "knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev. 3:17). Heaven's thoughts do not agree with earth's.

When Israel, separated from Egypt by the blood of the lamb on their doors, were thus marked out as God's own people, they did not stop to be recognized by Pharaoh and get political preferment. God put the Red Sea between them and him at once, and they started across the wilderness under God's care alone, being strangers and pilgrims till they reached Canaan. Their food came from heaven and their water from the smitten rock.

They were indebted to none but God. So is the Church a stranger and a pilgrim here till she reaches heaven. She is separated from this world, and can draw no real sustenance from it. All her needs are supplied from heaven. The least link with the world is a blot on her garment. When the Lord comes, she will at once reach home, and her pilgrimage and strangership will be at an end forever. But to tread that path requires unfeigned faith—that which can abide God's time, and meanwhile suffer in patience. Blessed will they be who will be found in that path when the Lord comes, and that day is not far off.

WHEN WILL WARS CEASE?

A LARGE daily newspaper, in a recent editorial on "War and Peace," cited all the wars, strikes, and unrest now existing on earth, and alluded to all the threatened disruptions between nations, concluding with the question, "How can we account for the seething unrest, the wars, actual and threatening, among the nations?"

For a true reply to such a great and important question, let us turn to that unfailing guide—the Bible.

First: Cain slaying Abel (Gen. 4:8) shows that strife, unrest, and dissatisfaction on man's part, are virtually as old as sin itself, being direct results of sin which Satan introduced into the world.

Second: In view of Romans 5: 12, "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin," we know that sin and death will travel together until God's ap-

pointed time. The fact that death still lays its iron grip upon the sons of men, proves that sin is in man and is swaying the affairs of nations.

Third: It may be asked, "Will the gospel of Christ, by which thousands are being saved from the present dominion and future judgment of sin, result in the extermination of sin and death?" The answer is found in the Gospel of Luke (chap. 17, ver. 26)—the same rebellious conditions toward Christ, will prevail until the future second coming of Christ to earth. Hence, sin and death will be operative until at least that time.

Again, looking past the above event (that is, after the Lord has come and reigned a thousand years on the earth—Rev. 20: 7-9), Satan will be allowed to exercise his power for a season (as he now does) to test the unregenerate, who will again rise in rebellion against God, and death to all such will be the result.

We read, therefore, in 1 Cor. 15: 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," and with death, sin of course. From Rev. 20: 7-15 we have seen that the time of the end of sin and death will be immediately prior to the judgment of all the unsaved at the end of time.

Fourth: From the foregoing scriptures we learn that the unrest, wars and death among men are attributable to sin still being here, and that such conditions will continue to prevail until the end of the present world, being blessedly interrupted, of course, while Christ actually reigns, during the Millennium, over the entire earth, where Satan now so largely governs the moral affairs of men and nations (2 Cor. 4:3,4). We have

also learned that while multitudes are accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour from approaching judgment—are you one such, dear reader?—nevertheless other multitudes refuse Him (John 5:40), and live necessarily in strife, unrest, and dissatisfaction, hastening on to the judgment of Rev. 20: 12-15.

It is true that there are a number of people spending their time and money in efforts toward having universal peace on the earth, but all such will be in vain, as they cannot change the heart of man.

We find from I Thess. 5: 2, 3 that when men are preaching peace, "Then sudden destruction cometh upon them." All human efforts to improve the heart of mankind are useless, and nothing will avail but this—our individual, personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus' invitation: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. II: 28). All others continue in sin and unrest to the end.

Is the reader one of those who have found rest to their souls in Christ?

* * *

"CONSIDER HIM"

(Heb. 12: 3.)

"Consider Him," dear ransomed soul,
Who in His wondrous love
Vacated glorious courts of light
That thou might'st dwell above.

He saw thee in the way of death; Thy feet were on the road That terminates in endless night, The demons' black abode.

In love and pity for thy soul
He came to rescue thee;
To save thee from the fiery pit
He died on Calvary.

Now linked with Him in union sweet, By deathless bonds of life, Thou'rt free to worship at His feet, Thy soul with praises rife.

The glories of the Father's house,
The joys of endless day,
Are through His grace made good to thee
Who once in death did lay.

Since He beheld thy lost estate
And came in love to save,
How should thy soul His name adore
In viewing cross and grave!

Henceforth let nothing in thy life Give sorrow to His heart; What's not according to His mind Bid instantly depart.

"Consider Him" in all thy ways— In thought, and word, and deed; Remember He considered thee In thy tremendous need.

Then may thy life speak forth His praise In one unbroken strain; Until with all the ransomed throng Thou'lt praise the Lamb once slain!

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 245.)

(Chap. 2:12-27.)

THE apostle now turns to the babes again (vers. 18-27). He directs their attention first of all to the fact that it is the last time. This expression, "the last time," signifies the time of the rise and progress of certain evil principles; the full development of which will be the apostasy under the Antichrist. The apostle Paul, in quieting the minds of the Thessalonian saints, who were disturbed by the representation of some that the day of Christ was present, assured them that before that day came there would be an apostasy (2 Thess. 2: 3). He also shows what this will be, when fully developed. A "man of sin," a "son of perdition," is to arise who will carry his opposition to God to the height of claiming to be God himself. That blasphemous claim will be the measure of his iniquity. The principle of it was already at work in apostolic days. The spirit, the animus, of the coming Antichrist, was already there.

The presence of this character of evil in various forms while yet there were apostles on earth, made it manifest that the time characterized by blasphemous antichristian principles had begun. The spirit of the Antichrist was there, though not yet developed as it will be in him when he comes. How this spirit has since progressed! How many movements of the present day are animated by it! If the Antichrist himself has not come yet, his spirit

—his character — is plainly discernible in many current activities.

We can thus understand the apostle's concern as to the babes—the inexperienced. They need to be instructed as to the character of the time, the tendencies of it. They need to be put on their guard against all those activities that are the prelude to the Antichrist's coming and manifestation. Hence the apostle in tender, pastoral care, tells the inexperienced babes of the family of God, "It is the last time" (ver. 18).

But he does not simply call their attention to the fact of its being the last time, he wants them to be fully awake to the seriousness of it. It is not some obscure evil of insignificant activities that confronts them, but wide-spread, active evil, manifesting itself in many places and in various forms. If the Antichrist himself has not yet come, there are already many antichristian tendencies; many movements in which the spirit or mind of the Antichrist is showing itself. The evil, instead of being obscure, is very prevalent, of great strength and energetically progressive. Attention is called to this, as well as to the fact of its being the last time; and thus we realize that the antichristian blasphemy is a characteristic of the time. We know it, not only as a matter of revelation, but as a matter of observation. Its trend as away from, and opposed to, the word of God, is a matter of common talk. The denial of inspiration, of the virgin-birth of Christ, of the supernatural, of the resurrection of Christ's body, and much more, is not only current in many quarters, but it is a matter of frequent comment. Even the on-looking world can distinguish between present day Christianity and apostolic Christianity. The evidence of its being the last time is overwhelming.

The saddest feature of it all is that these proclaimers of antichristian doctrines have risen up in the very sphere of the profession of Christianity. They are themselves professors who have departed from "the faith once delivered unto the saints," and, while retaining the Christian name, are apostates from the truth held by God's people as a deposit from God (Jude 3). But the fact of their not abiding in the truth has manifested them as never having been of the truth. The truth was never really in them. They were of the family of God only by profession. They are not in the light, and the light is not in them. They are not in community of life and nature with God: they are not participating in the thoughts, feelings, joys and activities of the Father and the Son. They are not of us-of the family of God (ver. 19).

One distinguishing mark of the children of God in this dispensation is the anointing from the Holy One—the Holy Spirit. Even the inexperienced babe has it. By the Spirit of God who dwells in the bodies of all believers now, the ear of the child of God is empowered to hear the truth revealed, by which the hand is strengthened to do His commandments and the feet energized to tread the path of faith. Ear, hand and feet having been purchased with the precious blood of Christ, the Spirit uses them in the interests of the truth of God. The child of God then has an ear consecrated to the truth. The Spirit who uses his ear is his capacity and power to hear the truth (ver. 20). By their

abandonment of the truth, the apostates make it manifest that they lack this distinctive mark of the Christian. They lack the ability to hear the truth.

In verse 21 the apostle assures the inexperienced babe that in writing thus strongly about these antichrists, it is not because he suspects them of being such. He sets them fully at ease as to this. He expresses unequivocally his confidence in them. The babes, inexperienced though they may be, are in the light, and the light is in them. They know the truth. They possess it as from God. They are in the realization of their link with God. Possessing and enjoying this link through what they had heard from the beginning-the truth-they realized and understood that no lie is of the truth. It is not that babes have taken in and grasped the full range of God's thoughts, or understood fully the counsels of His will, or adequately comprehended the purposes He has revealed; but there is in their souls the knowledge of God, and by this knowledge, whatever the measure of their grasp of it, they are sensible that no lie is of the truth.

While antichristian doctrine expresses itself in varied forms, yet its detection is easy even for the inexperienced babe. There are two lines along which the opposition developed against Christianity moves. The antichrists, whatever the special form in which they assert their tenets, either deny that Jesus is the Christ—the Jewish form of unbelief—or else deny the distinctive Christian revelation—that of the Father and the Son (ver. 22). Undoubtedly the Antichrist himself when he comes will do both. He will adopt the Jewish opposition to Jesus, denying that He is the Christ, and to this

will unite the denial of the Father and the Son. Both forms of error exist to-day and are widely current. They characterize the apostasy as now developing. The Antichrist will find them ready for his hand; he will appropriate them and expand them, for he will not only deny that Jesus is the Christ, but claim to be Christ himself. And to this claim he will add another: he will exalt himself by claiming to be God. The Father is not now professedly and openly denied. It is quite the fashion to talk of the fatherhood of God. In every system of error the claim is made that they have the Father. This the apostle will not admit if they deny the Son (ver. 23). He that denies the Son hath not the Father. Only those who acknowledge the Son have the Father.

We have previously seen that the apostle includes the inexperienced babes among those who know the Father. In that which they have heard from the beginning, they have what gives them the knowledge of the Father. He goes on then to exhort them to let that knowledge have its practical activity in their souls. It is thus they will abide in, live in, the practical enjoyment of the Father and the Son (ver. 24). This is eternal life (John 17: 3)—the life promised to faith (ver. 25). It was promised in Genesis 3: 15, when God told the woman she should have a conquering Seed; in John 10: 10, when the Good Shepherd said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it in full quality;" in verse 28 of the same chapter, when He said, "I give unto my sheep eternal life;" and in numerous other passages beside. It is the life that was with the Father, and manifested by

the incarnate Son, of which through grace believers have been made partakers. It is community of life with the Father through the Son. What a blessed, holy, happy life! What fulness of joy!

Verses 26 and 27 conclude the apostle's special address to the babes. He has written them in this special manner because he has had the errorists, the antichrists, in mind. They are seducers, leading astray. He is anxious to shield and protect the inexperienced babes. Hence he has addressed them as desirous of showing them what the marks of the antichrists are. In doing this he has also exhorted the babes to continue, or abide, in what they had heard from the beginning—that is, to hold fast the revelation given them of God, which they have ability to understand and enjoy in the Spirit that has been given them of God. But while he has been exhorting them thus, and earnestly urging them to let the truth they have from God have its practical activity and power in their souls, he assures them of his confidence in them. They are not to think that he doubts their possession of the Spirit. He says: "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you." He wants them to realize that through this abiding Spirit they are placed above the need of having any one tell them what is the truth. Any teaching that is not of the Spirit abiding in us, is of man, not of Him. Believers have no need of it. It may be represented as a development beyond what was given from the beginning. It may be commended as higher truth, but the Christian has no need of it; having the Spirit, he has no need of human authority to know what should be believed.

Our Lord assured His disciples that the Spirit, when He should come, would teach them all things. He told them He would enable them fully to recall all He had taught them (John 14: 26). This He has done in the four Gospels which we possess as a sacred deposit from Him. Further, our Lord assured His disciples that the Spirit would faithfully show them all that He desired yet to reveal to them (John 16: 12-15). The Acts, Epistles and Revelation is the work of the Spirit in fulfilment of this promise of Christ. This—what the Spirit has given us—is our heritage; having given it, and He Himself dwelling in us to make it all good to us, we need no one to tell us what is the truth.

Now He who has taught us the truth, who is Himself truth and no lie, teaches that those who know the truth will abide in it. It is a part of His testimony that those who are in the Father and the Son will abide in them-in a community of life and nature which is unchangeable and eternal. it be insisted that "Him" should be "it" (though there be very little ground for it), it amounts to the same thing. God, who has called us by His own glory and excellence, has made us partakers of His life and nature, whose activities are developed and maintained in us by the power of the greatest and precious promises He has given us. While there is responsibility resting on us to abide practically in the truth, God has made provision for this -a provision which secures practical dependence upon the truth.

The apostle then can say, even of the inexperienced babes, "Ye shall abide in Him." He will not close his special message to them without giving

THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY OF GOD, ETC. 269

them this assurance of his confidence that they are such as the anointing, the Spirit of truth, affirms will abide.

Here this division of the epistle closes.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST

WHAT will Thy glory be,
O glorious Lord—
When Thou shalt light all heaven,
As saith Thy Word!
When there shall be no night
Nor need of any light
Not e'en the glorious sun
We cannot look upon,
But Thou, the blessed Source,
To light the universe.
"The Lamb shall be
The light!" Oh wondrous truth—
Whom we shall see.

What thought of sin could live
In such a light—
Or sickness, pain, or grief,
Or aught of blight?
No, these have had their sway,
And man has had his way,
But Thou, the Lamb, at last
Shalt banish all the past
Of sin and night,
By just the glorious grace
Of God's own light.

The brightest light of earth We seem to see,

Is but as twilight gleam

THE LIGHT OF THE GLORY OF GOD

270

Is but a feeble ray.
The glory of Thy face
Shall once for all efface
All sin, and death, and night;
Thou only art the Light,

And we shall see
The glory of that light,
Eternally.

O blessed Lord, we long
To be like Thee!
Then only shall we learn
Thy majesty,
Thy glory as Thy love,
When with Thee, Lord, above;
And that eternally.
Oh glorious mystery!
Thou'rt infinite indeed,
And we, the finite, plead
That wondrous grace,
The glory of God's light

What will Thy glory be!
We cannot tell:
'Tis past all mortal ken,

In Jesus' face.

We know full well.
We cannot follow Thee
In Thy humility,

And anguish on the cross Once suffered there for us. We cannot penetrate, Nor yet the darkness break

Thou didst endure
That our redemption, Lord,
Might be made sure.

We could not fathom, Lord, That deep, dark pit; It strikes the soul with awe
To think of it.

Nor yet with mortal sight
Can we Thy glory's height
Ascend, but we can say,
Thou'st traveled all this way:
From glory's highest height
To depths of darkest night,
To glorify

God's name, and save our souls, Eternally.

Then what a hope is ours
Midst toil and strife.

What blessedness to look
Beyond this life,
From Thy humility
To that most glorious day
When we shall see Thee crowned,
And by all creatures owned;
And know the depth, the height,
Of darkness and of light,
And look upon

And look upon
The glory of Thy face,
Th' exalted One!

This world is hastening on
To meet its doom.
Soon we shall wait no more
For Thee to come.
Then from our shackles free
We shall ascend with Thee
And in Thy likeness shine,
Alone by grace divine,
And evermore behold
The glory "not half told."
We ask no more

Than thus to feast our souls For evermore.

H. McD.

GILGAL, THE VALLEY OF ACHOR AND BOCHIM

ILGAL was the place of circumcision. The epistle to the Colossians teaches us that circumcision is "the putting off the body of the flesh." The Christian, as regards his standing, is not in the flesh. He is in Christ, and as in Christ, he is circumcised; "in whom ye also are circumcised." We have not to put off the old man; that has been done; nor have we to put the flesh to death, for it has been crucified with Christ; but we have to "mortify our members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness," etc., and we have to reckon ourselves "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now, circumcision was one act; it was the putting off the flesh. The circumcised man typified the Christian as regards his standing before God, up to the point of the flesh having been put off. The flesh, or the first Adam nature, has been condemned in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is gone from the believer, for God and for faith—not yet actually.

But Gilgal was not only the place of circumcision, it was also the place where the camp was habitually; the place where Israel was to be found, where the Angel of the Lord was, so to speak, until he came up, after failure was established, from Gilgal to Bochim. The camp being there, shows that Israel was never to forget its lesson, that the flesh profits nothing. This is the teaching of the camp being there: "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus."

The true circumcision are those who worship God in the Spirit, and boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. This is not standing, but practical.

Now, historically, Israel did not keep the sense of the worthlessness of the flesh. They went from Gilgal to Jericho in the sense that they were nothing and Jehovah everything, and conquered by faith. The effect on the flesh, not reckoned dead, was to elate it, and in the sense of their own strength, they went from Jericho to Ai, to find out their own weakness.

This they might have learnt at Gilgal.

Why was the flesh put off if it had wisdom enough to judge and strength to accomplish? They had forgotten this, and forgotten that they needed God.

There are two things at Ai: first, collective failure, high thoughts of themselves; and, second, positive defilement, an accursed thing in their midst

This latter brought a curse upon them all. So now, a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Jehovah takes up the open act of sin, and not their condition, and declares that He will be with them no more, except they put away the accursed thing from among them.

This is true to His blessed character, who will not always chide, but who cannot be committed to fellowship with sin. True also to the word of the Man with the drawn sword, who, when asked, "Art Thou for us, or for our adversaries?" replied, "Nay, but as Captain of Jehovah's host am I now come;" that is, I am not for a party, but for a people having a certain moral character. Israel,

stealing and dissembling, had lost the character of Jehovah's host, and lost the Lord as Captain, too.

Then comes the remedy. It is found in the Valley of Achor. There the accursed thing was put away, put out from among them.

The nature of their action in this was not penal; that is, not punishment inflicted on an offender as a judge punishes a criminal. Their act had the character of self-judgment. It was a company that had sin put to their account, and they must get rid of it. It was not to punish Achan that they acted, but to clear themselves; although surely it did trouble him.

It is the same principle in assembly discipline now. The object of putting out a wicked person is not to inflict a punishment upon him, though it does this too. The figure Scripture uses is leaven. The lump has to be kept new, suited to Christ, who was sacrificed for us; and with this object the leaven is purged out. It is a corporate action to maintain a pure corporate condition; not to punish an offender, as a magistrate would do.

So, to spare the sin with a false thought of grace is to spare one's own sin; it is to keep the lump leavened, and so, practically, to keep the Lord out. It would have been so with Israel, had they kept Achan in.

In assembly discipline there is also care for the salvation of the spirit in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Now for Israel Jehovah was everything, and therefore the sin was judged. And it is to be observed that their bad corporate condition was no hindrance to their judging positive open sin.

The same thing is seen at Corinth. The assembly

there was in so bad a condition that the apostle, to spare them, would not go there, although fully owning it to be the table of the Lord. They were schismatic, and puffed up, although the grossest immorality was there. Yet they are called, not to general humiliation but, to the judgment of the wicked person.

Now this is not Gilgal, nor Bochim; it is the Valley of Achor.

Gilgal is the judgment of the nature, so that the fruit does not appear. There, there is perfect communion with God; for He condemned sin in the flesh when He sent His own Son for sin. And we at Gilgal recognize the justice of His judgment as against ourselves. But when that has been missed, and the fruit has appeared, we have not in the first place to deal with the nature—sin, but the fruit—sins, by confession, and clearing ourselves.

This is true, both individually and corporately. It is not communion with God, but it is the way back to God when communion has been lost. And it is always the way back; so we find the Valley of Achor, not only in Joshua, but also in Hosea, when, in the latter day, Israel will find it a door of hope (Hos. 2:15).

Bochim is another thing from either Gilgal or the Valley of Achor.

The Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. There He recounted His faithful ways with Israel, and His commands to them, which He charged them with disobeying, and stated the then irremediable consequences of their sin. The enemies, who might have been bread to them had they been faithful, were now to be thorns in their

sides, and their gods a snare to them. They were confronted with this solemn fact, that they had brought themselves into a condition of trouble, danger and shame, in which they must abide, because the Lord would not deliver them from it. The Angel of the Lord did not call them to put away evil now. Their opportunity for obedience and victory was past, and lost; they had now to suffer, and there was no remedy. A new phase of the nation's history was entered on. Gilgal was left and Bochim was reached.

While the Angel was at Gilgal, the people were on probation. If they had been faithful, they would have been universally victorious. Now, the sowing time was past. It had been to the flesh, and the inevitable reaping-time had come. It was not that grace could not display itself in those circumstances, as we see in chapter 3. For if on the one hand the enemies were still there, because of the people's failure, God had left the nations "that the generations of Israel might know to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof."

And beyond this, grace could finally bring in the Messiah, and put all enemies under His feet.

But at Bochim it was the bitter sense of hopeless failure and chastisement; and, through grace, they bow to it and weep. They do not attempt to remedy it, as once before in a similar case they did at Kadesh. There, there was bitterness, but no brokenness. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." This is what is found here. Hence, although the punishment is not remitted, communion is restored, and they sacrifice to Jehovah there.

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be regretted." Bitterness, without brokenness, is the sorrow of the world that works death.

It is a most serious fact that there are sins committed by believers which have permanent results. Grace restores the soul, as beautifully seen in David's case, but the mark of the sin remains to the end. See also Samson.

The difference between Bochim and the Valley of Achor is that at Bochim there is no positive sin present to be judged. They had disobeyed in the past, and were charged with it now, but they were not then in actual sin, as at Ai. Now they must accept the consequences.

It is the same thing later on under the kings. When failure had come in, and was irretrievable, the word was, "Serve the king of Babylon, and live."

At Bochim the people must judge their sins and accept the punishment. At the Valley of Achor they must judge their sin, and cease from it. At Gilgal they must judge their nature, so that they may not sin. When the angel had gone to Bochim, there is no hope of restitution until the Messiah comes. The same is true in the Church.

For us to-day there is no hope of general recovery. The ruin is established. The house of God has become like a great house. Bochim is our place, speaking generally; and looking for the return of our Lord, which alone can restore us. But this is not all. There is the positive duty of the individual to purge himself from the vessels of dishonor. He cannot leave the house; otherwise, he need not take up its shame as his own. Joshua never separates himself from the nation, though personally

innocent. He goes round the wilderness from Kadesh with them.

So we cannot separate from the general profession and start a new Christianity, and on the other hand, we must not go on in fellowship with evil. The first word to us now is, "Depart from iniquity;" the second, "Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

eart."

Obedience to these brings us to the Lord's table.

We may ask ourselves whether failure has not again characterized us, as those gathered there. Does not worldliness assert itself among us, and refuse to be put down, as the Canaanite in the Lord's land? How can it be met?

Individuals may, by grace, keep their garments, but weeping would, I believe, be the suited place for all.

Then suppose, as often, alas, happens, a positive sin appears; are we then to be weeping or judging the sin? Is it to be Bochim, or the Valley of Achor? To be at Bochim at such a time would be to have fellowship with evil, and to make our general bad condition an excuse for leaving sin unjudged. That is not really Bochim at all. It is saying, practically, "We are delivered to do all these abominations."

It may be observed that, when the saints have to clear themselves from evil, the action is corporate, not individual. They act as one body, in mutual fellowship. The judgment about the evil, and the suitable course to take, may be individual; and this judgment may be pressed upon the saints by the individual. "I have judged already," says the

apostle, "concerning him that hath so done this deed;" do you put him away from among yourselves. The power of binding and loosing belongs to the two or three gathered unto the Lord's name, not now to any individuals. Even an apostle did not act independently; and although not resident at Corinth, he does not on that account forbear to exercise their consciences. "Being absent in body . . . I have judged."

On the other hand, should a time come for separation from iniquity, corporate action is of course impossible, and fellowship is not the thought. The action is emphatically individual. "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor."

INVENTIONS AND CALAMITIES

THE past twenty years or so have witnessed some of the most remarkable discoveries and inventions; the wonderful telephone, has everywhere become almost indispensable in commerce and domestic life; the automobile, at first a toy for the wealthy, is fast coming into general use; wireless telegraphy spans space in what would once have been thought a supernatural way, and has been of great value in saving life; the eroplane is fast becoming an adjunct to commerce and, alas, to war.

All these great discoveries and inventions have been and are attended by great loss of life, especially in rapid locomotion, as the automobile. How many gay and thoughtless parties have ended with the silence of death, casting its awful shadow upon the misnamed "joy-ride." The recklessness of those who handle the æroplane is proverbial, as casualty upon casualty bears witness. Men seem to trifle with life itself. It is remarkable that with all these modern and remarkable inventions, disasters such as those of the *Titanic* and *The Empress of Ireland*, have taken place notwithstanding. We do not of course put the blame upon the discoverers; but God would remind us that we are as dependent as ever upon Himself; that we are living in a world which would fall to pieces unless upheld by its Maker's omnipotent hand.

Other and sinister developments are also manifest; pride, selfishness, self-will, insubordination, unsubdued passions, ungodliness, with attendant crime.

A traveler passing through a great city recently, which had experienced a terrific earthquake shock, followed by awful devastation of fire, heard some one boast: "We are earthquake-proof, fire-proof, and God-proof!" How awful is the puny wickedness which thus dares to sport on the verge of a yawning precipice which, but for the mercy of God, is ready to engulf him! Truly, "In the last days mockers shall come."

"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

S. R.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Prophecy and War ALL who know anything of the Scriptures know that government is a divinely instituted thing for the maintenance of men the security of life and property

order among men, the security of life and property. and the punishment of evil-doers. The first expression of it was given to Noah in these words: "Whose sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. 9: 6). The failure of man in government, under whatever form it has appeared. is manifest to all. Indeed it is often in government circles that the worst iniquities are found. So God has ordained that His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, after the present, long period of grace, during which He continues in heaven as Saviour, seeking to turn men to repentance and to save the "lost." shall return to this earth clothed in royal glory, to take the government of the whole earth in His own hands. But this is not to the world's liking-opposed to God as the natural man ever is. As a consequence of refusing God's authority and His Prince of Peace, man with clashing self-interests. will so fight each other-commercially, industrially, and nationally-as "to take away peace from the earth" (Rev. 6: 4), and the world will feel the need of the Deliverer, as a sinner now under conviction of sin feels the need of the Saviour.

That the turmoils of the times of this great crisis are forcibly showing themselves in the present European war, is being more or less felt not only by Christians but even by the man of the world. If it be so, peace may be looked for only by the appearing of the Prince of Peace on the clouds of heaven. While the crushing of this or that oppressive power

may give momentary relief, peace permanent and righteous can be had only in the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9: 6, 7). And this beneficent rule is to be exercised "upon the throne of David;" that is, at Jerusalem, which, on that account, will have become the metropolis of the earth.

Should any of our readers be desirous of instruction, clear and scriptural, on these subjects, we would recommend two books to them—one, "Eight Lectures on Prophecy," as preliminary. It is a small book of 342 pages, cloth bound, post-paid, 65 cents. The other book, "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects," covers the subject much more fully, has 582 pages, cloth bound, post-paid, \$1.25. Students of Prophecy have written to the publishers to say, that after reading all things published on Prophecy, they knew nothing to equal this book on the subject.

We believe that if believers were scripturally established by the instruction of such books, they would be preserved from the vagaries and follies of alarmists and sensationalists who see in prophecy much more of fire and blood than of the great central Object, which the Spirit of God ever keeps to the front. Prophecy without Christ as its Centre, becomes mere politics, which may excite the curiosity even of unbelievers.

THE following is published in the Youth's Companion, and we reproduce it here because of its plain and wholesome lesson.

WHEN A HAPSBURG DIES.

A very strange burial custom has been observed for centuries by the house of Hapsburg, the most ancient of the reigning houses of Europe. On the death of the Austrian Emperor the body is carried by the shortest way from the imperial palace to the crypt of the ancient monastery of the Capuchins near Vienna. No one appears to receive the royal cortege. Thereupon the master of ceremonies knocks on the closed door with his staff and demands admission. "Who is there?" asks the voice of the guardian monk from within.

"His Majesty, the most high Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary, Duke of Styria," etc., etc., replies the master of ceremonies, as he recites the long list of the dead man's titles.

"I know no such man," curtly replies the guardian from behind the closed door.

The master of ceremonies knocks a second time. Again the monk asks, "Who is there?" Again the master of ceremonies repeats the list of royal titles, and again the voice of the guardian replies, "I know no such man."

A third time the master of ceremonies knocks with his staff.

"Who is there?" repeats the voice.

"Our brother, Francis Joseph" (or whatever the dead monarch's name may be), replies the master of ceremonies.

At this humble confession of the simple humanity of the dead Emperor the bolts fly back. "Enter, brother!" cries the voice of the guardian monk, and the body is admitted. There follows later an imposing public burial.

Thus is mankind leveled by death. It is the sen-

tence of God upon sin, and as every man is a sinner. he is under the sentence of death, be he an emperor or a boot-black, a millionaire or a beggar. Ambitious young man, remember this. Let thy highest aims be always voked with this sentence. It will make thee wise, for it will show thee the necessity of escaping the judgment which follows death. What good would it be to have ruled an empire or to have exceeded all other men in the realms of wealth, of learning, of art, of honor in any line, if, after all, the question of eternal salvation is not settled? So important is this matter, that the Son of God left His glory above and came to this world of sorrow and woe to provide by His atoning death on the cross an eternal redemption for every soul that feels and owns its need of it. The costly way by which Christ obtained this redemption for us is itself sufficient proof of its importance. A God of love seeing the day of retributive justice surely coming, could not leave man without a way of escape. Justice can find no fault with it, since "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3: 18).

Death is thus God's summons to man to appear at His bar, and none can escape condemnation there but those who confess Christ as their Saviour, and His death on the cross as their own condemnation borne by their Substitute. Condemnation cannot pass the cross of Christ, for there He suffered the full penalty of sin, so that all who have taken refuge under it are beyond the claims of justice. They are as cleared from their guilt as Christ Himself is. They are accepted in Him the Beloved One, and God's love

rests on them as it does on Christ, not because of any merit in them, but because of the worthiness God finds in Christ, with whom they are united by the Spirit. There is no fluctuation therefore in God's love toward us, since it rests wholly on the unchanging and unchangeable value of the sacrifice of Christ. Nor can there be any fluctuation either in the acceptance of the believer, for he is "accepted in the Beloved." The believer thus freed from concern about his acceptance with God, can devote himself undistractedly and worshipfully to whatever service his Master may see fit to put upon him. Blessed service! May we abound in it till our Lord returns.

Martha What great loss many Christians are and suffering by not heeding the important Marv lesson of these two women recorded in Luke 10: 38-42. Martha-like they seem to think that their service is of immense importance. So engrossed with it are they, so enamored with their doings, that they have no time, and, what is worse, no inclination to listen to the word of God. They remain ignorant therefore of what every Christian ought to know, and needs to know, to serve the Lord acceptably. Many do not even enjoy peace with God, being too busy to let their Saviour pour into their souls that sweet peace which is the beginning of relations with Him, and which are sweeter than all beside. He delights to communicate to His own the full extent of the grace of God, and thus fill their souls to overflowing with praise and worship, but they have no time to lend Him their ear. "We have a great work to do," they say, "and we must be about it." Is it any wonder if they are restless and full of disquietude? It is living intercourse with Christ which satisfies the heart and sets it aglow for praise, worship and service. A satisfied heart is not restless, whatever its circumstances may be.

As to Mary, the Lord's words leave no doubt as to His mind about the object of her attitude and heart. He characterizes it as "that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Why then will any of God's beloved ones rob themselves of that good part which abides forever! Martha was as truly a child of God as Mary, and as truly loved of Christ as Mary, yet she was missing what the Lord most approved and loved. Would you, dear reader, do like her?

In the 10th chapter of John we see blessed fruits of the Lord's ministry in the same household: "Martha served"—her valued ministry has no more the impatient, fretful spirit manifested in Luke 12. The Holy Spirit therefore records the service as most acceptable. Lazarus—not heard of in Luke 10—is here, fruit of resurrection, at table with the Lord. And, crowning the precious scene, Mary pours out upon the Lord the costly perfume expressing the value in which He was held in her heart.

A Great WE were reading recently a labored Mistake article by a great writer, to reconcile the part which "Christian nations" are taking in the European war with the teaching of our Lord on non-resistance to evil in His Sermon on the Mount. All such efforts are futile and vain, for the two things are irreconcilable. If the Lord

has said, "Love your enemies," it is no easy matter to reconcile such words with taking up a gun and killing our enemies.

The great mistake of all such writers is in not discerning the difference which Scripture ever makes and maintains between the people of God and the people of the world. There is, according to the word of God, no such thing as a "Christian nation." The idea comes from the false Romish teaching that Christian baptism makes children of God out of those on whom it is administered. Romish conquerors therefore would compel conquered nations to submit to baptism, and thus become "Christian nations," without the regenerating work of the Spirit being wrought in them. The people of God are, every one of them, born of God, possessors of eternal life, and capable therefore of carrying out the mind of the Lord Jesus. None others can, and for that reason when the Lord teaches non-resistance He does so to His disciples alone. (See Matt. 5: 1, 2.)

Satan's work has been to obliterate the great dividing line between the world and the Church, by throwing them thus together, confusing the minds of the multitude as to their relative places.

A "Christian nation" may be as cruel as any other, for, though bearing the name of "Christian," it is at heart the same as all unregenerate men. Were they born of God their character would be changed; they could obey their Lord's word, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you."

THE ONE COMING AS A THIEF

I T is said that the present great strife of nations in Europe is primarily due to the disregard of racial characteristics and conditions in establishing boundaries of the various nations: that this has stifled the ambitions and national aspirations of various races, and made them the unwilling and often oppressed servants of some conquering power. Out of the din and turmoil of the present awful conflict, it is announced that one great result which will be accomplished by this struggle will be the re-adjustment of boundaries, based upon racial conditions, so that each of the various peoples may pursue their ambition and aspiration for self-government and race-development. This will bring, it is thought, contentment and peace; for, it is considered, that a solid basis for peace will then have been laid, by removing those conditions which provoke its disruption-conditions which the greatest of statesmen and world-rulers have hitherto been unable to completely master or control. Then peace and safety will be everywhere, and the programme of world-peace can be pushed to successful conclusion.

This may be discerned not only as the project of foremost statesmen of the day, but as uppermost in the mind of many Christians. If the world is thus to reach its desired goal, we ought to be made sure of it by God's word. In any case, it is well for us to be assured of the end in which present conditions will culminate.

It seems quite possible, and even probable, that

the readjustment of boundaries, with regard to racial conditions, may be accomplished as a result of the present upheavals; and, no doubt, with the progress of democratic institutions and so-called government of the people by the people, liberty of achievement and development will come to the larger families of mankind within their own natural boundaries, thus bringing about a more equable condition, and promote a condition of larger peace and progress. If such a readjustment takes place, it is easily realized how the cry of Peace and Safety would resound through the world. It is confidently announced already that disarmament will result from such a readjustment; that progress and material wealth, delivered from the burdens of militarism, and directed into better channels, will be greatly increased.

It is not amiss to anticipate that just such results may come, and that man in his pride and boasting will proclaim Peace and Safety as the attainment of the world. Will this then commence the age of peace and good will of which men have dreamed and for which they have longed? Listen! "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." This is said of the coming of "the day of the Lord." It shall come as a thief—unexpectedly—breaking up the peace and safety of the good man of the house. This simile of the thief is used particularly of "the day of the Lord" and "the day of the Son of Man," when He is revealed in power and glory.

But why break up the peace and safety which man may achieve? Because out of it will spring up the final forms of evil, the product of satanic power and wisdom, and its decisive overthrow is by the Lord Himself acting in judgment upon the world—a judgment of unparalleled severity, from which there shall be no escape. The reason why this day of the Lord shall overtake the world as a thief in the night, is because with its boast of Peace and Safety it will be shutting out the True Light which came into it.

There is no assurance given us of the universal acceptance of the gospel to establish universal peace and blessing. This has been a false dream preached by many; and, in view of the present awful conflict. many are now saying that Christianity has utterly failed in its mission, because so-called Christian nations have plunged into murderous strife. But the mission of Christianity was never to christianize nations, but rather to save individuals through faith in the Lord Jesus, and unite them in a divine and spiritual unity by the Holy Spirit. Such a cry is a prelude to the acceptance of that one who will come in his own name, and will be hailed as the man for whom the world has waited, but whom Scripture calls "the man of sin," the lawless one, whose coming is after the working of Satan, and who denies the Christian revelation of the Father and the Son. Then it is that the thief will break in; as in the hour of Belshazzar's impious feast the mysterious hand wrote the sentence of judgment upon the palace wall; or, as in the days of Noah, the flood broke into the world's festivities and swept them all away. Suddenly will that day come upon the world, as the present catastrophe of world-conflict has come. One short week of strenuous diplomatic effort had scarcely passed, when

men the world over were staggered, appalled, at the suddenness of development and the prospect of its awful consequences. What will it be when it is not simply the conflict of earth's armies, but the wrath of the Lamb the world will have to meet! And the events that are now marshaled before us prove to the eye of faith the truth of the Christian revelation, not its failure; and seeing them, we look up, knowing that our redemption draws nigh.

God gives us this outlook upon the future of the world that we may be delivered from its current of action; that we be not deceived or carried along with its false hope. May we be awake to the world's true condition and awful prospect, keeping ourselves clear from association with its movements and enterprises, that we may shine as lights amid its great and increasing darkness. God's people are as the salt, which preserves, while left here, from the final forms of corruption which are to be manifested; but what if the salt have lost its savor?

"Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof;" "For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

JOHN BLOORE.

To unite the divided and scattered people of God is the Lord's work, not ours. Walking "in the paths of right-eousness, for His name's sake," is what He looks for and expects in each one of us; and it is what will make His coming again precious to the soul.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 269.)

(Chap. 2:28-3:24.)

THE apostle now turns to a consideration of the ways in which the life eternal manifests itself in those in whom it dwells. He begins by setting before us a most solemn fact. The one who professes to have, but has not, life in the Son, will be ashamed in His presence when He appears. The false claim and its presumption will be shamed away from Christ's presence (ver. 28).

What then are the marks of its possession? It is made manifest by its own characteristic activities. Those who are born of God derive from Him who is the source of it, a nature which has its own characteristic features. Our Lord could say: " He that seeketh His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him" (John 7: 18). He was manifested as the righteous One in a life which constantly sought the glory of Him who sent Him. His life constantly bore witness that He is the righteous One. And those who have been born of God have derived from Him a life characterized by the aims and objects which characterized our Lord. The children of God are marked by that fact -by the practice of righteousness; it manifests them as being partakers of the life eternal; it proves them to be children of God (ver. 29).

If they are thus characterized, it is of the grace of God. The life which thus manifests its presence in us, witnesses that we are the subjects of a work of grace. No wonder the apostle exclaims:

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God!"* It is by grace we are His children, and through His grace we know it and have the liberty to take the place of children before Him. This is the kind or fashion of the love He bestows upon us. No angel is loved with such a love. God has seen fit to reserve this for us, whom He has redeemed from among sinful men.

But what a transformation has taken place in us! From living to ourselves and seeking the praise of men, we are led to walk in His steps who sought the glory of Him who sent Him. We have been turned from the practice of sin to the practice of righteousness; from being governed by our own lawless wills to being governed by the will of God; from aims, ends, purposes and objects natural to us, to the aims, ends, purposes and objects of Him who came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father who sent Him.

On this account, therefore, the children of God are not understood by the world. It can understand the pursuit of earthly and seen things, but it cannot understand the Christian's disregard of them. To be guided and controlled by heavenly and unseen things is a mystery to them. There is a day coming when the world will see us in glory with Christ; for, when He shall be manifested, we shall also be manifested with Him (Col. 3: 4). It will then know that we are sharers in the Father's love of His Son (John 17: 22, 23). But we have

^{*}The Greek has "children," not sons. John speaks of relationship by life—not of position, as Paul does.

not to wait until that day to know we are children of God. We have the knowledge of it now. In the day of manifested glory, we shall be conformed to the image of Christ; we shall be like Him. It has been distinctly revealed to us (chap. 3: 2).

Attention is called to the fact that we are to be conformed to Him as He is, not as He was. When the Son of God became incarnate, He assumed humanity in the form in which we are in this life. In men it is a fallen, sinful humanity; in Him it was unfallen and sinless; but even so, it was in the same form. He took part in flesh and blood, which we have. That form of humanity ended with His death. When He rose He took it up in a new form.

In 2 Cor. 5:16, the apostle Paul says: "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more." This was the lesson our risen Lord taught Mary Magdalene in John 20, when He said to her: "Touch Me not." She thought she had got Him back as He was before He died. Never again will He be in that form, but ever in the form of humanity He took up when He rose. We are to see Him as He is. We are to be like Him as He is—in manhood indeed, but in the form of humanity in which He now is. To be changed into His image means to have bodies fashioned after the body He now has. Not to have unfallen, sinless humanity simply, but in the condition in which our Lord now is.

What a hope! What a blessed prospect! "Like Him," both morally and physically! There is sanctifying power in such a hope. Every one who has this hope in relation to Him, purifies himself.

The Man Christ Jesus is not only the standard of perfect moral perfection, but of physical perfection also. The very desire to be as Christ is, to be in His image, will produce moral conformity to Him now (ver. 3). It will promote and develop the practice of righteousness, which manifests one to be a child of God.

The children of this world are marked by the practice of sin, by the activity of their own wills—not in subjection to God. (It scarcely needs to be remarked that verse 4 should be translated, "Whosoever practises sin practises lawlessness; for sin is lawlessness.") The Son of God came into the world to take away our sins (ver. 5). He had to stoop to the depths of the judgment of God upon our lawless practice to deliver us from what by such practice we justly deserved. It strongly shows, therefore, that the practice of sin cannot characterize one who is born of God.

But there is another statement in this verse equally strong: "In Him is no sin." This is true, whether we think of Him as He was here upon earth, or as He is now, risen and ascended to heaven: "In Him is no sin." Those born of God have received from Him a sinless nature. The life He has imparted to them is characterized by the same features as in Himself, in keeping therefore with righteousness. The children of God then, as being that, as abiding in the Son of God, do not practise sin. Such practice is altogether foreign to their nature; having community of life with Him, they cannot practise sin (ver. 6). He that practises sin is not abiding in Him, has never seen Him, does not know Him. The practice of righteousness

is not natural to us, but the practice of sin is. To know and to practise righteousness, then, we must know Him who is righteous.

The apostle is especially in earnest that the children of God should realize this. He says, in verse 7, "Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous:" it is the mark by which those are distinguished as children of Him who is righteous; while, on the other hand, the practice of sin distinguishes those who are in identification with the devil (ver. 8). A creature who abode not in the truth (John 8: 44) became the originator of sin in man. From the time that iniquity was found in him (Ezek. 28: 15) the practice of sin has marked him, and he is the great leader in the practice. It is this practice that manifests the world as being in association with, as of him. Through him, the original author of sin, works of evil have been found among God's creatures. whether angels or men. The practice of sin everywhere is of his instituting; it is his work.

The apostle reminds us now that the Son of God was manifested for the purpose of undoing the works of the devil. Every trace of him who introduced sin among God's creatures is to be removed. By the power of the blood of the cross all things, whether earthly or heavenly, will be brought back into a state of perfect harmony with God, absolutely and permanently purged from the defilement of sin (Col. 1: 20). Acting according to His own nature, the Son of God will remove sin from God's creation. Having already laid the basis for it in the work of the cross, He will entirely undo this scandal—the work of the devil.

"Which thing is true in Him and in you." As already said, righteousness attaches to the life we receive from Him. Its activities, not only in Him, but in us also, are all righteous. God's seed—His nature—abides in them. As in that nature the practice of sin is impossible to them (ver. 9).

It is needful to realize that the apostle is reasoning in the abstract. When he says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not practise sin," he is speaking of the child of God characteristically. He is not overlooking the fact that the old nature is still in him, but he does not consider that in giving his character as a child of God. He is not excusing the Christian's failures—he is not making light of the sins into which a child of God may fall, but it must necessarily be omitted in any abstract description of his character.

Another thing must also be remembered. The apostle is speaking, not of the perfection in which the character of the child of God is manifested, but of the fact that the practice of righteousness, whatever the degree of the perfection of its display, is a distinctive mark of God's children.

If the reader will keep in mind these things, he will not find it difficult to understand the account the apostle here gives of a child of God.

It may perhaps be well to restate this before we proceed to consider the next feature by which the children of God are characterized. Every child of God is born of One who is righteous, of One in whom there is no sin. His nature is a righteous nature; its activities are all righteous activities. The children of God have in them the seed of this sinless nature. It is this seed that distinguishes

them as born of God. It is an abiding seed; ever operative according to its own righteous nature. All its activities are righteous; not one of them is sinful. The children of God, viewed abstractly, not only do not practise sin, but are incapable of practising it. It is incompatible with the righteous nature by which they are characterized as born of God. C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

"BELOVED OF GOD"

(Rom. 1:7.)

THOU lovest me! And yet Thy child Is wayward, foolish, oft defiled; Is slow to learn and dull to hold, Quick to forget what Thou hast told; In service feeble, seeking ease Ofttimes, instead of Thee to please; Thus poor my record e'er will be. And vet. O God, Thou lovest me!

Thou lovest me, because that love Is in Thee, of Thee, yea, above All acts. Love's self is all Thine own! Thou, God, art love; Thou, love alone! Hadst Thou but waited for my call, Or love in me, then not at all Had I this purest ecstasy Known ever, that Thou lovest me!

Thou lovest me with that rich heart That sought its objects far apart From all that's winning, all that's good, Thou lovest, just because Thou'rt God: Thus Thou and I the story tell, Spanning all distance possible; I, nothing; Thou, infinity; I, hateful; but Thou lovest me!

Thou lovest me! yes, Thou, God, Thou! Thyself told out completely now—Thy holiness, Thy majesty; Yet this Thou add'st, Thou lovest me! Me! me the bad, without one claim, Whose fellowship and touch were shame; In this prevail'st Thou mightily, Thou tak'st no taint by loving me!

Nor is it shame to love me so!

None but Thou, God, durst stoop so low;
Because Thou'rt Thou! Thy glory this,
The high prerogative of bliss

Like thine—Thyself the bliss—to love
With grand imperial love, to move
With sovereign will, and so to be
All things to me by loving me.

Thou lovest me, shall be my boast, Whene'er the foe annoys me most; Parades each circumstance of ill, And magnifies the griefs I feel; Intensifies the bitterness Of trials, talks of my distress, As though I could forsaken be! I know, I know Thou lovest me!

Yes, he will speak of wrath, of rod,
Blaspheme Thee to my fears, my God!
Make light my gains, enlarge on loss;
My soul makes answer, "There's the cross!"
Beyond that wrath can never come;
Upon it Christ met all my doom;
I shout the pæan, "I am free!"
For there I find Thou lovest me!

Thou lovest me! And that shall stand Deeper than sea, firmer than land, 'Gainst all that Satan can evoke, 'Gainst destitution, sorrow, stroke,

Scorn, tribulation, hate of man, And ways of Thine I cannot scan; I see, above all mystery, This one clear fact, Thou lovest me!

This settles every doubt and fear;
Makes me a happy worshiper;
Gives to the weary feet a spring;
Makes the face shine, the tongue to sing;
Gives conscience, too, a clear release,
The heart a confidence and peace;
Fills every day and hour with glee—
The joy of heaven—Thou lovest me!

That I am so beloved of God,
Must form my manners on the road
I journey, till I meet Thy Son,
My Lord, who all Thy love has shown;
Must separate from world and sin,
From every path that He's not in;
Incite to toil, bring victory;
The only power, Thou lovest me!

And how Thy love invites my love!
Draws my whole soul toward Thee to move!
Makes possible to faith Thy facts
And all assurances! Thine acts,
The most astounding, no more strange
Can be, since I'm within their range
By knowing Thee, through love so free,
By knowing how Thou lovest me!

It is enough; no element
I want, to give my heart content,
I sit within this love's pure glow
With great delight, and waiting so,
The certain coming of my Lord,
So clearly told in love's pure word,
Then the full flow of life shall be
In heaven as here, Thou lovest me!

"BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING"

THERE is just one cure for care, and that is faith—faith in God. Faith may be weak or strong; the stronger the faith, the less the care. But we have to be sure what we mean by care—what Paul meant when he wrote, "Be careful for nothing." Not many would mistake the meaning here, but another meaning may be attached to the expression than the Holy Spirit intended. Most authorities use "anxious" in place of careful, as it is a better word to express the meaning of the original.

It would be entirely contrary to God's mind to say to a mother, Take no care of your child, or to a husbandman, Take no care of your fields. The word means over-anxious, distracted, but its primary meaning is "dividing the mind." It is the word used by Christ in Matt. 6: 25-34, translated "thought." Martha was "careful and troubled about many things" (Luke 10: 41). It is the word used for "care" and "cares" in Matt. 13: 22; Mark 4: 19; Luke 8: 14; 21: 34; 1 Pet. 5: 7. By looking up the use of the word in these places, we learn the evil and danger of anxiety and distraction.

The right kind of care is expressed by another word used in Mark 4:38; 12:14; Luke 10:40; John 10:13; 12:6. Both words are used in 1 Peter 5:7. We are to cast all our anxiety upon Him; that is, the over-anxious care, for He cares for us with a right and constant care.

In a world filled with sin and ruled by Satan, there is very much to make God's people anxious,

and they need His grace to keep them from this danger—from auxiety. The path of escape from auxiety is shown in our text, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." This means faith—the realizing of God's care for us, in some measure. It means knowing God, believing Him, trusting Him. It is a wonderful Scripture, and what blessing it opens up to faith.

God tells us to have no anxiety, no distraction. no worry. When things take place which move us to worry and anxious care, we are to take them to God. What a privilege, when we have a request about anything whatever, that we can make it known to Him! It may be something in the home, the family, the children; or it may be in our business, our work, our means of support. It may be our personal needs, our bodies, our health; or it may be our neighbors, our associates, our companions. It may be concern in our hearts for those far away from us, in whom we are interested. For everything in which we have enough interest to desire anything, we can go to God with our desires. We can put those desires into requests, and bring them to God.

Now this means walking with God, having Him before us. He tells us to do this; so it is a most important part of our lives. How great the difference between a child of God who thus goes to Him with every request, and one who carries his own burdens—who is anxious and worried! Our God cares for us, and tells us of this care in His Word. It is a very great blessing to a soul to know this

care and to realize it, so as to take our anxious thoughts and feelings to Him. And when He says, "Be anxious for nothing," and we are anxious and distracted about something, we lose very much. Should we not by all means go right to Him with our auxieties, and follow His Word? Prayer and supplication with thanksgiving means having to do with God in the closest way—coming right to Him, opening our hearts, baring them before Him. Worry and distraction take the mind and heart away from God; but prayer and supplication with thanksgiving bring us into His presence where all is light, and in this light His peace is found.

This peace comes, in part at least, from our consciousness that God acts for us, as well as takes interest in us. We see this everywhere in Scripture. He is watching over, and acting for, or dealing with, persons and nations; sometimes in direct blessing, sometimes in chastening, sometimes in judgment. Has He left this world now? Or does He still act, and guide, and restrain men and nations?

Take the short book of Jonah; see how it reveals God's ways both with men and nations. The Lord prepared a great fish; the Lord God prepared a gourd; God prepared a worm; God prepared a vehement east wind. How He is revealed in all this. It is such a mercy to see Him acting in behalf of His people. It is a greater mercy to be assured that He will act for us. He can bring such wonderful things about in such simple ways. We are to tell Him what we need and desire, and what troubles us, and our hearts and minds are set free from the burden of anxious care. If we really be-

lieve that God cares for us, and know His power and love, it will be easy to cast our care on Him.

There are two kinds of care: anxious care, and the care which God would have His people exercise over that which is in their hands. We are, as we have seen, to cast all our anxiety—anxious cares, upon Him. We know that it is easy to get anxious about things which God would have us care for. This often comes from our not being willing for God to have His way with us. We want our way, and worry when we cannot have it. But God's way is the only good way, the way of love; and casting our care on Him means giving up our own will, in the assurance that God's way is good.

The farmer plants his fields, the merchant stocks his store, the factory owner buys raw material and hires help. These men have care; they look to God if they are men of faith; they acknowledge Him in all their ways, and He directs their paths.

When they go on well, they are taking care of what is in their hands, and there are always daily cares to cast on God. But the cares of this life may begin to choke the Word. Droughts, panics, and troubles may come. These bring anxiety. What need at such times to cast all care on Him; then peace comes when the care is really cast on God. If there are losses, His grace makes them, as all else, work for good. It is a most wonderful thing that in this world where there is so much to cause care, we can be really care-free, while taking care of what God has put into our hands. It is a miracle of grace, one of the wonders of God's love.

J. W. NEWTON.

A WARNING TO PARENTS

(By a College Graduate.)

TO any who are contemplating sending their boys or girls to institutions of higher education, I would urge an earnest consideration of the following experience in the light of their responsibility to God to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Before entering college, I had been taught that the word of God was inspired from cover to cover; that God was a living, prayer-answering God; that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to day and forever;" that He came into this world as "God manifest in the flesh," lived a perfect life, was rejected of men; that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that He was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," and that "He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

All this I believed and accepted for myself. In my senior year, in a required course of ethics, the professor set forth theories which denied the living God as taught in the Bible. There was much discussion of these views, and an apparent acceptance of them by those about me.

One night, as I came back to my room from chapel, I felt alone in my acceptance of God and His Word. In a moment, as I stood there, came the thought that either what I had believed was true and these theories which seemed to be sweeping the college were false, or I was wrong and these theories were true. I stood on the brink of casting aside all I had believed and drifting into

rank infidelity. As I thought it over, I said: "If Thou art the living God and the Bible is true, give me some evidence that I am not alone here in this belief." Before I had finished there came a knock at my door—"Before they call I will answer." A girl came in who had never come before, and conversation at once drifted to the theories that were being set forth. She said she could not accept them, adding, that she had been saved in a Methodist camp-meeting as a child, and could not believe anything that denied the living God as taught in the Bible.

God had answered my prayer; I was saved from drifting into infidelity, and, thanks be to His name, I have never had a doubt as to Himself or His word ever since.

God carried me through, but will not you, Christian parents, consider well whether God would be pleased to have you place your children where they may in all probability have to pass through such an ordeal?

Going to the Root.—Scripture is more concerned with the root of things than their fruit. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." All true conviction carries one back to the first departure. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity," said David; his awful sin did not blind him to the fact that a condition of soul had made it possible. Whether it be the sinner awakened for the first time to his true standing before God, or the saint whose soul has wandered far from his first love, or an assembly of saints who have become entangled

in strife and evil, the principle remains that the root must be reached if we are to learn the lesson which God would teach. We may deplore the results of failure which may be manifest enough in the individual or company, but God would have us go further, and let Him place His hand upon the spring of all our trouble. Departure from Him, we can surely say, is the root of all declension. "I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

We are living in times of much superficiality. Sober convictions are not deep, and therefore results are not permanent. May we invite the holy searching of our God, as the Psalmist, and say: "Search me, O Lord, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

S. R.

GUIDED (Ps. 107:6,7).

He was better than all my hopes,
He was better than all my fears;
He made a road of my poor works
And a rainbow of my tears.
He led by paths I could not see,
And by ways I had not known;
The crooked things He made straight
As I followed Him alone.

* *

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

QUES. 32.—(a) Am I to understand from Matthew 25:41 that those to whom the Lord says, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," are to depart at once into that place—alive, or dead—which?

- (b) When are the wicked dead, who meet death during the tribulation, to be consigned to their everlasting abode—at once, or after the Great White Throne judgment?
- (c) Do any Christ-rejecters of this present Church-age, who have heard the gospel, pass into Christ's thousand-year reign (the millennial reign)?
- Ans.—(a) This judgment is not yet the "Great White Throne" judgment, where each individual receives retribution for his deeds in detail. It is the judgment of the King upon the assembled Gentile nations at His arrival to introduce His millennial reign. He declares there who are the "sheep" and who are the "goats" by the way they have dealt with His "brethren" (the Jewish people) during "the great tribulation" through which they have been passing. At the same time He gives the everlasting portion of each class, but the retributive judgment of each one awaits till the "Great White Throne."
- (b) After the "Great White Throne" judgment, no doubt. The "Beast" and "the false prophet" seem to be the only persons cast into the lake of fire before the judgment of the Great White Throne (Rev. 19:20). All the rest of the lost pass through the first death—the physical, the death of the body—and then are raised to appear at that Great White Throne judgment. How good to know that we who are Christ's belong to the first resurrection, long before the other takes place, and that we are raised not to be judged for our sins, but to enter into Christ's glory.
- (c) The word of God says, concerning them, that "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved . . . God shall send them strong delasion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2: 10-12).

EDITOR'S NOTES

"And Seen" In this passage the apostle outlines (Phil. 4:9). the character of the true ministry of Christ very fully. He does not stop at what the Philippians had "learned, and received, and heard" from him in his discourses and instructions among them, but includes also what they had seen in him. His deportment had been in keeping

with the precious things he taught.

We may rest assured that while God is sovereign. and can, and often does, use His word in power independently of the ways of His professed servants. yet the full blessing of the truth ministered will not be generally found apart from the truth being "seen" in the character and ways of those who confess and bear it. The beloved apostle was as jealous over himself as over his message, that he might thus appeal to what had been seen in him as well as heard from him. This, of course, called for abundance of self-denial; but that is the test of the true servant. How full of interest the path of Christ's servant becomes day by day when so much is attached to it! And as Christ's people realize this themselves, they realize the need of applying to the Lord of the harvest Himself for the sending of laborers into His harvest. He alone can supply and equip them-whatever His people may do, and should do, in furthering their way.

Armageddon That the hearts of men are moved with fear when more than what is usual appears, is shown by the oft-asked question of

late if the present European war is Armageddon. They know that Armageddon is a complete defeat of the forces assembled there, and that it is the end of the world's history. Not being at peace with God, they naturally dread the end: therefore the anxious inquiry.

The calamities announced as connected with the Lord's second coming, belong not to the Christian, or present dispensation, but to the Tewish, which is revived as soon as the present dispensation is over. Very likely, however, the end of the Christian dispensation may witness a beginning of the sorrows of the Tewish, and this may be the case with the present war, so full already with harrowing scenes and distress of multitudes through the heartless treachery and wickedness of a ruler who makes claim to piety. It is not Armageddon, howeyer, which will take place in the Holy Land, where the nations will be summoned by three unclean spirits-that of the dragon, the Beast, and the false prophet—the two last of which are not yet manifested, and, according to 2 Thess. 2, cannot be manifested until the Holy Spirit, and therefore the Church, which He indwells, are taken from the earth. These two arch-enemies of Christ get the ears of the peoples who have closed them to Christ, and will seek to destroy the remnant of the Jews among whom the testimony of Christ shall be found -a testimony, not of grace and love as ours is, but of the royal claims and glory of Him who is "the King of kings and Lord of lords" as well as "the King of the Tews."

As determined to forbid His reigning in glory as they had been to let Him reign in grace, they are given over to a spirit of "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie"—the lie of the dragon, the Beast and the false prophet. Armageddon is a compound Hebrew word, which means the "mount of slaughter," or "mounds of dead men;" it describes, therefore, the awful judgment that will come upon Christ's and His people's enemies rather than the place of their judgment. The description of the last plagues upon the world, and of Armageddon, is found in Rev. 16. Note a touching thing in verse 15 of that chapter—though late for men, yet God in His love and grace still warns them. He desires not the death of the sinner but his salvation.

The Day of the Lord The second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ embodies various events or phases which must not be confounded; though forming together His coming again, they are so distinct from each other that careless persons have spoken of them as different comings of our Lord.

Of course, the event of chief interest to us, Christians, is that described in I Thess. 4, by which we are to "comfort one another." That, and the first chapter of the same epistle, as also John 14: 1-4, is where we learn of our "blessed hope." We could not but smile therefore when we saw in a religious magazine, not long ago, an article in which an opposer of this blessed hope spoke of its origin as coming from some old woman's wandering mind. Nor have all the arguments against the "any-moment theory" of this hope moved us any more than the arguments against the grace of God, plausible

as they may seem to the unestablished in the truth. Both come from the same source, to rob God's people both of peace and joy.

ple both of peace and joy.

Another event is the restoration of the then repentant Jewish nation, to all the blessings and privileges which God had promised to their fathers

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to the royal house of David! This introduces the millennium, and the deliverance of creation from its groans. Who that weeps with those who weep is not filled with joy at this prospect? But between the translation of the heavenly people and this coming bright day for

Israel and the groaning creation, there comes "the day of the Lord," a season detailed in Revelation in several series of sore judgments which come upon the earth, whose climax for Israel is the "affliction,

such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, neither shall be" (Mark 13: 19). It is not merely in bodily suffering, but the national anguish which the Christ-persecuting Saul must, as an individual, have passed through after his vision on the way to Damascus, and which would not cease till, deeply subdued at the feet of Christ, he confessed Him in baptism. For the Gentile nations, the judgments end in

The day of the Lord is thus a time of judgments such as the world has never yet experienced. The Thessalonians, who were suffering great persecutions because of their conversion, were in danger of being led into the idea that the day of Christ had come, and that they were suffering its judgments. This would be practically the same doctrine as of those who teach now that the Church will pass

Armageddon.

F. W. G.

disturb them. His plea is on the ground of the coming of the Lord and the saints being gathered up to Him above, outside all the turmoils and sorrows on earth. He tells them the day of Christ cannot come until the events he mentions have taken place. "Our gathering together unto Him," mentioned in 1 Thess. 4, waits for no events, but

may take place at any moment.

Satan more than His coming again.

of soul of the people of God. The apostle warns them (2 Thess. 2) not to allow any such teaching to

If we thus carefully distinguish between the various parts which cluster about this second coming of our Lord, we will not be moved by the many theories abounding in our times. There is perhaps no subject, unless it be the person and atoning work of our Lord, which has engaged the activities of

SUNNY LAND "Hammom (sunny)-no matter what the circumstances of the way may be,

the sky ought always to be clear; the heavens cannot fail us."-Numerical Bible, Notes on Joshua 19. SUNNY land beyond the skies, To me thy portion give!

The throne of God is ever there. And there my soul shall live!

O sunny land beyond the skies, My spirit longs for thee; Where I shall dwell with Christ, my Lord, And His blest face shall see!

O weary way, O thorny road, Which I must tread each day; My Saviour trod thee long before, And He will show the way!

Though rough the road and long the way, My soul is not dismayed; I'll trust His strength, His power, His love; I will not be afraid.

The sky is clear, the heavens prevail— My soul, look up and sing! My Father's God, and I the child He shelters 'neath His wing.

O sky that's clear and heaven that's sure, My soul looks up above; It soars as does the singing lark, To God whose heart is Love!

A. J. R.

WHEN DID THE COMING OF THE LORD BECOME AN ANY-MOMENT EXPECTATION?

Of God's people was the Lord's return in power and glory to establish His kingdom. This had been presented in John the Baptist's preaching and our Lord's own ministry, as the Gospels record. It was the subject of the apostles' inquiry after the Lord's resurrection (Acts 1:6,7), and of angelic message at His ascension (ver. 11), and of the preaching recorded in the Acts 2: 32-36; 3: 12-21, etc. In connection with this coming certain signs were given whereby they would know that the time was near. They knew that certain conditions must come in, and certain events take place, and they knew that before the Lord returned they were to be witnesses for Him, and to preach the gospel to all nations. Thus they were, undoubtedly, sure of a

certain lapse of time between His departure and His return; but not knowing the exact time of His return they were to "watch" that they might be ready. "The day of the Lord" and "the day of the Son of Man" are connected with this phase of His return, as the Lord affirms in His ministry. Thus it seems evident that the any-moment coming of the Lord could not have been the hope of the Lord's people in the earliest days of their history.

As suggested, there could be no change in this view until the apostle wrote his two Thessalonian epistles. Then, by new revelation, the order and relation of events were clearly defined. First, it is said, they were waiting for the Son from heaven; then, they knew they were called to the kingdom and glory, and they are assured that the Lord will come with all His saints.

How about those who had died? A mystery was revealed here: the dead in Christ are to rise, and with the living changed, unite in one company to meet the Lord in the air, and therefore can return with Him at the appointed time (Col. 3: 4).

The coming of the Lord and our gathering together unto Him introduce in one way "the day of the Lord." By the very secrecy of the Rapture, that day is to steal upon the world as a thief, and they will not know it until sudden destruction falls upon them. Now if the Rapture and the Day follow in this immediate fashion, let us in view of this consider what the apostle makes known in 2 Thessalonians.

He says, the day will not come unless the apostasy first come, and the man of sin be revealed; and, note, the revealing of this man, is hindered 316

by a present restraining power. When this power is removed, the man of sin will be revealed coming in the power and deceit of Satan. Here we have three events—the apostasy, the man of sin, the restraining power; the latter evidently stands between the apostasy and the man of sin.

Now let us ask, first of all, What is this restraining power? It resists and keeps in check the energy of Satan who brings in Antichrist. As it cannot be of man, it must be God's power, present in this world where the revelation of the man of sin is to take place. It can be no other than the Spirit of God who is now present in this world, who indwells every believer-the whole Church. When will this restraining power be removed? When the temple in which He dwells-the Church-is taken away, at the Rapture. This is the one event which stands between us and the full manifestation of Satan's power in the world. Some will say the apostasy must first come, and the condition of the last days develop. The point is that Scripture shows that the apostasy and all the features of the last days, as referred to in the New Testament, had come before the last apostle passed away; so that there was no event to intervene between that time and the Rapture, and thus the secret introduction of the day of the Lord; none, therefore, can be looked for by us.

It seems clear, in the light in which Scripture records the history of the Church's early days, that an immediate return of the Lord could not be looked for, because of certain prior events to take place; yet this in no wise prevented a continual attitude of waiting, for the hour was not known. If nothing else, one thing was to be done-the preaching to all nations; but this had been accomplished even before the close of the apostolic age.

Let us briefly review the scriptural evidence. Both Paul, Peter, and Jude announce that in the last days there would be scoffers, seducers, evil men - false teachers who would rise up among Christ's disciples. These warnings were written some thirty years after our Lord's departure to heaven, about A.D. 65 or 67. Jude indeed says that such were already present; and because of it he wrote, instructing the saints to earnestly contend for the faith. John, writing about twentyfive years later, affirms the fulfilment of these warnings in his days. The testimony of Scripture is clear, that apostasy had already come in before the close of the apostolic age. Scarcely twenty years after Paul had announced to the Thessalonians the coming apostasy, declaring that the mystery of lawlessness was already working, he must lament that "all they who are in Asia had turned away from him." Then the addresses to the seven churches, which came some twenty-five years later, further emphasized and enlarged upon these conditions which had so generally spread and increased.

Every feature of the last days, then, was present at that time; one event alone remained to take place, namely: the removal of the Restrainer (the Spirit of God and the Church in which He dwells); then "the man of sin" would be revealed, when all the final forms of evil culminate. Therefore the last days, as the apostles speak of them, were present before the close of their time; everything was ripe for the final form of evil, which alone has been

prevented (ever since) by the One who restrains not being removed. We therefore can say that, to faith, the coming of the Lord became a momental expectation ever since. James even declares, about thirty-five years before John wrote, that "the coming of the Lord is drawn nigh" (J. N. D.). And may not these considerations give more meaning to the Lord's words about John, when Peter questioned Him about his fellow-disciple, than we have been accustomed to attach to them (John 21: 23)? In John's day the Lord's coming was at the very door, and it had become both a threat and a promise to the Church.

But why this long delay of more than eighteen centuries since John wrote? "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

May this blessed hope rise with greater brightness in our hearts with its sanctifying power, while, as we wait, we can also rejoice that the longsuffering of our Saviour-God is salvation.

JOHN BLOORE.

Jesus we wait for Thee,
With Thee to have our part;
What can full joy and blessing be
But being where Thou art.

"Sing Aloud unto God our Strength"

(Ps. 81:1.)

"SING aloud to God our strength,"
Oh, praise His blessed name,
For He has saved us by His grace;
Then loud that grace proclaim.
How much we owe Him for His love
No tongue can ever tell!
He saved us from that fiery pit
Where fiends and demons dwell.

"Sing aloud to God our strength;"
O ransomed sinners, sing!
Let sweetest praise ascend to Him
Who did salvation bring.
He sent it not by angel hands,
But by His own dear Son;
For creatures ne'er could do the work
That He Himself hath done.

"Sing aloud to God our strength"—
The journey won't be long;
Then let the wilderness resound
With faith's triumphant song.
He'll give us strength for every step
And grace for every need;
Then let us in His work abound
Till from earth's trammels freed.

And then, around Himself above,
We'll sing redemption's song,
Untainted by the things of time,
And endless ages long.
We'll see Him, then, whom now we know
As "our strength upon the road;"
Our heart's deep yearnings more than gained

In His unstained abode.

C. C. Crowston.

READINGS ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

(Continued from page 298.)

(Chap. 2:28-3:24.)

THE practice of righteousness is not the only mark of one who is born of God. A child of God is characterized by loving his brethren (ver. 10). We must now consider what the apostle says in reference to this.

It is to be noted that he mentions the two characteristics in a way that shows they go together. A child of God cannot be marked by one without the other. They are inseparable. If one is lacking, so is the other. We have seen that there is in the child of God a nature that is perfectly holy. This holy nature asserts itself in two ways—in the practice of righteousness and in loving the brethren.

Let us remember the apostle is speaking, not of the measure of realization or degree of enjoyment. but of what is characteristically true of all children of God. He is not discussing the hindrances to the full expression of the divine nature in us, but what is true in fact. It is the fact that is insisted on, not the extent in which it is displayed. If doing righteousness and loving the brethren are in any measure present, if they are at all in operation, the divine nature is there. There may be still much evidence of the old nature's presence, which characterizes us as natural men; it shows what we are as natural men-not what we are as born of God. It is the operations of our new nature that display what we are as having been born of God, although overshadowed often by those of the old. They are

in error who reason that the old nature is done away by the new, and who teach that the evidence of the presence of the old is evidence of the absence of the new.

All this that I have been saying is of the greatest moment if the apostle is to be understood. If we read him intelligently, it must be seen that he is speaking in the abstract, that he is writing of what is characteristically true, and thus of what is true of every believer, of every child of God.

For proof of the statement that loving the brethren is a mark of a child of God, the apostle appeals to the message or instruction of the incarnate Son of God (ver. 11). He refers to the fact that love to one another should characterize them. In John 13: 34, 35, He said: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Our Lord is not simply pressing upon His own the obligation or responsibility to love one another, but that it would be a mark by which the reality of their professed discipleship would be manifested. John appeals to this as a mark of the children of God.

A child of God is one who has been born of Him, and so is of God—not like Cain, who was of the evil one (ver. 12). His works therefore were evil. There was, even then, light shining sufficiently to manifest whether his works were wrought in God or were evil. The light exposed his works, showed them to be evil. God's acceptance of what Abel had wrought in God manifested Cain's deeds to be evil, proved he had not done well. Cain therefore hates the

light—hates its witness. His murder of Abel manifested his hatred of the light. The children of God come to the light, and the light manifests them to be of the truth; it shows that their deeds are wrought in God (John 3: 21). However misunderstood by the world, the children of God are seen to be doers of righteousness and lovers of their brethren.

If Cain represents the natural man in his rejection of the testimony of God, and is an example of the world's hatred of the light which exposes its evil deeds, the children of God need not wonder at the world's hatred of them (ver. 13). Our Lord said to His disciples, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15: 18). If it hates Him, if it refuses Him who is the Light, it will desire to rid itself of every witness to Him. The light, even feebly reflected, will be intolerable to it.

But we have passed out of death into life. We have the testimony of the Son of God for this (John 5:24). John, however, does not appeal to this here. We are conscious of love to the brethren (ver. 14): therefore we are not of the world, nor are we of him in whom the world lies—the wicked one. We are abiding, not in death, but in life—eternal life. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. If he does not love, he hates; and "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (ver. 15); that is, he is identified in nature and character with him who "abode not in the truth," but became a murderer and liar (John 8:44).

"Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" has often been misunderstood. It

has been taken to mean that no murderer can be saved. Let us seek to understand what the apostle says. In the first place, he declares that "whosoever hates his brother is a murderer." Is it not plain that the apostle points to the nature which characterizes one who, like Cain, is of the wicked one? Thus a man does not need to take the life of a fellowman to be a murderer; he is that by the very fact that he possesses that nature. In this sense all men are murderers by their very nature since the fall. But when the grace of God lays hold of one who is such in the eyes of God, he is born anew, "born from above." He possesses a new nature, which now characterizes him in God's eyes. God looks upon him as having passed out of death into life. He no more looks at him according to the old nature which is still in him, but according to what he is as born of God. A new life dwells in him. It is in the character of this new life that God now views him.

We have spoken of love to the brethren as evidence of a new nature received from God; but it may be said: Is not God above us, beyond us? Do we not read, "No man hath seen God at any time?" How then is it possible for us to comprehend the activities of love in God? It has been manifested in the person of His Son whom He sent into the world to lay down His life sacrificially in behalf of men (ver. 16). In this we have learned what the love of God is. The knowledge of this divine love is abiding in the soul that has bowed to the meaning of the Cross of Christ.

The activities of love in God must necessarily characterize His children. It is not merely a ques-

tion of duty or obligation, but a characteristic of their nature, which in communion with God displays itself. This is the force of verse 17. Of course, the verse may be used as an appeal to rouse the conscience where there seems to be carelessness or indifference, but the apostle is convicting of unreality the mere profession of loving the brethren. His argument is, How can love be there if there is no activity of it? How can love that is of God be dwelling where it is not in exercise? There is danger, even in the children of God, of falling into pretension. So in verse 18 the apostle warns against it. Clearly he is speaking here to those whom he recognizes as of God. He is exhorting them to see to it that there be no pretence, no mere loving in word or tongue, but only in deed and in truth. Unreality is a grievous sin in a child of God; it is really hypocrisy. Let us then give due heed to the apostle's warning against it. Our Lord also speaks of this in Luke 12: 1.

What is the test of reality? Verses 19 and 20 are the apostle's answer. It is for us to know—to realize—that we are of the truth. It is the privilege of the child of God to assure his heart before God. "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Those who "walk in the light as God is in the light" realize this; they are conscious that all unreality is exposed before Him. What enables us to stand in the light in which no unreality can be tolerated, is the atoning blood of Christ. It is that which gives us assured hearts before God, before whom all is thoroughly searched out. He who is greater than our hearts has provided us with what gives us full confidence in His presence; the

blood of Christ is His answer to every question of our acceptance or attack of the enemy. In the power of the blood of Christ, with uncondemning hearts, we abide in that Presence before whom all is manifest. God Himself is our refuge and our confidence; by His grace we are those who keep His commandments and practise the things pleasing to Him. We are those who believe "on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another," and whose petitions are in accordance with Him in whom we are accepted. We abide in God and He abides in us (vers. 21-24).

A marvelous blessing this, a wonderful privilege: abiding in God and God abiding in us! We are in the community of life and nature, after the pattern of that declared by our Lord when He said, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me" (John 14: 10, 11). Just as He abode in the Father and the Father in Him, so also we abide in Him and He in us. B the Spirit which now dwells in us we are able t realize and enjoy the portion that is ours. Charac teristically speaking (as John constantly does), it this dispensation of the Spirit the children of God are qualified to enjoy the intimacies of their relationship with God. They find their power for th in the Spirit dwelling in them.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

OUR GROWTH IN GRACE

(2 Pet. 3:18)

"ROW in grace" is the injunction of an apostle, and to it the heart and conscience of the Christian man respond. The law of growth is the law of life pre-eminently in Christianity, where the life is eternal life, and maturity in it is not the easy attainment of a day. "He that hath this hope in Him," says the apostle John, "purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 Jno. 3: 3). Put that as the limit, and who can say that he has reached it—is purified as Christ is pure? When then shall the exhortation be needless, "Grow in Grace?"

There is such a thing as growth then—as the progressive sanctification of the believing soul to God. Progress in holiness there ought to be: we ought to be this year more fully and practically Christ's than last, which is what is meant by holiness; more simply and in detail yielded up to Him, and the results of it apparent in our lives.

I speak of course to believers. There must be life before there can be growth. First of all we must be "born again," as the apostle speaks, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God;" a "word," he takes care to add, "which by the gospel is preached unto you" (I Pet. I: 23, 25).

It is as if expressly designed to make it more emphatic in warning to all who depend on ordinances for the reception of new life, that *Peter* (proclaimed by men as the very head of the most ritualistic system existing at this day) is inspired to speak so. It is he who tells his would-be follow-

ers that men are born again, not in baptism, but by the "word of the gospel."

That word which, coming to sinners as it does, speaks of a work done for sinners, salvation for the lost by the death of another—it is this that, being received, transforms. Having had much forgiven, the soul forgiven loves; and that love to One who has saved is the spring and power of a new life, a life of blessed and endeared obedience.

But I do not dwell upon this at this time. I would only be understood to speak to those just now who have learnt, if only babes, to cry, "Abba, Father." To such I would say, Do not imagine that because you are saved and have conscious peace with God, that therefore you have attained the summit of Christianity. The unhappy result of making the knowledge of salvation (as many make it) the result of (it may be even a lengthy) Christian experience, has been unhappily with a good many the making that the end and the resting point which is in reality only the beginning of attainment, and of experiences properly Christian. And thus the gospel itself is shorn of much more than half its power and blessing. Rest and peace and blessing for oneself are made the end of all, and rest in salvation substituted very often for rest in God. Thus how many sink into loose and easy living, and call it freedom! Alas for such, and for the gospel that they boast of, if such is indeed the freedom it has given.

We need to speak out plainly. The worst evil of the day is the Laodiceanism which can speak loudly of grace with the conscience unexercised as to the responsibility which grace introduces into. Men who delight in the gospel, "the glorious gospel"—and so it truly is—if you speak to them of other things which the God of the gospel has made known and enjoined obedience to, will answer, "Such things are not necessary to salvation." God has spoken, and men have learnt by listening to His voice (as they would have it), how and when with safety to themselves they may disregard His voice. But is that then the fruit of the gospel? Of what worth is the piety that sits down content with salvation, and not wishing to be disturbed or unsettled by the claims of God and of His truth?

And it must be remembered that, according to Scripture, truth alone sanctifies. We do not judge with the poet of latitudinarianism,

"He can't be wrong whose life is in the right,"

but rather, with the Lord Himself, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me" (Jno. 14:21). There must be an ear listening for the voice of Christ, or there cannot be the spirit of true obedience. He who does not care to hear, does not really care to obey. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow Me." He who discards, as it were, from the word of God all but the gospel, has never known yet the proper power of the gospel.

But the apostle adds to his exhortation, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Our Lord," mark, first, as well as "Saviour." Nay, we may say, "our Lord," and even so our "Saviour." Rendered up into His hands who has alone title to us, we find salvation from One "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour,"

and one main part of our salvation is deliverance from other masters into His service, whom when we "call Master and Lord," we "say well, for so He is"—He who "died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him that died and rose again for them."

Beloved reader, before we go a step further, let me ask you this question: If you profess and call yourself a Christian, are you Christ's? - surrendered up to Him in the full joyful consciousness of His service being indeed perfect freedom? Do you live with every pulse of that new life He has given vou, "to Him?" There is no growth in grace for you till such is the purpose of your heart. Is your eye then on Him, your ear waiting upon His voice, your hand engaged for Him, your foot treading in His pleasant paths? Are you one not only "redeemed," but "redeemed to God?" no hired servant indeed, but one to whom "to live is Christ?" Oh, then, beloved, we hail in you the true and proper effects of the gospel of grace: for "the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, rightcously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works" (Tit. 2: 11-14).

And now then, beloved, "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The book of His thoughts, His counsels, 330

His mind, lies open in your hand, and truth is truth just as far as it brings home to your soul Him who is Himself the truth. He is your Master. Sit in the page of His presence at His fact, and learn of

the peace of His presence at His feet and learn of Him. Do not say one syllable He utters is "no matter," "of little import," or "of little profit,"

or "that cannot be understood." Do not be content with mere opinions or human authorities. Consult Himself. Let your faith not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for

is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works "(2 Tim. 3: 16, 17).

Be you one of "God's men" in this evil day.

And now for the more strict inquiry: "What is growing in grace?" It is explained as to its

moral characteristics in those words which we have seen the apostle joins with it: "And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

A false idea is prevalent, to the great damage of souls. Men have forgotten to distinguish between growth in *grace* and growth in *self-consciousness* of the grace we have. They imagine that, along with their growth in grace, they are to be able more and

more to find satisfaction in their practical state. They think they ought to be able to measure their growth, and to find out to their own satisfaction how much holier they are this year than last. That

growth, and to find out to their own satisfaction how much holier they are this year than last. That they ought to be practically holier, I have already said. But this is a very different thing from being conscious to myself that I am so, and in no wise needful to it. It is quite true that God says to us, "Be

has been but just now insisted on. But suppose I take another text: when the Lord says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart," what am I to infer from this? That I am to be "lowly?"

ye holy, for I am holy; "and quite true, therefore, that we ought to "follow after holiness." All this

True. But what would you think of me if I said, "Well, I am getting to be quite lowly; I improve in lowliness continually." Would you say that that was "lowliness" which spoke in me?—or vanity? Is it not right, then, to seek to be lowly? Clearly. But lowliness is self-forgetfulness and not self-con-

sciousness, much less self-complacency.

And so with holiness. "To me to live is Christ" is its principle, and "we ought to walk as He walked" is our measure. As we grow then in the knowledge of Him, do we come to think more highly of our devotedness to Him, and be better satisfied with it, or the reverse? Comparing our walk with His, as we come to know better what that walk was, shall we increase in satisfaction with

our own imitation of it, or the reverse?

A plant is in my garden. By its side stands a dead stick, which was put in for its support. The other day the plant was but just as high as the stick, and now it is two inches or more above. It is easy to measure the living and growing plant by the dead stick. And why? Just because it is dead.

the dead stick. And why? Just because it is dead. But if the stick itself were alive and growing too, I should have lost my measurement. If my knowledge of Christ were but a dead and not a living

edge of Christ were but a dead and not a living thing, a fixed measure never to increase, I might more easily perhaps measure my own growth by it.

But as He grows upon my soul, I dwarf. That is

the result in my experience. "He must increase, I must decrease:" that is the daily law and the daily song.

Yet the aim after holiness is a right and not a fruitless thing; but occupation with Christ is the essential requisite for holiness and for growth. "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 Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3: 18, marg.). It is our privilege to have done with ourselves and to be occupied with Christ. It is impossible to be occupied with Christ and not be holy. It is very possible to be occupied with holiness, and be neither holy nor happy. And happiness is a thing closely connected with holiness, for "the joy of the Lord is your strength."

A man may be seeking holiness in order to be better in his own eyes. Will God honor that or help him in it? He will not. "Living to Christ" is another matter. Nor have I got to better myself in anywise. All that came to an end upon the cross of Calvary, where I died in the person of my Substitute. I am dead-"crucified with Christ." I have come thus (for faith) to the end of that self which terrifies and distresses me. God has put me as a sinner for ever out of His sight in the death of His Son, and He has accepted me in that Son, risen from the dead-in His "Beloved." How that name tells of One upon whom His eye rests with infinite delight! There am I, "in Him," never separate. My mirror, as a Christian, reflects the glory of the Well-Beloved. I am there in Him-"complete in Him"—"made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Better myself, then, shall I? Can I better Him? There is my true self now. The other—I bear it about with me still, but it is no more I; the other died with Christ; and now, if "I live," it is "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." I died; Christ lives; I in Him. I may look at myself there without vanity and with full satisfaction and rest of heart. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new." If I look into myself I can say no such thing. With my eye on Christ it is all simple. I have not, then, to better myself; I have to walk as He walked. And that because I am already before God identified with Him.

But I grow in grace as a man down here as I grow in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour. Saved—fitted for glory—a new man in Christ; the wants of my heart are all filled up in Him, and I am free to live for Him who loved me and gave Himself for me. All that I see in Him, in whom daily I see more, is power over me and in me, working out in me likeness to the One I love. I yield myself up to the enjoyment of love, which has answered every question, settled every doubt, supplied every need. Joy in Him brings me with full surrender of heart to the God I see in Him. He lives in me. I know Him who is Eternal Life; full blessedness, rest, power, devotedness, are implied in that.

As He shines more and more into my soul, even I myself, dark as midnight in myself, reflect back His glory, and am "light in the Lord."

F. W. G.

"A SOLITARY WAY-THE RIGHT WAY"

"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation" (Ps. 107: 4, 7).

THEY wandered in the wilderness, a land of pits and drought.

Where shelter from the burning sun might all in vain be sought;

On every side around them lay a desert wide and drear, And Israel's hosts, thro' unbelief, were ready to despair.

And yet no cause for dread had they, for God did lead them forth;

He gave them water for their thirst, and fed their souls in dearth:

His cloudy pillar guided them, and shaded them by day, And in the night His light of fire still pointed out the way.

It was a "solitary" way—for no man dwelt therein; In vain the eye was cast around, no friendly face was seen. They wander'd on, alone with God, thro' all that desert wide, All human intercourse debarred, all human help denied.

And yet it was "the right way" still, although so sad and lone;

Each toilsome march, by day or night, to God was fully known; Nay, He Himself did go before as their unerring Guide, To "search them out a resting-place," and from each danger hide.

As pilgrims and as sojourners, they pitched their nightly tent, And onward still at God's command their weary footsteps bent;

For ne'er within the limits vast of all that wilderness, They found a city where to dwell in peace and quietness. For God had purposes of love, beyond their highest thought, When thus thro' those untrodden paths His chosen ones He brought;

He led them to a glorious land where they might rest in peace.

"A city" He "prepared" for them, where all their toils might cease.

May not their history, child of God, some cheering thoughts suggest?

For we, like them, are journeying; this world is not our rest; And oft thro' "solitary" paths our heavenward journey lies; No certain dwelling-place we find, no home beneath the skies.

But sweet it is to know that He, who Israel's journeyings led, Doth order all our steps aright, and gives us daily bread; Nor will He ever cease to guide our feet with watchful love, Until we reach the promised land, Jerusalem above.

Then from that holy, blessed abode we'll cast a backward gaze

On all the way by which we trod, and own with thankful praise

That all that now looks dark and sad was ordered for the best,

To fit us for our Father's Home, our everlasting rest.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

NOTE.—All persons sending communications for this department of our magazine, are especially requested to sign their names in full, and to give their P. O address. One reason is that we can often find, and would send them, some publication in our Publishers' Catalogue which answers the question asked better and more fully than we can do in our limited and often over-crowded space. Another reason is the necessity of guarding scrupulously the integrity of the purpose of this department.

EDITOR.

- QUES. 32.—(a) In the light of 1 Cor. 11, is her own hair a sufficient covering for a woman engaged in prayer, as some have asserted verse 15 indicates?
- (b) If a woman's head must have a covering besides her hair when she prays or prophesies, does this include occasions when she is present where others are praying?
- ANS.—(a) Not at all. A woman's head is no more really covered by her long hair than a man's is uncovered by his short hair. Verse 15 only affirms the principle laid down before by referring to woman's long hair as nature's teaching in what is becoming. Why is long hair a glory to the woman, while it is a shame to the man? Because they occupy different positions in creation; the one expressed by covering the head, the other by uncovering it. In each case nature itself teaches what is becoming to each. The long hair, as a veil, indicates the retirement that becomes the woman; while the shorn, or unveiled head of the man, indicates the public place in which God placed him.
- (b) Wherever it is proper that a man should be uncovered (and where is the man who kneels in prayer without uncovering his head, no matter how secret the place may be?) it is proper that the woman should be covered, be it with but a veil, a handkerchief, or anything as a sign that she is keeping her place of subjection (ver. 10).
- QUES. 33.—Does 1 Cor. 14:39 have any application to these times, referring to speaking with tongues?

Ans.—Most assuredly, if the tongues are really there, and the order of verse 27 be followed in their exercise.