

SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

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A Monthly Magazine.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the **Word**, that ye may grow thereby."—1 PETER II. 2.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the **Word** with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed."—ACTS XVII. 11, 12.

"The **Word** of the Lord endureth for ever."—1 PETER I. 25.

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SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU: DO NOT MISS IT!

THERE are Christians who, if asked, would be the first to admit that their lives have to a large extent been failures. The hopes with which they started out have been dashed to the ground, the victories they expected have not been achieved. In result they have sunk down to a low level life, and have actually come to acquiesce in defeat as if there were nothing better for them. Perhaps they may learn a lesson from the narrative that follows.

In a certain fishing village on one of the great lakes of North America was a pair of captive eagles. They had been caught when but two weeks old, and were kept in a large cage. Year by year they grew, until from tip to tip of their wings they measured six feet.

One day the eagles were missing. Their owner had gone fishing on the lake. While he was absent a mischievous boy opened the door of the cage, and gave the great birds their liberty. At once they escaped. But, kept in captivity from their earliest days, they had never learned to fly. The instinct for the sky, however, had not been wholly crushed. They tried to use their wings, and floundered about on the village green. They struggled, and fell,

2 GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU : DO NOT MISS IT !

and made piteous efforts to rise into the airy freedom of their God-appointed destiny, but all in vain. One, essaying to fly across a small stream, dropped into the water and had to be rescued from drowning. The other, after a succession of humiliating failures, managed to attain to the lowest branch of a near-by tree, where it was shot by the hand of a cruel boy. The other shared the same hapless fate. Thus the tragedy of their lives came to an end.

God designed for these kingly birds a noble inheritance of freedom. It was for them to transcend the loftiest flight of other birds, and to nest in crags where the foot of man had never trod. But from all this they had been hopelessly shut out. Instead of the liberty planned for them had come captivity, helplessness and humiliation. They missed God's plan for their lives.

Even so is it with some of His children. Instead of their lives being spent in glorious liberty, they are brought into bondage to their sin and coldness of heart ; instead of spreading the wings of their souls and soaring into the blue of heaven, they grovel upon the earth plane and seem unable to rise above the low level life of the more respectable of their unconverted neighbours.

How different God's plan for His children, a life in which sin is dethroned from its dominion and in which the world appeals in vain for conformity to its standards ! His design is that we should walk with Him, and

GOD'S PLAN FOR YOU : DO NOT MISS IT ! 3

live not unto ourselves but unto Him who died for us. How short of this do many of us come ! Even when conscious of our shame, how hopelessly we flounder in our endeavours to get right !

What is the remedy ? First to set apart an hour when, without fear of disturbance, we can tell out the story of our failure in the listening ear of God, with the consciousness that He hears. Second, the absolute submission of our *wills* to Christ, the surrender of everything in our lives that is not according to *His* will and pleasure. Third, the fixing of the eye upon Christ, that one may know the joy of companionship with Himself. Self will then be forgotten, and daily communion with Him will be sought, and the soul will be nourished by prayer and meditation upon the Word of God.

There is no short cut to this happiness. It must be Christ, formed in our affections, dwelling in our hearts, that shall transform our lives. To make joy, victory, holiness or progress our object will not do. CHRIST must be the object, and in Him will be found the things that we desire.

This is the secret of a victorious life : to have Christ before the soul, to abide in His presence, willing to have His cross stand as a barrier between us and sin, the world *and ourselves*.

EDITOR.

DO YOU PRAY?

“Behold he prayeth.” (Acts ix. 11).

AS a boy of six, I had two miles to walk to school. The nearest way led through the “haugh” past the Castle Mill.

At that time there was a great stir in Greenlaw. God was working and souls were beginning to realize their lost condition, and to know that Jesus came to “seek and to save that which was LOST.”

Miss Graham, a lady from Edinburgh, was going about like the woman in John iv., speaking to souls, and one night on my way home she met me at the Castle Mill and spoke to me about my sins, my soul, and the Saviour. Her last words were: “I hope I shall meet you in heaven.” This was the first time in my life that any one had spoken plainly to me of my eternal welfare.

About eight years later, while I was staying with an uncle and aunt at the Castle Mill, my aunt said to me one night as I prepared to retire: “You seem to get into bed very quickly after going upstairs; do you never *pray*?”

This question “Do you never pray?” troubled me greatly, and for a time I became religious,” prayed daily and read my Bible. However, I had not yet, like the prodigal son, “*come to myself.*”

One night, some years afterwards, I heard

DO YOU PRAY?

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Mr. S——, from Melrose, preach in a barn at Bemersyde on John xv. 15. Nothing in the sermon touched me, but at the close he put the question to the company: "Do all here PRAY?" He went on to say that the time would come when all should pray, if not to God, then to the mountains and rocks: "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

Now, at last, I was fully awake, and prayed and read in earnest, seeking refuge from the wrath of God. My sins rose up like a great mountain between me and a holy God. I used to be afraid that I should find myself in hell before the morning light. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow" (Psalm cxvi. 3). These words fitly described the state of my soul.

I went on for some time in a state of dread, until a little book, with the title "Mrs. Little" was put into my hand. On reading this I saw that it was not by prayers, tears, or repentance, of which at the time I had plenty, but by the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, that sins were cleansed and peace made. I saw that God was not judging sinners at this time, but justifying them "freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation *through faith in His blood*, that He might be just and the

Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Romans iii. 24, 25).

When I realized that God had come out through Christ to cleanse, to clear, and to clothe guilty sinners such as I was, that God had delivered Jesus our Lord for our offences and raised Him again for our justification, then all was peace in my soul. I could look back and see that all was clear. My sins were gone; and looking forward I need fear no wrath. "Much more then, being justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Rom. v. 9).

But I was not yet *free*. I found something bad in me, and some days I felt happy, others unhappy, until I heard Mr. Steel preach on Romans vi., and found that while it was true that my sins were all forgiven, yet sin, the root, the old master, was still there, and that it was by the same death—in the same Person—through whom I had got clear of my *sins*, that I could get clear of *myself*. I saw that "so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ unto His death." So that all He was dead to, it was my privilege to reckon myself dead to; and all He was alive to, I was free to reckon myself alive to, in Him. "For He that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him. . . . Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death

shall have no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans vi. 7-11).

It is not only a slave redeemed, but the slave dead, and life giveth in another Person, in a new power and in a new position. This is what we get in Romans viii. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." . . . "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of sonship whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans viii. 14-18). On the one side there is no condemnation, on the other life and liberty, the power of the Spirit to enter into the place of sons before the Father now, and the prospect of being actually with Christ in glory. For the present there is suffering and we need patience to wait for the glory.

You will notice there are two cries. The first is a cry of distress when the Spirit of God works in the soul as He did in Saul of Tarsus

in Acts ix. For three days he was in deep distress. Light had shone into his dark soul, and there was trouble until the Lord sent His word by Ananias to heal him. And when Ananias was not sure about him, the one sign given by the Lord was : " Behold he prayeth." Often doubtless, as a Pharisee, Saul had prayed, thanking God he was not as other men ; but now, like the publican in Luke xviii., it was as a *sinner* he raised a cry for mercy. " God be merciful to me a sinner." He knew then that he was justified through Christ and received the Spirit, who enabled him to raise another " cry "—one of the fullest confidence—the cry of a son. " Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6). This is to be in the presence of God and to know His love. " God is love." " There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear." (1 John iv. 16, 18).

As soon as I felt clear that my sins were all forgiven, and that I was delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan, the flesh and the world, I began to taste that the Lord was good, that He was the Good Shepherd. Like the man in John ix., my eyes were opened not only to see the light, but to see that men were no better now and did not want Christ. They took up stones to cast at Him in John viii. In chapter ix., the work of God in the man born blind was rejected. No one cared for the man who had got his eyes opened by Jesus,

the Son of God. Neighbours, Jews, parents, all turned against this man, simply because he spoke of Christ. The light was shining in and shining out, till at last he was cast out of the synagogue. But when Jesus heard that they had cast him out He found him, and revealed Himself to him as Son of God, and the man worshipped Him. He had got a blessed Object to fill his eyes now, the One who had opened them filled them. In connection with this miracle the Lord is shewn in the following chapter proving to the Pharisees that they were not His sheep, or they would have heard the voice of the Good Shepherd, and followed Him.

The very nature of sheep is to be together, *food* and *fear* bring them together. The food that Jesus gives draws the sheep together, but a stranger or a wolf will cause them to flee together. They follow the Shepherd, but flee from a stranger.

Now, I found that among my neighbours many did not care for Christ, and that though people were religious they did not like to talk about the Lord or His Word. So I felt a want of suitable company, a want of fellowship, and a want of food, until one day I came across a book called, "Daniel Mann," and in reading it I found there existed a company who seemed to have just what I wanted. They sought the company of Christ and fellowship with one another, and their teaching was food to the soul, meat in due season.

Messrs. D—— and F——, came from Edinburgh to Melrose to have some Bible readings and preach the gospel. I got real help and was led to Christ Himself as Centre and Priest. Though they were few and feeble I found myself among a company like the one in Luke xvii., who left the nine and returned with a loud voice giving glory to God and fell on his face at the feet of Jesus giving Him thanks. What a reality it is to be in the presence of God to *give*—not to *get*—and to be occupied with the Blessor and not only with the blessing, where no man of an earthly order is looked to but where every heart is free to bow in worship to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. “The Father seeketh such to worship Him, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.”

This I found to be the place of every saint on earth, though few take it. In John xx. the disciples were together, as the effect of the message from the risen Lord by Mary, I doubt not, and the Lord could come in and say “*Peace*,” shewing them His hands and side, and making their hearts glad.

In Acts xx., the disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week. In 1 Cor. xi., Paul received this specially from the Lord in glory, to deliver to the saints. They were to do this in remembrance of Him till He come, and those who broke bread were to be in a suited state. “Let a man examine himself and so let him eat.” This I found

THE MYSTERY OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST. II

some of God's children had got their eyes opened to see as being their privilege still, and that they could come together—if walking in truth and holiness—without having anyone specially set apart to break the bread, and thus enjoy what had been the blessed portion of the saints at the beginning. “They continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers.” (Acts ii. 42).

Jude, servant of Jesus Christ, wrote specially exhorting the saints to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.” If men had got in who denied the *only* Lord and Master, the saints were not to give Him up. And if certain men had set themselves up, not having the Spirit, the saints were nevertheless to go on building themselves up on their most holy faith. (Jude xx.).

R. K. WILSON.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

HE was the LIGHT, yet He hung in darkness on the cross.

He was the LIFE, yet He “poured out His soul unto death.”

He was the ROCK OF AGES, yet “His feet sank in the deep waters.”

He was the SON OF GOD, yet He died a felon's death.

12 THE MYSTERY OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

He was HOLY, UNDEFILED, SEPARATE FROM SINNERS, and knew no sin, yet He was "made sin" when He took the guilty culprit's place, and suffered in his stead.

He bade the weary come to Him for rest, yet not on earth could He find rest until He said, "It is finished," and gave up His life to God.

He was the LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH, yet He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.

He was the ROOT AND OFFSPRING OF DAVID, yet He grew as "a root out of a dry ground."

He was the CHIEFEST AMONG TEN THOUSAND, AND THE ALTOGETHER LOVELY, yet it is written, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him."

He was the ANCIENT OF DAYS, yet He was "cut off in the midst" of His days.

He was the FATHER OF ETERNITY, yet He became the Babe in the manger at Bethlehem.

He was the MIGHTY GOD, yet He became a Man, and "was crucified through weakness."

He UPHOLDS ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER, yet in Gethsemane an angel came to strengthen Him.

He was the IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, yet His visage was "marred more than any man."

ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD DWELLS BODILY IN HIM, yet He took on Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

"HE SPAKE and it was done, HE COMMANDED and it stood fast," yet He humbled Himself and became obedient,—obedient unto death.

He was the DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS, yet He was despised and rejected of men.

“GET THAT MAN OUT!”

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He is the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE, yet upon the cross
He cried, “I thirst.”

Can you understand these mysteries? These are things that angels desire to look into. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, yet He comes to dwell with us: “I will come in to him, and will sup with him.”

HEYMAN WREFORD.

“GET THAT MAN OUT!”

A FRIEND employed in large engineering works was telling us that his firm had had a new automatic machine installed. When it was erected and set in motion it worked all right except one “arm.” This they could not get to move. They examined it carefully, and adopted every means of which they could think, all to no purpose.

At last they sent for the patentee, who was an expert, but thought that while waiting for him they might use the machine as much as possible. They therefore set a man to work by hand the immovable “arm.”

In due time the expert arrived and was conducted to the machine room. His first words were :

“GET THAT MAN OUT OF THERE!”

The man ceased working. The expert stepped forward and touched a spring, the “arm” commenced to work, and the entire machine worked automatically to the entire

satisfaction of all concerned.

May we not learn a lesson from this ? Is it not possible, particularly in any little service for the Lord, that the wrong man may obtrude himself and that we may forget that

“ Within us dwells that spring from heaven,
The Spirit of our God ” ?

We may attach much importance to fine singing, elaborate organization, careful preparation and so on, and leave the Holy Spirit no room to work.

Do not let us be misunderstood. Slovenly singing is a disgrace. Haphazard arrangements—if we can use such apparently contradictory terms—are inexcusable. Going to deliver a message without first receiving a message to deliver is folly. All such things are dishonouring to the Lord. Having said all this, however, it must yet be said that singing may be fleshly display ; that organization may be mere human planning ; and that preparation may result in a mere display of “ wisdom of words.”

In the incident that we have narrated, it was *when the man was removed* that the machine worked, and that without the aid of man.

The Holy Spirit very graciously deigns to work through those who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ ; but, just as an automatic machine is moved by invisible springs, so He is the invisible power who works in and through us for carrying out of His own purpose. Paul’s preaching was “ not with enticing words of man’s wisdom,” and who

“GET THAT MAN OUT !”

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could have excelled him who was “brought up . . . at the feet of Gamaliel” in that respect? He was with the Corinthians “in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling :” and we judge that these traits were not conspicuous in that quarter. His preaching was, however, “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” (1 Cor. ii. 3-5).

There are many meetings now-a-days, much preaching, and a good deal of what is called “special effort,” but we feel sure that all will admit that the results are by no means commensurate either with the claims of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, or with the grandeur of the message. The gospel is the same to-day as it was at Pentecost ; there is not less power now than there was then. Shall we get down low before the Lord, and ask Him in all sincerity to

“GET THAT MAN OUT OF THERE !”

and to touch the secret spring, so that the Holy Spirit may work unhinderedly as He will, when He will, and where He will, for His glory, whose we are, and whom we serve ?

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

THE Lord is ever ready to acknowledge the smallest act of service done to Him, but the moment a man become occupied about his service, the Lord will teach him that He wants him no longer.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Our readers will agree that there never was a time when the work of the Sunday School was more needed. To instruct the young in the ways of the Lord is a duty and privilege, the importance of which can hardly be exaggerated.

It is too great and important a work to be entrusted to the hands of the inept and inefficient. Yet how far from efficient for the service of the Lord we all feel ourselves to be! There is abundant room for improvement. And to help the Sunday School teacher on this line we propose to devote some of our pages each month throughout the year to this subject. We pray that God may graciously bless them to the encouragement and help of many an earnest worker.

The papers will mostly consist of reports of addresses given at Conferences of Sunday School teachers in different parts of London. The notes of these have been kindly supplied by our friend Mr. E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S W. 14, who will be pleased to answer any questions that may arise out of the papers, either privately or in the correspondence pages of this magazine. Write him freely if you feel your need of counsel or help in connection with Sunday School work.

(I.)

Preparation in Relation to Teaching.

WE find a difficulty in holding the attention of the children to-day owing to our ignorance and to the children's knowledge. The time when the children knew little or nothing of the Scriptures is past. Thanks to their day school education, most are now well acquainted with the more important historical incidents of both the Old and New Testaments, and unless *we* are well taught, and stand well

ahead of our children, we find it no easy matter to gain and hold their attention.

The story of one's conversion soon becomes hackneyed, and the stock of anecdotes exhausted. We may pass the hour allotted to us by talking generalities, but little interest will be aroused in our children, and we are in danger of losing their attention for ever if this is continued for any length of time.

Is it not true that many of our difficulties in this respect would disappear if we were properly equipped by preparation beforehand? If, in a single word, we were *fit*?

VESSELS MEET FOR THE MASTER'S USE.

First and foremost we are met by the words: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts." We need individually to be sanctified, and the neglect of obedience to the command "keep thyself pure" works havoc among those who seek to teach the young. It is a day of laxity, but 1 John ii. 6 is the standard for all.

Hand in hand with personal preparation goes the necessity for prayer: by this we get wisdom from the Lord. (James i. 5).

To these two essentials must be added preparation of the lesson. Does Scripture help us as to this? We need to distinguish between what is known as an "assembly meeting" and the Sunday School. The latter cannot be conducted on the lines of the former, and it is quite wrong for a teacher to come to his class unprepared. "Have an outline of sound words,

which (words) thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”*

It can scarcely be necessary to state that, in order to choose the right subject and to have a correct outline of what should be taught, we must be dependent on the Holy Spirit. His guidance should be sought early in the week, and not left until five minutes before we sit down in our classes. May not the neglect to utilise His power in these respects be responsible for much of our failure?

A young teacher was heard to say that she did not get on as well with her class as she ought, and an experienced teacher thereupon asked her how she spent the time before the Sunday School.

“Oh,” she replied, “after the morning service we go home to dinner, and talk and laugh while we are having it.”

“Yes, and what then?”

“Oh, we talk and laugh until it is time to start for school, and then we go down and take our classes.”

The secret was out. Failure was not due so much to want of heart as to lack of appreciation of the importance of the work and how to take it up.

Reading and meditation are the twin necessities of the Sunday School teacher: reading in order to acquire an accurate knowledge of the subject; meditation, which puts

*2 Timothy i. 13, Darby's Translation. He adds a note: “Timothy had heard no form from Paul, but words or doctrines. Hence he had not to keep the form, but to have a summary or outline, so as to state clearly and definitely what he did hold.”

WAITING.

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the soul in an attitude of receptivity, in order to a deeper insight, deeper sympathy with the subject. It is only by going over the selected chapter or incident *from the child's point of view* that it is possible to see where the child's interest or difficulty will be.

Preparation should, however, never be allowed to cramp the teacher. It is possible that a question or incident in the class may turn the whole subject, and much that has been prepared will not be used. It is not necessarily lost, but will be of use at some future time.

Our necessities are then :—

Personal sanctification, (2 Timothy ii. 21).

Prayer, (James i. 5).

Reading, (1 Timothy iv. 13).

Meditation, (1 Timothy iv. 15).

And if to these is added the work of the Spirit of God, we shall have the joy of seeing our scholars brought to a heart knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Next month :—"The Study of the Lesson."

WAITING.

Psalm lxii. 6.

IT is one thing to spread out my needs before God, but quite another to "wait" upon Him. How the waiting time tries my restless will ! I am in such a hurry ; I want it here and *now* ; yet the Psalmist says "*wait thou only upon God.*"

We are very much like Saul, (1 Samuel xiii).

He could not "wait." He found the Philistines drawing nearer and nearer, and his own people leaving him. The Philistines were in number as the sand on the sea shore, with thousands of chariots, and his own handful of terrified people hiding themselves in caves, rocks or anywhere, yet Samuel had not come to offer the offering. Truly a pitiable case! What *could* he do? Waiting was an impossibility as every moment increased the utter hopelessness of the situation. He *acted*, and this was his undoing. Oh, that he could have "waited"!

Yet are we are not often like this? We have brought our matter to God, surely, but can we wait? If we can "wait" on Him, we shall not be ashamed. Instead of this, how often we get anxious and troubled! We see our Philistines drawing nearer and nearer, our case growing more and more hopeless. Yet if we can learn to "wait" on Him, not only will our deliverance come at the right moment, but in the meantime, we shall know the peace and rest of verse 6 of our Psalm; *He is my defence; I shall not be moved!*

"Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry, moves the Spirit there."

A few of my friends were on a mountain a short time ago, and while there a heavy shower could be seen down in the valley, yet up where they were all was sunshine. Can we not know something of an experience like this if we live above the storms?

A. T. SEWELL.

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

A GIRL at a certain college was much admired both for her personal appearance and her artistic abilities. She had very beautiful auburn hair, and seemed to be able to do anything on canvas with her paints and brushes. Her skill in this direction was quite remarkable.

Her college mates asked her the secret of her lovely hair. She mentioned several things : how she brushed it, what she washed it with, and what dressing she used for it.

They asked her also how she managed to produce those wonderful little sketches. She replied that she had given a lot of thought and labour to the subject, and that she had practised for hours together.

One day the mother came to the college to visit her daughter. When she arrived it was observed that she had a head of lovely hair like Dora's. Her friends said :

"Dora, *now* we know where you got your beautiful hair ! It was not through your washing and brushing it, nor through anything you put on it. You got it from your mother !"

At the college the mother was sitting in a room where three of the girls were singing a little extemporaneous trio. It struck her imagination, and taking out a pencil she rapidly made a sketch that was a perfect picture of the scene. The girls when they saw it, said :

"Dora, *this* accounts for your being so clever with your pencil and your paint brushes! You got your gift from your mother!"

Sometimes we see in our fellow-Christians qualities that call forth our whole-hearted admiration. We wonder what the secret can be. Is it the result of much earnest effort, of long continued practice, or what?

The answer is simple. Find it in Philippians i. 11: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are BY JESUS CHRIST." There we have the secret! The things that we admire are found first of all, and in perfection, in Christ. As Christ is reproduced in our lives, His qualities shine forth in us. No amount of endeavour, no earnest effort to "imitate" Him, or "walk in His steps" will produce the effect. Look at Christ, and you see where it all comes from!

Not imitation but *reproduction* is the secret of a Christ-like life. And the reproduction comes through keeping company with Him.

A gentleman who had lived for some years in Japan, and had been honoured with the notice of the Imperial family of that land, had returned home. One day the Mikado's son, who was on a visit to this country, called at his house. He had been commissioned to give a special message of greeting from his royal father.

Unfortunately the gentleman was absent from home when the prince called. During the time that the distinguished visitor was at

the house he had taken his handkerchief from his pocket, thus liberating some of the delicate eastern perfume with which it was sprinkled. When the gentleman returned he at once exclaimed :

“You have had a visit from someone belonging to the royal house of Japan.”

They asked him how he knew. He replied that he detected in the room a particular scent, of which the Mikado and his family had the exclusive use. Their presence, wherever they had been, was recognized by this beautiful fragrance. Thus it was that he knew the prince had been.

It is even so with the fragrance of a Christ-like life. It is due to the fact that Christ has been there, and His company has left its trace in the life of the one that has communed with Him.

Nor is companionship with Christ hard to secure. His own gracious words are : “If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Rev. iii. 20).

Only thus can “the fruits of righteousness” be produced in us. They can only come “by Jesus Christ.”

Just as Dora’s mother, when she came to the college, was recognized as the one from whom her daughter derived her good looks and her artistic skill, so when Christ comes “to be admired in all them that believe” (2 Thess. ii. 10), it will be recognized that He, and He

alone, is the source of all in His saints that has excited the admiration of others. *Then*, HE will be glorified in them (verse 10). May God grant that even *now* HIS NAME may be glorified in us! (verse 12).

EDITOR.

UNCHANGING LOVE.

“His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me.” (Song of Sol. ii. 6).

Those hands of love, once pierced because of
sin ;

Yet I, a child of wrath, am now within
His all-encircling grasp, Who died to win

My wretched, sinful heart, so cold and dead ;
And yet He loved ; for me His blood was shed,
Amazing grace ! no room for doubt or dread.

His left hand 'neath my head, the pain to still,
The throbbing pulse beats calmly at His will,
While joy and peace flow in, the soul to fill.

Oh ! rest divine ! the rest of being there,
What healing balm to soothe each anxious care !
His word said “I will carry, I will bear.”

“His right hand doth embrace me.” May I
know

This strong, protecting hand while here below,
And ever in His own blest likeness grow.

L. R.

“I’M GOING BY THE BOOK.”

“That little tract *I’m Going by the Book*” says a Scottish shipbuilder, “opened my eyes to see that it was not my ideas nor other people’s opinions, but God’s Word, that was to be my guide in regard to eternal things.” May it do the same as a magazine article for any of our readers who still have misgivings as to their salvation.

TWO men, the one a foreman, the other one of the carpenters under him, were standing on the deck of a steamship then on the rocks, in one of the shipbuilding yards on the Clyde.

“Well S——,” said the foreman, “I have been anxious to have a conversation with you. I am told you are one of those people who say they know for certain that they are saved. Is that true?”

“Yes,” said S——, “quite true; thank God, I know I am saved. In fact there is nothing I am more sure of than that I am saved.”

“Well now,” said the foreman, “there is something I cannot see through, how any man can say that he is saved as long as he is in this world. I think it is rather presumptuous for anyone to say so. I used to attend Mr——’s place of worship a good many years ago, and several of the leading men in it pressed me

to join and become a member, but I could not, for I knew I was not a Christian, and told them so, but they urged me on to do it, and told me that that would come all right afterwards. They even said they would get me made a deacon at the next election of office-bearers, but I refused. I left them, and have never gone to any place since, for I concluded the whole thing was a sham, and that there was no reality in Christianity at all."

"Well," said S——, "I'm not at all surprised at you being disgusted at the amount of sham and hypocrisy there is amongst people professing godliness, but after all *there is reality in being saved*, in being a child of God, and in knowing it. What is the breadth of this waterway?"

The foreman, astonished at the apparently sudden change in the conversation, said, "Why, fourteen inches all round, to be sure; what makes you ask that when you know?"

"But are you quite sure that it is to be fourteen inches?"

"Certainly."

"But what makes you so sure?" asked S——.

"Why, *I am going by the book*;" and as he said so, he pulled a small memorandum book out of his pocket, in which were marked the sizes and position of the various things on the deck; "I'm sure it is fourteen inches, for it is here in the book, and I got the book from headquarters. I got it in the drawing office."

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"Oh! I see," said S——. "Now look here; that is just exactly how I know I'm saved. *I'm just going by the Book.* It came from God, it is God's Word. I found in there that I was a lost, condemned sinner, worthy of nothing but the lake of fire; but I also found that '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 iii. 16). I took God at His word, and I'm saved; and you too may be saved if you will, simply as you are, a lost, condemned sinner. Believe in Jesus; that is, trust Him as your Saviour, and you are saved. And then you can say without presumption, I KNOW I am saved, for *I'm going by the Book.*"

Here the conversation ended. Reader, can you say on the authority of God's word, "I know I am saved"? Or are you a false professor, having nothing but a form of godliness? Profession without the new birth will never take you to heaven. J. S.

"AFTER MANY DAYS."

THE promise of Scripture: "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecc. xi. 1), was happily fulfilled in the following instance.

A good many years ago a copy of a children's gospel magazine, published in England, found its way to an out-of-the-way corner of New Zealand, called Cabbage Bay. It contained an

article entitled, "Are you one of God's children?" in which the writer had sought to explain simply the necessity of the new birth as insisted on by our Lord in His conversation with Nicodemus, if a soul is to enter the kingdom of God. (John iii.). The writer had described this experience as a second birthday and had put to his readers the question, "Have you had a second birthday?" indicating that without one, the soul was without hope of ever being with Christ and the redeemed, since Jesus had said so emphatically: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The copy of the magazine was given to a little girl to read one Sunday afternoon on her twelfth birthday with happy results for her and for her sisters and brother, as the following letter written by the father to the editor of the magazine shows.

Dear Editor,

In *Gospel Stories for the Young* there is a piece entitled "Are you one of God's children?" October, 1898.* We live on a sheep-run, forty miles from town and isolated. My youngest girl on her twelfth birthday was reading the above and came to me trembling and weeping, and cried, "I want to find Jesus, and I can't." Through His Word and Spirit's aid she soon found the Saviour as I explained, and so the work went on. This was about three o'clock; we sang and rejoiced together and before retiring I read and talked and prayed with the family as usual, and so Lily and Dorothy went to bed.

*The writer did not receive this letter until the year 1907.

I went to Ernest and found him kneeling, seeking the Lord, and so I tried to help him.

Two saved now. I went into Lily and Dorothy's room, and Dorothy, laughing and crying together, said, “There are two of us now, Lily has just found the Saviour.”

I thanked the Lord very much. Then the eldest girl, Netta, was seeking the Lord and her mother was talking with her; and Dorothy went to her bed and talked with Netta and read verses to her and said, “Why, you are looking at your own heart; look away to Jesus!” and Netta did so, and found salvation.

I then went to Ernest's room and he too had trusted in His finished work and dying on the Cross. Each child had different exercises and experience, but the same Saviour. It was now 10 p.m. and the Lord's power had been known, and we rejoiced.

Four saved and washed in the precious blood of the Lamb in a few short hours. How wonderful! God is sovereign; He worked step by step in His divine order from the youngest to the eldest. How different from man's way! Man would begin with the oldest first, I judge.

Salvation, Giver, Gift, Receiver. We spoke of these and Dorothy said, “I have it, I have two birthdays now. Let us thank Him,” and so we did.

God's way. He saved the youngest first out of four, and then she became a little preacher to the others. First she went to her mother and then came the mother's kiss and embrace, and the song, “My only plea, Christ died for me, etc.” Dorothy was saved in five minutes or less

and so she ran to her brother, a little older, and told him that Jesus had saved her. "Ernest, I have found Jesus, you love Him too."

Family saved for glory! You can imagine how delighted and thankful we, as parents, are to know this, and Christian friends in Auckland too. For some months the four saved have remembered the Lord Jesus with us in the breaking of bread and fellowship of His death.

We often return from a gospel meeting held a few miles away riding through the bush and over the range in the dark—six of us—singing: "Precious, precious blood of Jesus, shed on Calvary," and other hymns, I believe we pass over the very ground where the natives used to fight amongst themselves and hold their cannibal feasts. Can we not rejoice that there the songs of Jesus and His love ascend to Him in glory?

Yours, etc.,

A. W.

Our little story, so full of encouragement for distributors of the printed page is ended, but, reader, allow us to ask you, "Have you been born again?" And if you are not sure, may we lovingly ask you to weigh over carefully the words of Jesus, the Lover of all souls, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Do not rest until, like Dorothy, you are able to say, "I have it, I have two birthdays now."

Listen to the words of Scripture which tell us that "as many as received Him (Christ), to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John i. 12).

A. F. POLLOCK.

“WITH ALL SAINTS.”

ALTHOUGH one has read Eph. iii. 18, 19 hundreds of times, one must confess to having only recently noticed the point and significance of the little phrase, “with all saints,” in that sparkling Scripture gem. Yet in truth the passage does say: “that ye may be able to comprehend *with all saints* what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.”

Someone might have thought it unnecessary to bring in “all saints” just there, where the pen of inspiration is dealing with our understanding the height and depth and greatness of the love of God revealed in Christ. Might not that understanding well be a thing “between the soul and the Saviour,” and altogether apart from any co-operation with our fellow believers?

A few, indeed, will affect to belittle any occupation with our brethren. “You have the saints before you rather than Christ,” they will say, in superior tones which imply that *they* would never make such a mistake. And yet if we are “looking unto Jesus” we cannot help looking toward those who are with Him. And we may be sure that does not displease Him. The same Book which says “consider Him” says also “consider one another.”

But the significant phrase we have happened on deserves further and closer study. Is it possible that we may quite fail to “comprehend” the meaning and scope of Scripture truth if we ignore those in whom it is exemplified? Or

will it be safe if we endeavour to comprehend it with *some* saints: those, for instance, of our own special circle; and quite fail to include in our purview *all* saints?

Let us test the truth referred to in our text by leaving out “all saints” from the study of it, and by the omission assure ourselves that the phrase is indeed essential to the matter. If our thought and sympathy does not truly include *all* saints, can we be sure that we are really in touch with the “breadth” of the love of God, which does include them? If our longsuffering patience fails to linger lovingly over *all* saints (even over those who have not yet learnt all that we know), can we be sure that we really understand the “length” to which the love of God will go?

And the “depth” and “height” also: if we willingly or wantonly omit *one* of God’s saints from our prayerful interest and brotherly love, may we not by so doing lose some of the deepest and highest experiences of the divine compassions, to which we can never attain in self-righteous isolation?

May there not well be room here for heart-searching and confession? “Lord, we have not been doing this thing: this has been our sin of omission. We have had something much less than *all* saints before us: a limited, narrow, sectarian sympathy, wholly unlike the greatness of the heart of God. Lord, forgive our sin. Teach us to love as Thou dost love. Enable us to comprehend with *all* saints, making no exceptions.”

There will always be limitations, for, after all, we are finite creatures. We cannot be in

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touch with all saints *everywhere*, but let us honestly face the question: have we made a point, in our search for truth, of being in hearty relations with all saints *anywhere*? Have we not rather been content to ignore many of them, perhaps most of them, and to go on with our chosen few as if *they* were the “all saints” referred to? How narrow, sectional and sectarian our preferences often are, and how wide is the heart of God!

“With all saints!” How much the little phrase includes! The self-opinionated ones whom we have disliked; the ill-taught ones whom we have disdained; the too ardent or too enthusiastic ones of whom we have disapproved. Yet in some way *all* saints are necessary to us, that we may explore *with them* the breadth, length, depth and height of God’s revelation of Himself in love.

We must not be content to get right with God individually as to our attitude towards all saints, but must endeavour that those we habitually meet with shall do the same. “All Saints’ Church” is the name sometimes given to a building, but where is the company in Christendom to-day which could take with truth that title and which could say: “We claim fellowship with all saints, and all saints may have fellowship with us”? Many may have heard of “your faith in Christ Jesus,” but have they also heard of “the love which ye have to *all* the saints”? (Col. i. 4).

How searching is God’s Word, and also how mighty in its saving power! Why, every division in Christendom would be healed if the Scriptures we are considering were obeyed by

all. The same love to *all* saints which characterized Philemon individually (Philemon, verse 5) was also characteristic of the church at Colosse as a whole (Col. i. 4). What an excellent testimony it would be were it “heard” of some company of Christians to-day: “Those believers have the same love and the same care for *all* the people of God.”

Naturally the enemy will combat this truth, though not, perhaps, with avowed hostility. With pious phrases, as an angel of light, he will suggest that it is better to “comprehend” with a select few and not with the crowd,—most certainly not with *all* saints. He will explain quite plausibly that anything so comprehensive as that might involve us in very undesirable associations, with some who, though assuredly saints, are not our sort of saints at all. He may suggest that to do any such thing savours of “seeking a wider path” (though of course not wider than divine love); or he may allow that we should “comprehend with all saints” theoretically, so long as we do nothing of the sort actually. He always has plausible reasons why the teaching of Scripture should not rule our lives.

Finally, there is discrimination in the phrase. “All saints” means all God’s holy people and no others, but the scope and simplicity of such discrimination mark it as divine. We should naturally elect to “comprehend” with those we like, those of our way of thinking as to . . . perhaps even with those whose holiness does not put us too much to shame; but God’s plan is that we may comprehend *with all saints* the breadth and length and height and depth,

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because without including them all in the outlook of our souls, our vision will be diminished and distorted.

S. E. MNAIR.

**“THY LOVE TO ME WAS
WONDERFUL.”**

2 Samuel i. 26.

“Thy love to me was wonderful!” O Saviour,
can it be
That Thou could'st ever utter such wondrous
words of me?
May I so love Thee, Master, as praise like this
to win,
I, who Thy grace resisted, and lived so long in
sin?

What though of all I strip me, my girdle and
my bow,
The sword so dearly trusted, and all on Thee
bestow?
What are they worth, Lord Jesus? What are
they worth to Thee?
That Thou should'st ever utter such wondrous
words of me?

Oh, wonderful, most wonderful, is Thy great
love to me,
So deep, so broad, so boundless, so vast, so high,
so free!
Oh, let it now, Lord Jesus, so knit my heart to
Thine,
That Thou may'st see Thy wondrous love
reflected back in mine.

H. MAXWELL WRIGHT, *Portugal*.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

(II.)

The Study of the Lesson.

THE Lord Jesus, when He sent His disciples out as sheep in the midst of wolves to testify before governors and kings, told them to take no thought beforehand how or what they should speak, for the word should be given them by the Spirit of their Father. When, however, He sent them forth to teach, He told them to teach the things they had already learned, He having opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. The study of the Word and prayer is the general preparation for teaching. But there is a special side of preparation which is important if the children are to understand and take an interest in what they are learning.

When the Lord gathered the people around Himself and taught them, He constantly drew illustrations either from the Old Testament Scriptures familiar to His hearers or from actions or scenes of every-day life equally familiar. Our children live in different times and circumstances and such expressions as washing the feet, uncovering the roof, grinding at the mill, dipping the hand in the dish or sitting at the receipt of custom, convey no meaning at all to their minds, while to those who heard them from the Lord's lips, they conveyed the exact message He intended.

Suppose that after prayerful consideration you have chosen a subject for your class next week. Read it over at least on Sunday evening

that you may have it before your mind during the week, may imagine yourself in front of your class and think how you can best explain and illustrate the passage, and above all make up your mind as to the particular idea you wish the children to take hold of and carry away. Indefinite statements, however true, make no particular impression and leave the child's mind quite free to occupy itself with other matters. By thus going over the lesson, you will at least get in your own mind a clear idea of what you are going to teach. But you may perhaps have time and opportunity to sit down during the week with your Bible before you for more definite study. It is helpful sometimes to take a concordance and look out every reference to the principal words which occur in the lesson. Take for instance, the parable of the Ten Virgins. Find the words oil, lamp, wise, foolish or any others which bear upon the application you intend to make, and see for yourself all that God says in His Word on that particular subject, not that you will be able to use in the class a tenth part of what you find, but you will get your own ideas corrected by the teaching of God's Word through the Holy Spirit.

As to the details of the parable suggested, there are several points which need explanation. The description of an Eastern wedding will bring the scene vividly before the children, *e.g.*, the two processions, that of the bridegroom going out to meet the bride, and that of the bride going to meet the bridegroom. Weddings take place at night in the East and lamps are carried. A drawing of a lamp would

interest the class, with the larger oil vessel, which is worn slung round the neck and from which the little lamp, only big enough perhaps to hold an hour's supply of oil at a time, must be constantly refilled. These things may seem trivial to some, but they are not so in reality, and even if such explanations give you the trouble of a visit to the British Museum where you can see the things for yourself, or to a library where you may find them explained and illustrated, it will be time well spent.

But of course such explanations and illustrations are only means to an end, and must be kept in their proper place. To quote a well-known writer on Sunday Schools:—"Remember you have immortal souls to deal with. Very ordinary children they may be, but the soul of each is precious in the sight of God . . . it is not in order to amuse them, to help them to spend a pleasant hour, or to fill them with learning so that they may pass a creditable examination; it is to bring them face to face with God and His Word, that you sit down to prepare for your lesson."

But there is something more to be done before we go to the class on Sunday afternoon. If we know the children we are going to teach, let us bring each child's name to God in prayer and ask Him to suit the lesson to that child's needs and circumstances, and surely we may with confidence look to see the fruit of our work, when the reaping time comes, in the salvation of that child's soul. The Lord Jesus died to win it for Himself, and we should think no trouble or time wasted which helps us to interest these little ones in the story of His great love.

HOW ELIJAH PRAYED.

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In conclusion I quote a few words from another:—

“A teacher who has not only read but diligently studied his Bible will not be alarmed when he is asked on an emergency to take a class without having time for special preparation. Relying on the Holy Spirit to lead him to the right use of so much as he already knows, he may go without fear to the post he is required to fill.”

Next month:—“Thoroughness.”

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

HOW ELIJAH PRAYED.

WE understand very little about intelligent prayer. It is opening out to many as a very definite work, as much a “work” as preaching. Turn to James v. 16 (R.V.), “The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its WORKING.”

Now observe how prayer worked in the example mentioned by James. He refers to Elijah and says he was a man of like nature with us, and then proceeds to show the effects of his prayer. The WORKING of his prayer was such, that when he prayed that the heavens should not give rain, there was no rain.

To be able to pray so that the heavens close over *a whole country* is “work” indeed. We

have not understood the possibilities of this work of prayer. Prayer, to many, is something to be done when there is a bit of time free, and even then but rarely. But prayer is a definite work, greater and vaster in its issues than any other service to be done on earth, if the soul understood *how* to pray.

What we need is our minds open to the possibilities of such prayer, and to set ourselves to know God, so that we can pray like Elijah. Here is a tremendous possibility to any believer willing to learn. If you could learn to know God, so as to know the mind of God when God wanted such and such a thing done, you could pray like Elijah. Elijah knew both God and *the will of God* so as to pray the prayer that worked for Israel. You too could touch the whole country, yea, the whole world in the same way if you knew God's will; for prayer *according to the will of God* "availeth much in its working."

Then simply it is said, "And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain." That is all that James says about such a tremendous thing. He does not say, "What a wonderful Elijah!" There is no excess of language in the Bible, but sober statements, with no exaggeration, but a calm, majestic omnipotence. When God does vast things He does them quietly, just as He did in answer to the one who prayed and the heavens were opened and gave rain.

SELECTED.

WHY DID CHRIST BUY YOU?

THAT He *did* buy you, if your Christianity is more than a mere name, is certain.

“Ye are bought with a price,” we read, and the price paid was a heavy one : His own life-blood. And now, in the words of Mark ix. 41, you “belong to Christ.” You are His property.

Were you then of such exceeding value that He should buy you at this tremendous cost ? What had He in view when He paid the awful price ?

Let us, to make this clear, borrow an illustration. A miser lived in a wretched little hut on a valuable piece of land, a large corner lot in the part of an American city where millionaires had their princely residences. Many offers were made to him for his property, but he simply raised his price and clung to his miserable hovel. The roof leaked ; the floors were broken ; the windows had rags stuffed in where the panes were lacking but still the old man went on living there.

Dosing one afternoon on the porch, he was roused by a visitor, who turned out to be the agent of a very wealthy man who wanted to buy the ramshackle old place, and who was prepared to pay any price for it.

“What will you take for the lot ?” asked the visitor.

"One hundred thousand dollars," replied the miser, thinking no doubt that the mention of such an exorbitant figure would prevent any more being said on the subject. But to his surprise the agent said, "Very well. Sign this paper, please."

He handed the old man the paper after filling in the amount.

"Here is a cheque for ten thousand to bind the contract," he continued, "and I shall be round in ten days with the remainder of the money."

The miser's conscience began to hurt him for having asked a sum for his lot so vastly in excess of its value. He thought that the least he could do would be to have the necessary repairs done to the hut, and he set about fixing it up.

In ten days the purchaser, his agent, two witnesses and a lawyer called. The deed was produced and duly signed and sealed. When all was completed, the old man turned to the new owner and remarked: "I hope you have observed the repairs and decorations I have had done. New boards have been put in the floor, glass in the windows, and tiles on the roof where they were needed."

"That is nothing to me," said the other "for I am going to tear the whole thing down."

"But why?" asked the miser. "I have spent good money in having it fixed up."

"But is it not all mine now?" said the purchaser, "may I not do as I please with my own? Your hovel is of no use to me. But there is

something here which will be of great use, and for which I have paid this tremendous price. The thing that I value is *the situation*. On it I intend to build a beautiful mansion. Do you see? I wanted the situation—*only the situation.*”

Herein lies a lesson of the utmost importance for us. Christ has bought us, not for anything that we can do or produce, not for the sake of any endeavours that we may be able to make in His cause or any service that we can perform in His interests. “To Him, Who values us all at our proper worth, you and I are of higher price than anything that we can hope to achieve.”*

He paid the tremendous price because of what He wanted to do with us and in us. *He wanted the situation* that He might build in us His dwelling and form us according to His own designs.

Are we willing to let Him do as He pleases with His own property? Or are we absorbed with the importance of what we are trying to do for Him?

EDITOR.

PHEBE OUR SISTER.

IT would be no small undertaking, in the early days of the Church's history, to carry an important document from Corinth to Rome; yet Phebe was the honoured messenger chosen

*P. Whitwell Wilson, *The Christ We Forget*; page 177.

by the apostle Paul to convey his great foundation epistle to the Christians in that city (Rom. xvi. 1).

The epistle to the Romans, it may be said, was Phebe's "letter of commendation" to the saints at Rome. To the believers located there Paul writes:—"I commend to you Phebe, our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, that ye receive her as becometh saints." Before mentioning Phebe's service, he speaks of that which marks her off, along with the Roman believers, as "chosen of God from before the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 4; 2 Tim. i. 9). No greater honour can anyone have, either now or hereafter, than to be a "saint by calling" (1 Cor. i. 2, 9). It was from this holy and blessed standpoint they were to receive and welcome this dear servant of God from Cenchrea. In exactly what capacity she served we are not told, but it was evidently that which had the stamp of divine approval. And the apostle sees in Phebe a fitting vessel to be the bearer of his communications to the believers at Rome, and also, as directed of the Lord, a useful sphere for the exercise of her gift and loving service in the assembly of God in that city.

"And that ye assist her," he goes on to say, "in whatsoever business she hath need of you." Being personally a stranger to them, they were to give her a hearty welcome into their midst, and to recognize in her one who had already been much used of the Lord in loving and devoted service among the children of God elsewhere.

"For," the apostle continues, "she hath been a succourer of many." Here were Phebe's credentials. And in his own exquisite and tactful

way he adds, "and of myself also." The saints at Rome might well, therefore, receive this beloved sister with open arms.

In this wonderful chapter, so full of touching allusion to the saints at Rome, Phebe heads the list. How the apostle delights to point out, and enlarge upon, the variegated traits of Christ that shine out in these dear believers. Do we not learn from it that God takes account of every little detail in the history of His children, and that it is His pleasure to mark and commend all that is seen of His grace in them? The apostle could say of these saints:—"I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (chap. i. 8). And in chap. xvi. in his greetings and salutations to these beloved saints and servants, he tenderly discloses the various ways in which that faith had found expression. How he lingers in loving detail under the hand of the Holy Spirit over these faithful men and women of God, as he thankfully bears witness to their love and zeal in the interests of Christ.

In verses 21-23, Paul's fellow-labourers and companions join him in hearty salutations to the saints at Rome: valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, who were standing shoulder to shoulder with the apostle, in the forefront of the battle against the powers of darkness.

The epistle closes with a brief intimation of the mystery which had been kept secret since the world began, but which was now made known. We can well understand the gratitude and thankfulness of the believers at Rome when Phebe handed over this important apostolic epistle, in which was given a full unfolding of the mind of

God in regard to man's natural condition, as well as making known the details of His intervention in grace to meet that condition.

Scripture is silent as to the movements of Phebe after her arrival in the great Gentile city. But we may be assured that the reading of the epistle and the apostle's warm commendation of this beloved servant would bind all their hearts together in happy "fellowship of life." How much we need such hallowed intercommunion to-day! How greatly the Phebes are wanted! How many need the gentle sisterly care, and the kindly succour, so soothing and grateful in a world where there are so many crushed and bruised hearts! Is there not a wide field in the assemblies of God's children for the Phebes, the Dorcases, and the Marys? May *we* not lay to heart the apostle's commendation of a beloved sister, and challenge ourselves as to how far we are on the outlook for those who, like Phebe, can be spoken of as a "succourer of many"? The Spirit of God has been pleased to record this of her, not alone for the believers at Rome, but for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. It is in this same Epistle that we learn that "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" (xii. 4, 5). When we bear in mind that this wonderful truth embraces every true believer in Jesus on the earth, our hearts may well be stirred up in gratitude and praise to God for the way He has wrought in sovereign love and grace, through the death and resurrection of His beloved Son, to bring about such marvellous results. And seeing that

we are all absolutely indispensable to Christ and also to one another, how earnestly and longingly should our hearts be going out in fervent love and desire for the spiritual welfare of *all the beloved sheep and lambs of the flock of Christ!* "A new commandment I give unto you," said the Lord to His disciples, "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" (John xiii. 34, 35).

G. F. EDINGTON.

THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE rise and early progress of any remarkable movement must ever have an interest for the thoughtful and the enquiring. We see then some of the original labourers at work. We learn something of the springs of the movement. And, whilst noticing results, we can trace the causes which conduced to its success. If that is true of the many remarkable movements of which this world has been the theatre, what shall we say of the rise and early progress of Christianity? That must ever be to the Christian a study of intense interest.

A movement like it has never been known. It started into life with all

the energy of a giant,

just when, to human thoughts, the mission

inaugurated by its Founder had received its death-blow. It spread without human patronage and without the aid of human power. The great ones of the earth where it arose, and those who wielded the sword of government in different countries to which it spread, were none of them at first in its favour, but for the most part manifestly hostile. Yet it progressed. Threats, imprisonments, scourgings, tumults, legal prosecutions, and even the fear of martyrdom, were alike insufficient to cow its supporters, or to check their ardour in propagating their views. It was intensely aggressive. It admitted of no compromise with any creed in the world. It claimed to be the true faith; and, as such, alone offering that which was needful for everlasting salvation. It had confessedly truth in common with Judaism, yet was jealous of any Judaising teaching. It alone, it proclaimed, could furnish any enquirer with

the full revelation

vouchsafed by God, for the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. iii. 15).

We read in the Gospels of the birth and life on earth of its Founder. The birthplace, however, of the movement recorded in the Acts was really an upper room in Jerusalem, its time was the feast of Pentecost, and its first company numbered one hundred and twenty souls. But the number of its adherents in that city swelled to upwards of three thousand ere its first day had closed. And that remarkable result was effected simply by preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Soon the company numbered five thousand. Priests and people in Jerusalem and in Judea,

and subsequently men of wealth and position elsewhere, came under the sound of the preached Word, felt its power, and bowed to it as the truth of God. Never before had people of all classes and various creeds in such numbers given heed to a message from heaven.

That a history should be written of such a movement need not surprise us. But, as with

another remarkable movement,

fifteen centuries earlier, only one history has in each case come down, written in the latter case by an eye-witness, and in the former by a contemporary of that which he records.

Profane history of their several dates, as far as preserved to our day, knows little or nothing of the marvels that the inspired historians record. Nor is this to be wondered at. For as with Israel at the Exodus, so with Christians in apostolic times, the conflict lay between them and the ruling powers of their day. Naturally, chroniclers of those times, who recorded the victories of their rulers, were little likely to hand down records of their defeats. And such there were in connection with the struggles against the emancipation of the Israelites, as well as against the rise and fall of Christianity. An authentic history, however, of both these epochs. Inspired histories we have to call them, because written under the guidance and by the direction of the Holy Ghost.

Remarkable indeed, as we have called it, was the first movement we have referred to, because it was the springing up, as it were, suddenly of a nation into a political existence, with a country in prospect to which they were marching. Yet,

the second movement was the more remarkable, since it was the taking out of nations of a people to be gathered only to the Lord. In the former case it was the dawn of political life of a nation born, as it were, in a day. In the latter it was

the calling out of an assembly,

limited to no country, peculiar to no race, embracing men and women of different nationalities, formerly practising diverse religious rites, and the blending them into one company, uniting all by the tie of spiritual brotherhood, and knitting them together as members of that one body of which the Head was the crucified One in heaven.

Marvellous were some facts in connection with each. The Red Sea had been divided for the passage of the Israelitish host, and the waters of the Jordan were arrested to let the people go over dryshod. That night in the sea and that day in the river channel, were surely never forgotten by those who were present. And night after night, too, in the wilderness, a food, hitherto unknown on earth and never again supplied after Israel rested on the west of Jordan, fell around their camp wherever it was pitched.

Yet more marvellous were some of the facts connected with the latter movement. Galilæan fishermen were heard suddenly speaking in languages they had never learnt. They spoke intelligibly and doubtless fluently. They spoke in the ears of those in whose mother tongue they were expressing themselves. These heard, they marvelled, and attested that the men were speaking in the tongue in which each listener was born.

Other marvels there were,

for, what had never been known, the shadow of Peter passing along the street was eagerly desired by sick ones to overshadow them, and clothes from Paul's body conveyed healing virtue to such as had need of it.

Further, the apostles were imprisoned: the doors were locked; the keepers outside were on guard; yet the whole company, the Twelve, were brought out by angelic agency, without the knowledge or suspicion of even one of the warders, who were found in the morning to be guarding an empty gaol! And the apostles, thus set free, were found continuing their mission, publicly speaking in the court of the Temple "all the words of this life."

The rulers now doubted, and well they might, whereunto that would grow. Then Peter, arrested and imprisoned by the king and chained to two soldiers to keep him safe, was set free in the hours of night without one of his guards being aware of it. He walked out of the prison unchallenged, and, accompanied by the angel, passed out by the iron gate into the city, which had opened of its own accord. Bolts and bars, soldiers and warders, were alike powerless to detain those whom the Lord would set free. Divine power was working for and with the Christians.

Another startling fact

was recorded. The relentless persecutor of the new faith was suddenly converted and became a most zealous champion of the truth, confounding the Jews as he reasoned with them. The work

still spread wider and wider. Gentiles were converted and Christian assemblies began to be formed outside the land of promise. What the rabble of Thessalonica declared was indeed true—the world was being turned upside down.

Then at Philippi Paul and Silas were imprisoned and their feet made fast in the stocks; and though their backs had been lacerated by scourging, unjustly and unlawfully administered, and their wounds remained undressed, yet their spirits were free, and prayers and praises at night poured forth from their lips. The prisoners heard them. Suddenly an earthquake took place. The doors were opened. Everyone's bonds were loosed. The prisoners were set free. Yet none escaped. Of liberty, so dear to the captive, no one availed himself. And, stranger than all, the jailor was found prostrate before those two whose feet he had made fast in the stocks, anxiously enquiring of them the way of salvation. Nor did he ask in vain. The enemy would, if possible, stop the work in Philippi. It burst out afresh where none would have looked for it—inside the walls of that city's prison.

Then, too,

the energy of faith

as displayed in the Acts, must not be forgotten. We see the disciples, when threatened by the rulers at Jerusalem, kneeling together in prayer for boldness to speak the Word. And Paul, stoned one day at Lystra and drawn out of the city for dead, departed on the next day to preach the gospel in Derbe. Nothing damped their energies or chilled their ardour. And what shall we say of manifestations of grace,—as Stephen

praying for his murderers, and Paul and Silas preserving the jailor from impending self-destruction?

No romance could be more thickly studded with incidents of the deepest interest than the short, simple, yet truthful narrative given in the Acts, destitute as it is of any rhetorical flourish or wordy embellishment. This history which Luke has, under God, given us is, we venture to say, without parallel in the ordinary writings of men. It is the history of the power of the Word of God, that sword of the Spirit wielded by men under the guidance of the Holy Ghost—miracles attesting in the first place the commencement of a new dispensation, and then confirming the word of the first preachers of the Christian faith.

C. E. STUART.

CHRIST'S JEWEL.

LORD Jesus Christ, our Saviour
 We worship and adore Thee
 Since Thou hadst not before Thee
 The righteous or the just
 When Thou to earth descended'st;
 But wounded men, and dying,
 By life's hard highway lying,
 Thou raised'st from the dust.

Amazed are we to hear Thee
 Assure us that a treasure,
 For Thine own joy and pleasure,
 Thou sawest here below ;

CHRIST'S JEWEL

How that Thy church beloved
 (Like some fair pearl yet hidden)
 Still unredeemed, sin-ridden,
 Lay in this world of woe.

And so, with love's great longing
 (We prize the matchless story)
 Thou laid'st aside Thy glory,
 Thy kingly, heavenly dress,
 That Thou should'st be our Saviour—
 Thy very life Thou gavest,
 A cruel death Thou braved'st,
 That jewel to possess.

'Twas grace divine, and mercy,
 That could discern the jewel
 Where sin's mark, foul and cruel
 Was manifest alone.
 Though lost and lorn and lonely,
 Thou to Thy heart would'st take us,
 And by Thy blood would'st make us
 Meet for Thy glorious throne.

We praise Thy grace, Lord Jesus ;
 On such unequalled blessing
 We meditate, confessing
 Ourselves unworthy still.
 We take Thy great salvation,
 Thy love our soul rejoices,
 Thy mercies all, our voices
 With heart-felt praises fill.

Translated from the Portuguese of

R. HOLDEN, by S. E. MCNAIR.

THE WRONG WAY AND THE RIGHT WAY.

Phil. iv. 2.

LET Euodias look coldly and critically upon Syntyche, and occupy her mind with whatever she can find in her character or ways that is contrary to the virtues here mentioned, and the breach between them will be immeasurably widened. Let Syntyche retort by exaggerating every defect or short-coming in her sister in Christ, and she will soon become so alienated from her that reconciliation will be almost impossible.

But, on the other hand, if Euodias, realizing that Syntyche has been redeemed to God by the same precious blood as herself, and is indwelt by the same Holy Spirit, determines to think of the virtues or anything worthy of praise in her life and personality, to magnify her graces and minimise her faults, refusing to indulge in unkind criticism, she will be so attracted by what is of Christ in her that she will find herself linked in heart to the one from whom she had previously turned coldly away.

Is not this what we all greatly need in our dealings with each other? In every truly converted soul there are the manifest inwrought virtues of the Spirit of God; things that are honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report—the activities of the new nature. If we think on these things, instead of dwelling upon the

failures to which all are liable, our fellowship one with another will become increasingly precious as the days go by.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL (III.)

Thoroughness.

WITH reference to the actual preparation of the lesson, a few suggestions may be made, based on personal experience.

Let our motto be "Thorough." Languid desires and half-hearted attempts are worse than useless. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Begin early in the week by choosing a subject. For this you must look up to God for wisdom, because it must be chosen with regard to the general intelligence and capacity of your scholars. Do not wait for the "happy thought," or be so unwise as to choose a subject at random, but make it a very definite matter of prayer. It may be urged by some that they have no time for preparation. Are we to understand by this that they never, or rarely, read the Word of God alone? If such be the case, they can be of little use as teachers, because their own souls want nourishing and feeding; they can have none to spare for others, if there is any meaning at all in that Scripture which says "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The most successful teachers, and those whom God uses for conversion, are not, as a rule, men of leisure, but men and women who are in business six days

out of seven, and who have to plan out their time so as to fit in their many duties.

When you have got your subject, endeavour to start preparation at once. If you find that you cannot prepare early in the week, at any rate choose your subject early, and you will find that the mind will work unconsciously on the subject, shaping it and providing illustrations, so that when you do manage to sit down, you will find your heart and mind well stored. Don't attempt to read your Bible in a room where there are others laughing and talking—you must be alone. If possible, go to your bedroom and shut yourself in. After committing yourself to God for guidance, help and wisdom, read the incident or chapter selected. Always read with pen and paper in hand, in order that anything which strikes you forcibly may be jotted down. If it strikes you, it will most likely strike your class.

After having read the incident, shut your Bible and try to write it out in your own words. What a revelation it is to compare your account with what God has said! You will find that you have put in what God purposely omitted and you have omitted just the thing that God laid emphasis upon. This, more than anything else, will help to fix the Scripture in your mind, and enable you to seize the point of the chapter.

Then read it sentence by sentence, verse by verse, and find out what links there are between the different verses. The Scripture is not thrown together anyhow. There is divine design in its order and arrangement.

When you have got this clear, go through from the child's point of view, and endeavour to tell it in the child's own language. You may pre-

pare it in a way which will appeal to the boy or girl. A famous schoolmaster once said "The teacher's first thought should be the child he has to teach, the teacher's second thought should be the child he has to teach, the teacher's third and last thought should be the child he has to teach."

I am reminded of an incident which I witnessed recently. Walking through a suburban town, I noticed a boy behaving in a most extraordinary way on the pavement, just in front of a large advertisement hoarding. The streets were almost deserted, and I don't think he could have seen me as I was some distance away. He was absorbed in a picture on the hoarding, and presently adopted a boxing attitude, sparring up to the picture in the regulation style. I saw a great fight in progress, but there was only one pugilist—my boy pugilist. He passed on after having relieved himself in this way and, my curiosity aroused, I went to see what could have moved him so. It was a picture of a boxing match, and the management had thought fit to show the ring and the pugilists, in order to attract public attention. It was only too successful, for it gripped the boy, stirred him and roused the devil in him. I crave to be able to present eternal things in a way which shall in like manner grip and keep the attention of my boys. Therefore seek grace and power from on high to tell boys things in their own language which they can understand and carry away with them.

Now just a few words as to illustrations. You will find truths compressed within a sentence which, as they stand, will convey nothing to the child. You must try to illustrate them, so that they will *live* in the mind. Is it a sentence

which conveys the truth of self-sacrifice? Illustrate it by a story of a captain who gives up his lifebuoy to a stowaway found on the wrecked ship, and who loses his life in consequence. Are weights and measures or money referred to, which are Eastern, and convey absolutely nothing to the boy? Turn the liquid measures into pints and quarts; he probably began his business life by fetching drink for his parents, and so knows all about them. An example of what I mean is given in Matthew xviii. The servant is said to owe his lord 10,000 talents. You may say. "It is a lot of money, and more than you or I shall ever possess." But if you *illustrate* it, they will get hold of it better. Tell them that 10,000 talents would not be reached if you placed £5 notes one upon another in a pile as high as St. Paul's Cathedral.

But illustrations must be simple and clear to be useful. Who has not heard of that teacher who desired to illustrate what faith was, by saying "Suppose I was to put a loaf of bread under a seat in a boat, without you seeing me do it. You did not see the loaf, and you did not see me put it there, but I tell you that it is there—that is faith." He thought the illustration had gone home and asked "What is faith?" and was surprised to get for an answer, "A loaf of bread under the seat of a boat."

Use the "concrete" in teaching. I hope all understand what is meant by the "concrete." A concrete name is the name of a thing; an abstract name is the name of an attribute or a quality. An illustration of the use of concrete is given in Psalm xlii: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after

Thee, O God." The Psalmist illustrates the vehemence of his soul's desire by a reference to the hart—a concrete thing.

So then illustrate! illustrate!! illustrate!!! The Lord Jesus did it with grown-up people. How much more we ought to do so with the children. He illustrated truths by a reference to the lilies of the field, sparrows, wolves and sheep, and the vine. Even from heaven He spoke to Saul of Tarsus and used the ox-goad as an illustration. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."

Don't try to teach too much. One truth insisted on and well illustrated will do more than a hundred generalities, however beautiful they may be. To use an illustration that everybody will appreciate (and also to utilise the concrete) "One tenpenny nail well driven home will hold better than a whole box of tintacks." The art of teaching is to know when to leave off. Teaching is not bricklaying; nor can you shovel knowledge into the minds of the children. They can receive up to given point, and then they refuse to take in more.

What has been said may appear to some to be the "counsel of perfection," but if "it is worth a life to save a soul," we should see that nothing which would make the work successful is lacking on our part. God alone can work in the soul—"God gave the increase" is ever true. But if we occupy the place of workers, He will not work through us if we are slack or half-hearted.

Next month: "The Study of the Child."

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CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DECLINE.

ONE cause is DISCOURAGEMENT. With desperate efforts we seek to crush the life out of the serpent of sin, but in spite of our struggles to overcome we are forced to repeat the confession of Luther's friend, "Old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon." The discovery of the badness of the old nature, and the repeated failure to do the good which we long to do, forces from us the cry, "O wretched man that I am ! Who will deliver me ?" And in our disappointment we may lose the sense of the divine approval and may settle down under a sense of partial estrangement from the Lord as if this were the normal Christian life.

It is a great relief when we see that God has settled with the old nature, so far as our standing is concerned, and therefore will never condemn us on account of its presence within us. He *has* condemned it already, at the Cross.

This does not mean complete victory, however. In spite of our knowledge of our standing in Christ we may repeatedly fall under the power of temptation and infirmity, and be constantly repeating past failures, until we give up hope of being any different, and settle down on a low plane of Christian living. Some have found deliverance from this condition of soul when they experienced a sudden infilling by the Holy Spirit, and they at once leaped on to a

higher plane of living, victory taking the place of defeat. But as a rule it takes time to form the victory habit by persistently resisting the evil, and when we have fallen, getting up again at once and bravely renewing the fight, at the same time seeking the energy of the Holy Spirit, the great Empowerer.

And there is apparent failure in service. It has been said that most of the cases of declension amongst the officers of the Salvation Army are due to this cause. No headway seems to be made. No conversions can be recorded. The citadel of unbelief and indifference seems impregnable. The word of the Gospel seems not to grip or penetrate. And discouragement and backsliding of soul may be the result. Under these circumstances it is imperative that we should realise that Christ Himself has sent us to do the work in which we are engaged, and which seems to yield so little result. Such labour cannot be in vain.

And discouragement may be due to trial upon trial falling upon the heart, until it lies broken and bleeding, and all zest of life has fled, and the outlook is a hopeless grey. It is not often that "sorrows past endurance" assail us, but sometimes trouble seems to be overwhelming, and no way of escape can be seen, and we are ready to give up the fight. Then we shall be saved by long-suffering, endurance, faith and prayer, and the determination to view our troubles in the light of a work by which our salvation is being wrought out.

PERSECUTION is seldom met with to-day in this country, but it may not be quite extinct. Persecution may brace the soul and strengthen it ; on the other hand it may crush all resiliency out of it and leave it permanently maimed. Many a godly woman has become a backslider through the brutal treatment meted out to her by an ungodly husband.

It is almost superfluous to name the PLEASURES OF THE WORLD as a cause of soul declension. Sweet pleasure is the "acid test" of young believers, and under the searching test loyalty to Christ is not always maintained. Later in life, business and domestic cares may engross the attention to such an extent that the things eternal are put in the background.

And there is FALSE DOCTRINE, either in the form of religious infidelity or of some freak "ism." The former paralyses the faith, while the latter inflates the victim with spiritual pride and side-tracks him into the vagaries of fanaticism.

E. ADAMS.

A DECAYING CHURCH.

WE once saw, in the graveyard of a small Worcestershire village, the sepulchres of *all* the brethren and sisters who had once composed an assembly of Christians in that place. We emphasise the word *all* ; it is literally true. One by one they had died, and the last survivor had recently followed the others to the

grave. Their meeting room stood empty and disused.

Why was this permitted? Why did God allow this light to be extinguished, this testimony to become extinct? We know not. We can only recall what a well-known servant of Christ used to say :—

“IF YOU DO NOT GO OUT, YOU WILL DIE OUT.”

What else can be expected, where there is no going out, with divinely-given energy and enthusiasm, to carry the gospel to perishing sinners?

But there is such a thing as *spiritual* death. Men may continue on earth, but the assembly to which they belong may be in the throes of spiritual decay and death.

The story is told of an artist who was once asked to paint a picture of a decaying church. To the astonishment of many, instead of putting on the canvas an old, tottering ruin, the artist painted a stately edifice of modern grandeur. Through the open portals could be seen the richly carved pulpit, the magnificent organ, and the beautiful stained glass windows.

Within the grand entrance was a plate of elaborate design for the offerings of fashionable worshippers. But—and here the artist's conception of a decaying church was made known—right above the offering plate, suspended from a nail in the wall there hung a square box, bearing the legend,

“FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS”

but right over the slot through which contributions ought to have gone he had painted a huge cobweb.

Was not the artist right? Where the interests of Christ are forgotten and the work of God, whether at home or abroad, neglected, there may be material prosperity, but there will surely be spiritual stagnation and decay.

The appalling thing is that this state of things may come to pass, and yet the assembly in question be quite unconscious thereof. Those who compose it may be orthodox in their creed and respectable in their manner of life. They may plume themselves on having “wonderful ministry” and on being different from other Christians.

But neglect of aggressive gospel work, Sunday school evangelism and foreign missionary effort brings its own nemesis, and to-day we see the pitiful sight of assemblies, once the sphere of the gracious activities of the Spirit of God, stagnant, decaying, and in some cases, dead.

EDITOR.

THE LAST YEARS OF PAUL.

THE book of Acts suddenly breaks off with a brief summary of Paul's two years' imprisonment at Rome. Is this because there was no more to tell? When his trial came on, did it issue in his condemnation and death?

Or did he get out of prison and resume his old occupations?

Where Luke's lucid narrative so suddenly ends tradition comes in, proffering its doubtful aid. It tells us that he was acquitted on his trial and let out of prison; that he resumed his travels, visiting Spain among other places; but that before long he was arrested again and sent back to Rome, where he died a martyr's death at the cruel hands of Nero.

What Scripture tells us.

Happily, however, we are not altogether dependent on the precarious aid of tradition. We have writings of Paul's own, undoubtedly subsequent to the two years of his first imprisonment. These are what are called the Pastoral Epistles, the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. In these we see that he regained his liberty and resumed his employment of re-visiting the churches and founding new ones. His footsteps cannot, indeed, be any longer traced with certainty. We find him back at Ephesus and Troas; we find him in Crete, an island at which he touched on his voyage to Rome, and in which he may then have become interested; we find him exploring new territory in the northern part of Greece. We see him once more, like the commander of an army who sends his aides-de-camp all over the field of battle, sending out his younger assistants to care for and watch over the churches.

Fresh Outbreak of Persecution.

But this was not to last long. An event had happened immediately after his release from

prison, which could not but influence his fate. This was the burning of Rome, an appalling disaster, the glare of which even at this distance makes the heart shudder. It was probably a mad freak of the malicious monster who then wore the imperial purple. But Nero saw fit to attribute it to the Christians, and instantly the most atrocious persecution broke out against them. Of course the fame of this soon spread over the Roman world; and it was not likely that the foremost apostle of Christianity could long escape. Every Roman governor knew that he could not do the Emperor a more pleasing service than by sending Paul to him in chains.

In the Mamertine Dungeon.

It was not long, accordingly, before Paul was laying once more in prison at Rome. And it was no mild imprisonment this time, but the worst known to the law. No troops of friends now filled his room, for the Christians of Rome had been massacred or scattered, and it was dangerous for any one to avow himself a Christian.

We have a letter written from his dungeon, the last he ever wrote, the Second Epistle to Timothy, which affords us a glimpse of unspeakable pathos into the circumstances of the prisoner. He tells us that one part of his trial is already over. Not a friend stood by him as he faced the bloodthirsty tyrant who sat on the judgment-seat. But the Lord stood by him, and enabled him to make the emperor and the spectators in the crowded basilica hear the sound of the Gospel. The charge against him had broken down. But he had no hope of escape. Other stages of the

trial were yet to come, and he knew that evidence to condemn him would either be discovered or manufactured.

Paul's State in Prison.

His second letter to Timothy betrays the miseries of his dungeon. He prays him to bring cloak had he left at Troas, to defend him from the damp of the cell and the cold of the winter. He asked for his books and parchments, that he may relieve the tedium of his solitary hours with studies that he had always loved. But, above all, he beseeches Timothy to come himself, for he was longing to feel the touch of a friendly hand and see the face of a friend yet once again before he died.

Was the brave heart then conquered at last? Read the epistle and see. How does it begin? "I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." How does it end? "I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing." This is not the strain of the vanquished!

The Irony of Human Life.

There can be little doubt that he appeared again at Nero's bar, and this time the charge

did not break down. In all history there is not a more startling illustration of the irony of human life than this scene of Paul at the bar of Nero. On the judgment-seat, clad in the imperial purple, sat a man who in a bad world had attained the eminence of being the very worst and meanest being in it; a man stained with every crime, the murderer of his own mother, of his wives, and of his best benefactors; a man whose whole being was so steeped in every nameable and unnameable vice that body and soul of him were, as someone said at the time, nothing but a compound of mud and blood; and in the prisoner's dock stood the best man the earth possessed, his hair whitened with labours for the good of men and the glory of God. Such was the occupation of the seat of justice, and such the man who stood in the place of the criminal.

His Execution.

The trial ended, Paul was condemned and delivered over to the executioner. He was led out of the city with a crowd of the lowest rabble at his heels. The fatal spot was reached; he knelt beside the block; the headsman's axe gleamed in the sun and fell; and the head of the apostle to the nations rolled down in the dust.

So sin did its uttermost and its worst. Yet, how poor and empty was its triumph! The blow of the axe only smote off the lock of the prison and let the spirit go forth to its home. The city, falsely called eternal, dismissed him with execration from her gates; but ten thousand times ten thousand welcomed him in the same hour at the gates of the city which is really eternal.

His Undying Voice.

Even on earth Paul could not die. He lives among us to-day with a life a hundredfold more influential than that which throbbed in him whilst the earthly hull which made him visible still lingered on the earth. Wherever the feet of them who publish the glad tidings go forth, beautiful upon the mountains, he walks by their side as an inspirer and a guide. In ten thousand assemblies every Lord's Day, and on a thousand thousand hearths every day, his eloquent lips still teach that gospel of which he was never ashamed. And, wherever there are human souls searching for the white flower of holiness or climbing the difficult heights of self-denial, there he, whose life was so pure, whose devotion to Christ was so entire, and whose pursuit of a single purpose was so unceasing, is welcomed as the best of friends.

Adapted from Stalker's "Life of St. Paul."

MINOR VIRTUES OF A MISSIONARY.

I CHOOSE this theme in preference to writing of the major and more essentially spiritual virtues because these are not likely to be overlooked, while the minor ones, being less important, are frequently forgotten or treated as "non-essentials." It will be well for those who may be contemplating foreign service, to think whether they are prepared to bring with them

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these lesser virtues as well as the nobler ones. They can also consider what use there may be at home for the same qualities.

The first thing I would note is the grace of CHEERFULNESS, without which the greatest gifts are of little account amongst ignorant and often degraded natives.

I do not of course ask for a cheerfulness born of levity, but rather that radiant happiness which characterizes those who "dwell in the secret place of the Most High." And one need hardly remark that cheerfulness when all is going just right is of less account than a persistent serenity when everything seems to be going quite wrong. It was my privilege to live for years in the house of a Christian widow who was tried in almost every way that is possible, yet her constant happiness was so evident that a neighbour came one day to ask the explanation of it. And during all the five years, in spite of almost constant suffering, I never heard one word of complaint.

But one has heard of a certain worker who has unwittingly ruled this essential quality of serenity out of her life by attempting more than her strength will permit, undertaking immense walks in a tropical climate, and working or studying till midnight. Is it to be wondered at that, with a weakened body and shattered nerves, her temper is—well, not improved?

Then also "the servant of the Lord must be . . . *gentle* unto all men," much as at home one is especially gentle with children. Heathen races and backward people generally are very much like children, and need to be gently handled. Years ago I remember meeting a

young brother who had given himself to working amongst the Essex villages, and I spent a day there visiting with him, much interested to find out why his work was so greatly appreciated. Certainly there was nothing striking in his ministry, but his manner was remarkably gentle and kindly; and that seemed to win the confidence of the simple-minded villagers. And in foreign fields those qualities will be even more appreciable.

The missionary may sometimes find a use for such a Scripture as "He that believeth shall not *make haste*," and the most efficient worker, if he does make haste, will make it so skilfully that most people will not know that he is making it at all. A gifted and observant missionary worker in Portugal once remarked to me: "I find that when I am quick the people think I am angry." One with whom I have enjoyed many months of happy fellowship in the foreign field had the knack of seeming always at leisure. When a native brother dropped in for a chat, it seemed as if that worker had nothing on earth to do but talk to him. And the brother would before long be going on his way rejoicing, without any feeling of having been dismissed rankling in his soul.

To say that the missionary must love the souls of the natives scarcely belongs to our subject, as that is one of the *greatest* motives that will account for his being in the mission field at all. But besides this great love, akin to the love of God to the guilty world, he will *like themselves* if he is to be greatly used amongst them. And here there may be a very necessary discrimination, a capacity to reach beyond the accidental and

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temporary defects which may offend the eye, or even the nose, and see the essential *man*, clothed with the irresistible charm of all the spiritual possibilities that may yet be realized in him.

The missionary may well rejoice the more he finds himself assimilated to those he serves. To this end he will cultivate the greatest possible adaptability, while at the same time ever endeavouring to raise the native to a more Christian conduct and a nobler life. Nothing is more fatal to usefulness than to feel a contempt for the "ignorant native." In some matters of the utmost importance it is the missionary who is ignorant and the native is learned. What highly-trained missionary would, for instance, venture to build a house without consulting the "ignorant" natives as to the timber he should use, and the right time to fell it? What does the missionary see in the virgin forest but a bewildering variety of trees and undergrowth, when the better instructed savage will recognize some healing virtue in almost every variety of leaf? Nor can we afford to despise his knowledge because it does not come from books or schools, but from centuries of practical experience.

Another minor virtue I think I may call FRATERNITY, by which I mean the desire to be as much alongside the native as possible. Some people constitutionally prefer to "keep themselves to themselves," but they will not make the most efficient foreign workers. Perhaps Hudson Taylor had some such in mind when he wrote to his workers in China: "You may lead exemplary lives, but you won't help other people

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unless they see you do it." One of the things that missionaries may have to give up for the Lord's sake is some small measure of their privacy.

CHARITY is so considerable an asset that it is a little difficult to find room for it amongst the *minor* virtues. But here I will merely refer to the habit of always putting the best construction on the conduct of others, whether they be fellow-workers or natives. A suspicious or hypersensitive nature is a scourge on the mission field, where it is not so easily "left severely alone" as at home. The optimist may live in a fool's paradise part of the time, but he will find it a much pleasanter place than the pessimist's purgatory.

And then people are apt to prove very much what you expect them to be, so that often both pessimist and optimist can say "I told you so!" for each has found what he was looking for. I could not help noticing how one fellow-worker invariably got the very best out of other people, and the explanation may be that he was always looking for the very best in them.

A most estimable sister in England was buying coals from a brother, a dealer in a small way. He urged her to take the best quality, but she was too knowing, and ordered a cheaper sort. I heard *her* say sagaciously afterwards: "He wanted to sell me the best for the sake of the extra profit." I heard *him* remark to me a little later: "I make more profit on the cheaper sorts, but I cannot recommend them." How little that excellent sister thought that she had been guilty of the sin of *uncharitableness*!

Then GENEROSITY and CONSIDERATENESS are essential to the successful missionary, while

anything like meanness is fatal to his usefulness. It will never do for the servant of the Lord to be very keen to "turn an honest penny" whenever an opportunity offers, as he may find he has earned something much less desirable than the pennies: a reputation for avarice.

Native workmen should be treated with every consideration, and kept up to the mark without any semblance of "nigger-driving." A poor youth of good family, keen to get trained for the ministry, agreed to work for his education at a certain mission school in Brazil. But his complaint of the treatment received was grievous to hear: toiling for long hours in the fields beneath a tropical sun, stripped to the waist, and so exhausted that study was sometimes impossible. The management got full value, no doubt, from his labour, which they could have got so cheaply in no other way, but the total loss to the school's reputation it would be impossible to estimate.

Then ADAPTABILITY deserves a separate paragraph. Some missionaries cannot be happy in the meeting unless they read the passages in their English Bibles. Others cannot quite reconcile themselves to the native meal hours, and still less to the native food. The writer made a rule, on first reaching Brazil twenty-six years ago, to eat everything provided, so long as it would stay down. He has never regretted this, as it often makes just the difference between going full or hungry. There may be inevitable exceptions, but the principle is the thing. Such a trifle as the lack of all sanitary conveniences in native houses might deter some from heeding the Master's call to the foreign work, while

others would look on it as just an opportunity for exercising a little resourcefulness.

Speaking with the late Colonel Jacob about work in Egypt, I remarked that I should scarcely have courage to attempt visiting such a sphere, as one worker had reported that in some native houses you could find seven different sorts of body-vermin. The Colonel said that to such places it would be necessary to take plenty of Keating's Powder, and he added that a missionary needs something of the Mark Tapley spirit, that persists in being happy in difficult circumstances.

But having said this much, I may add that the missionary does not *usually* have to endure all the above hardships. Certainly at his head-quarters he will have everything in order, if he be a man of any resourcefulness at all.

The grace of INDUSTRY is essential to the missionary, for the example of a hale and hearty man loafing about all day, waiting for the evening meeting, is by no means edifying to those amongst whom he lives. In this respect some are more resourceful than others in finding suitable occupation, and it must never be forgotten that some sort of secular employment may enhance rather than hinder the missionary's usefulness. More especially while learning the language and the people, a new worker in lands like Brazil will often do well to take a situation and support himself, with no detriment whatever to his usefulness, and then when fully equipped give his whole time to the work, just as he might have done at home. But it would be a calamity if *all* preachers were to live of the gospel.

And in conclusion one may add that these lesser virtues can only be expected where the major ones already exist. No one will be bright and uncomplaining unless he can take life with all its details from the Father's hand, and in *everything* give thanks. He will only be able to get close to the natives, and lay his life alongside theirs, as he realizes deeply in his soul that this was what Christ did for him in his wretchedness and need. Many years ago, when an elderly and gifted brother wrote of his thought of living in Portugal for the Lord's work, I thought to test his plan by reminding him of the very different conditions of life in Portugal from those that obtain in England. His answer was: "I think that the contrast between the glory of heaven and the village life of Galilee was greater than between Newcastle and Portugal."

S. E. McNAIR, *Brazil*.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL (IV.)

The Study of the Child.

IF it is important to study the lesson you are going to teach, it is at least equally important to study the child you are going to teach. You study the lesson in order to get such a complete grasp of your subject that you may be able to present it clearly and in the simplest possible form. You study the child in order that you may suit that lesson to its particular needs. You have perhaps half a dozen children in your class; you may therefore need to say the same thing in half a dozen ways. Nothing is more encouraging than to get an answer or remark

from a child which shows that your words have reached him, and that he has taken in exactly what you meant to say.

But many of us know what it is to fall short of this. We have come to the class confident of success, eager to pour out upon it a carefully prepared lesson, only to find it an utter failure, and to feel by the end of the afternoon that the children are incorrigible, that we have mistaken our vocation and that whatever our work *may* be, at all events it is *not* Sunday School teaching. But we may and should learn from our failures and, instead of laying the blame on the class or giving up in despair, let us try to find out the reason of our want of success. Perhaps you felt, and showed that you felt, annoyed that your well thought out lesson did not get the attention you thought it deserved. The children watch us intently, and quickly notice any show of feeling on our part and—must we say it?—delight in worrying a teacher who is “easily provoked.”

Possibly your manner was not sympathetic enough. We must try to enter into a child's feelings and ways of thought, and put ourselves in his or her place. Every young heart responds to love and sympathy, and the feeling that his teacher loves and thinks of him goes a long way with a child. “I often say my teacher is thinking of me every time she passes the shop,” said a young girl who was employed in a situation not far from her teacher's home. And this feeling helped to keep her at school at an age when many girls begin to think themselves “too old to come.” We *must* win our scholars' love and confidence if we are to lead them to the

Saviour. We *must* get them to love us if we would draw their hearts to love Him.

But we often fail in arousing interest and gaining attention simply because we speak above their heads. Our words are too difficult for the children to follow. Instead of entering into their feelings and ways of thought, we expect them to enter into ours. In studying, for instance, the history of Joseph, we may find great pleasure in seeing the different ways in which he foreshadows Christ in His suffering and glory. In tracing the meaning of the "pit" through Scripture, we may get a fresh view of the One who went down into death for us. But when we sit down to tell the story to the children we must not begin by saying that "Joseph is a type Christ." That restless little boy is thinking of the sweets in his pocket or of the new boots worn for the first time, which he fondly hopes you will notice and remark on. The problem you have before you is to provide something more interesting, and to make him feel that what you are telling him is of vital importance to himself and is not merely a story of long past times.

Begin by telling of the little child left motherless when quite young with a baby brother to love and care for, of the happy home life and the father's love, and then of the new suit of clothes and the pride with which he put it on to go out and seek his brethren. Passing on from incident to incident of the wonderful story, you will lead his heart to think of the Son of man, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. The children will probably make the application themselves. Ask them, "Is there anything in this story which reminds us of the Lord Jesus

Christ?" "Yes, teacher, his father loved him," "He was sold for twenty pieces of silver," "He was ill-treated by his brethren," are some of the replies you will get. If there is any time left, the children will enjoy finding texts to illustrate points which they themselves have suggested. And instead of hearing a sigh of relief when the bell rings, you will be asked to go on with the story next time.

It is easier to write about these things than to put them into practice, and we feel how necessary it is to pray earnestly for the self-control, patience, sympathy and love which form so great a part of a teacher's equipment. But we need never despair. The following sentences may be encouragement to those of us who feel our deficiencies.

"Sunday School teaching is not a poor imitation by amateurs of the more competent teaching given by trained teachers during the week. The heart, not the head, is our special province. We are not bound by external fetters; we can follow at will the method which seems to us most excellent. Do not despair if the result seems small, if lessons which you think you have brought home to your class cannot be repeated by them in intelligible form. By the simple mind such thoughts are absorbed through sentiment; and the more they are felt, the less readily they can be expressed in words. 'JESUS LOVES ME.' How great a thing it is to feel and know, how little result it would produce in an examination!

You, just because you are a volunteer, and unskilled in the ways of teaching, can carry home that truth with a force which no professional teacher can command."

Next month "Illustrations."

Correspondance to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road London, S.W. 14.

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CLING TO THE BIBLE.

“Great God, with wonder and with praise
On all Thy works I look;
But still Thy wisdom, power and grace
Shine brightest in Thy Book.

Then may I love my Bible more,
And take a fresh delight
By day to read these wonders o'er,
And meditate by night.”

ISAAC WATTS.

THE captain of a sailing vessel, leaving a negro sailor in charge of the helm, told him to keep his eye on a certain bright star in the sky ahead, and to steer the ship by it.

After a while the sky became overcast, and the star was no longer visible. But soon the clouds disappeared, and the steersman looked out for the star. It had apparently changed its place in the heavens, and was now more to the rear of the ship than ahead. The negro ran down to the captain's cabin, saying, “Massa, I want another star to steer by; *I have got past that one.*”

Foolish fellow! The star shone as brightly as ever in its proper place, but *he* had so diverged from the right course that he was no longer able to use it to steer the ship by. For the star to be of service to him again, he would have to get the ship on the correct course once more.

Some folks that we know, steering their little bark across life's ocean, think of the Bible as a star that they have got past. “Good enough for the dim days of our forefathers,” they say, “but hardly up-to-date enough for us in the twentieth century.”

Ah! if they did but know it, it is that they have swerved from the straight course. They have lent an ear to those who seem to take a delight in discrediting the Book of God, and are inclined to believe the critics rather than the prophets of the Most High and the apostles of the Lord.

But the star still shines. Its lustre remains undimmed. There is no alloy mixed with its fine gold.

"There!" said a sceptic to a Christian Yorkshireman, referring to a certain book, written by a critic, assailing the Pentateuch, "there's an extinguisher for your Bible!"

"Yes," replied the Yorkshireman, "it has had many an extinguisher put upon it; but they have all been wooden ones and the light has burned through them!"

And so it has ever been. The holy Word of God, the Book which we call the Bible, emerges triumphant from every onslaught which its enemies make upon it.

I.

THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE PUT IN THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE.

Colonel Ingersoll, in the course of a lecture against the Bible at Milwaukee, said that he could make a better book himself.

A little old lady in the gallery of the hall called out: "Why don't you make it, Colonel? The world has been waiting a long time for it!"

This punctured the Colonel's lecture and it fell quite flat. The audience laughed. But the

words were pertinent. Why do not the critics give us a better book? H. G. Wells says he is going to, and has made a beginning with it. We shall be interested to see the finished product, if it comes to birth in our day; and still more interested to observe how many sinners it converts, how many dull lives it brightens, how many sufferers it comforts, how many men and women learn of God by its means, and whether those who acclaim it will spend their fortunes in having it translated into all languages and circulated in millions to the ends of the earth.

We have no fear of its proving a rival to the Holy Scriptures!

II.

THE OFFER OF THE CRITICS, TO ASSIST US TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE THINGS OF GOD, WOULD BE LUDICROUS IF IT WERE NOT SO PITIFUL.

“One day,” says R. C. Chapman, “while walking in the noon-day light of a mid-summer sun beneath a cloudless sky, I was accosted by a person, wholly a stranger to me, who, with kind, condescending air, made offer to show me the way. I saw in his hand a lantern, and in it a lighted farthing candle. Pity checked my rising laughter; so, as gravely as I could, I declined his offer and went on my way. I was afterwards told that his name was Higher Criticism.”

This little parable is just. To him upon whose soul the “light from heaven above the brightness of the sun” has shone, the dim farthing light of human thought is useless. He *knows* that the voice of God speaks to him

through the sacred pages of the Bible, and he is taught by the Holy Spirit to trust implicitly the statements that it makes.

III.

THE COMBINED OPINIONS OF CRITICS AND SCIENTISTS ARE NOT WORTH AS MUCH AS THE TESTIMONY OF ONE WHO HAS TASTED FOR HIMSELF.

A well-known scientist invited several others, who were of a sceptical turn of mind, to dinner. When the meal was ended, he produced a little packet of white substance from his waistcoat pocket, and asked his guests to examine it, and say whether it was sugar or salt. The first said: "Saline crystals," and eight others declared for salt. When the substance was passed to the tenth guest he dipped his finger in it and touched his tongue, and immediately exclaimed, "Sugar!" He had *tasted* it.

Now if you, kind reader, had been present at that table, to whose opinion would you have attached most importance? Whose testimony would you have believed? Nine scientific gentlemen say "Salt!" Only one says "Sugar!" Yet we venture to think that you would at once have believed that the white substance was sugar. The testimony of one who has tasted is worth incomparably more than the opinion of those who have not done so.

It is the same with regard to the Bible and Christianity. There are those who have tasted for themselves, not once, but again and again, the graciousness of the Lord (1 Peter ii. 3), and the sweetness of His words (Psalm cxix. 103). They have discovered something in the wonderful revelation given by God of Himself in the

Scriptures to which the critics seem utterly blind. It has been food to their souls. Let anyone come and try to persuade them that they are mistaken; that the Bible is a book built upon the foundation of early Babylonian myths and folklore, and added to by priestly forgers actuated by interested motives. They will laugh at such opinions. They *know* whom they have believed, and that the Holy Scriptures are His Word, bringing life, warmth, love and joy to their souls, and informing them with divine authority as to all that it is necessary for them to know.

We would rather listen to one who has tasted of these things for himself than to all the vapourings of men who assume to possess a monopoly of scholarship. The man who said "Sugar!" was right, though nine times as many had said "Salt!"

IV.

CHRISTIANS SOMETIMES PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF THE CRITICS BY THE WAY THEY DEAL WITH THE BIBLE.

A Sunday School teacher was asked by a child as to the four men who let down the paralytic into the house where the Lord Jesus was, through the uncovered roof. The question was, How could they stand on a sloping roof so as to let the man and his couch down?

The teacher could not answer, but referred the question to an older one, who was also unable to explain, but who replied, "Oh, tell him that with God all things are possible!"

Now, while this statement is perfectly true, as an answer to the question it was misleading,

and was only given to conceal ignorance. Those who know anything about houses in the East are aware that the roofs are not sloping, but flat, so that it would be quite easy for the four men to stand on one. There was therefore no reason to suggest a second miracle, when the only one mentioned was the healing of the man who was introduced in this strange way to the Saviour's presence.

In a similar way, well-meaning men read their own interpretation of, for instance, Genesis i., into the sacred narrative, and when they find themselves in hopeless conflict with established facts, they take refuge in the pious-sounding statement: "Oh, we must not limit the power of God!" But who wishes to do so? Genesis i., be it noted, is not an account of what God *could do*, but what He *did*. And when questions are asked, we shall do well not to cover over our ignorance by explanations that leave the difficulties untouched, but to say, if necessary, "I do not know."

V.

THERE IS A MOTIVE FOR THE CONTINUAL ATTACKS THAT ARE MADE UPON THE BIBLE.

Pliny tells of an elephant that, when taken to a pool to drink, saw himself reflected in the water, and lashed it with his trunk in consequence, stirring up the mud to hide his confusion.

The Scriptures reflect the true nature of sinful men, searching their hearts, rebuking their selfishness and exposing their hypocrisy. No wonder men hate the Book with such virulent hatred; no wonder they lash out at it time after time.

But let us welcome its searching light and faithful rebukes. Let us remember that with the painful *exposure* of what is in our hearts, there is the gladdening *disclosure* of what is in God's heart, and the revelation of a Saviour that meets every possible need that arises on our part. Let the Word of God sit in the critic's chair, and let us submit ourselves, our lives, our very thoughts and motives to its holy criticism. (Heb. iv. 12).

R. W. Beachey divides people into three classes, according to their attitude to the Bible :

1. Those who neglect it altogether
2. Those who endeavour to put it right.
3. Those who *wish it to put them right.*

May we, by God's grace, be numbered with this third class !

"Oh, wonderful, wonderful Word of the Lord !

True wisdom its pages unfold !

And, though we may read them a thousand times o'er,
They never, no never grow old."

EDITOR.

CHRIST AS WRITER.

"I will write upon him." (Rev. iii 12).

WE are accustomed to think of Christ as the Apostle—the great Speaker—but He is also the great Writer. Saints are now the epistle of Christ, and He is writing upon the fleshy tables of their hearts, in principle, what He will write upon the overcomer : "the name of My God." It is God revealed—we may

reverently say—as Christ His beloved Son knows Him, that is being written now in the affections of saints by the skilful hand of that blessed One.

What is *spoken* by Christ is the revelation presented objectively to men, but what is *written* by Him is the revelation made good in human hearts subjectively under the effective operation of His hand. It is written that it might be “known and read of all men”—that saints might appear before men as having the true knowledge of God in their hearts, because it has been written there by Christ. They thus become the tables of testimony here. The name of His God will be written by Christ on the overcomer in his glorified state. He will display publicly in the overcomer those impressions of His God which as the great Writer He delights to imprint in a living and indelible way in the affectionst of His saints.

“And the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God.” God revealed as the Son knows Him must be, as it were, the first line of the divine writing; it is primary and fundamental. But the second line, if we may so say, is concerning the assembly. How Christ loves to write in the affections of His saints now what the assembly will be as the city of His God, the new and holy and heavenly vessel in which the glory of His God will be displayed! That city will be the pure and transparent shrine of divine glory in the world to come and throughout eternity. The overcomer will have His name written upon him by Christ; the renown and glory of the city of God will be

read upon him in a peculiar and distinctive way.

It is a wondrous honour to come even now under the impression from the hand of Christ of what the assembly is in her divine and heavenly dignity and glory. And do you not think that it is a peculiar satisfaction to Christ to find overcomers to-day on whose hearts He can write what the assembly is as the city of His God? While so many, even true believers, think hardly at all of the assembly, and so many in christendom connect the thought of the church with a great corrupt profession which is in God's sight Babylon, it must be a pleasure to Christ to write—as it is indeed an honour to the overcomer who is counted worthy to have written upon him by Christ—what the assembly is in her true character and glory as the city of His God; the effulgence of all that God is, shining forth in the accomplishment of the purposes of His love in that city for which Abraham waited, and in which will be found the answer to every spiritual desire that was formed by divine working in the spirits of just men in ages past. They will find all that they longed for in that city and, though not forming part of it, their blessedness will be found in relation to it, “God having foreseen some better thing for us, that they should not be made perfect without us” (Heb. xi. 40).

“And My new name.” Christ has a Name of gracious power in relation to what is old. For example, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. i. 21). “Him has God exalted by His right hand Leader and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins” (Acts v.

“LUCK.”

31). He can meet divinely all the need of fallen and sinful men, and it is His renown to do so.

But that is not what is written on the overcomer; it is “new name;” the renown that attaches to Him in relation to what is new! This book speaks of “new Jerusalem,” a “new heaven and new earth,” “all things new.” Sin and death have come in here and made things old, but Jesus has a name in relation to what is entirely and eternally new. He has already brought in a company of brethren after His own order, and many sons for God, and He will be the Centre and Sun of a universe of bliss where no trace of evil will ever come. It is His distinctive glory to be the Accomplisher of all the Father’s purposes of love. And when every trace of that which became old by the entrance of sin has passed away, the new, which had its origin in God’s purpose before the foundation of the world, will remain. And all that Christ is in relation to what will be eternally new is set forth in “My new name.” It will be written on the overcomer, so that it may be read in him in a distinctive way.

C. A. COATES, “*An Outline of the Revelation.*”

“LUCK.”

SCARCELY a day passes that we do not hear some one talk about themselves, or some other person, having “good luck,” or “bad luck,” as the case may be; just as if a Christian’s affairs were in the hands of some

mysterious personage who was uncertain what course to follow. The believer who is walking by faith and trusting in the God of heaven, the Creator of the universe, ought to feel ashamed to be talking about “luck.” Luck implies chance and uncertainty, which the Scriptures nowhere teach.

Let a Christian be under the power of the principle set forth in Romas viii. 28 and he has something more substantial than a contingency resting on the mere caprice of an unknown power, concealed behind an impenetrable mask, upon which to base his faith. When Paul said, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose,” he certainly is to be understood as asserting a real fact, and not in anywise entertaining or holding any mental reservation which might leave the outcome of the matter contingent after all on what may be termed an indefinable phantom of the imagination, spoken of as “luck.”

God's Word throughout teaches us that there is a providential care exercised over even the most helpless of creatures. Can any one claiming the Christian name deny the words of our Lord recorded in Matthew x. 29 and Luke xii. 7? There we are told that our Father takes notice even of sparrows.

To be talking of good and bad “luck” is a virtual denial of the providential care of God over His creatures, and especially over those

who have been born from above. Paul says, Acts xvii. 28, “In Him we live, and move, and have our being.” There is another declaration of similar import in Hebrews i. 3, where our Saviour, who is God, is spoken of as “Upholding all things by the word of His power.” The Christian is not under any rule of chance and, when he goes to expatiating about the good luck or bad luck he has experienced, he betrays a woeful degree of ignorance, or else he is criminally indifferent to the insults he throws in the face of Almighty God.

How it must grieve our Lord and Master, who died on Calvary to secure redemption from eternal damnation for every believer, to hear the thoughtless expressions so often on the lips of Christians ! Unlike the Psalmist, they do not pray, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth ; keep the door of my lips.” Psalm cxli. 3. People often rattle away and talk the language of the ungodly until there seems to be little, if any, distinction between the two classes.

Some may object to what we have said, and try to refute our assertions by quoting such passages as Ecclesiastes ix. 11 ; but any intelligent student of Scripture will see at once the meaning of that passage if he only remembers the key phrase of Ecclesiastes, “under the sun,” which is used in that very verse to show that it is only the worldly man’s view of things which is being given

WORSHIP.

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Other passages such as 1 Samuel vi. 9 and Luke x. 31 will perhaps be cited to prove "luck;" but in the first case it is clearly only the adaptation of language to the Philistine idea, while in the second case the incident taken as a whole in no sense antagonizes the teaching of an overruling providence, but the rather confirms it. To argue or believe in luck implies a certain degree of infidelity.

S. S. FORREST.

WORSHIP.

LIPS are too weak,
 Tongue far too slow,
 Heart with deceit so filled,
 That, Lord, I cannot worship Thee
 In giving what Thou askest me —
 A basket FULL of praise.

Yet would I seek,
 While here below
 To heed Thy voice, which stilled
 The mighty raging of the deep,
 And can my soul in quiet steep
 Till on Thy face I gaze.

Here lowly at Thy table Lord
 I would behold Thy face.
 Lord of my life, I Thee adore;
 I give Thee of my richest store,
 Which is such dross: make me know
 more
 Of all Thy wondrous grace;
 I do behold Thy face!

RUTH D. SMITH.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (V.)

Illustrations.

THE subject of illustrations has been touched on in previous papers but, as it holds a large place in our preparation and teaching, it may be well to consider it at greater length. We have already dwelt upon the need of illustrations and upon the fact that we are justified in using them because the Lord Jesus and the inspired writers of the Holy Scriptures have set us the example.

When we have found the subject that is to be taught, we should seek wisdom to illustrate it suitably. The first question should be, Has God illustrated this truth in His Word? If so, the illustration He has given should be used. We should next see whether there is any other illustration in the Scriptures that could be used to throw light on the subject. Then we should seek to be guided to other illustrations, if more are necessary.

There are certain principles, however, to be borne in mind while seeking for, and also in using illustrations.

1. The elements composing the illustration must be within the compass of the knowledge and experience of the child, and should never need explaining, but should be so simple as to appeal directly to the child's mind.

This shows the need of knowing the children by getting into contact with them outside the Sunday School; we learn the extent of their knowledge, and are then able to base our illustrations upon that circle of knowledge.

A writer upon Sunday School work gives the following incident. "An elderly gentleman was once out walking with a little boy. The former stopped and gazed on the splendours of the setting sun. He repeatedly called to the boy so that the child might share in his delight, but no notice was taken of his frequent entreaties. At length the gentleman turned and found the child bending and looking intently at the movements of a worm on the ground."

The boy saw more in the worm than in the sun, and so an illustration may appeal to us but not to a child, as his knowledge is so limited.

2. Another important point to remember is that the illustration should convey the same meaning to the child as it does to us. Thus, we think of a policeman as one who has a kindly heart towards little children. A boy, however, may have an altogether different view of the subject. Hence if we compare the preserving care of the Lord to a policeman helping a child across the road a great mistake would very likely be made.

Let us consider the following illustration used recently by a servant of the Lord to explain the words in John xiv. 6: "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." The preacher said:

"I was once walking along a road in Derbyshire and met a tramp. He was in deep distress, but I seemed to take to him, for he appeared quite genuine. I had nothing to give him so I took a piece of paper from my pocket and wrote on it 'Please give bearer a good square meal; he is hungry.' This I signed, folded and gave to the man. I told him to go along the road, over the

hill, past the fir trees, to a large white house. The tramp went as directed and as he entered the gateway of the house there appeared an aged man with silvery locks who demanded his business. The note was handed to him. He read it, and when he reached the signature, said, 'Why, that's my son! Yes, come in! Here cook, what have you in the larder? Beef! etc. Yes, that was my son who gave you the note.'"

It will be found that this illustration is more effectual in its application to the older children than to the younger. Indeed it is most suited to adults. Why is this? It is because the ideas that represent the terms "tramp" and "father's love" in the mind are different in the case of children, youths and adults.

For instance, a boy knows a tramp as a dirty, badly dressed man who walks along the road; the youth knows more of the privations he has probably endured, while the adult has some idea of the sin into which he has very likely fallen.

So it is with every subject we may consider. No two persons have precisely the same idea of the one subject.

What we should try to ascertain is that the children have a sufficiently good idea of the thing in question to profit by the illustration. Many illustrations that appear excellent at first sight prove useless because of failure in this direction.

3. Again, we must remember that time must be given to the children to seize the points of an illustration in order. We, knowing the end of the story, are inclined to hurry, and so often the children fail to firmly grip one link in the chain of incidents, and thus the story is meaningless.

It is well to pause frequently and watch the effect upon the children. In giving the above illustration the preacher actually wrote the note before the audience and slowly described the route the man had to take. All this time the foundation of the story was firmly made in the mind and curiosity was aroused to such an extent that when the welcome was given by the father, the faces of the hearers undoubtedly indicated that the truth had been thoroughly grasped.

4. Then too, it is well to tell just so much as will rouse curiosity and leave it unsatisfied until the suited time has arrived.

Thus the above illustration would not be nearly so effective if we said that the gentleman sent the tramp to his father's house, or that the father ascertained that the note was sent by his son before reading it.

From what has been said it will be seen that good anecdotes are rare and difficult to obtain, but they are valuable and are worth preserving.

An aged evangelist, when speaking of the wonderful cases of conversion that he had witnessed and of their use as illustrations, said he considered that these accounts were not his own property but belonged to Christians in general.

We should then, when we hear a good illustration, record it in a good-sized note book. Some teachers have pursued this plan for years and have now a large stock of illustrations upon which to draw.

Those who have time and opportunity to read biographies of Christian men and women, especially of missionaries, will often come across

telling illustrations which should be transcribed and preserved.

We should always be on the alert, endeavouring to train ourselves to find comparisons, and to be constantly thinking of things from that standpoint for, as a noted preacher once said, "The whole world is hung round by God with pictures which the preacher has only to take down, one by one, and hold them up before his congregation to enlist their interest in the subject he is seeking to illustrate. But he must have his eyes open or he will not see these pictures."

Next month "The Infant's Class."

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ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

LEAMINGTON.—You find a difficulty as to Verbal Inspiration in 1 Cor. i. 14 and 16, and think that "verse 16 is a contradiction of verse 14," and you ask, if this be so, "how can verse 14 have been verbally inspired? And how could an inspired writer say that he *did not know* whether he had baptized any other?"

Well, let us see. Perhaps we shall find that your rather hasty conclusions have been formed through your not having accurately read what Paul really wrote.

The verses contain three separate statements:

1. That the apostle had baptized none "of you" but Crispus and Gaius. Here much depends what he means by "of you." May we take it that he means the actual Corinthian saints to whom he addresses the epistle, and

who were at Corinth at the time of his writing it? This is a very natural interpretation of the words, surely.

2. That he also baptized the household of Stephanas. Were these, then, not among the "you" of verse 14? Apparently not. Though they were undoubtedly saints of the assembly at Corinth, it seems that they were not there when the epistle was written, but that they were with Paul. He speaks of them in chapter xvi., and if we are right in surmising that the Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus of verse 17 were "the house of Stephanas," then it is clear that they had come to Paul with an offering from the saints at Corinth, and it is probable that they were the bearers of the epistle on their return journey.

You may say that there is a good deal of surmising in all this. But is it not a very feasible explanation of the difficulty? Is it not much better to accept an explanation that is probably, if not certainly, the true one, rather than take refuge from the difficulty in a supposition that casts doubt upon the inspiration of the epistle?

Of course we are aware that a different Greek word is used for the house of Stephanas in 1 Cor. xvi. 15 from that used in 1 Cor. i. 16. But the two words are to a large extent interchangeable. In Matt. ix. 23 one word is used; in Mark v. 38 the other. But both words refer to one and the same house. The use of the two words in the first epistle to the Corinthians does not justify the conclusion that the "household" of chapter i. differed in any way from the "house" of chapter xvi.

There yet remains to be considered the statement in verse 16:—

3. That Paul did not know whether he had baptized any “besides,” or of the rest. To whom does he here refer? In a busy commercial city like Corinth there would always be many coming and going, and it is probable that some of those converted when the apostle was at Corinth were no longer there. They may have been visitors to the city, or residents that had since removed. Paul did not remember whether he had baptized any of these.

Your question implies that his ignorance as to this discredits his claim to be writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But are you not mixing up two things that are entirely different: Inspiration and Revelation? God might, if it had pleased Him, have *revealed* to Paul the fact as to whether or not he had baptized any of these others. But He did not do so; and Paul is inspired to record the fact of his own ignorance. The Holy Spirit would not inspire him to say what was not true, and to say that he knew, when he did not know, would have been an untruth. Where then is anything in this passage that militates against the truth of Verbal Inspiration? We fail to find even a suggestion of such a thing.

THE ONLY TRUE way to serve God is Daniel's way. Grasshopper Christians, who take a leap in God's service during a revival, and then sit still in cold and trying times when their activity is most needed, are of very little account in God's kingdom.

DO YOU GET TEMPTED?

HERE is a mother; she is told that her child has been run over at the railway. She is off directly. Does she think of the things in the street as she passes? Not she; on she runs. All those things might have been an attraction to her if she had been unoccupied—a fine dress hung out, or a pretty picture. They none of them arrest her attention now. She does not see them.

And so ninety-nine out of a hundred temptations never would be such to you if Christ were in your mind. If we were full of Him, there would be no room for the idle thoughts with which Satan seeks to distract us by the world around us, if he cannot occupy us with them as an object.

J. N. DARBY.

THE HIDDEN WISDOM.

TO understand the purpose of God it is necessary to be at leisure from ourselves and to have our hearts established in grace. This is evident from Paul's method of withholding the secret from people who were self-occupied and stunted in spiritual growth. He spoke of things to the Ephesians which he purposely withheld from the Corinthians. He fed the latter with milk, but to the saints at Ephesus he gave strong meat.

The Ephesians were in good repute when Paul wrote to them. Tidings of their "faith in

the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints" had reached him at Rome, hence the apostle deemed that they were ready for instruction in "the deep things of God." Therefore by means of this letter he seeks to impart a knowledge of divine counsels, to show them the great purpose which God had in view when He first quickened their souls and attached them to Christ as members of His body. He prays that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened to see what is the *hope* of God's calling and that they may know "the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe," even the self-same power which "wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. i. 17-23).

Language is strained by the apostle to make known the unique position which Christ and His body, the Church, occupy in the counsels of God. Yet he feels the weakness of man's mind to lay hold of the divine purpose which has been hid from the beginning of time. Hence he bows his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and prays that believers might be strengthened by His Spirit to apprehend the vast system of glory and blessing with which they are linked even now as members of Christ's body.

This is in keeping with the Lord's desire for His people. Speaking to His disciples Jesus said: "When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth . . . and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall shew it unto you." True to His office, the Holy Spirit ever points to Christ, the Man of God's purpose; and

if our spiritual affections are awake, our hearts will unfold to Him like the rose to the morning sun. Under His influence souls are formed anew; they breathe the atmosphere of heaven until love becomes the root and foundation of their being. Such people, like Paul, get the true perspective, and their vision is clear. They see Christ to be the centre of a great universe of bliss, and are thus able to apprehend God's eternal purpose to "gather together in ONE all things in Christ," the earnest of which is realized in the gathering together of His people to-day. Taking up the privilege which belongs to all Christians, they are able to explore the length and breadth, the depth and height of God's inheritance in the saints, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. This experience results in their being filled with the fulness of God. In Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, "and," says Paul to the Colossians, "ye are complete (filled full) in Him." We cannot comprehend the infinite, but through grace our tiny vessels may be filled full of Christ. The Holy Spirit can enlarge our capacity and do for us "above all that we ask or think." The universal church is said to be the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

You say, "these things are beyond me; I prefer to stick to simple lines." Very good, hold them fast; but observe that every bit of Gospel truth is linked up with the teaching of this epistle. We do not forsake the fundamentals when we grow in knowledge, even as we do not dispense with the alphabet when we soar into higher regions of literature. If, like the Ephesians,

we rejoice in the forgiveness of sins and know deliverance from our dead selves, our minds are set free to contemplate the hidden wisdom and to rise to higher things, "which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Waiting on the Lord will give us strength to "mount up with wings as eagles" and thus enlarge our vision and outlook,—an experience which will also give us direction and aim, and establish our goings. When our feet touch earth again we "shall run and not be weary;" we "shall walk and not faint."

Let us listen to Paul who desires that we should not remain children, unstable on our feet, but grow up to manhood; that we should edify one another in love, until we all come in the unity of the faith to the knowledge of the Son of God and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The mention of these things leads the apostle from prayer to worship. If creation declares the manifold works of God, the formation of the Church sets forth His manifold wisdom. By means of this embodiment of Christ, he sees that God will restore a disordered universe, (Romans viii. 19-21), and make known the wealth and splendour of His grace. (Eph. ii. 7). Hence chapter iii. of this wonderful epistle closes with a doxology, "Unto Him be the glory in the church, and in Christ Jesus unto all generations, for ever and ever. Amen." (R.V.).

The apostle John, whose ministry followed that of Paul at Ephesus, saw in prophetic vision the Church, the holy City, resplendent with the glory of God and adorned with the beauty of Christ. John also heard a voice saying, "Behold,

the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people." The veil of the future was thus drawn aside so that he might see the fulfilment of those bright designs which were planned by divine wisdom before the ages of time, in order that divine love might find its full expression through Christ Jesus in the blessing of men.

The knowledge of God's purpose magnifies our sense of His mercy; we appreciate more and more the grace which has saved us, as we learn the reason why. When "the good pleasure of His will" is revealed to us we are ready to join in the apostle's benediction. (Eph. i. 3). To find that we are brought to God in Christ by virtue of His precious blood; that we have been marked out for "sonship" and accepted in the Beloved is to get an overwhelming sense of His grace which strikes a grateful chord in our hearts. While these spiritual blessings are true of the individual Christian yet they are shared in common "with all saints." We belong to a commonwealth which supersedes that of Israel, and our chief concern should be the welfare of the community. United to Christ by ONE Spirit as members of His Body, our aim at the present time should be "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This "endeavour" is rendered necessary because the rulers of the darkness of this world are out to destroy the manifestation of unity and to disturb the peace of the saints.

We may add that the unity of the Spirit is the unity of divine affections. As the Son dwells in the bosom of the Father, so the church dwells in the heart of Christ. When by the

Spirit we are made conscious of His love we respond to it, and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. With all saints we thus realize the precious promise contained in the Lord's own words: "At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." This unity is what Jesus had in view when, addressing the Father, He prayed "that they all may be ONE, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." (John xvii. 21).

We cannot leave this subject without referring to the behaviour expected of those who are taught in the secret things of God. Intercourse with our fellow Christians brings its difficulties, and circumstances arise which call for the exercise of forbearance and wisdom. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you," says the apostle. Nothing short of God's attitude towards ourselves is the standard of conduct. "Be ye followers (imitators) of God, as dear children; and walk in love." Then as regards family life; husbands are to love their wives even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. What an ideal! Wives are to be subject to their husbands even as the church is subject to Christ. In fact every relationship of life is transformed in the light of the apostle's doctrine, and we find that the deeper we go into the things of God the higher the standard of life becomes.

But knowledge apart from love is futile. May the light and warmth of divine love quicken our affections and enable us to walk worthy of

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this divine association, the *ecclesia*, which transcends the divisions of men and distinctions of race, whose members "are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

W. TAYLOR.

 CONSIDER.

IT is necessary in these days of perplexity and hustle for Christians to be very careful lest they get permeated with the same spirit that pervades the world generally. Let us not unduly rush in spiritual matters, but take time to *consider* and weigh things. "He that believeth shall not make haste" (Isa. xxviii. 16). In the epistle to the Hebrews the subject of "considering" is referred to several times.

I. "CONSIDER the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." (Heb. iii. 1).

The writer of the epistle, having pointed out that in these last days God has spoken unto us by His Son, and that therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed, goes on to remind us that Jesus came into this world taking upon Himself the form of man.

There had been high priests in earlier times and later on apostles, but they all had their origin on the earth. The priests ministered in the tabernacle or temple, whilst the apostles, amongst other things, wrought miracles in the eyes of the people.

Here, however, we who have a *heavenly* calling, are told to *consider* the Apostle and

High Priest of *our* profession.

Notice that "Apostle" is the title that is first used of Christ. Before He can act in the character of High Priest for us, He acts as Apostle in the saving of the soul, which none can do but Himself—all on the ground of His work at Calvary. It is not now a question of working miracles for the body, but the soul.

He is far greater than all who have been before; all others were but types and shadows, but here is the substance. He enters, not the temple, but heaven itself, and appears in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix. 24). To see how infinitely greater this High Priest is than His predecessors we must read carefully through the epistle and notice the many contrasts that are made. They are most instructive.

May we each, when reading the Old Testament, be more ready to consider Christ as the one of whom the types speak.

2. "CONSIDER how great this man (Melchisedec) was." (Heb. vii. 4).

It is sometimes good for us to think of noble and great personages. It often begets an enthusiasm and desire to act likewise. Melchisedec was a remarkable priest, unlike any that were before or after him. So Jesus, (who, we are told at least six times in chapters vi. and vii., is a Priest "after the order of Melchisedec") is greater than all who went before or shall be after Him. The notable men of olden days like Abraham, Daniel, Isaiah and others, and also men of later days such as Peter, John and Paul are all eclipsed by Christ Jesus.

If we read the short account given of Melchisedec and consider what a remarkable man he was, how *infinitely greater* is Jesus! Melchisedec's day has ended, but there has arisen another Priest who is a Priest *for ever* after the order of Melchisedec.

May we be stirred up to more enthusiasm!

3. "Let us CONSIDER one another to provoke unto love and to good works." (Heb. x. 24).

Judging by the way we sometimes inadvisedly act, it would almost appear that this text does not exist in our Bible. There would be far less anger and malice, and far more thought for one another if we just gave one another a little more consideration. Let us "*consider* one another." It is a very good thing to imagine ourselves in another's circumstances; by so doing we would be ready to shew rather more consideration for the other.

But this verse does not read to the effect that we are to "consider one another not to provoke to anger," but that we are to consider one another with the definite object of provoking others to shew forth their very best. Alas, how often do we provoke others so as to bring out all their failings and faults.

It will require a good deal of "love and good works" in connection with *ourselves* if we are to provoke *others* to do likewise. But let us consider one another, remembering that every true Christian belongs to Christ and is a part of the church.

4. "For CONSIDER Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself." (Heb. xii. 3).

What long suffering on His part to bear with all the contradictions and misunderstandings during His life on earth, He who ever went about doing good, healing the sick, cleansing the leper, giving sight to the blind and proclaiming forgiveness of sins! Who of us would ever have put up with what the Lord went through as He did? "Who when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not" (1 Peter ii. 23). No wonder that we are told to "consider *Him*." In considering many other things, let us never forget to consider *Him*. It will help us in our daily path. It will keep us lowly. It will help us to be kind and tender-hearted, and we shall get more like Him as the result of considering Him.

5. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, CONSIDERING the end of their conversation." (Heb. xiii. 7).

The apostle here appeals to us to remember those who have sought to teach and direct us, so that we might follow in the same path and that we should consider the end they had in view, which was Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Let each one of us ask ourselves: Does the influence we have over others, whether in a large or small degree, always have that end in view, namely, of leading others to know the Lord Jesus Christ better and of reminding them that He *never* changes but that He is always the same? May it be so for His Name's sake.

L. A. ANDERSON.

[III]

“HEIRS TOGETHER.”

1 Peter iii. 7.

REFERENCE is made in this Scripture to the “family altar,” or family prayers, “that your prayers be not hindered,” as an incentive to carry out the remainder of the exhortation.

It is indeed a sublime description of union, displayed in qualities which have their springs in the grace of God and issue forth in a practical way, in the every day duties of each member of the family. It is addressed to husband and wife, responsible for the conduct of the home; and also to those who contemplate the married state. It can only have full reference to them after the bond of union has been formed. Previous to that, each is individually accountable to the Lord. Now, having taken up the responsibilities of matrimony, they are exhorted to dwell together “as being heirs together of the grace of life,” with one united purpose and interest, each contributing to each, the object being: “prayers not hindered.” Happy the bridegroom who, when all the excitement of the wedding day is over, kneels with his bride, laying out in prayer and adoration the foundation of the new home.

“The family altar is the hub of the spiritual universe,” and the knowledge of the grace of God will enable all who are truly converted to take up these relationships as God intended they should be taken up, making reference to Him in every thing; so forming in them the Christian character which controls all the details

of their lives, and is far reaching in its influence for good upon others.

How watchful we should be lest anything be allowed to intrude upon the sanctity of our private devotions! Even a little friction or unpleasantness in the home may cast a cloud over the spirit. Or it may be the presence of some friends, on account of whom family prayers are omitted as inconvenient, all for lack of courage on the part of the one responsible to own the Lord's authority over all under his roof. In this way, their prayers are hindered. The loss occasioned in such a case can never be compensated, but may produce painful regret afterwards. Instead, let us bring all we have and are into subjection to Christ as Lord "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." "Thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord."

A young Christian woman, many miles from her home, met with others in the locality where she was placed. It was said that she brought the power and presence of Christ into the meeting with her. She had evidently been wearing, in her home, that precious jewel, a jewel compared with which the gems of the ocean are worthless: "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." The secret of her power was the hallowed influence of a God-fearing home.

Never let us forget the power for good that we may have upon others, or upon the Christian company in which we are found. We may carry it with us for others to see and feel. Well may we all covet this power!

The word "together," as found in Scripture, suggests much to the mind and affections of the believer. It seems as though God would have us enjoy the blessing He gives so bountifully in association with others, or at least in companionship with one another. This is emphasized again and again. We read, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." We are spoken of as "risen together," "seated together," "heirs together." We shall be "caught up together," to "live together with Him," never to be alone. Then let us "walk together."

How beautiful to see two "walking together," enjoying the same happy portion on equal terms, through grace, and in the purpose of God, "as heirs together of the grace of life!"

No wonder that in this particular epistle we find everything is living. The words, "grace of life" seem to connect the believer with the "living God," who has brought us into divine favour with a "living hope" beyond this present life, while "having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

With such an outlook, the Christian is enabled to serve and please the Lord in all the relationships of social and family life: while both the "heirs together" have an equal right to enjoy the inheritance secured and settled upon them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and reserved in heaven for us while we are kept for it.

R. M. SMITH.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (VI.)

The Infant's Class.

AS the Infant's Class will be what its teacher makes it, we start with the teacher, who should be, as a rule, a sister. For it is in Christian womanhood that is found developed all that appeals to the infant heart: tenderness, sympathy, patience and love. To these qualities must be added knowledge of the Word of God, tactfulness, firmness, a sunny disposition and an ability to smile at the ugly, careworn and often-times diseased, as at the bright and well cared for.

It is almost essential that a separate room be provided, and care should be taken to see that it is well lit and well ventilated. A blackboard should be provided in every infant class-room.

With regard to the class itself, remember that the children cannot listen to ordinary teaching, nor to a forty-minute address. Use simple prayers and discard such words as "beseech" "grant," etc., using in their place "ask," "give," etc. The teacher's aim is to transfer the ideas from her own mind to the minds of the children. But between the mind of the teacher and the minds of the children there is a great gulf. Over what bridge can the ideas cross?

VISION. The ideas first of all cross by means of the eye. Before our words convey much to them at all, a picture will appeal to them and be retained in their minds. For at this early stage of life their minds are like a sensitive photographic plate. Therefore use pictures,

good pictures of objects and Scripture incidents. Above all use the black board. If "ear-gate" be closed to you it may be that "eye-gate" is the more widely open.

MEMORY. The memory of the infant is of great value to the teacher. Teach them hymns; teach them Scriptures, and above all else secure accuracy in repetition, remembering that

1. It is the Word of God.
2. They will be too busy to learn it in their after life.
3. Romanism may at any time take it from their hands, but cannot take it from their memory.

REASON. Try to get them to ask questions; remember how the Lord worked with His disciples. His words were surely bearing fruit when they asked Him, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares." Deal gently with enquiring minds; never discourage, and be judicious in the distribution of praise.

BODY. Restlessness characterises infants; they cannot remain long in one position; they must have change. Let them stand up and sing, clap hands, or sing a chorus that introduces physical actions.

VARIETY. Do not stay too long on one thing. It has been well said, "If order be heaven's first law, variety is its second." Present the ideas in different ways, the same truths but differently put.

MATTER. Do not attempt to teach too much at one time. It is better to get *one* idea well grasped than to have six or seven muddled up together.

EXAMPLE. Children unconsciously imitate their teacher. "Make thyself a pattern in word, in life, in love, in purity" was the advice given many years ago to a teacher, and this cannot be improved upon.

The Blackboard.

The blackboard may with great advantage be used for the drawing of pictures. Some teachers prefer to draw them beforehand, while others, possessed of more artistic skill, find it preferable to draw them in front of the class, giving a running comment on them as they do so. The latter way is only possible when the class is well under control; otherwise the sight of the teacher's back is an incentive to play. For those who draw their pictures beforehand, a portable "blackboard" made of black oilcloth, and costing about three shillings, proves a boon. Do not attempt too much, nor put in too much detail, for it is better for *one* idea to stand out in the picture. It is a common error to overwhelm the children with comment on the picture which ought to speak for itself. In the choice of descriptive words, too, we should exercise care, using only short, easy words, and not too many of them.

To give an example of the use of the blackboard, see how it may be employed to teach the truth contained in the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 30-35). Read and explain such hard words as are necessary to your treatment of the narrative, and start something like this: "Now, children, I am going to tell you the story of the poor man about whom I have just been reading. He was going on a journey,

walking, from a place called Jerusalem (now draw a rough sketch of city walls with gateway, towers, etc., with a road leading from it, and include the figure of a man with a bundle and staff). He started off along the rough road, looking first to one side and then to the other for fear of thieves, when suddenly, etc., etc."

Object Lessons.

Perhaps I may be allowed to give a little personal testimony to the lasting good that I myself obtained at the age of seven by means of two object lessons.

A dear old friend, Dr. Moxey, with a big heart for children, was giving some of his famous lectures at a seaside town in Ireland. On one occasion he had before him two glasses of water. The water in one glass was thick and black with dirt. The water in the other glass was clean and clear as crystal. His knowledge of chemicals enabled him to turn the clear water into a bright red, the colour of blood. This he poured into the black, dirty water and it immediately became pure and clean. The doctor applied it very beautifully, showing how our souls, black with sin, can only be cleansed by the precious blood of Christ.

On another occasion the doctor came on the platform with a magnet and a handful of nails of all sizes and shapes. These he divided into groups according to their size, representing people at various ages in life. Then he held the magnet over the tiny nails, and so many of them clung on, indeed nearly every one. This, he pointed out, illustrated how easy it was to come to the Saviour when very young. Then

he went on to the other groups, showing that the older people become, the more difficult it is for them to come. At last he came to one very large nail, and this one made no response at all to the attraction of the magnet: a hardened sinner.

These lessons made an abiding impression on my heart, and I can look back to that time as the time of my first awakening to my need of a Saviour. They afford convincing evidence of the value of object lessons when dealing with little children. In the Sunday school, the object brought into the lesson should be merely a means to an end, the stepping-stone to that which the teacher wishes to impress. It should be something which the child knows and sees for itself, to illustrate and make clear something which is new.

The Sand Tray.

A valuable acquisition in the infant's class is the Sand Tray. This consists of a rectangular wooden tray lined with zinc. It is supplied by any educational firm at the cost of a few shillings. But an ordinary tin or wooden tea tray will answer the purpose. This, with a few pounds of silver sand (costing only a few pence) generally used wet, is a wonderful means of interesting and instructing the very young. The use of it may require some preparation on the part of the teacher, but he will be amply repaid by the pleasure and profit that the children will derive from it. In some cases the tray will need to be prepared beforehand; in others, the sand can be modelled while the talk is going on.

THOU BEAREST ME.

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As an example of how the Sand Tray may be used, suppose that you wish to illustrate the subject of the two roads, Matthew vii. 13, 14. Trace the broad and narrow ways in the sand, the two gates "wide" and "narrow" at the respective entrances. Print "I am the way" at the entrance of the narrow way, etc.

A great advantage of the Sand Tray is that the little ones can often in turn take part in helping to make the illustrations, thus turning the restlessness of the child into right channels. Apart from the value that the child's actual *doing* will have in impressing the lesson to be learned, their natural love of activity will make this a great pleasure to the children, and an incentive to good behaviour.

Next month "Decision and Confession."

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

THOU BEAREST ME.

My Saviour Thou, my glorious Lord,
 Though sorrow's tears these eyes bedim,
 Yet, with one upward look to Thee,
 My heart gives forth her joyful hymn.
 A trembling, weak Mephibosheth,
 I find, since tender love set me
 Here, at the table of the King,
 God's kindness and my all in Thee.
 I cannot walk ; these feet are lame ;
 Thou bearest me along the way.
 Because 'tis so I bless Thy Name
 And love Thee deeper, day by day.

CLARA C. ATWOOD.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

SHERBORNE.—“Give me thine heart” is not a suitable exhortation to address to a sinner. It is not the way of salvation set forth in the gospel. In the passage where the words occur, Proverbs xxiii. 26, they are prefaced by two other words, “My son.” From this we may conclude that the appeal is addressed only to those who stand in a known relationship to God. If it be objected that it is Solomon speaking to his son, and not God addressing His child, we reply that the quotation of a similar passage in Hebrews xii., rules such an objection out of court. In Proverbs iii. 11, we read, “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord.” In citing this passage the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews (chap. xii. 5) calls it “the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children” and further comments upon it thus: “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons” (verse 7). It is evident, therefore, that as children of God, and not as unregenerate sinners, we are bidden to give Him our hearts.

It may help us to understand what the giving of the heart really means if we refer to the statement of the preacher-king in Eccles. i. 17. He *gave his heart* to the study of wisdom; that is, he turned to the pursuit with earnestness and desire. Even so, with earnest diligence are we to give ourselves to the Lord and to the observance of His ways. We are to respond to His desires for us, not coldly, as a slave might carry out the wishes of his Master, but with the affections engaged therein.

THE GLORIOUS SUMMER.

AFTER a long and severe winter, how welcome is summer! We anticipate with pleasure the long days, the bright sunshine, the lovely flowers, and everything that makes us forget the chill blast of winter, and makes us feel that it is good to be alive. The question is: How are we going to spend it? Many readers of "Simple Testimony" are confined in offices, workshops, workrooms, etc., all the week, and when Saturday comes, with its afternoon off, they wonder what they will do. Relaxation and recreation are conducive to health.

These are, however, more ways of securing these than by playing golf or tennis, which frequently involve undesirable associations.

Walking is a splendid exercise, and what is more delightful than a walk out into the country, or down by the sea? This is more charming if a few true believers walk together, and, as they walk, talk of the precious things of God. More enjoyable still it becomes, if they distribute Gospel books as they go along, call at the houses in the villages through which they pass and, at times, stop in a village street and tell out "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Then, when the annual holidays come round, *go where there is a company of the Lord's people, with whom it is possible to have fellowship*; take a good supply of Gospel tracts and sow the good seed. We promise all who try this, whether on Saturdays, or for the longer period, that they will return fresh and fit in body, and happy in soul.

Let us remember our Lord's words:—"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." (John iv. 35.)

And if He leaves us here during the summer—it may be our last summer on earth—let us seek His glory as our highest aim, and let us ensure the happiest, most healthy, and delightful holiday, by engaging in His service, and by seizing every opportunity of scattering the sunshine of His love, of His Gospel, and of His salvation wherever we go.

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

“UNTO” AND “UPON.”

IN one of His exquisite parables the Lord Jesus likened sin to a debt which man is not able to pay (Luke viii. 41, 42). God is the great Creditor and man is the debtor. The debt of sin has been met by the penalty of sin being borne by Christ in His atoning death.

That atoning death was one, yet it may be considered from two points of view; first, as to the way it has met the claims of God, the Creditor; second, as to the way it meets the actual liabilities of each debtor, of each sinner, who comes in faith to the Saviour for forgiveness. The former is expressed by the Scriptural word *propitiation*; the latter we connect with the word *substitution*.

At the beginning of our spiritual history, when we were anxious sinners seeking peace with God, the latter side of things probably took the first place in our thoughts. For the

moment, the pressure of our liabilities, our sins, was overwhelming, and we had no thought for anything save how we were to be exempted from their penalty. And when the tidings of a Saviour who had died in our stead reached us, we received them thankfully and were satisfied, without for the moment enquiring further. How many of us are now awake to the fact that the claims and glory of the Creditor must take precedence over the needs and distresses of the debtors ? The former is the matter of supreme importance and lies at the foundation of everything.

The order which we are indicating is clearly observed in the Epistle to the Romans, in which the Gospel is unfolded in an orderly and methodical manner. Directly the point is reached when, man's ruin having been proved beyond dispute, the gospel of God is to be unfolded, Christ's work from the propitiation standpoint is set before us.

Let Romans iii. 21-26 be carefully read first of all. Then fix your eye on verse 22, and notice the two expressions, “unto all” and “upon all them that believe.” The first “all” stands without any qualification whatever ; it indicates the widest possible circle and embraces everybody. The second “all” is qualified by the words “them that believe,” and this qualification instantly contracts it to a very much smaller circle : it is just large enough to embrace all true believers, and them alone. Notice again that the prepositions differ : it is

“unto” in the first case and “upon” in the second. The preposition *unto* (or *towards*) indicates the bearing or direction of the act or thing in question : whereas the preposition *upon* indicates the actually realized effect.

Now there is frequently a very great difference between these two things, as may be observed in every-day life. If, for instance, an Act of Parliament should be passed making the possession of private means, however large, no longer a disqualification for the drawing of the Old Age pension, then the bearing of the Act would be to render eligible for a pension both the Duke of X. with his vast estates, and Mr. Z. with his millions. We do not, however, anticipate seeing them line up in the queue at the local post office to receive their pension as the realized effect of the Act, unless indeed we have enormously overestimated the amount of pride and self-esteem which they possess.

To apply the illustration, observe that in Romans iii. the righteousness of God is said to have been manifested : it does not state in so many words how it has been manifested, but the context shows it to have been in connection with the death of Christ ; and that righteousness is, in its *bearing*, “towards” all the largest possible number of people. In its *application* it is “upon” only those who believe.

The only possible basis for all this, whichever aspect be in question, is the propitiatory death of Christ. God has set Him forth as a

mercy-seat (for this is the real meaning of the word translated “ propitiation ” in Rom. iii. 25) through faith in His blood. Under the law, you will remember, the mercy-seat was the place where propitiation was effected and it was blood that effected it. Of this the Lord Jesus is the Antitype : He is the mercy-seat, and His blood has made propitiation.

The first effect of the accomplishment of propitiation is that God Himself is declared to have been quite right in passing over sins in the ages which preceded the Cross. In the second place it justifies God (if we may so speak) in still extending grace to men, and sending out the offer of forgiveness unto all. Thirdly, it justifies Him in positively justifying “ him which believeth in Jesus.”

For as long as we confine our thoughts to propitiation we are not concerning ourselves with the sins of any particular individual. We are rather thinking of the whole question of sin in all its ramifications as one great outrage upon the nature, character and glory of God, and of the way in which the death of Christ has rendered an infinite satisfaction in regard to all, so that by that satisfaction God has been more glorified than if sin had never existed. Yet there is, of course, the question of the sins of each individual, and each one who believes in Jesus, and consequently is justified, is entitled to know how that same death has met and settled the burden of his individual sins.

We pass on to the end of Romans iv. for this.

Here we read of the Lord Jesus being delivered, not for everybody's offences, but for “our offences”; of His being raised again, not for everybody's justification, but for “our justification.” The “our” here indicates believers and none besides, as the next verse (Rom. v. 1) shows. Propitiation is thus followed by substitution in the course of the epistle of Romans.

It is a remarkable fact that the actual word substitution does not occur in our English Bible, yet the truth which we express by that word occurs over and over again. If any desire to see a great scriptural illustration of this truth let them turn to Genesis xxii. 13, and read how the ram was offered *in the stead of* Isaac. Then let them turn to Isaiah liii. and note how the idea of substitution occurs not less than twelve times, i. e. twelve times over is Jehovah's Servant said to stand and endure in the room and stead of others, although in that chapter, however, the same rule is observed; His substitutionary work is not for everybody; it is limited in its scope to the “us” and the “our.” Verse 6 is a prominent example for it. “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” Who are the “us all”? The same as the “all we” of the beginning of the verse, i. e. those who repent and own themselves to be sinners who have gone astray. Scripture nowhere goes so far as to say that God laid upon Jesus the iniquity of those who remain unrepentant and in their sins, though it is perfectly true that He has been propitiated in

regard to the sin question, viewed in its totality, by the death of Christ. If these things seem to some to be matters beyond human ken, we admit it; and if some are inclined to ask, How can these things be? We can only reply: Remember, first, that God is sovereign; and second, that He is omniscient.

It may be helpful to turn also to Romans v. 18, 19. In this passage not sins but sin, the nature, is in question. Yet the same distinction is preserved, though it is obscured by an unfortunate mistranslation in our Authorized version. The offence and the righteousness respectively in verse 18 are “towards” all men. It is exactly the same preposition as is translated “unto” in chapter iii. 22. The point then in verse 18 is the *bearing* of the offence and of the righteousness, in each case *all*, without any qualification. But in verse 19 it is a question of the actual realized *effect* of the disobedience and of the obedience, and consequently in each case “many,” (or, more correctly, “the many”) is the word used. “The many” indicates the mass coming under and standing connected with the respective heads, Adam and Christ.

In one case, that of Adam and his race, the many who come under his headship are, as a matter of fact, every human creature; consequently “the many” in its first occurrence in verse 18 does mean everybody. But this is purely *incidental* and does not affect the course of the apostle’s argument. He still uses the

term "the many" to complete the contrast with "the many" who come under Christ's headship, and they are by no means everybody.

Bearing in mind the distinctions we have been pointing out, it is not difficult to see that in heralding forth the Gospel in the ears of all sorts and conditions of men the side of things to be stressed is propitiation. Let them be told how fully the death of Christ has satisfied every claim of divine righteousness, and consequently how freely forgiveness is being preached to men. God will bless the testimony, and sinners will be brought to repentance. Let the eyes of such still be directed to Christ, and let the truth of substitution be clearly set before them for their comfort and establishment.

We may safely assert that Christ died for all, for so Scripture says. He "died for the ungodly." But that and all similar passages have propitiation in view. To say that He bore as a Substitute the sins of all is to go one step too far. This Scripture asserts it to be true, not of all, but of "many," *i.e. of those who believe.*

F. B. HOLE.

THE CHURCH.

As a Building.

AWAY back in the Old Testament we find God had a dwelling place. In the garden of Eden God had *walked* with Adam before the fall. In the Tabernacle He *dwelt* with man ;

not in any full sense, but there was the fact that God was dwelling upon earth, though only one man, once a year, was able to go into the holiest, the place of His presence. Never do we read of the Church of God in the Old Testament. We find the first mention of it in Matthew xvi. 17, 18.

The Lord Jesus Christ asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter, who was very often foremost on these occasions, replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou" said the Lord, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Now upon this fact, that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, He announced that He would build His own church.

This was to be the rock foundation of everything.

Now not only is this the first time the church is mentioned in Scripture, but it is the only time that it is called Christ's church. You will usually find it spoken of as the church of God. Some tell us that Peter is the foundation; that when the Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build My church" He meant Peter. The fallacy of this is seen in the word the Lord used. He says, "upon this *rock* I will build My church." Peter does not mean "rock." In John 1. 42, Simon came to the Lord Jesus among the early disciples, and when the Saviour saw him He said, "Thou art Simon the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas, . . . a stone." CHRIST is the rock, Peter a stone; and, thank God, he is not the only stone, for you and I too are stones in this building. We have the same truth brought forward in 1 Cor. iii. : 11 that the

rock foundation is Christ Himself; He forms the basis of this wonderful structure, the Church. We have confirmation as to what is built thereon in 1 Peter 2: 5, "Ye also, as lively (living) stones are built up a spiritual house."

It does not say "bricks." That is what we should use. Man speaks of bricks and mortar, because bricks are of man's making. But stones are of God's quarrying. He finds them out in the earth, in places of sin and corruption, and brings them out of that condition to set them as stones in His building. Solomon's temple was built of stones, all cut and fashioned before they were brought to the place where the temple was to be built. So it is here; all God's stones are built together. Eph. ii. 21, 22 speaks of the building being "fitly framed together" and of our being "builded together." God has shaped and fashioned everyone of us, His children, for a certain place in His church.

Now turn to Eph. ii. 19, 20: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Someone may say on reading that verse, that it is a little different from the above which says that Christ was the foundation, whilst here it says, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." How can we reconcile these? Christ is truly the foundation, but next to Him come the apostles and prophets, in the order of the building, and on the apostles and prophets you and I are built. They passed away, but in a sense they are not dead; they are still here in the Scriptures. The New

Testament is the foundation of the church to-day. If only the church of God were regulated more according to this foundation, more in conformity with the Word of God, how different things would be! This is what the church should be guided by, and when the Holy Spirit speaks of the apostles and prophets being the foundation, He means not only the actual apostles and prophets, but also their writings. How is it that we have no apostles in the church to-day? It is because we are nearing the top of the building, and the foundation is not to be looked for at the top! God gave the apostles and prophets at the *beginning* of the church, in order that a good foundation might be laid, they are the foundation of the building, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone.

As a Body.

We turn from the church of God as a building to consider it as a Body; we go from one side to the other. You have seen photos of cathedrals, giving views from the north-west, east, and south. Looking at the three together you might probably think they were views of different buildings. But you are looking at the same thing from various view points, and that is just how God presents His church in the Scriptures. We have just been looking at the first, (the building), and as such it is spoken of under four different titles:

The Habitation of God—where He dwells.

The House of God—where He rules.

The Temple of God—where He is worshipped.

The Pillar and Ground of the Truth—God's testimony.

The *building* aspect of the church is an outside view, but when we come to the church as a Body we are looking at the Assembly inside, and at the individual relationship of its various members. (See Ephesians i. 23 ; iv. 4-16 ; 1 Cor. xii. 12-27).

Ephesians i. 22 : "And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body."

Ephesians iv. 12 : "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Ephesians iv. 16 : "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

In the body of Christ, every believer (whether Jew or Gentile) forms a part. We are never told what part of the body we form ; but it is most important that we should find it out, for thus only can we fulfil the function assigned to us ; we cannot do another member's part.

If in the sight of God I am a hand of the body of Christ, I cannot do the work of a foot ; and if I am an eye I cannot do the work of an ear. I must find out just what God has set me to be in the church and there I must fulfil the duties He has given me to do. For He hath set the members in the body *as it hath pleased Him*, (1 Cor. xii. 18) and it should therefore please me too ! In other words I may be a Help, Government, Teacher, Pastor, Evangelist, Sunday School Teacher, Open Air Worker, Tract Distributor, or perhaps a member whose function is not of a public nature, such as the heart, the lungs and

other internal organs of the human body. If God has made me a teacher, let me wait on teaching; and if God has made me a pastor, let me diligently pursue a pastor's work. If I leave undone the particular work that God has given me to do, the whole body will suffer because one of its members is lying idle.

1 Cor. xii. 15 says, "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" This tells me that I must not be *envious*. One may say, "Because my brother is able to do more than I can, then I am not going to do anything at all." But if I do not do my portion, then the other members of the body will suffer in consequence, but if I fill my place it will help the other members to work together better. Though the place that we hold in the church of God, *seems* to be less important, we are no less necessary to the body; and if we fill that post to the best of our ability, we shall not be *envious* of one that *seems* to have a more important place.

1 Cor. xii. 21 says, "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." This is putting the truth round the other way. It speaks of one who looks down on some other member and says, You are not wanted at all. God says you cannot dispense with one that does not *seem* to have such an important place as you have, any more than you can occupy the place of one that is higher. We have just to keep in the particular place where He has sat us. If this truth grips our hearts, (that we have a certain place to fill and no other)

we shall soon begin trying to find out where God has put us and there do our work; not envious of others, nor treating any with contempt, but with what verse 26 indicates, "whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." Suppose you cut your finger, the other hand will fly to the cut finger and hold it, because there is fellowship between one member and another. You drop something on your foot and immediately sit down and hold it. Why? Because the other members come to its aid directly. Further, the moment you injure a member of your body, it is known by the head first, which communicates it to the other parts of the body, and in the same way if one of God's children is hurt, is injured, is ill spoken of, or in any way damaged at all, the very first one that feels it is the Head in heaven. We are the body, but Christ is the Head, and if any particular member of His body is hurt, He is the first to know, and may make it known to other members, thus establishing fellowship one with another.

We hear brother So-and-so has been knocked down, and we visit him in his trouble. Why? Because the Head in heaven has led another member of the same Body to care for him.

As a Bride.

Now we are going to look at the church as the Bride, which shows our relationship to the Lord Himself, not so much my care for my fellow believer as my Lord's care for His Bride.

Some say that *the church* cannot be the Bride of Christ, and they give one of two reasons.

Either they think that Israel is the Bride, or they object that the church cannot be both the Body and the Bride. God says concerning Israel, "Israel is My son, even My firstborn," but Paul says of the Bride, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. v. 32). The Body of Christ is also the Bride of Christ. Take a type in the Bible to illustrate. In Eden God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, took a rib from his side and of it built a woman. That woman became his bride, and God said, "They shall be one flesh." Christ and His church are spoken of in exactly the same way, and out of His death at Calvary God has taken that from which He is forming, a Bride for His Son.

In John iii. 16 we read, "God so *loved* the *world*;" in Eph. v. 25, "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." God loved the world, but Christ loved the church. This refers to THE PAST.

In Eph. v. 26: "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with washing of water by the Word." To-day, through the Holy Spirit, He is sanctifying, cleansing with a continual cleansing from the defilement of the world the members of His body, which is His bride. This is His PRESENT service, and it is in view of a glorious FUTURE, "that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. v. 27).

Here is God's purpose for His own Beloved Son, that He should have a Bride to share His glory. The time is coming when the last stone will be added to the building; as a body, it will complete with all its members, and the

Lord's ministry to His Bride will have reached its end ; then His coming !

The Lord will come as Isaac came to meet Rebekah whom the servant brought. They met somewhere between their two homes, and that is where the Lord is going to meet us, somewhere between earth and heaven, and He will take us to the prepared place in glory, "that where I am there ye may be also." Christ will then see of the travail of His soul and have His heart's desire, and we shall be His Bride for ever and for ever.

As a Jewel.

In Rev. xxi. we see the final glory of the church. In Matthew xiii. we read of the man that sold all that he had in order to buy the pearl of great price. The man that gave up all is Christ. He set His heart upon the pearl, laid aside His glory, and gave His life to obtain it.

The Bride, the body, the building, which in the Epistles is being completed, is in Rev. xxi. revealed. There has been the marriage supper of the Lamb ; there has been the judgment seat of Christ ; and now the Lord comes out finally in everlasting glory. This is eternity, and the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is none other than you and I and all our fellow-Christians. Then He will to wondering worlds display that we with Him are one.

With such a past, and with such glory before us, what manner of persons ought we to be in the little time that is left us here to serve ! How faithful we should be ! how true to the Lord that has brought us ! how careful of where we go, of what we say, or how we act !

G. F. VALLANCE.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. VII.

Decision for Christ.

HOW may we lead our scholars to decision for Christ? What is meant by decision?

We seek that there should be such an acceptance of the Gospel as shall produce repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; not a mere intellectual grasp of the Gospel which leaves the hearer exactly where it finds him.

Some raise the doubt as to the possibility of children being converted. We should remember that Polycarp was converted at the age of 9; Matthew Henry at 11; and Dr. Watts at 9. We ought therefore to seek conversion, and to reckon "conversionable" every child over the age of 9. Many would say the age should be much lower.

As to the depth and reality of the conversion, some of us have seen the reality and depth of the work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of children. We ought not to be Sunday School teachers if we doubt these facts.

Our equipment is the Word of God used by the Spirit of God. But how do we teach the children? We have to insist upon the total depravity of the sinner. In every child's heart there is sufficient sin to wreck a continent if it were allowed to work itself out. We press the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and must insist upon their responsibility as to the acceptance of the message.

Again, our method of teaching and our lessons may be perfect in form, but if they lack the power of the Holy Ghost there will be no fruit.

Do we count on this? You may say, "I believe in Jesus; I hold the truth of His second coming; I am quite orthodox." But unless there is a living faith in the Word we teach, we had far better not go to Sunday School at all. We must believe not only in the *truth* of God's Word, but in its *power*.

We must have expectancy, expecting that God will use the Word, and look for the salvation of our scholars. We need faith, and can substitute nothing else for it.

Finally, we need confidence that God will carry on the work after we have done all. A boy picked up a piece of wood on the seashore, and with his knife tried to carve it into a boat. But the wood was hard and the knife was blunt, and long before the wood had much resemblance to a boat he cut his thumb. His mother bound it up, and with the wood beside his bed he went to sleep. His father, a fisherman, come home later in the evening. He looked at the bound-up thumb and the unfinished boat, and understood it all. Taking out his great knife, with deft cuts he fashioned the boat more perfectly than ever the boy had dreamed of, and left it beside the bed. In the morning as the little fellow awoke, his thumb throbbed, and he turned his eyes upon his failure, when, to his amazement and delight he saw, not the bungled work he expected, but the beautiful and perfected boat, finished by a loving, unseen hand.

Let this be an encouragement to confidence in God. The loving hand of the Father takes up the work, and in the morning we shall see the perfect result.

Confession of Christ.

Confession may be described as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual life ; it is distinctly stated in the Word of God (Rom. x. 9) to be with the mouth, and we, as teachers, must see that it has, in our teaching, the place that it has in the Scriptures.

It is worse than useless for a scholar to confess with the mouth that which is not true in the life ; before seeking confession of Christ, we should therefore be careful to instruct them clearly in the Gospel, so that they may know what the Gospel is, and what a belief of it involves. Confession will be the more valuable when it springs from an intelligent decision.

Confession carries with it a responsibility, and some therefore either avoid or shirk it. An instance was given of a boy who, proving a trifle inattentive in class, was rebuked by his younger brother saying, "I thought you said you was a Christian ; you ain't much like one." This made the lad blush, and put an end to his inattention. The world is keen, and expects more from Christians than from others.

In many cases our scholars believe the Gospel and the only thing needed to bring them out boldly for Christ is to confess Jesus as Lord. Help must be sought from the Lord, for wisdom to know how to deal with the different boys and girls, for all need different treatment. Trace out the dealings of the Lord with some who received blessing from Him : the more timid and nervous needed to be made to confess (see Luke viii. 47), while others did it without any instructions from Him (see John iv. 29). To challenge a boy as the Lord did the man in

John ix., "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" will be to make the Gospel a personal matter with him; but, for this, guidance from God is essential.

On the other hand, we must avoid the danger of eliciting confessions in a wholesale manner from the scholars, and, above all, have nothing to do with "button-holing" every boy indiscriminately in your class. In order to get out of an awkward position, and to get rid of you, they will confess they are Christians when they are not, and you may have the mortification of seeing the work of God in their souls brought to a standstill.

In the case of those who are known to be Christians, we should also impress upon them the necessity of confessing Jesus as Lord when entering a new situation, so that they may have the joy of witnessing for Him, and His power in their lives; because of neglect or refusal to confess Christ, many of our boys and girls fall into sin, and drift away from the Saviour. Point out that confession is a great help and that joy and peace result from it.

The tendency to-day is to be ashamed of Christ. A man is not ashamed to be known as a socialist, free-thinker, or food-faddist; but he does not like to be thought anything so odd as a "Christian."

Let us see to it that we teach the *whole* of the Gospel—not only the work of Christ to meet our need, but that Jesus lives, and is to be obeyed.

Next month "Discipline."

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“WRECKING AND REPAIRING.”**Part I.**

THE above is part of a business sign I saw some time ago. What it was that this firm was prepared to wreck or repair I was not concerned to know. But I *was* (and am) interested in another line of wrecking and repairing, that of souls, the work of God, the interests of the Lord Jesus here on earth.

The wrecking of souls: how sad it is! I speak not here of the common ruin of all mankind in sin, nor of their punishment in eternity, in case they die unreconciled to God. Here indeed is wreckage, catastrophic, and fearful to contemplate. But I have more in mind the shipwreck to which those really saved are exposed, not of being finally lost, (for this can never be, see John x. 27-30), but the danger of striking in their course on some sunken rock or treacherous sand-bar.

These unseen dangers, ever threatening the souls of the children of God, are innumerable. They lurk everywhere, and we are likely to run upon them at any moment of our lives. While Satan is doubtless the secret instigator and real director of these attempts at the destruction of our soul's joy and peace, he in most cases uses men. Human agents seem to suit his purpose best. And to accomplish his fell design he does not call into his service the openly depraved. The course and the brutal would hinder rather than further his cause against the righteous. The refined and the religious suit his purpose admirably. Hence he chooses as his wreckers

gifted ministers, able professors, accomplished teachers, talented and fascinating writers, and all who are supposed to exercise influence over the minds of men.

The ominous words “WRECKING DONE HERE” might fittingly be written over many a church, chapel or “tabernacle” entrance, many a lecture hall, and many an educational institution. They might be inscribed on the covers of many a popular book.

Take the first, for example, the churches, supposed to be erected for the whole purpose of the worship of God and the preaching of His holy Word. In how many of these to-day is the deadly “higher criticism” being taught. It appears to have been rechristened under the newer name of “Modernism” (for it is the practice of crooks and deceivers to frequently change names and operate under various aliases); but whether called by its older name of Rationalism or its newer ones of the present time, it is the same old poison, whatever the colour of the outside sugar-coating of the death containing pill. It has even invaded the mission field, as the following from a recent number of *The Bible Champion* shows. It is from a letter written by Rev. Hugh W. White, D.D., of Yencheng, Kiangsu, China.

“I am sorry to find Modernism spreading terribly on the mission field. Books rank with infidelity are being read and studied by missionaries. I have just been translating passages from two theological professors in China, one American and the other Chinese. The former openly asserts that Daniel was written, not before but after the events therein predicted. The latter holds that religion is an evolutionary product arising from the ignorant errors of the primitive people. Another book I saw in the hands of a

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missionary, thickly underscored, was *New Church and Old*, by John Haynes Holmes. This book is reeking with anti-Christian animus.”

Alas, alas, now, for the poor “heathen Chinees” with such missionaries to instruct him! What wreckage will such men make!

Let the real believer in the Christ and Word of God beware of teachers such as these. Did not the divine Master Himself caution us, saying, “Take heed what you hear”? And is it not elsewhere written for our admonition: “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.” Refuse then to listen to preachers or teachers, of whatever denomination, who are not four-square for “the faith once for all delivered to the saints.” Inquire where in your district or town the pure Word of God is being held and taught, and there receive your instruction in spiritual things; and resolutely eschew, as you value your soul’s peace and safety, the instruction that denies or casts doubt upon the fundamentals of the Christian’s “most holy faith,” “faith” meaning here, the things believed.

It is bad and sad enough to be given the cold hard “stones” of formalism for the living bread from heaven; but when hungry souls ask for wholesome “fish” and are handed instead “serpents,” or in place of fresh, nourishing “eggs” are served with “scorpions,” it is infinitely worse (Luke xi. 11, 12); and this is what is being done to many of the children of God to-day. The poison of the serpent and the scorpion is being served out from many a pulpit and platform, where only the sound, sure

doctrines of the inerrant Word of God are supposed to be heard.

Oh, what wreckage has come to souls from this cause alone!

Then as to many or most of our modern institutions of learning, what may be said of them? What of the unsuspecting youths who sit in their class-rooms and have poured into their ears the guesses of evolution, and are taught the wild hypotheses of geologists as if they were facts, proven and settled, the origin of life and the first appearance of man, antedating the Biblical account by hundreds of thousands and even millions of years!

There appears to be a wicked conspiracy, not of silence, but of most active propaganda, for the spread and acceptance of the lie of evolution in most of our modern educational institutions, from the common elementary schools to the higher colleges and universities, including even the theological seminaries where young men are supposed to be preparing themselves for the Christian ministry. So serious has this menace become that several States of the U.S.A. have deemed it necessary to pass laws prohibiting the use in the public schools of all text books teaching the theory of evolution, or denying the origin of life excepting by the direct creation of God. This is as it should be; but it is to be feared that few of the other States will follow this noble example. Men appear so wedded to this stupendous lie, and the delusion of the last days seems to have already taken such a hold upon them.

To show the baneful effects of this rationalistic instruction served up of truth to the youth of

our land, we quote the following, written by a young lady student in one of the semi-religious schools of the United States.

“In my New Testament they have taken away many of the beautiful stories and nothing seems real any more. Before I came here I read in the Bible, but now when I sit down to read I stop and ask, Is it the truth that I am reading? My vision of service has disappeared, and I feel no more like I did. When I pray I think to myself, What a beautiful form! I just hate when Sunday comes. I felt this coming on all the while, but I kept telling myself that I would get over it, and when I would go home at Christmas time I would feel as I always did, but alas, I find myself questioning all religious work. I know that you will wonder almost if I am in my right mind. Sometimes I think that I am not, but how can I believe when they have removed the very foundations of my belief?”

A godly minister told me some time ago that he had sent his only son to Columbia College, a believer, as he thought. He added sadly: “They sent him back to me *an infidel!*” Oh, the wreckage, wrought on the faith of the youth of the land in the schools to whose instructions they have been committed.

Then there is the wreckage wrought to faith in the popular books of to-day. Take two of the latest and most widely advertised works of the present moment: *The Outline of History*, by H. G. Wells, and *The Story of Mankind*, by Hendrik Van Loon. A reviewer says:

“Both of these books have been sold by the ton both in England and America, and both of them have been syndicated and are being published in serial instalments by some of the chief newspapers. What a sad commentary on the kind of education furnished by our public school system, that the readers of these papers have acquired the ability to understand the lingo used to describe the geological ages and the

alleged process of organic evolution by which the amoeba developed into an amphibian, and finally into a mammal and a man; but have not acquired the ability to discriminate between facts and near-facts, or between science and scientific fiction."

The same writer, Prof. George McCready Price, M.A., himself a scientist of no mean standing, characterizes Wells's book as "a gigantic bluff," and has the following to say of it:

"Why do not scientists in general protest against this claptrap, foisted on to a confiding public in the name of science and history? Why do not some of them openly declare that these views of Wells are only the theories held by one extreme faction of scientists as even a possible explanation of the facts hitherto discovered? In reality, this book of Wells is only another stage in the gigantic game of bluff which the advocates of the animal origin of man have been putting over on the public for the past generation or more. Great quantities of propagandic literature have year after year been turned out of the presses of Europe and America, and it serves the purpose of the interests behind this propaganda all the better if, as in this case of Wells, such propagandic literature can be issued in good binding and be sponsored by one of our best known publishing houses. Often such propagandic documents are issued under the imprimatur of some highly honoured body, like a well-known University or some learned Society. But so far has this campaign of propaganda been carried, that seemingly very few scientifically educated people dare to stand out against it, or to protest against such a work as Wells', or the almost equally popular *Story of Mankind*, by Hendrik Van Loon, when they see them being palmed off on an unsuspecting public in the sacred name of science."

The last named work is even worse, if that were possible, than Wells's "Outlines." Take one example, which will be sufficient for our purpose to show what "death" there is in this "pot" of romancing, masquerading as "history."

His second chapter is headed, “How the Jews believed that the world had been created.” He speaks of God’s sublime revelation of the beginnings of things as recorded in Genesis, as “stories of the Creation,” written more than a thousand years after Moses had died. By “stories” he means, of course, fables, nursery tales, made up or make-believe accounts, like his own miscalled “history.” He is simply “parroting,” as another has said, the rationalists of a generation or more ago, as Wellhausen, Cheyne, Driver and others. And to think of the almost unprecedented popularity of this scarcely disguised work of infidelity! Well does a reviewer remark, “what endless trouble this book will make in the Christian home.” Yes, what wreckage, what havoc among the boys and girls who will be permitted by their unsuspecting parents to read it!

There is only one way to adequately account for the immense demand for works of this and a similar kind. It is the power of the prince of darkness, the father of lies, over the minds of men, and the sad conviction that must surely dawn upon us that the predicted “strong delusion” is already seizing upon the hearts and minds of the men of this Christ-rejecting, Spirit-resisting, Bible-neglecting generation. And it but confirms our understanding of that expressive and striking question of the divine Master: “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?”

The answer is both Yes and No. No, if Satan were allowed to work unhindered; for “if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.” Yes, for as the Lord prayed for Peter that his

faith should not fail, so He, the Advocate with the Father, the Intercessor, prays for all His own; and because of His all-powerful intercession the faith of the feeblest saint shall not fail, and though all but wrecked they shall at His coming be rescued and made more than conquerors through Him that loved and loveth them!

In a following paper I hope to enlarge on this happier theme of "Repairing."

C. KNAPP.

HOW MAY I KNOW?

THE question is asked, How may I know whether I am called to serve the Lord in the foreign field?

The questioner must recognize the impossibility of a direct and final answer to such an enquiry being given, especially by one to whom the individual and the circumstances of the case are quite unknown. The knowledge of a special and definite call to service is a very personal matter and can only be decided as the result of dealings with God. However, it does not seem fair to dispose of the question in this general fashion, and perhaps it may be helpful to readers generally, and the questioner in particular, if attention is called to some points which have a very real bearing upon this whole subject.

I. CONVERSION. Just because it is possible for some to imagine that service in the foreign field is merely some sort of post which some are fortunate in obtaining, it is necessary to state

that no person should ever dream about service abroad, who is not certain, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that the experience of conversion has been a real one. Let not any other consideration be thought of until conversion is a settled and manifested fact.

II. SERVICE. One of the first evidences of a work of grace is the desire to reach others and to engage in some sort of service. A person has been known to take up Christian work *because* of intending to become a missionary. But service should be engaged in solely out of love to the Lord and compassion towards the needy, and because of necessity being laid upon us. Therefore, one thinking of further service should be able to give a good account of the work he has *been* engaged in. In the New Testament it will be observed that those who were commended for service farther afield were only such as had already proved themselves. Hudson Taylor has well said that a trip across the ocean will not make you a soul-winner. It is the business of every servant to be faithful in his service wherever he may be placed. It is to the active and the faithful that the call comes for a larger service.

III. FELLOWSHIP. It is becoming more generally recognized that missionaries are made of the same sort of stuff as their fellow-creatures. It is admittedly difficult to work in complete harmony with every fellow-servant. But it is always possible to display the spirit of love, grace and forbearance. If a person cannot get on with a number of workers at home, that individual should never be encouraged to go to another land in the hope that fellowship would readily exist with only one or two co-workers.

The ideal person for service in other lands, in one respect at any rate, is the one about whom it is remarked, "we really do not know however we shall get on without her." On the other hand, if a number of others give a sigh of relief at the prospect of one leaving their midst, it is time for someone to apply the brake, so that such a tragedy might be averted. "To dwell together in unity" is a very necessary attainment.

IV. KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCRIPTURES. It is necessary to have more than a love for souls. If you are going to instruct others in the Scriptures, it is essential that you should have more than a cursory knowledge of your Bible. Let this matter be seriously faced. What is my actual knowledge of the Word of God? Have I ever read the whole of my Bible? Have I made a personal study of the great doctrines of grace? Is my mind settled as regards the great fundamental truths of the Word? This knowledge is not acquired in one year. Indeed, unless you have been spending a considerable time in the study of your Bible, it is not to be expected that you can lay any claim to having a working knowledge of the Book. Hence the growing need for all who serve to find time to devote to the study of the Scriptures. And this is particularly true regarding those who are contemplating whole time service in other lands.

V. NEGATIVELY. Under this heading I wish to mention some items which should not have any weight in determining whether a call has been heard or not. Doubtless some will feel shocked at the mere suggestion of the possibility of any of these things entering into the minds of any young Christian. But because we are all

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made of flesh and blood, it will do us no harm to search beneath the surface so that we may never make any mistake.

(a) *Not for Romance.* No young fellow has failed to be stirred by the reading of a very romantic tale of missionary adventure. That sort of thing makes an appeal to most young people. Romance does not bulk largely in the missionary's experience, and therefore if it is the desire for this that is calling you, seek it elsewhere.

(b) *Not for Prominence.* This seems a very real temptation. At the moment you may be plain John Smith or Mary Jones, not known or likely to be known beyond a very small circle of friends. But if you become a missionary your name would appear in missionary letters and a whole host of friends would begin to take notice of you. Instead of being a nobody you would become a somebody. The desire for prominence is an unworthy one in the service of the Lord.

(c) *Not for Matrimony.* There is much wisdom in the decision of some missionary societies where the law is laid down that no missionary should marry until at least five years have been spent in a foreign field. This may be debatable, but because it has happened that an engagement has taken place as soon as a couple have met in the mission field, it is very undesirable that any should think of the needs of other lands with this in the back of their mind. But into a discussion of this real problem we must not enter.

(d) *Not for New Surroundings.* There are people who get bored with the same surroundings, and

these feel quite sure that if they only had a change they would get on a lot better. Emphatically let no one think of service in other lands merely for the sake of a change of surroundings. The chances are that your present difficulties will be considerably increased when living in a trying climate.

(e) *Not for the Worker's Sake.* Some missionaries have been referred to as recruiting agents. It is easy to imagine a very nice missionary being on furlough and making a special appeal to some person or persons. Moreover it is perfectly natural for one to say: "I should really like to work with that labourer." But to decide that you have a call simply because of a desire to be with some particular worker will not carry you very far. Further, beware of the persuasion of any missionary who assures you that you are just the very person he has been looking for. Depend upon it you are neither the first nor the last person to whom he has said the same thing. Undoubtedly a spiritually minded worker may be a means of a very real help to you and may even prove to be your Ananias. But the marks will be unmistakable. Put the Lord's will before the wish of any worker.

VI. POSITIVELY. On the other hand, there are some very necessary things which must be added to the first four points, and these we will now enumerate.

(a) *Impossibility of remaining at home.* The old advice is worth passing on, that if you can possibly stay at home do so. The idea of going abroad has been turned down by you frequently, but the insistence of the call seems to increase.

You feel that you must go.

(b) *Physical Fitness.* The probability is that a consultation with a medical man, who has some knowledge as to the physical requirements of the particular part of the world you are thinking about, may settle your problem once for all. He may tell you quite frankly that you are physically unfit for such a climate. Surely it is not necessary to labour this point, as any sensible person must see the force of it.

(c) *Freedom from home responsibilities.* There are the responsibilities of children to parents; and in the case of parents not being provided for, especially in their advancing years, it is the moral obligation of children to see to this. We have known those who have had to wait for years until a way was made clear in this very respect. To fail to provide for one's own household is to deny the faith.

(d) *Ability to learn a language.* An aspiring young missionary was asked if anything had been done in the meantime to improve his education, and the answer was in the negative. Surely any thinking of service abroad should avail themselves of every opportunity of testing their ability to learn another language. The many opportunities of evening classes bring this within the reach of all. For example, are you thus perfecting your knowledge of the English language? If you can acquire a knowledge of any foreign tongue, French for example, it is probable that you may be able to master a more difficult language. But if you hopelessly fail in your efforts with French, you cannot expect to succeed elsewhere.

(e) *Age.* The China Inland Mission has had

a long and varied experience, and they are of the opinion that "while each case is considered on its own merits, generally speaking, twenty years may be considered as the minimum and thirty years as the maximum age for candidates." These words are worthy of serious consideration, even although a case may be quoted of a person at forty who did exceptionally well.

VII. THE JUDGMENT OF OTHERS. Fortunately the Scriptures have not left us without guidance respecting the call and commendation of workers. Indeed there is a general principle suggested in the words "and let the others discern." For example, Paul took into consideration the past experience of John Mark and was definitely of the opinion that at that time he was quite unsuitable for the work Barnabas proposed for him. Others can discern if there has been a call and especially if there is any measure of fitness to meet the need. Others are the best judges as to whether we can work with fellow-Christians. Let no servant think lightly of the well considered opinions of others about his or her fitness for service.

And when all has been said, the becoming attitude of each one of us is "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" May we "assuredly gather" that the Lord is calling us either to "tarry by the stuff" or go into the harvest field.

J. STEPHEN.

THE CROSS.

THREE times in John's Gospel the Lord Jesus Christ refers to being "lifted up," presenting on each occasion some fresh

view of the Cross, and giving at least three different thoughts regarding His death.

Taking the passages in the order in which they occur, we look first at chapter iii. 14. Here, most clearly, is seen

1. THE NEED FOR THE CROSS.

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." How wonderfully the great necessity is emphasized in these few impressive words! The "must," we would ever remember, was occasioned solely by the fact of sin,—yours and mine. Life for the sinner can only come by the Cross.

We pass next to

2. THE REVELATION OF THE CROSS. (Chap. viii. 28).

Here we learn (again from the lips of the Saviour Himself) that the Cross reveals the greatness of His Person. As then, so now. It is when we stand by the Cross and realize who He is, that we exclaim, even as the centurion of old: "Truly this was the Son of God."

The Deity of Christ is seen at the Cross. "When ye have lifted up the Son of man then shall ye know that I AM."

So unique a Person must have died a death vastly different from all others. And, indeed, He did. (See chapter x. 17, 18). Many have laid down their lives in a good cause; but none have come back. Not one has taken his (or her) life again.

Lastly, let us briefly consider,

3. THE ATTRACTIVE APPEAL OF THE CROSS. (Chap. xii. 32).

There is so much in these words of our Lord that one hardly knows how to comment upon them. In truth that is our feeling in dealing with all such wonderful verses, and we have purposely refrained from lengthy exposition, desiring that our readers should prayerfully meditate upon the actual words themselves. However, a closing thought may be suggested as to the appeal of the Cross.

Love always attracts. And love at its highest shines out from the uplifted Christ.

The Cross attracts because it was there we first saw the light, and the burden of our sin rolled away. It was there we learnt how desperate our case was, and how perfectly all our deep need was met by Christ who died for our sins, the Just for the unjust. Yes; it is *there* "my need and Thy great fullness meet, and I have all in Thee."

"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me."

He alone can do helpless sinners good; His precious blood alone can make the foulest clean; He alone can save me, all because of the Cross, *and in no other way.*

As we muse on these things, even thus briefly, do not the words of Paul ring anew in our hearts: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"? (Gal. i. 14).

May the Lord graciously cause the Cross to become a greater power in our lives, enabling us to exalt Him more, and to experience the truth of these oft-quoted words in a way we have never done yet.

H. A. WOOLLEY.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (VIII.)

Discipline.

WHAT is discipline? It is the management and control of a Sunday School in accordance with certain rules, and embraces instruction, correction, reward and punishment. Severity and punishment are not necessarily discipline, though in certain circumstances it may include them both.

There exists in some minds doubt as to the necessity of discipline. The propriety of correction and punishment is questioned as not being in agreement with "grace." But if we understand clearly the relationship in which we stand to the children, all doubt as to this disappears. The children are given to us for an hour on Sundays, and during that time we act towards them as "foster parents;" they are lent to us by their parents for the express purpose of instructing them in the Gospel.

As a rule they live in two or three rooms and their playground is the street, where there is little or no personal control. They come to us full of life and "go," and we find in them a tendency to disregard orders and to grow restive under restraint. Hence the need for firm and kind discipline. No teacher can possibly be successful without order, and no School can be carried on creditably without discipline. "Let all things be done decently and in order."

To secure discipline there must be good organization, and we may judge of the effectiveness of the organization by the measure of order prevailing in the School.

The superintendent and the teachers must work together in harmony. The former should be a man of character, capable of winning the respect of the children. The latter should be saved men and women who fear God and love our Lord Jesus Christ, having a love for souls.

The work of the superintendent is to assist the teachers to keep order. He must not interrupt in class work, but should come to the help of the teachers when necessary, dealing with cases that call for correction with a firm hand and yet with grace. For this much tact is needed. He must be prepared to insist that his orders are carried out, and should therefore exercise a wise discretion in giving orders. Failure to insist on the observance of that which is ordered spells defeat, and the children detect this at once, and behave accordingly.

Faulty organization is largely responsible for disorder, and attention to the following will go far towards securing that good organization which has as its primary object the maintenance of order.

1. Each teacher should be in his or her place before the scholars are admitted.

2. The prayer at opening and closing should be brief, simple and to the point. Long, rambling and "teaching" prayers are the death-knell of interest and attention.

3. Late scholars should not go to their classes as they arrive, but should be seated on special forms till the opening of the School is concluded.

4. The teachers in their classes should speak in such a tone as to be audible to their own scholars only. It is most distracting for a

teacher to be heard by an adjoining class.

5. The children should be dismissed in an orderly manner.

Attention to detail is the keynote to success.

If unsuccessful, should I give up?

Persevere and look to the Lord for help. Do not give up. If you meet with difficulties in your daily work, you do not throw it up; you persevere till it is done.

If your difficulty is to secure the interest and attention of your class, consider whether you have not been talking over their heads. Give them what they will enjoy, and avoid that which is unfitted for their mental digestion. If terms are used such as grace, justification, righteousness, etc., which children cannot possibly understand, it is small wonder that the mind flies to something more palatable. The abstractions of the Epistles should be illustrated by concrete examples from the Old Testament and the Gospels. Words and principles must be abundantly illustrated by circumstances within the child's experience or knowledge. Get down to his level.

We are the Lord's servants and He sometimes tests us. After failure it is profitable to enquire, Why is this? Get hold of your boys or girls quietly, and secure their attention by an interest in their daily life. The children thus get to know you, and you obtain a power over them. Get in your class before the children are there, and a little talk beforehand will often secure their interest for the whole of the afternoon. Whatever happens, do not give up. "Let us not

be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Next month, "Method in Sunday School Work."

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"I have been very much enjoying the comments in *Simple Testimony* on the ways and methods of Sunday School teaching, and agree heartily with the writer, that the best way to teach is to let the mouth speak out of the fulness of the heart, and that, if the heart has been in communion with the Lord during the week, surely there will be a portion for the little ones. I find that the best method, for me, is, as the writer suggests, to seek the Lord's face *early* in the week, that He might lay upon my heart the portion He would have me give my little ones, and then, having got that portion from Him, to seek earnestly and prayerfully all the light and help I can from Him on it, through studies in the Word, and any ministry I can obtain that He has given to any of His servants, in printed form. When my own soul grasps some of the depths and beauties of the passage I have in mind, then I can give it to the little ones, since I understand it myself, in language simple enough for them to comprehend. For my class is of small children, between three and seven years old. I have not found much satisfaction from prepared lesson sheets, that tell you just what to teach, and how to teach it, but love to take into my own heart a particularly tender and moving lesson from the Bible, and give out what my own soul has grasped. I also heartily agree with the writer that illustrations, correctly used, are of untold value in making a point clear."

CLARA C. ATWOOD.

"Only an hour with the children
Lovingly, cheerfully given ;
Yet seed was sown in that hour alone
That shall bring forth fruit for heaven."

“WRECKING AND REPAIRING.”

Part II.

I ONCE saw advertised a little paper called *The Repairer*. I at first misread it as “Reaper,” but a second glance showed my mistake, and I was rather glad of the correction. For while reaping is work which for the toiling servant is both happy and important, repairing is even more so; for it really precedes all reaping and is a work to which our Lord gave Himself immediately on His resurrection, in the case of poor fallen Peter.

I have never seen a copy of *The Repairer*; but I took the trouble to look up the word in the Scriptures and found it used but once, “And thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” (Isaiah lviii. 12). The context of the passage shows that it refers not to Messiah Himself, but to those who had themselves been restored in soul. And there are none so well fitted to restore souls as those who have been themselves the subjects of God’s restoring grace. So the Lord says to Peter, “When thou art converted (*i.e.*, restored) strengthen thy brethren.”

And if there is being done to-day, under Satanic influence, by means of pulpit, press and classroom, much and most lamentable “wrecking,” there is also, on the other hand, a work of “repairing,” blessed and of the Spirit, as the other is cursed and devilish.

But how can a wrecked faith, a wrecked life, a wrecked conscience, be repaired? “Easily,” we would by no means answer. For in replying

thus we should be far indeed from speaking the truth. It is *not* an easy matter to repair a breakdown among Christians, in either faith or morals. And the consequent result, a wrecked *testimony*, is even harder to repair, for it requires a much longer time to regain confidence from men than it does to obtain restoring forgiveness for the soul from God. Men do not quickly forget the past failures of a professing Christian, however humbly and circumspectly he may seek to walk afterwards.

Am I addressing any who have been so unfortunate as to have fallen under the disquieting influence of modern unbelief? On the ground of qualification from past experience I could not hope to help you; for I have never, I am thankful to confess, passed through any such period of doubt. Even in my unconverted days, I remember well having tried hard to make myself an infidel, or at least a disbeliever in all the things recorded in the Bible. Happily, I did not succeed. My natural confidence in the teachings of the Book was stronger than my will to disbelieve; or shall I say that my imagination was weaker than my reason? But in spite of this possible handicap (that of never having personally fallen under the power of scepticism) may I not at least *try* to repair the broken or impaired confidence of any who may have been less fortunate?

I shall take the shortest method possible to accomplish this. It is by asking you, "If you let go the Bible, what have you left to believe?" Nothing, absolutely nothing. It alone speaks with authority in matters of eternal and transcendental import. It is your one sheet anchor.

If you cut your cable here, you have nothing to hold you to your moorings in the storm, or to prevent your being carried on to the rocks of despairing doubt and uncertainty.

For who of those who would shake your confidence in the Bible have, or can have, anything to offer you in its place? The evolutionist does not speak of his theories as facts. He will not for his reputation's sake, if for no other reason, say, “I know.” Neither can the geologist, who would nullify for you the Genesis account of the earth's formation, dare to tell you that his theories as to the dates of the beginning of things are anything more than speculations. Do not let his favourite word *hypothesis* throw you off the track, for it is only the scientist's word for *guess*! Would you exchange the sure and positive “Thus saith the Lord” for the guesses of unbelieving men?

Nor can modernist theologians offer you anything real to rest upon. They may destroy faith, but they have nothing constructive to offer you when they have once shaken you from your confidence in the Bible as the written Word of God. Turn, if you will, to any of their writings and see if you can find in them anything like the sure and satisfying testimony of the holy Book. Not one of them can speak with anything like certainty. After they have taken from under your feet the one sure foundation of God's Word, they leave you not even “sinking sand” to rest upon, nothing but empty air!

I do not hesitate to challenge any one to show me in any of their books or pronouncements a solid, proved, certain statement of fact on which,

if I give up my belief in the holy Scriptures, I may safely and confidently stand. Take for proof the statement made some time ago by Professor Albert Bateson, the well-known British scientist, before a body of fellow-scientists in Toronto. He

“declared that scientists to-day knew nothing for certain as to the origin of species; knew less, indeed, than they thought they did in the days of Darwinism; and therefore he said that the evolutionists, instead of being able to treat the genesis of species by evolution as a proved fact, had to accept the theory ‘by faith.’ He also advised them to lay theorizing aside, and devote themselves to the study of *facts*.”
Bible Champion, March 1924.

What a mistake then to give up that which is sure and authoritative, and which has stood the test, not of years merely, or centuries, but of millenniums! If I become an evolutionist I must become one “by faith.” Let me a thousand times rather remain a Christian “by faith”! If it is a choice between faith in man or faith in God, who would for a moment hesitate? And this in the last analysis is what it really comes to, a question as whether I am to believe the Word of God or the fallible word of sinful men.

Hold on then to what God has given, and preserved, and passed on to you, till the detractors of His Word have something better to offer you than their guesses, camouflaged under the high-sounding word “hypothesis,” to be received from them “by faith” Faith forsooth, when God advises me in His Word, “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?”

What kind of faith, think you, would it be,

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that was founded on the ten thousand theories of those evolutionary scientists and modernist theologians? It would be like a bread I saw advertised recently in one of the New York subways. It read, “Made as 343,040 housewives showed us!” And a “faith” based upon what these revelation-refusing speculators would give us would be much the same. No two of them thoroughly agree; and in a very few years you would have to change your “faith” again, for their theories are as changeable as the fashions in clothes. A wholesome bread *might* be made from the combined recipes of more than a quarter of a million housewives; but a faith to stand the test of time, and that can assure me in the face of eternity, is not to be the product of what man can guess about and change as often as the Latin Americans have their revolutions. No! I must have something absolutely sure and unchangeable. And this I have, thank God, in His sure and holy Word.

No man has argued me into this faith; no reasoning or physical evidence of any kind has given me this assurance. Having read the Bible constantly during thirty-five years, the conviction grows upon me daily that only a person with a moral bias against the truth revealed therein could, if he knew its contents, refuse to believe in it as a revelation from God.

So read it for yourself, distressed and doubting soul, and keep on reading. “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God,” (Rom. x. 17). And if you continue reading with an honest and open heart, you will soon be able to say a final farewell to all your tormenting doubts. And then, even if deceived (which is

utterly impossible) you cannot in the end lose anything; but if you let go the substance for the shadow, the true for the false, your loss will be eternal and irreparable. Pray to God to help you to believe. Say like the man in the Gospels, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief!" And He will do it, be assured.

C. KNAPP.

EUTYCHUS AND HIS FAILURE.

PAUL the apostle to the Gentiles, we gather from Acts xx, was pressed to leave Asia, where he had expended much labour of love, for Jerusalem, desiring to be there by the day of Pentecost. His ministry in Asia had been accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit, and had been very fruitful. Many had been delivered from the power of darkness and from former associations and life by the power of the truth received, and were gathered in little groups as members of the body of Christ, looking to their Saviour in heaven for guidance and strength.

The day preceding Paul's departure was the Lord's day, and the disciples at Troas as usual had come together in an upper chamber to break bread in remembrance of the Lord. With heart vibrating with love for the dear saints whom he knew he would never see again on earth, Paul spoke to them, and prolonged his discourse until midnight, a long message, indeed! The servant and the saints, however,

were not bound that Lord's Day evening by limitations of time and sense. The time passed unheeded as they absorbed the refreshing stream flowing through a chosen vessel full of Christ. Surely the atmosphere breathed was of the fragrance of heaven itself.

"And there were many lights in the upper chamber," typifying the saints who were being made luminous with light from the courts of glory. We may well believe that the lights burned brightly, and still more brightly, as "fuel" was added to the divine flame. Indeed, this assembly was a miniature city of God whose light the Lamb is.

But within this heavenly enclosure, or rather at its farthest limits, "there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep." He sought to interest himself in the words of the apostle, but the message was long, and in the position where he sat he began to feel drowsiness. Finally, being "sunk down by his sleep he *fell* and was taken up dead."

Young Christian, take heed! Is this a picture of you? Are you trying to straddle the fence, as it were, engaging your interest with the ministry from heaven while you breathe the night air without? You may know surely that the ultimate effect will be deep sleep, sleep that will make you insensible to the things of Christ, irresponsive to the voice of the Spirit and deaf to His heavenly ministrations.

Time is the test. For a while, undoubtedly, the young man was wholly occupied with the words falling from the lips of Paul, but as the midnight drew nigh he became restless. He placed himself in a position of danger, and he *fell!*

How sad, with the midnight hour upon us and with the day about to break, that so many become lukewarm, having so slight an interest in the things of Christ! The Word is neglected or read casually, the meetings become common-place and even irksome, while the social atmosphere and the pleasures of the world possess a greater attraction. Soon, alas, the signs of life become invisible; to all appearances death has ensued, spiritual death. The child of God is no longer held in communion with his Lord walking in newness of life; he has gradually, perhaps imperceptibly, sunk to earth, and walks carnally as a man.

True, restoration there will be. Even though the death-like slumber continues till the final hour arrives, the poor, erring sheep will be embraced as Eutychus, not by the apostle, but by the One Who died and now lives for them, the very One we have neglected, dishonoured and grieved. But what an unspeakable loss: the rich treasures of heaven forsaken for the "pleasures of sin for a season." And this does not mean vice: sin may be simply living unto self, following wilful desires, inconsiderate of the claims of Christ.

The predicted lukewarmness of the midnight

hour has set in : it is unmistakably present in many quarters. Only those who walk in the Spirit, with their gaze fixed upon the face of our Lord Jesus, rejoicing in Him, are immune from its subtle influence. Other safety there is none.

But with God's help let us maintain patiently and firmly our stand as servants and representatives of the absent Lord, as we observe everywhere, and especially in the prevailing lukewarmness, the signs of His return, which is surely approaching. Think of it: the "twinkling of the eye" is nearing, in which the present scenes of earth will suddenly and forever be replaced by the glorious, heavenly home. The present trials, hard indeed to be endured, will have passed forever as we enter into the joy of our God and Saviour, to go no more out, drinking to the full the best wine, reserved for the last.

So let us hold fast! Let us faithfully "occupy" till He comes ; let us maintain the truth in the face of all opposition of the enemy ; and let us live in "the faith that worketh by love" (Gal. v. 6), which has its source in Christ. Health is produced by nourishment and work : communion at His feet and service in His strength. Brethren, *CHRIST IS COMING!* May we then live as those that wait for Him!

R. P. HYDE, *Trenton, N. J.*

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (IX.)

Method in Sunday School Work.

I SHOULD like to draw attention to certain common-sense principles, to which we must give heed if we would be efficient in the work of teaching in the Sunday School.

The first of these is

1. UNITY. To achieve this, we must ask ourselves (a) What? (b) Why? and (c) For whom?

(a) We must have *one definite subject* and stick to it. Digressions bewilder and distract the hearers. Just as the huntsman has to take infinite pains to train his hounds to follow the "first scent," and not to break off after every animal which crosses their course, so we must train ourselves to resist the temptation to chase every new idea which crosses our mind while we are speaking.

(b) Next, we must have *a definite purpose*. This will lead us to choose only the matter conducive to this end, and will also ensure its proper treatment. Lessons of great *educative* value could be taught from the Bible, but our purpose ought to be nothing less than the conversion or edification of souls. The *feeling* or *tone* of our lesson will also be determined thereby. We should be bright and cheerful, but nothing vulgar, coarse or frivolous should intrude to mar or lower the high tone befitting such a purpose.

(c) Thirdly, there must be *a definite standpoint*. Let us try to realize the child's point of

view, and from it approach the subject. Ideas which are familiar to us may be quite incomprehensible to him; and his stock of knowledge, Biblical or secular, is in all probability much smaller than ours. Let us be simple, and avoid the error of speaking "over the children's heads." This does not mean addressing boys and girls of 12 or 13 in "baby language," but the careful study of the children, and the adaptation of language and matter to their needs.

2. SELECTION. There must also be *Selection*, even in matter which is strictly relevant. The indolent teacher may have difficulty in finding enough to "fill in" the time, but the more we study the more our wealth of matter accumulates. We may, therefore, require to ask ourselves, "Is this or that point sufficiently important to be mentioned, or will its inclusion lead to the undue protraction of the lesson or to the exclusion of something of more value?" Disregard of this principle is a fault which often grows with years, and has turned many a useful servant into an intolerable bore.

3. ORDER. Every lesson should follow some definite *order* or *sequence*. How irritating and bewildering it is to listen to a speaker who plunges about in his subject, and throws at his hearers disjointed remarks in any haphazard method. Avoid parentheses or interpolated remarks, which are confusing even to the adult mind. In narrative lessons the chronological or time order should be followed. Tell the story as it happened. In a textual or topical lesson the order may be difficult to find, but if it has been well thought out, each part will lead on

naturally to the next. Mental development proceeds from the known to the unknown, from the near to the remote, and from the simple to the complex.

4. PROPORTION. In Art, the violation of the rule of *Proportion* is easily detected. But in preaching, teaching, or writing, it is no less serious. Our hearers judge of the importance of any idea by the *time* and *space* devoted to it. Stories and illustrations play a most important part, but let them not usurp more than their proper share of the lesson. Beware of treating the Bible as a mine of curious facts and verbal coincidences from which to draw questions, or puzzles, on which the scholars may exercise their ingenuity. By all means stimulate interest in the *letter* of the Word, but let its *spiritual* import have the chief place.

5. EMPHASIS. The most *emphatic* parts of a lesson are the beginning and the end. The impression made on the hearer by the opening remark determines his attitude to the rest of the address; the closing appeal is what remains with him most vividly. The *beginning* should be brief, direct, and should indicate the subject to be dealt with. Catch the attention at once and get under way. Long, roundabout introductions are worse than useless; they are disastrous. Again, the speaker who drags on for five or ten minutes after he has finished, in an effort to find a suitable *conclusion*, only irritates his audience. Avoid abruptness, but be abrupt ten times rather than wearisome. The conclusion should be a *brief* summing up and should bring out clearly the leading thought. It should give the listeners the sense of completeness.

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6. **VARIETY.** Our message is the old story from the old Book, but this, like the book of Nature, is characterised by *variety*. The grand saving truths of the Gospel, which ever abide the same, can be illustrated and presented in various ways. The continual repetition of stock phrases, appeals and anecdotes, weary and offend the audience. On the other hand, freshness of thought and variety of expression give colour to our teaching and will enable us to win and sustain interest.

CONCLUSION. To sum up: a good lesson will be characterised by *unity* of thought, purpose and standpoint; the matter will be carefully *selected* and arranged in a natural *sequence*; the time devoted to each section will be in *proportion* to its importance; the prominent features will be duly *emphasised*; and the whole lesson will be enlivened by freshness and *variety* in tone, language and illustration.

DAVID ROSS, M.A.

Next month "The Model Teacher."

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

REJOICING IN CHRIST JESUS.

OUR God, we thank Thee we have found
 Delight in Thine own Son,
 In Him, with whom the heavens resound,
 Thy well-belovéd One;
 Daily before Thee, Thy delight,
 Who ever did Thy will,
 The only One who in Thy sight
 Thy pleasure did fulfil.

The one green spot, when here on earth,
 On which Thine eye could rest,
 Where all around was desert, dearth,
 Man far from Thee, unblest.
 Thy pleasure prospered in His hand,
 Thy will was His delight:
 And as He trod this desert sand,
 He was this dark world's light.

Thou loved'st Thy belovéd Son
 With love, how infinite !
 And yet from Him, Thine only One,
 On Calvary's dark night
 Dids't hide Thy face 'mid awful gloom,
 As there our sins He bore;
 But now the shame, the cross, the tomb,
 The judgment, all is o'er.

At Thy right hand, we see Him fill
 Thy throne, with glory crowned,
 The object of Thy pleasure still,
 In whom Thy joy is found.
 But oh ! what wondrous thought is this,
 That we are brought to share
 Thine own great thoughts about Thy Son,
 Delighting in Him there !

The precious object of Thy heart
 To us Thou now hast given,
 In Him to find our blessed part,
 Sharing the joy of heaven.
 And soon like Him before Thy face
 We'll worship and adore,
 Conformed to Him in Thy rich grace,
 For ever, evermore !

E.W.T.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

HARROW. We are not entirely dependent on
 Genesis i. for our knowledge of how things

were brought into existence, though that chapter alone gives us an orderly account of creation. See what can be learnt from other parts of Scripture.

Both heaven and earth are the fruit of God's work; it was He who, before the earth was brought into being, laid its foundation.⁽¹⁾ At its commencement it was covered with "the deep," which wrapped it about as a garment.⁽²⁾ An outer garment, of cloud and thick darkness surrounded the water-covered earth.⁽³⁾

Then God commanded the light to shine out of darkness.⁽⁴⁾ Then the expanse was made, the heavens being stretched out like a curtain.⁽⁵⁾ There were waters above the heavens,⁽⁶⁾ set there by the creative command of Jehovah.

The waters, covering even the mountains, were driven back into the place prepared for them,⁽⁷⁾ gathered together⁽⁸⁾ and confined within appointed bounds.⁽⁹⁾

The hands of God formed the dry land⁽¹⁰⁾ and stretched it out above the waters.⁽¹¹⁾ He caused grass and herbs to grow.⁽¹²⁾

He made great lights: the sun to rule by day, and the moon and stars to rule by night.⁽¹³⁾ The resulting day and night were of God's ordering, for He prepared the light and the sun,⁽¹⁴⁾ as also the change of seasons.⁽¹⁵⁾ The moon had her appointed part to play.⁽¹⁶⁾

Then came the great and varied life of the waters, things innumerable, smaller reptiles (creeping things) and great sea monsters.⁽¹⁷⁾ Beasts that should live on land were also made by God.⁽¹⁸⁾

Finally came man, made after the similitude of God,⁽¹⁹⁾ the image and glory of God,⁽²⁰⁾ male

and female.⁽²¹⁾

All that we read in other parts of the inspired volume, is, of course, in absolute agreement with the narrative in Genesis i. So too, is all genuine science.

You will observe that we have not included Isaiah xlv. 18 among the passages quoted. This verse is sometimes cited as a proof of there having been a creation of the earth previous to that recorded in Genesis i. 2-31. The point of the citation is that the Hebrew word *tohu*, translated "without form" in Genesis i. 2, is the word translated "in vain" in Isaiah xlv. 18, and it is said that since God did not create the earth *tohu*, the *tohu* state of it, described in Genesis i. 2, could not have been that of the original creation.

We are persuaded, however, that the argument is fallacious. *Tohu*, like other words, must be translated according to its evident meaning and context. "Without form" is a rendering that cannot be improved upon in Genesis i. 2; "in vain" is an equally good rendering of the word in Isaiah xlv. 18. For here the evident subject is God's *purpose* in His work, just as in the following verse the subject is His purpose in His word.

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1. Psalm cii. 25.	12. Psalm civ. 14.
2. Psalm civ. 6.	13. Psalm cxxxvi. 7-9.
3. Job xxxviii. 9.	14. Psalm lxxiv. 16.
4. 2 Cor. iv. 6.	15. Psalm lxxiv. 17.
5. Psalm civ. 2.	16. Psalm iv. 19.
6. Psalm cxlviii. 4.	17. Psalm lxxiv. 25.
7. Psalm civ. 6-9.	18. Jeremiah xxvii. 5.
8. Psalm xxxiii. 7, 9.	19. James iii. 9.
9. Job xxxviii. 10, 11.	20. 1 Corinth. xi. 7.
10. Psalm xcv. 5.	21. Matthew xix. 4.
11. Psalm cxxxvi. 6.	

Look at verse 19 for a moment. The Lord says that He has not spoken in secret: His word is not without an aim. When He bade the seed of Jacob seek Him, it was not a mere purposeless command. (*Tohu* is used here also, and is rendered "in vain.") He spoke because He intended to perform that which He promised.

The eighteenth verse is parallel. God has not *wrought*, any more than He has *spoken*, without an object. His creation of the earth had a purpose in view; "He formed it to be inhabited." The creation here evidently includes the whole work of the six "days," and the finished product is referred to as created, not "in vain," but for the habitation of man. *Tohu* in verse 18 must clearly be translated as in verse 19, not "without form" (that would make verse 19 meaningless), but "in vain." It is not true exegesis to tear a passage from its connection, and explain it by another Scripture where the same Hebrew word occurs, when the clue to its interpretation lies in a parallel statement contained in the verse immediately following.

In Genesis i. 2, a truly wonderful verse, we may discern three great stages, which together constitute the "evening" of the first "day," preceding the bright "morning" of verses 3 and 4.

(1) The state of the earth when it was literally "without form," a most accurate description of a great mass in a molten and gaseous condition which, naturally, would have no defined "form."

(2) The state when its surface could be defined as "the face of the deep." The molten mass of the earth was now assuming a definite

contour, though still screened from all light by the thick volume of uncondensed gaseous matter that surrounded it.

(3) The state when "the deep" had become "waters." It was when this period was reached that the Spirit of God moved. It has been said that He "brooded" over the scene. How easily we may spoil Scripture by substituting words of our own for those chosen by the Holy Spirit! A bird that "broods" is silent and still. Brooding is not activity. But Genesis i. 2 gives us a view of the Spirit of God in *activity*. The word rendered "moved" is the same as that used in Jer. xxiii. 9 to describe the tremendous effect on Jeremiah of the words of the Lord in view of the false prophets. "All my bones *shake*," he says. The verb is only used in one other place in Scripture, in Deut. xxxii. 11, where it is translated "fluttereth." The passage describes the intense activity of the eagle in leading her young ones from the nest and teaching them to fly,—a very different thing from "brooding."

That the Holy Spirit was an active agent in creation we learn, not only from Genesis i., but also from Job xxvi. 13 and Psalm civ. 30. Though He is not mentioned in Genesis i. after verse 2, was it not He who gave effect, in every case, to the *word* spoken by God?

For instance, in verse 3. First there is the *word*: "God said, Let there be light." Then there is the fulfilment of the word: "And there was light." The Spirit wrought to give effect to the word. So too in verses 6, 7. First, God *said*, "Let there be an expanse." Then (how long afterwards we are not told) "God made the expanse." He worked (by His Spirit) to

produce that which His word had commanded.

It is the same in spiritual things. The Word of God bears no fruit in souls where the Spirit does not work to produce a response. It is He who graciously wrought, in new birth, to make the Word of God effectual in us. And now that we are believers, He continues His work in our souls, so that an effectual response may be made to the Word that ministers the great things of God to us.

This is a subject of which perhaps we do not hear as much as we might, and it is little understood by those not taught of God. The great Earl of Chatham once went at the invitation of a Christian friend to hear Mr. Cecil preach. The sermon was on *The Spirit's Work in the Hearts of Believers*. On coming out, the statesman confessed that he had not understood it at all, and asked his friend if he supposed that any one had done so.

"Why, yes;" he replied, "there were many plain, unlettered men and women, and some children, who understood every word of it, and heard it with joy."

Would that *we* understood better what it is to have *Christ formed in us*, by the work of the Spirit, so that, with the affections of Himself in our souls, there might be a more adequate response to the truth set forth in the Word of God!

For an unfolding of the marvellous scientific accuracy of the Genesis story of creation, we refer you to a remarkable series of articles by Mr. John Tuckwell, M.R.A.S., Lecturer at the British Museum, entitled "Is the Story of Creation True?" now appearing month by month, in

The Bible Witness. This can be obtained, with reprints of articles in the series that have already appeared, from its Editor, Runnimeade, Hounslow.

BOOK REVIEWS.

Two pamphlets have been sent us for review. *The Beginning*, by Alfred Mace, has reached its third edition, and by this time has become quite a classic on the doctrine of the Person of Christ. Its twenty-six pages contain much that is important and helpful in the highest degree, not only as to its chief theme but as to many of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. 4d. post free from Mr. H. Langston, 6, Buchanan Avenue, Bournemouth, E.

Modernism versus the Bible, by A. J. Pollock, is a timely and sound defence of the truth of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. It quotes from several of the leading modernist teachers and compares their destructive theories with the *facts* of Holy Writ. May be had from our publishers. See advt. on cover.

In commending most heartily both these books, it is of course understood that we do not of necessity endorse every word that they contain. But what they bring before the reader is, we are persuaded, of superlative importance.

To read pamphlets like these, setting forth that which is fundamental to Christianity, in opposition to errors that are current to-day, is a fine antidote to the spirit that magnifies minor differences between orthodox Christians. We are made to feel how much we have in common, and that it becomes us to cease striving with one another, and march shoulder to shoulder in defence of the truth.

WE SEE JESUS.

A Christian lad lay dying. For weeks his dear ones watched at his bedside as he grew weaker and weaker. But as his physical strength ebbed, his faith in Christ grew stronger, and Jesus became more precious to him. One day he said to his mother, "Mother, if I grow too weak to speak to you, watch my face and when you see me smile, you will know that I have seen Jesus."

It is seeing Jesus that makes the Christian smiling and happy. One who claims to belong to Christ, but who goes about with a sour, frowning face, is *not* seeing Jesus. But the child of God who lives with his eye fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ has a continual song in his heart and a smile upon his face.

"We see Jesus." (Heb. ii. 9). We see Jesus made a little lower than the angels: this is, become man (Psalm viii. 4, 5), that He by the grace of God should taste death for all.

This is the place where first of all we must see Him. The world has rejected and cast out Jesus, and nailed Him to the cross. God has ordained that all who are saved must see Him there first (1 Cor. i. 17-24). Else they must wail when they see Him coming in the clouds (Rev. i. 7). But He says, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," and all who heed this gracious invitation, and behold the Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world, in looking unto Him are saved.

Then the Christian looks up through the opened heaven and sees Jesus at the right hand

of God (Acts vii. 55, 56), our great High Priest who ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb. vii. 25).

So in Hebrews iii. 1, we are exhorted to consider, or to perceive thoroughly, the great High Priest of our confession—Jesus. And again, “seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” (Heb. iv. 14). We are to hold fast our profession (or confession) of faith without wavering, for He is faithful. (Heb. x. 23).

We have confessed the Lord Jesus Christ before men as our Saviour and Lord. The world, the flesh and the devil are united against us to cause us to disgrace our confession, to deny our Lord, to dishonour His holy Name. Only as we consider our great High Priest, ever living to make intercession for us, can we hold fast what we professed. And then, we are in the Christian race. In order to run it successfully we lay aside every weight and sin, and fix our eyes upon Jesus. We are told in Hebrews xii. 2 to “look away off unto Jesus,” the Beginner and Completer of our faith. He Who endured, despising the shame, has reached the goal, being now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Would we reach our goal? We must keep our eye on Jesus. We must fix it upon Him Who waits to welcome us at the end, and only as we do that will our eyes be taken from things on the earth through which we are passing.

“When you see me smile you will know that I have seen Jesus.” Let us go through this world with a smile, the smile of bright, happy

joy that is in the heart and face of those who see Jesus.

A few weeks ago I saw three happy Christians in the almshouse. One was black and blind: one has lain for thirty years with shrivelled limbs and body, scarcely able to talk: one was a dear old Chinese Christian, very sick. All were smiling and happy because they saw Jesus. May our friends and neighbours be able to see in our happy life and joyful face a proof that we too have seen Him!

F. L. FRENCH.

SHALL WE LISTEN IN?

“**W**HY, certainly! Why should we not?” asks a chorus of voices. Some one may add: “I installed my own set at considerable trouble, not without expense. I am well satisfied with it, and why should I not enjoy it?” So far, so good. Shall we now see if we can get any direction from the Word of God? In Colossians iii. 17 we read, “And *whatsoever* ye do in word or deed, do *all* in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”

When an evening is spent “listening in,” is it done in the name of the Lord Jesus? And can the person who is so occupied kneel down, before retiring, and thank God for that evening’s occupation?

Once again we open our Bible and read 1 Corinthians x. 31-33: “Whether therefore

ye eat, or drink, or WHATSOEVER ye do, do *all* to the glory of God, giving none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God, even as I please all men in all things, *not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*"

Are we sure that "listening in" is to "the glory of God"? May we not thereby give offence to the unconverted?

An irreligious man entered a house where he found a converted relative listening to a famous singer. "What!" he exclaimed, "*you* listening to that? You would not go to the Music Hall to hear her, but you do not mind listening where no one can see you."

Needless to state, the Christian young lady at once dropped the receiver. May we not also give offence to those who form part of "the church of God" and who seek to walk in separation from the world? A Christian lady remarked to the writer, "Those who listen in are not only worldly, but they must needs proclaim the fact from the house-top."

One more passage of holy Scripture, Ephesians v. 16-18: "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

"Redeeming the time" does not mean recovering lost time; that is impossible. It means buying up the present opportunities.

Some persons may dub us as "kill-joys," but may we not label them "kill-times"? An unconverted student said recently, "Listening in is ruining my studies, I am listening in when I ought to be studying." How much time that used to be spent over the Word of God, and in the company of the people of God, is now spent listening in? How many listen in the privacy of their own house to that which their conscience would not allow them to go and hear in a public building? By those who are responsible for "broadcasting," the Lord's Day is flagrantly disregarded, with an apology for a sermonette thrown as a sop to those who are religiously inclined. Is this "the will of the Lord"? And do those who support it show evidence of being "filled with the Spirit"? The Spirit-filled person is the joyful person, and he shows it by singing and making melody in his heart to the Lord.

One question more: Should we like the Lord to come and find us listening in? Or should we prefer that when He comes He should find us listening for His footfall? All this will not make us legal. Love for the Lord will produce the desire to know His will, to be found here well pleasing to Him, to do everything in His name, to be "like unto men that wait for their Lord," and then we shall be "singing and making melody in our heart to the Lord."

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

NOT OURSELVES BUT CHRIST.

IT was never more important to listen to Paul than at the present time, seeing his successors have perverted his teaching. (Acts xx. 29, 30). Indeed, what is generally accepted now as Paul's doctrine has more in common with the religious notions of Saul the Pharisee. Emphasis is laid on what man can do to commend himself. "Self-expression" is the keynote of the modern "gospel." But Paul's message is the reverse of all that. After bitter experience he learned that legalism was a huge mistake, that human efforts on that line come short of God's requirements, that man after the flesh cannot please God and that his condition is hopeless apart from divine intervention. But the gospel according to Paul unfolds *what God has done for man*, and shows that by submission to His will man's desperate need is fully met.

Saul the Pharisee was most sincere when with religious zeal he persecuted the church. But the shock received on the Damascus road convinced him of his error and the enormity of his sin. He found that his will was entirely opposed to God's, and that he had neither wisdom nor strength to do the right thing. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" he exclaimed.

The light exposed the solemn fact that Saul was not only a sinner, but an enemy of God, yet that, while in that state, God had given His own Son, Jesus Christ, to die for him. The sense of divine love was overwhelming. His former religious self, Saul of Tarsus, and his

many sins, were covered by the ocean of divine mercy. The goodness of God manifested in Christ Jesus now filled his vision with great results. He was transformed. Saul the Pharisee became Paul the Christian. He saw the end of himself in the death of Christ and found righteousness and salvation in the One who died and rose again.

Paul writes concerning his religious experience to the people at Rome. It was to some extent unique. Yet he knew himself to be an example of what the grace of God can do, or has already done, for other men. Sovereign mercy had been shown to the Roman believers. With Paul, they rejoiced "in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation." Hence he concludes: "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." The love of God expressed in the gift and sacrifice of Jesus had been shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Spirit, displacing the alienation and enmity once there. They were no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit: they were a new creation. Christ was their life, and in the power of that life they would be saved.

Christ *objectively* was the source and inspiration of that life. With the eye of faith steadfastly fixed upon Him, they were enabled to walk the troubled sea of human experience in this world, while *Christ within* gave them new desires and aspirations, so that henceforth they should not walk after the flesh but after the Spirit.

To the Philippians Paul wrote: "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of

His good pleasure," which means that the same people who were once dominated by sin, and were the slaves of their own depraved will, were now subject to God. New powers had invaded their souls, so that they were able to appropriate salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, and make it their own.

Paul, as we have seen, found salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ. He saw that "our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin," which meant that *he* was crucified with Christ; that Saul no longer existed, but Christ lived in Him. Whilst he remained in the body his life became a life of trust in the Son of God, "who," he said, "loved me and gave Himself for me." Divorced from the law by the body of Christ, he was now united to another Husband, even Christ risen from the dead, and the original sentence was fulfilled: "thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee" (Gen. iii. 16; Rom. vii. 1-7). Only in this way can we bring forth fruit unto God.

The modernist who cultivates "self-expression" is miles away from the truth. Yet his example is often followed by people who ought to know better. Is there not an attempt to carry out Christian principles independently of Christ? Have we no experience of religious pride, and of effort to distinguish ourselves? Fifty years ago such terms as "self-judgment" and "self-ignoring" were much in vogue, but the vocabulary is changed. One seldom hears these expressions now. Why is it?

“RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST.” 189

Let us return to Paul and profit by his experience. May *we* also know the constraining power of the love of Christ, and henceforth live unto Him who died for us and rose again. By submitting ourselves to Him the moral features of Christ, “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” will be expressed in our lives and we shall be transformed, like Paul, into the same image.

W. TAYLOR.

“RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST.”

In John xx. 22 it is said that the Lord breathed on the disciples and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Did He speak of the day of Pentecost, or did they receive the Holy Spirit at that time?

IT is not of a special *act* or *moment* that this passage speaks, but of what characterizes the present dispensation. Consider the last part of John’s Gospel from chap. xiii. to end of chap. xx. You will see that in this last night, with His disciples alone, the Lord prepares them for what was before them. He was going to leave them; His work here on earth was finished. He was going back to the Father; they were to believe in Him now even as in the Father, invisible to them. He washes their feet as a picture of what He is doing for us now. He strengthens them in view of the opposition they would meet from the world, even as He had

suffered opposition. In His high-priestly prayer (chap. xvii.) He says, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (though the cross was yet before Him), and He presents them to the Father in the value of that work which is considered as *done*. It is all anticipative.

Now in chapter xx. *as the Risen One*, He takes His place before them as the Head of a new race to whom He gives a new life—eternal life. "He breathed on them." As He had breathed *natural* life into Adam, now as "the last Adam, a quickening Spirit" (1 Cor xv. 45), He takes His place as the communicator of eternal life to the new race of whom He is the Head, and the gift of the Holy Spirit accompanies the new position in which He brings those whom God has given Him. The passage, therefore, speaks not of receiving eternal life *then*, nor the Holy Spirit *then*, but is emblematic of the Lord's place in new creation.

Help and Food.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (X).

The Model Teacher.

APOLLOS may well serve as a model for every Sunday School teacher. He was marked by fervency of spirit, diligence in teaching, and boldness of utterance. In his *manner* he was eloquent. As for his *matter*, he was mighty in the Scriptures, instructed in the way of the Lord, and eager to learn the way of God more perfectly. Little wonder, therefore, that he greatly helped the people of God and mightily convinced the unbelievers.

The perilous times foretold in 2 Timothy are upon us, and hence the clamant need to "preach the Word." The love of pleasure dominates men, and sound doctrine is no longer palatable. While the press daily pours forth its flood of fiction, and the picture houses cater sensational shows for the youthful minds, we must beware of seeking to compete with them. Our mission is not to *please* but to *save*, and to-day, as in Timothy's childhood, only the holy Scriptures can make wise unto salvation through faith. We cannot provide the faith, but we can furnish the young minds with the knowledge of God's Word, knowing it to be as living seed.

Think of it! The opportunity of hearing the Gospel is for hundreds limited to half an hour per week, and yet with hearers almost wholly ignorant of the Bible the teacher often fritters away the time with a sentimental story, and the preacher with a dissertation on the poets. No one knew better than the apostle Paul the value of a good and timely quotation from the poets. He was a student of books, and continued to be so till his latest days, (2 Tim. iv. 13.) He practised what he enjoined upon Timothy: "Give attendance to reading." "Reading makes a *full* man." (Bacon). "The man who never reads will never be read; the man who never quotes will never be quoted" (Spurgeon). Yet, with all his "much learning," Paul was a man of *one* book. If we set over against his *three* quotations from the heathen poets which have been recorded (Acts xvii. 28, 1 Cor. xv. 33, Tit. i. 12) his eighty-eight quotations from the Old Testament, we shall see which book dominated his mind. Well for the preacher

whose quotations are in the same proportion.

The printing press has not been an unmingled blessing. It has multiplied books to such an extent that the study of God's Word is often almost crowded out of our lives. A smattering of many things and thorough knowledge of nothing is too often the result of modern education, both secular and religious. Our knowledge *about* the Bible, especially the unessential points, is probably as great as that of our forefathers. But do we know our Bible as well as they did? Many readable and interesting modern books on Biblical subjects contain hardly a crumb of spiritual food.

"What did you think of my sermon?" asked a young preacher of an old servant of God.

"It was a very poor one. There was nothing of Christ in it," was the candid reply.

"But there was nothing about Christ in the text," answered the youth.

"Young man, do you know that from every English town there is always a road which leads to London? So also from every text there is always a road which leads to Christ. When you take a text, consider it your first duty to ask, 'Where is the road leading to Christ?'"

The apostle was a man of *one* subject, "I am determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The *person* and *work* of Christ should be the theme, not stories of which the preacher is the hero. "He must increase, I must decrease." All true preaching seeks to magnify Christ. Let us send out our scholars so well grounded in the scriptural teaching as to the eternal deity of Christ, that they will not be seduced by the numerous heresies

regarding this important matter.

His wonderful incarnation, His stoop to Bethlehem's manger, His life of lowly grace and perfect goodness should be lovingly spoken of, but let us ever remember that it is the preaching of the *cross* which is the power of God. Dwell not so much on the physical agonies of the Saviour—mere natural emotion can be wrought upon thereby—but show rather the exceeding sinfulness of sin in the human heart, and the exceeding greatness of God's love made known on Calvary's cross.

Nor will our gospel be a complete one unless we dwell largely on His resurrection on which the validity of our Christian faith rests, and which is mentioned no less than *one hundred and four* times in the New Testament; on His ascension and present session at God's right hand; and His second coming, to which Scripture refers five times as often as to His first.

Thus "thoroughly furnished" in the divine library and the divine Person of the Son of God with both text-book and theme, the servant of God will have as his motto "*Christ* in all the *Scriptures*."

DAVID ROSS, M.A.

At a Conference of Sunday School teachers, when the subject of the Ideal Teacher was considered, contributions to the discussion were made by several speakers.

One summarized his views thus :—

The ideal teacher should (1) Be a really converted person. (2) Have love to Christ and for

souls. (3) Be capable of winning the confidence of his scholars. (4) Be observant of human nature. (5) Not only tell of the joy of Christian life, but personally manifest it.

Another speaker mentioned various hindrances to success in the work :—

(1) The feeling that all teachers must work along stereotyped lines; getting into a rut. Many are afraid of originality, but your power depends to a great extent on the fact that you are natural, and that God is free to work through you.

(2) The fear of man. Just as in country villages an action is viewed in the light of "What will the parson say?" so the fear of what Mr. So-and-So will say may hinder some from taking up something about which they are perfectly clear before God.

(3) The expectation that the Spirit of God will necessarily work to-day on exactly the same lines as He has done in the past. We must be on the look out for His activity, or we may be left high and dry, and the blessing pass on to others.

These remarks were followed by an address by Mr. Edmund Clark, who said :—

You will never win children to Christ unless you can win them to yourselves; if they do not care for you they will not care for your message. The ideal teacher therefore is one who wins the children to himself. I heard a dear little girl only five years of age say to her teacher, "I love Jesus." The teacher tactfully asked "Why?" "Because you love Him too" was the answer.

What a splendid ideal !

While the ideal teacher was the Saviour, there are several Scriptures which give us examples of ideal teachers. We get a perfect example in John i. John the Baptist at this time was popular and had gathered all the people to himself. He would, however, have ceased to have been an ideal teacher if they had remained in that position. My aim, first of all, is to bring children to Christ, but I shall never lead the children to Christ unless I win them for myself. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God !" I like the new rendering of the words "and looking upon Jesus, he said 'Behold the Lamb of God'": "and looking upon Jesus, he said, Look !"

Of course it is not a bit of use for me to try and make children interested in a subject if I am not interested in it myself. In the first place John had the affections of the people ; and in the second place, being occupied with Christ, he said to the people "Look !" This is the ideal teacher.

Now as to the message. I have spoken of John as the ideal teacher. Let us look at his message : "Behold the Lamb of God." Do not take the children for a ramble nor begin with "Come, let us reason" and finish up with the Second Coming. Confine yourself to one truth, and keep to that all the time. Cover the whole plan of redemption, if you like ; but do not think that you must necessarily have ruin, redemption and the other "r's" the same afternoon.

The ideal teacher with an ideal message will have ideal results, *i.e.*, conversions. He always

tries to draw people to the Saviour and then endeavours to make them workers. Andrew brought a Peter. Perhaps I am a nobody: be content to be Andrew and you may bring a Peter yet. As you sit in your class say to yourself, "There may be a Spurgeon or a Moody here."

A further point is whether the teacher is justified in looking for results, and is being profoundly disappointed if he does not see them. I may be satisfied with the state of things I find, or have a conviction in my soul that God *does* save children. Let us be clear that children are not saved because they understand certain things, although faith is often intelligent. (Matthew xi. 25). The Gospel is a revelation, And the ideal teacher will be waiting on God and believing that his message will be used. Now, is it my aim to bring children to believe in Christ, or am I content to leave it till "later on"?

I was brought up to believe that children could not be converted. Now I believe that God leads children to believe, but the difficulty is, directly the child leaves day school he leaves the Sunday School as well. We must aim to bring the children intelligently to Christ and stop at nothing short of bringing them into the assembly. It is heart-breaking to see how long it is before children are brought into the assembly. A man was saved at a meeting that I had, and a brother in the Lord interviewed him as he desired to break bread, and the following Sunday he broke bread; but the brother's own little daughter, who had been converted some five years before, was still kept

outside. I had the privilege of taking up with them Exodus xiii., "When your *children* shall say what meaneth this," etc.

When I was very young I loved the Saviour, but no one thought it was possible for a child to be saved. I remember how that at dinner time on Sunday I used to break a crumb off the bread at the side of my plate in order to remember the Lord in His death. My aim is to bring the little ones to Christ and then to lead them to the assembly. As a boy I was allowed to go to a Congregational Chapel, and here it was that God was pleased to bring me to Himself; I was for years lost to the assembly, but not to the Lord. I have not the slightest doubt that I could not have been caught at the local assembly, for they did not believe that children could be converted.

Children are lost; let us be clear as to this. But "it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones perish." God views a child as lost, and the Son of man came to save such.

With reference to the expression "The ideal teacher is born, not made," *it is not true*. For instance, in the district in which I was brought up, I was told never to work in a Sunday School, as I was not suitable for such work. Well, I have done nothing but children's work for ten years and have dealt with thousands of children. I was not born to love children; it is a gift of grace, and grace can teach. I do not agree with the statement that the ideal teacher is born and not made.

Next month "The Ideal Superintendent"

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

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EUCHARISTIA.

Who is this stranger from the desert coming,
A virgin chaste and fair,
In glorious robe of wroughten gold apparelled,
Her veil upon her hair?

Who is this stranger from the desert coming
To keep her heart's glad tryst?
This is the bride, the love-gift of the ages,
That God hath given His Christ.

This is the pearl for which Christ gave up all
things,
The church for which He died;
So precious was she, honourable, He loved her
Far more than all beside.

She treadeth softly, and her heart is saying:
"I go my Lord to meet;
Tell Him that I am sick of love and listening
For HIS step in the street."

Unto an upper chamber mean He cometh,
Cometh to meet His bride,
Bidding her heart recall Him in His sorrow,
Shewing His hands and side.

There will she bring to Him her love's sweet
spikenard,
With fruits from out her stores,
There pour upon His feet the costly perfume,
The while her heart adores.

There will He whisper gently how He loves her,
His Father's Name declare;
There pledge her to Himself until the morning
When she His home shall share.

L. R.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ST. EUSTATIUS, W. I. You have heard it affirmed that the Israelites were *safe* in Egypt, under the shelter of the blood of the passover lamb, but that they were not *saved* until they had passed the Red Sea. But, like so many things that come to be regarded as gospel truth because they are reiterated with much assurance, the statement is not supported by Scripture.

It was a wonderful *deliverance* that the Israelites experienced in Egypt—see Exodus xii. 27. They were delivered, or saved, by the gracious provision of God, from the stroke of His judgment. At the Red Sea they were delivered, or saved, from the power of the oppressor. Later on they needed to be saved from enemies that came against them, as Deut. xx. 4 shows us. So that, instead of attempting to draw a distinction between “safe” and “saved,” (a mere play of words), the right and Scriptural distinction is between (1) What they were saved from in Egypt, and (2) What they were saved from at the Red Sea. The sinner who puts his faith in Christ to-day is saved in a way typified by both these deliverances. Not only is he completely delivered from the judgment due to his sins, but he is for ever saved from the tyranny of Satan, and “the power of darkness,” (Colossians i. 13).

WOOD GREEN. We do not believe that any “self-emptying,” or *kenosis*, such as your words imply, took place in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ. If the water in a bowl is poured out, we may speak of the bowl as being emptied.

But we may also use the word with regard to the water. The *contents* of the vessel are emptied out. And this we believe to be the force of the word in Phil. ii. 7, translated in the R.V. "emptied." It is not that Christ was a vessel out of which certain qualities and attributes were emptied, but that *He emptied Himself* as it were, from one vessel to another. The vessel *from* which He emptied Himself was "the form of God" (verse 6): that is, the circumstances, or the status, of Deity. The vessel *into* which He emptied Himself was "the form of a servant" (verse 7), that is, the circumstances, or the status, of a servant. But in thus emptying Himself He did not cease to be what He ever was; nor did He divest Himself of any of His attributes. Here, as Man, He was still the Omnipotent, all-wise Creator-God. In Him there still dwelt all the fulness. (Col. i. 19). The notion that in becoming flesh the eternal Word became something less than He essentially was, borders in our judgment, on profanity.

PETERBOROUGH. We hardly know what to make of your question. If you mean that sin has been put away by the sacrifice of Christ in the sense that the believer stands before God perfectly justified, with no sin imputed to him, we heartily agree. But Scripture does not say that the Lamb of God *has taken away* the sin of the world. Sin is still in the world, though the work in virtue of which it is to be taken away has been finished, once for all, on the cross. It will only be really taken away when the new heaven and the new earth come into being. We must not confound our redemption, and the clearing of our consciences, with the putting away of sin out of the world.

THE CRAZE FOR MONEY.

THE Scriptures teach us that the Christian is to look for a heavenly inheritance, not for worldly possessions. On earth he is to be a pilgrim and a stranger, he is to turn from money-getting to deeds of benevolence, and he may well count it a blessing to be poor, and fear to be rich, for his own soul's sake, and also lest his children outrun him on the road toward the Antichrist.

Many a boy and girl has been ruined by the first week's wages, for with the money has come a new thrill of worldly life, a lifting up of the head, a feeling of independence—the money disease has been caught. It were better for our children to work hard at low wages, to be kept poor, than to enter into the mad crowd of money lovers.

How far removed from the spirit of the age were those sound words of Spurgeon. A lady had left him £10,000, and his brother James said, as he informed him of the fact: "Charles, that will make a fine nest egg for your family," but Charles turned to him with a look of surprise and decision, and said: "I guess not, James; I am not such a fool as to dam up the stream of God's blessings to my family with £10,000."

Hearing God's thunderings in His Book against covetousness and money-loving, seeing his high calling in Christ Jesus and God's purposes for him, understanding what the

closing days of man's power will be, let the Christian—that one who belongs to Christ—come back to a simple and lowly life in fellowship with his Master. Let the teachings of the Scriptures correct and lead him in his eating, the clothes he wears, his home and house furnishings, his travelling, and all his plans. All that he has belongs to the One who bought him with His blood, and he cannot say, "Because I have money I can afford this luxury or this unnecessary comfort,"—not only because many starve to death and the heathen perish without the Gospel, but because he has seen the consummation of money-loving and money-making in the mark of the Beast and in the judgments of God upon the covetings of man.

G. U. P. C.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

A CAPTAIN on a voyage to the United States, when standing on the bridge of his steamer one day at twelve o'clock in the forenoon, had a sudden impulse to alter his course. He was a Christian man, and went into his chart-room and prayed to God about it, and asked that, if he was to alter the course of his ship, the impression that he had might be deepened. He went to his first officer, and consulted him about altering the course; but the officer said, No, he did not

think it advisable to do so. But the first impression deepened in his heart, and he went straight to the man at the helm and altered the course of the steamer.

Twelve hours after, a ship hove in sight, showing signals of distress. The captain at once asked the first officer to man the boat and rescue the crew on board the sinking ship. As it was blowing a stiff gale, the officer refused, but on the captain saying he would go himself and leave him in charge of the ship, he consented to go. At great risk, they boarded the ship and rescued nineteen men. No sooner were the men on board than they saw their ship disappear below the waves; they were just in time.

When the rescued crew were safely on board the steamer, they fell on their knees in earnest prayer. It turned out that seventeen of the men were Christians, and exactly at twelve o'clock, when the first impulse came to the captain, these seventeen men on board their sinking ship were praying to God to send some help, and to rescue them out of their perilous condition. They had been driven from the coast of Newfoundland by a severe storm, and in a direction where little help could be expected from passing vessels.

Thus our God hears and answers prayer. To Him be all the praise.

R. THOMPSON.

AN EVENING ON LAKE TIBERIAS.

Matthew viii. 23-27.

WHO can estimate the worth of that little band of voyagers, who, in the dusky evening twilight, pushed off from the western shore of the lake? In that small vessel, manned by humble fishermen, we see the almighty Son of God in lowly guise. We behold there, also the "infant assembly" destined, ere long, under the Holy Spirit's power, to herald forth to earth's remotest bound the glories of Christ and the love and grace of a Saviour-God.

The early part of that day, as we learn from the Evangelists, was spent by Jesus in gracious and unremitting toil. As the true Servant of God for man's necessities, His labours were incessant, His zeal unflagging. He came forth from the Father's bosom to tell out its deep secrets to the lawless and rebellious children of men; and to set forth in this world, by a life of perfect subjection and obedience to the will of God, the kind of man in whom a God of unsullied light and holiness could find His pleasure.

Let us draw near to that little boat with its precious occupants. Mark tells us that they took Jesus *even as He was* in the ship: all unrefreshed and unprepared for a night's voyage, the garments needed for crossing the lake unprovided, it may be, and the evening meal untasted. We may think of the great apostle's request to Timothy to bring with him the cloak that he left at Troas, to protect his shivering

limbs from the cold of a Roman dungeon. But here we have Paul's Master and Lord, God manifest in flesh, Creator and Redeemer, fast asleep on the rough planks of a fishing vessel, exhausted nature demanding refreshment and rest after the arduous strain of a busy day. Think of it! the Lord of glory, Emmanuel, *God with us*, out on the bleak sea, the dusk of approaching night for His curtains, the sky for His canopy, lulled to rest by the music of the oars and the ripple of the waters. Have we not here a vivid picture of the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ?

The scene deepens in interest as the little bark pursues its course. When they left the shore at the bidding of Jesus, the sun had set peacefully behind the western hills; the sky was clear, the sea unruffled with waves. But suddenly, one of those squalls, or gusts, so often experienced in inland lakes, came sweeping down the opposite mountain gorge. The gathering clouds answer to the wail of the hurricane, the waves beneath lift their crested forms, and the rain rushes from the blackened heavens. So violent does the tempest soon become that, as Mark tells us, "the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full." It was no mimic storm, no ordinary danger, that would lead the fisherman disciples, who knew the sea so well from youth, to cower in terror for their safety and abandon themselves to despair. What now of that lowly Sleeper? Still weary humanity asserts its claims. The wind is sighing and sweeping around; the rain is pouring on that unprotected pillow: yet still He slumbers. The wild howling war of the

elements awakes Him not ; and had His disciples not come with violent hands and roused Him, those weary eyes would have slept out the storm.

One only of that little crew was prostrated with bodily fatigue, and that one was Jesus. It is the same pilgrim Saviour, who, after traversing the dusty roads of Samaria, with its summer sun blazing overhead, sat Himself weary and wayworn, as best He could, on a well by the wayside, and asked from a woman of Samaria a cup of cold water ; the same glorious Person who mingled His tears of sympathy with those of the bereaved sisters of Bethany. The temple of His body was mysterious indeed : a holy, sinless, unpolluted shrine. But though separate from sinners, He was not separate from human infirmities. Hunger, thirst, weariness and grief He shared in common with those whom He came into the world to seek and save. What are we to learn from all this ? That our Saviour, the Son of the living God is a *real Man*, as well as "God over all, blessed for ever." He knows me through and through ; He feels for me in all my weaknesses, temptations and trials. He draws near to me in the hour of sorrow and pressure, and soothes and comforts me with His precious unchanging love. He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" and "was in all points tempted like as we are," sin apart.

It feeds my soul to contemplate that lowly form on the rude deck of a fishing-boat on the lake of Galilee, for there I see my Saviour, the One who bore my sins in His own body on the tree, sunk in slumber, glad of rest as the humblest son of earthly toil, the prostration of an overwrought frame requiring the hands and voices of

His loved disciples to unseal His weary eyelids.

But what about those disciples? Did the Lord not say to them, "Let us go to the other side of the lake"? Was not this sufficient pledge for them, that they would reach the other side in safety? He was about to assail one of Satan's strongholds at Gadara, and He desired the company and fellowship of His disciples so that He might train, instruct and fit them for future service when He was taken from them. They had already seen His power exercised over demons and the fish of the sea. They had witnessed the miraculous feeding of the multitudes and many other wonderful works. Now they were to see the wind and waves stilled at His almighty word. How easy it is for us, as we read the narrative, to express surprise at the seeming unbelief of the disciples. Their Master was on board; why did they not study that peaceful face and bid farewell to their faithless fears? Could it be possible for the boat to perish with the mighty Son of God on board?

Kind reader, let us take these questions home. Have *we* not often allowed our craven fears to overwhelm us, when our little sky was overcast and the dark storm-cloud seemed ready to burst upon us? Has the Lord not called *us*, in sovereign grace, to go to the "other side" with Him? Are we not even now, "homeward bound"? Has He not said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age"? With *Him* on board our little bark, what have we to fear? Storms may rise, tempests may rage, the billows of trial and adversity may threaten to engulf us. But our Pilot is ever near, ever accessible, all-powerful. His ear is ever open to our cries.

The disciples found out to their joy that, although the Lord seemed oblivious to the tempest, their earnest cry of need brought a swift response from His loving heart. In their future memories of their sojourn with the Master, how the combined remembrance of His tender human sympathy and the exercise of His almighty power would brace their hearts and strengthen their hands, in their testimony for His Name! His precious words—"Peace be still" have been a force and watchword which the winds of Lake Tiberias have wafted from clime to clime, sustaining faith in sinking hearts, and producing in many a storm-swept bosom "a great calm."

It is good for us if all the hurricanes that ruffle life's unquiet sea have the effect of making Christ more precious to our hearts. If our God has to employ stormy trials and severe afflictions for this end, let us not murmur at His wise ordering. *Better the storm with Jesus, than the smooth water without Him.* It is the experience, not of the comfortable barracks, but of the tented field, the trench and night watch, that makes the better and hardier soldier. If there is a sight in the spiritual world more glorious than another, it is when one sees a believer growing in strength and trust in God by reason of his very trials. Battered down by storm and hail, "a great fight of afflictions," enduring loss of substance, loss of health, loss of friends; yet standing by emptied coffers and full graves, and with an aching, but submissive and thankful heart, enabled to say: "Heart and flesh faint and fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

Never let us take our trials as an indication that God is not with us and murmur, "the Saviour cannot have been at my side else this desolating storm never would have swept over me." Nay, He *was* with the disciples, asleep in their very boat, when the hurricane descended. May it not be that in His wise ordering of our pathway He may select the blackest cloud, and cause us to pass through it, that He may span it with His rainbow of mercy, and shew us in blended colours His power, His faithfulness, and His love?

The great lesson here taught to the disciples and to ourselves is this: that in *nearness to Jesus lies our safety*. Ye who are in trial, perplexity, temptation, go to your Lord as the disciples did. In tender love He rebukes their weak faith, but straightway removes the cause of their distress. "There was a great calm."

Mark this testimony to the power of prayer. It was prayer that aroused the Saviour from His slumber. He slept on until His disciples awoke Him. The roar of the elements, the voice of wind and rain and mountain waves awake Him not; but the cries and entreaties of His saints at once reach His ear. The world, which has refused and cast out the Son of God, is at best a treacherous sea. Its painted barks may for a while hold on their uncertain course, spreading their white wings beneath summer suns and before favourable breezes. But a sudden hurricane comes, the waters are strewn with their wrecks, and the place which once knew them knows them no more. But, safe in the ark of God's providing, with the heavenly Pilot on board, we are as secure as combined omnipotence and

love can make us. And when earthly storms are all over, every crested wave of a chequered past will only endear to us the more the "haven of rest," where the tempest's voice will never more be felt or feared.

G. F. EDINGTON.

THE SONG OF THE TREES.

IN a garden the Master had planted with care,
With trees that He fancied, both fruitful and rare,
Where often He wandered when weary in mind,
Assured a glad welcome He always would find,

A sapling was swaying about in the breeze
And gazing around on the circling tall trees
That towered above her; and, shaking her head,
"I shall never be like their broad beauty," she said.

And calling to one that stood nearest of all,
"How can you stand thus so majestic and tall,
While the wind that is swaying me thus to and fro,
Scarcely ruffles your branches, though fiercely it
blow?"

The tree, smiling down on her willowy form,
Was fearing she never could weather a storm;
"Oh, surely I'll tell you the secret of strength,
How to broaden your boughs while they're growing
in length.

"You must spend little time in your branches, my
dear,
In gazing and wondering how you appear
To those all about you; their smile or their frown
Should never elate you or make you cast down.

"The Master is watching for blossoms and fruit,
And a wonderful soil He has placed at your root.
He will tend to your branches, and prune them with
care,
And pluck off the fruit that He wants you to bear.

THE SONG OF THE TREES.

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"So most of your time you must spend down below
 Alone in the dark; to your roots you must go;
 The deeper you plunge them, the moisture to gain,
 The broader the boughs that your strength can sustain.

"And thus will develop your branches and leaves,
 And blossoms and fruit from the sap each receives.
 Now take my advice and slip down out of sight,
 And patiently work in the darkness of night.

"Concern yourself only with what is below
 And all on the surface will certainly grow."
 "Oh, thank you, kind neighbour," she softly replied,
 "I shall do as you bid, in my roots I'll abide."

* * *

A wonderful lesson now learn from the trees,
 As borne to our ears by the whispering breeze!
 The secret of strength surely gladly we'd know,
 And how to withstand all the winds that may blow.

For we, too, are trees that are planted with care
 By a Master who wishes much fruit we shall bear.
 Then hark to the echoing words that we hear,
 As brought by the wind to our listening ear:

"You must spend little time in your branches above,
 In gazing and wondering if others approve
 Of what you are doing; their smile or their frown
 Should never elate you or make you cast down.

"Your Master knows what will bring blossoms and fruit,
 And the soil of His love He has placed at your root.
He will tend to your branches, and prune them with
 care,
 And pluck off the fruit that He wants you to bear.

"Your boughs will but dwindle if in them you stay,"
 Thus whispers the wind that is blowing our way.
 "'Tis under the surface your strength will be found,
 So plunge forth your rootlets far into the ground."

* * *

You have heard softly echoed the song of the trees,
 As borne to our ears by the whispering breeze,
 And may the sweet secret sink deep in our hearts,
 While we ponder the lesson its music imparts!

'Tis being thus rooted and grounded in love ;
This only will strengthen what grows up above
So let us now down to our roots swiftly glide,
And joyfully there in His love e'er abide !

And now, passing onward, O whispering breeze !
Gently waft to our master a song from His trees,
A song that shall echo through heaven's bright days,
A song of thanksgiving, love, worship, and praise.
Henriette R. Ulrich.

GETTING READY TO MOVE.

THE owner of the tenement which I have occupied for many years has given notice that he will furnish but little or nothing more for repairs. I am advised to be ready to move.

At first this was not a very welcome notice. The surroundings here are in many respects very pleasant, and were it not for the evidence of decay, I should consider the old house good enough. But even a light wind causes it to tremble and totter, and all the braces are not sufficient to make it secure. So I am getting ready to move.

It is strange how quickly one's interest is transferred to the prospective home. I have been consulting maps of the new country and reading descriptions of its inhabitants. One who visited it has returned, and from him I learn that it is beautiful beyond description. Language breaks down in attempting to tell of what he heard while there. He says that, in order to make an investment there, he has suffered the

loss of all things that he owned here, and even rejoices in what others would call making a sacrifice.

Another, whose love to me has been proven by the greatest possible test, is now there. He has sent me several clusters of the most delicious fruits. After tasting them, all food here seems insipid.

Two or three times I have been down by the border of the river that forms the boundary, and have wished myself among the company of those who were singing praises to the King on the other side.

Many of my friends have moved there. Before leaving, they spoke of my coming later. I have seen the smile upon their faces as they passed out of sight.

Often I am asked to make some new investments here, but my answer in every case is, "I am getting ready to move."

Selected.

WHAT OF THE WINTER?

ONCE again winter is upon us, and we usually look upon dark nights as more favourable for special gospel effort indoors. May we ask *YOU*, dear fellow-believer, what are *YOU* going to do? Do we hear you say:—"Well, there will, of course, be the usual gospel meetings in our hall, and I shall be there."

"The usual gospel meetings!" A missionary said to us some time ago:—"I cannot understand you people; you preach to the same company

year in and year out. In some cases, if one unconverted person is present, it is an event."

"But then," it is said, "the people will not come." Perhaps not. Is our responsibility thereby at an end? What has the Lord of the harvest said? "Go." Have we done it? If not, why not?

Some say, "The gospel is not exactly our line." We fear those who so speak have got hold of the wrong line. Our adorable Lord preached the gospel. The apostle Paul said, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16). "Yes, we quite admit that," says our good friend, "but we leave such preaching to others, and we admire their zeal and pray for them. We seek to present a *teaching gospel*, so that souls may be established." Good! But before they can be established they must be saved! Have we nothing to do with that? The Lord Jesus Christ said that the object of His death was that "REPENTANCE and REMISSION OF SINS should be preached in His Name among all nations" (Luke xxiv. 47).

He sent Paul to the Gentiles that they might receive "forgiveness of sins" as well as the many other blessings (Acts xxvi. 18).

We thank God for evidence of increased interest in the gospel, but there is room for more and still more. Let the various gatherings of the Lord's people concentrate their energies, refuse all merely artificial aids, not imitating popular preachers or adopting the artifices of so-called missions, but trusting to the irresistible power of God. Get together for prayer before the preaching, sisters as well as brothers. Let *all* get down on their knees. Do not make long

speeches with closed eyes, but *pray!* PRAY!! PRAY!!! *Expect* blessing. Pray for it, preach for it, work for it, look for it, and if it does not come, get down again before God and ask Him the reason. Do not ride off on the comfortable theory that "it is not always God's way to show results."

When a fisherman goes to sea he goes to CATCH fish. When a farmer sows his field, he does so to REAP a harvest.

This may be our last winter in this world. Shall we each and all bow before God, ask Him to fill us with a consuming desire for His glory; with a passion for souls; and then seek that in the little spot where our special interest lies the first ten words of 1 Thessalonians i. 8, shall be true, and that thus by our attention to the initial necessity, the number of gathered out ones shall be increased, the great work of Christ in building His assembly shall be furthered, the purpose of God shall be fulfilled, and His grace shall be magnified?

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (XI.)

The Ideal Superintendent.

"Give me now wisdom and knowledge that I may go out and come in before this people." (2 Chron i. 10).

NO one will deny that the post of Superintendent is a hard one. Few teachers can possibly realise the difficulty of that position, and only by keen observation can they grasp the many troubles which beset the paths

of those in command. To begin with, the Superintendent has to meet all sorts and conditions of men and women, teaching under his direction, and all of different temperaments. He must know each temperament and deal with each, at the same time keeping the bond of unity round all if his rule is to be marked by success. Then he meets a still greater variety of character in his scholars. Hundreds of minds and not two alike ; yet he must gain and keep the respect of all of these, if he would be an "Ideal Superintendent."

Perhaps the greatest task of the Superintendent is in the organization of the school. In this he must exercise the greatest care. He has to sort out which scholar he judges to be suitable for each teacher. In order to do this, he must be a quick reader of character. He speaks a few words to the new scholar, and at once settles in his mind the teacher who can win that child. Of course the scholars themselves would be most desirous of choosing their own classes. "Can't I go into my friend's class?" asks the girl who has been allotted to another teacher. The weak Superintendent says "Yes." But the ideal Superintendent looks ahead. He sees troublesome times for that class if those girls get together, so he tactfully remarks that he will see how she gets on with the other teacher first. What is the result? Good behaviour and attention on the part of the new girl, who has the hope of being placed with her friend, if she behaves well. Therefore we see that in dealing with organization our ideal Superintendent must be tactful and a man of strong personal character himself.

Next, he should be a man of sympathy. The sympathetic Superintendent is ready to listen and to talk with his teachers of their trials. He makes their grievances his own, and does his utmost to remove them. He discusses his own difficulties with his staff and thereby gains their confidence and aid. Then the children bring their pitiful tales of wretchedness at home, and pour them into his ear. He listens patiently to all and, where possible and advisable, gives help. He visits their homes, and how much better he understands his children when he knows what awful circumstances attend their up-bringing.

The Superintendent is the rudder of the boat. I heard recently of a school where the Superintendent performed the opening ceremony and then went to sleep for the afternoon. He awoke to find the time for closing had come and gone, and all his teachers in a state of utmost fatigue, trying to interest their scholars till he should appear. Also I heard of a Superintendent who went off to another meeting, after opening school. The classes had to go on till he reappeared, as there was no one else there who could perform his duty. It is small wonder that in both cases the schools are badly attended, and not even the teachers have any respect for their Superintendent. No! the real Superintendent is in the school all the time and has the metaphorical "eyes at the back of his head," as well as ordinary ones. His glance takes in every teacher and every scholar, and the school acts accordingly.

A Superintendent is one who, gifted with the power of organization, is able to efficiently control the school placed in his charge—the

ideal Superintenoent adds to this gift and power that of being personally a soul-winner.

Some, however, question whether a Superintendent is necessary. There are two methods of conducting a Sunday School. One is to allow both children and teachers to come when they please and do what they like, with no organization and with no responsible head. The other is for a head to be appointed and recognized by all, and whose word fs obeyed without question. The first method results in what may be dismissed with one word—"muddle." The other may be taken as the gateway to success. No matter how small a school may be, in order to be conducted successfully there must be a Superintendent, or at any rate, someone who does his work,—call him head, leader, responsible brother, or what you will.

The Superintendent, so long as he is in office, should receive the support and obedience of teachers, whatsoever his failing may be.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S WORK.

The ideal Superintendent will find his energy employed in securing teachers for the school, in allotting them to suitable classes, in seeking and receiving new scholars and maintaining order. He will preserve good relations between the teachers and, where there is friction between them, by unfailing tact and courtesy, make things run smoothly. Lastly, he will see to the provision of funds, and to the arrangements of treats and excursions. Is it too much to say that the ideal Superintendent always has a balance in hand?

HIS QUALIFICATIONS.

He must be capable of winning and retaining the confidence of the teachers and scholars, and must be characterised by firmness, self-control, patience and tact.

By Firmness.—Firmness is not severity, neither does it consist of stamping on the floor and shouting “I will have order.” In some schools, order is more often secured by silence than by speech. He will not be fierce one day and lax the next. We can see one even now—an excellent man!—he was vinegar last Sunday; he will be soothing syrup next.

By Self-Control.—A single outburst of temper may do so much harm that it will take years to undo, and a single miscarriage of justice will rankle in a child’s mind as long as he is in the school, and may be a hindrance to conversion.

By Tact.—He will not give an order that he is not prepared to insist upon, neither will he lionise the bad boy and treat him differently from the rest. He will not needlessly find fault, but will find that there are occasions when it is an advantage to have one blind eye and one deaf ear.

How is the ideal Superintendent to be obtained? Should he be chosen by the teachers? Or should he be allowed to drift in and say “I have come to be your superintendent; I feel I have a call that way”? The choice by teachers is the best, for three reasons:—

(1) The teachers know better than anyone else what sort of person they need to take the lead.

(2) He is likely to retain their support and confidence, if he is their own choice.

(3) If he is unsuitable he may be asked to vacate the appointment. He was requested to fill the appointment by the teachers, the teachers can ask him to retire.

Next month "Children Worshipping the Devil."

Correspondence to E. L. Hales, 66, Palmerston Road, London, S.W. 14.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

KIMBOLTON.—We have read the magazine article to which you call our attention. You have sidelined the following paragraph :—

The Arminian's gospel is far too uncertain for me. He says, "If you believe you *shall* have life." I use the words of John Baptist (John iii. 36) and say you *have* it. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." Not *shall* have it as a *reward*, or as an *exchange for believing*: that is the essence of the Arminian heresy, but as the Holy Ghost puts it, "He that believeth . . . *hath* " *That is why he believes*, as I have before given ample proof. *LIFE*, the great cause, *believing* the effect.

No wonder you are puzzled at such teaching. To make the possession of eternal life come before believing, and the cause of believing, is entirely contrary to the teaching of Scripture. In John iii. 16, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," the believing most manifestly comes first, and everlasting life is possessed in this way. So, too, in John xx. 31, "That believing, ye might have through His name." To make believing follow the possession of life, as the article in question does, is to twist such passages as these completely round.

BIBLE "DIFFICULTIES."

WHAT I narrate may well appear so incredible that I am prepared to find that even the personal guarantee of the Editor of SIMPLE TESTIMONY as to its truth will at first sight fail to carry conviction.

During the reign of her Majesty Queen Victoria, a certain London merchant killed an unfortunate wretch whom circumstances had placed in his power. He did not actually kill him with his own hands, but he had him brought to a secluded room which was deliberately prepared for the purpose, and there he stood by while his victim was strangled by a man whom he had hired to do the deed.

The facts were well known not only to the authorities, but to the Queen. And yet not only did the homicide go unpunished, but, with full knowledge of the circumstances, her Majesty singled him out for royal favour and conferred a title on him.

What estimate will our readers form of such conduct on the part of one whom we have always understood to have been a pattern and paragon of public and private virtue?

But before they pass judgment upon the facts they ought to know a few additional details. The victim of the tragedy was a condemned murderer; the man who was paid to strangle him was the common hangman; the secluded room was in Newgate prison, and the merchant who received a knighthood subsequently was the Sheriff, whose official duty it was to execute the criminal.

And now the meaning of my parable will begin to dawn. Let these added details be suppressed, and a plain narrative which does not contain a syllable that is untrue or even exaggerated may seem to endanger the reputation of Queen Victoria.

And it is precisely by this sort of suppression that the Bible and the God of the Bible are misrepresented to-day.

There are certain who freely condemn

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE CANAANITES

as a gross injustice, picturing them as a number of semi-civilized tribes on the upward path of progress, exterminated by an invading horde of religious fanatics.

It is not God's way to justify Himself at the bar of His creature's judgment, but in this matter He has deigned to explain His decrees. The Canaanites were a degenerate and apostate race whose destruction was decreed by a God of infinite mercy, because they had given themselves up to loathsome sin.

Four centuries had passed since Sodom fell. And among the citizens of Sodom not even ten righteous could be found. What then must have been the condition of the land when God at last called in the Israelites as His executioners?

Yet for four generations His judgment had been delayed "because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full" (Gen. xv. 16).

The Bible narrative makes it abundantly plain that the extermination of the Canaanites was the carrying out of a divine decree.

That the men of a wandering tribe, with neither cavalry nor military base, should

conquer a nation with walled towns and chariots of iron is a feat to which history affords no parallel. Seven such nations fell before the Israelite invaders, and such facts would indicate that it was as clearly a divine judgment as the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea.

To the solution of other "difficulties" of a kindred type this parable may afford the clue. For example,

THE IMPRECATORY PSALMS

which are prophetic warnings of divine judgments upon those who take the place of enemies of God.

Again, God is represented as granting the Jews a monopoly of divine favour, leaving the world to its fate. But what is more unlike His revelation? God's purpose for Israel was that that favoured nation should be His medium for the world wide dissemination of His blessings. Jerusalem was to be "the place of His name." But "the house of God," designed to become "a house of prayer for all nations," they treated as their own, and ended by making it "a den of thieves" (1 Kings viii. 41-43; Mark xi. 17). Instead of bringing honour to the name of God, they caused His name to be blasphemed among the heathen (Rom. ii. 24)

They were as false to the divine trust committed to them as the "historic church" of Christendom has been in this dispensation.

Then there are supposed contradictions in different statements. One such, of which much has been made, is 2 Samuel xxiv. 24, where David bought the oxen and threshing floor of Araunah for fifty shekels of silver, while in 1 Chron.

xxi. 25, we learn that David gave 600 shekels of gold for the place. It is extraordinary that any honest and intelligent mind could find a difficulty here. Fifty shekels of silver was presumably a fair price for the oxen and use of the threshing floor. But does anyone imagine that the *fee simple* of "the place"—the entire site of the temple—was worth only fifty shekels of silver? David went on to purchase the entire homestead out and out; and the price he paid for it was 600 shekels. And this is what the Chronicler records.

Much has been made of the differences in the text of

THE INSCRIPTION ON THE CROSS

because they are not all alike. Here is the text of each:—

"This is Jesus the King of the Jews." (Matt. xxvii. 37).

"The King of the Jews." (Mark xv. 26).

"This is the King of the Jews." (Luke xxiii. 38).

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." (John xix. 19).

Now let us assume that the full inscription was, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Its purpose was clear—not in the least to identify the accused, but solely to give the accusation on which He was condemned. Pilate would not have noticed the charges which so excited the religious leaders of the Jews; but the claim to be a king they represented as a *political* offence. And though he saw the prisoner was no leader of sedition, and the accusation was dishonestly preferred, he feared

lest the Sanhedrim should make trouble for him with Cæsar if he refused to entertain it. Therefore he yielded to their clamour. But he revenged himself upon them by putting up the charge in a form that brought them into contempt, giving prominence to the royal title. Their remonstrance was most noteworthy. "Write not, 'the King of the Jews' but that He said, I am King of the Jews." And this, which alone is essential, or important, all the Gospels agree in giving.

The title was written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin; and this is probably the explanation of the whole matter.

Matthew's Gospel might be expected to record the Hebrew inscription. Luke, writing for a Roman officer, would not unnaturally reproduce the Latin. The inscription as given by John may well be the Greek. Mark gives merely, as his words imply—"the inscription of the accusation."

Such differences only prove that the Gospels are not, as the critics would tell us, copied from one another, or from a common source, but that they are wholly independent narratives. In revelation, as in nature, we may expect to find endless variety of detail combined with absolute unity in essentials.

Let no one be frightened by a parade of seeming errors in the Scriptures. There are difficulties that may seem to be insoluble but which can not only be explained, but so explained as to become helps to faith. Others there are, no doubt, to the solution of which we cannot find a clue, though perhaps if we had all the facts and circumstances in view it would be simple and obvious.

May every one of our readers hold fast to the absolute inerrancy of the Scriptures, as well as the fullest confidence in the righteous character of God.

Adapted by H. A. MATIER, from Sir R. Anderson's
The Bible and Modern Criticism.

“MELODY IN YOUR HEART.”

Ephesians v. 19.

JESUS, Lord, my Saviour,
Sweetest peace I know,
Following Thy footsteps,
Singing as I go !

Singing of the wonders
Of Thy matchless love
To the worn and weary,
Flowing from above !

Singing, heart adoring,
List'ning to Thy voice,
Guiding through the journey,
Making me rejoice !

Singing as I'm waiting
For Thee, Lord, to come,
With Thy shout that takes us
To our longed-for home.

CLARA C. ATWOOD.

A SUBTLE TEMPTATION.

THERE is an instructive incident recorded in Numbers x. 29-36. Israel, with their God-appointed leader, have reached a stage in the wilderness journey that brings them to the neighbourhood where dwelt Moses' father-in-law, (Ex. iii. 12), and so we are not surprised to see Hobab coming to see Moses. A most interesting conversation takes place. Moses pleads with Hobab to come with them, assuring him that he would share in all the blessings wherewith God had promised to bless His people. But Hobab was blunt in his reply,—“I will not go.”

Moses then makes an appeal to his pride as to his knowledge and ability : “Leave us not I pray thee, forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.”

Some commentators believe that this last appeal was effectual in causing Hobab to yield, but the silence of Scripture is significant, and from what follows I judge that he did as is said by him in verse 30. His eye was filled and satisfied with what he had SEEN and HANDLED, and he was not to be allured by the UNSEEN land, however great its promises. Note what follows, (verse 33). A three days' journey is ordered, for the cloud lifted and the ark of the Lord went before them, TO SEARCH OUT A RESTING PLACE.

The danger to which Moses, the servant of the Lord, was exposed is a common one, and one that at times we yield to without being aware of what it involves. Do we not find ourselves desiring some arm of flesh to lean upon, not content with the LIVING GOD alone? In other words, we are in danger of walking by sight, instead of by faith. Here was Hobab, well acquainted with all the wilderness, its twists and turnings, its good places in which to encamp such an army. What more natural for Moses than to desire such a man as a guide? It would relieve him of a lot of trouble and responsibility. And they would no longer need to KEEP THE EYE FIXED UPON THE CLOUDY AND FIERY PILLAR FOR GUIDANCE, with this splendid human guide in their midst. Good for Moses and the people that Hobab did not go with them, and that they were to put a three days' journey between them and him! They were to get back to God, and away from the arm of flesh and snare of Satan.

The same danger of departing IN HEART from the living God is one that still besets the people of God at every turn. If yielded to, it soon ends in the FEET being turned out of the way. Sometimes the Lord in His mercy comes in and removes the props we have placed our confidence in. Far from this being a calamity, it opens our eyes to the sin and snare that we had fallen into, and turns out in the end for blessing and restoration as the eye once more becomes centred on the Lord alone.

The late J. W. WILSON, China.

A BOOK, A MAN, A NATION.

THESE are the world's three phenomena. They cannot be explained on purely natural grounds. Each of the three has a *divine origin, a divine history* and a *predicted future*. Through this *Book*, and this *Man*, and this *Nation* will all the purposes of God be fulfilled. Through them will come the world's reconstruction and peace, and the earth be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea, (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2 ; Hab. ii. 14).

THE BOOK IS THE BIBLE.

In it God hath spoken, (Heb. i. 1, 2). Nowhere else is the pure Word of God found, and neglect of this Book has brought our nation to its present confusion, (Jer. viii. 9). In it was written beforehand the history of the world for three thousand years, (Dan. ii.), and the course of the nations has run in that mould. Its pages alone tell us what is yet to come. In the present darkness and confusion it is a light, (2 Peter i. 19). This Book has been saved from all its enemies, and God has declared that it is to be preserved from every generation, (Psa. xii. 6, 7.) It is forever settled in heaven, (Psa. cxix. 89), and in a world where change and decay and death reign supreme, it is the only thing that lives, (1 Pet. i. 25).

THE MAN IS CHRIST JESUS.

Lifted up on a Roman cross He became the

world's Saviour, (John i. 29). Pouring out His blood that the world's sin may be taken away, He has been the hope of the sinner whose stain is scarlet, and the "Fountain filled with blood" has cleansed the multitudes of the redeemed who will sing His praise through all eternity, (Rev. i. 5). As lifted to a cross He became a Saviour. *Lifted to the throne of David* in Jerusalem He will be the world's King, (Luke i. 32, 33). While Scripture predicts a glorious time of peace on earth, it also tells us that that time shall not come till *He appears to reign* in the city of David, (Isa. ii. 2-4 ; Zech. xiv. 9-16). Through *this Man* will the *Book* find its fulfilment, and all the plans of God be completed, (Rev. xix. 11-16).

THE NATION IS ISRAEL.

Through this *Nation*, divinely chosen, there have been given to the world the *Book* and the *Man*. Temporarily cast off by God, it has been kept for two thousand years, a standing miracle. Scattered and peeled, and hated in every land, they live on till God shall gather them again, (Rom. xi. 11-15). They are the only nation with a sure future. Other nations *may* have a future ; Israel *must* have. They will be gathered by the hand of God from all lands, and their glorious predicted future will come to pass, (Jer. xxiii. 7, 8 ; xxxii. 41). It is impossible that God's hand of blessing should be upon the nations to restore and build up, and abolish war, while the chosen instrument

to bring these things to pass, even the Jew, is kept out of the land. The Jew must be head of the nations, (Deut. xxviii. 12, 13). The nations will then seek the Lord in Jerusalem, and Israel shall be counted the most glorious among all people, (Zech. viii. 22, 23.)

So the *Book* testifies that when the *Man* shall appear in His glory, (Matt. xxv. 31), then shall the *Nation* of Israel be built up, (Psa. cii. 16), and all the nations shall then seek the Lord, (Acts xv. 13-18), and the earth be filled with His glory. Men shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks and learn the art of war no more, (Isa. ii. 4).

Let us believe the *Book*, pray that the *Son of Man* may come, and *Israel* again be called of God, *My Glory*, (Isaiah xlvi. 13).

E. DREW.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. (XII.)

Children Worshipping the Devil.

MR. D. M. Panton, of Norwich, has written many articles and booklets exposing the theories and practices of the numerous strange cults of religion prevalent to-day, but scarcely anything he has written has been so startling as an article in the columns of *The Christian* under the title of "The Cry of the Children." It is a revelation of the methods being adopted to poison the minds of children

against true religion. He says that in this "Christian" land there are 13,340 child members of the Lyceum Union, or Spiritualist Sunday Schools, the aim of which is to create mediums among little children. Three handbooks are issued by the Union, in which the child is taught that he has no need of a Redeemer, and repudiating all the essentials of the Christian faith. The great cities—Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Sheffield, Liverpool, Bristol—all have these centres, some several; and boys and girls of fourteen are instructed in mediumship, clairvoyance, clairsaudience, the trance state and even possession.

Mr. H. D. Brown, the late secretary of the Christian Colportage Association, said:

"A Sunday school teacher in London recently discovered that some of his boys were always going, directly after morning Sunday School, to some mysterious place of meeting. He learned where this meeting was held, and went one Sunday morning to the place, which was a large room formed by enclosing a railway arch. Knocking at the door, it was opened by one of his own scholars, who looked very much abashed at seeing him, but the teacher followed him in. There he found a number of boys and girls, some from his own Sunday School, and, asking what they were doing, was told they were going to have Sunday School. Presently a woman came in, who turned out to be their leader or teacher, and who formed them into a ring, after telling them to put on a shelf the Bibles they had brought with them from the Church Sunday School. They then began to sing hymns, one being addressed to 'Mother Lotus'; and presently

the visitor observed a gilt serpent hanging from the roof.

“The children circled round this, each holding up a hand, and, pointing with the forefinger to this serpent, called out repeatedly: ‘O glorious Apollo!’ Some of the girls had rings on their fingers, in the form of a serpent with its tail in its mouth. The teacher who found this out called a meeting of the other teachers, and related what he had seen. Inquiries were made, and it was found that many of their scholars went to this place, and these were being taught to worship the devil. One girl of fourteen, who was spoken to by the teacher, said quite seriously: ‘Oh, miss, the devil’s very kind; he’ll give me whatever I want.’ It was discovered that this was one of a considerable number of similar ‘Sunday Schools’ in England.”

Side by side with this, Mr. Panton calls attention to another serious peril to child-life. He says: “Red Sunday Schools—some Socialist, some Proletarian, some Communist—are springing up all over England. There is a Red Catechism; a Decalogue, one of the ten commandments of which begins: ‘Thou shalt teach revolution;’ a Calendar of Saints, which includes murderers; and a Doxology beginning, ‘No Saviours from on high deliver.’”

When there is added to this the fact that thousands of children are being poisoned by the modernist teaching of certain periodicals, and some preachers, discrediting the inspiration and authority of God’s Word, even cast doubt on the teaching of Christ, it is not surprising that sceptical indifference is rife among young people.

The foregoing, from *The Christian Herald*, may well startle us. It is right that it should. God grant that it may stimulate us to greater zeal in winning the young for Christ. Let every Sunday School teacher be more in earnest than ever and realize afresh the tremendous importance of the trust committed to him or her.

Twelve years ago we wrote an article, *Save the Children!* We are so impressed with the urgency of the present need, that we reproduce the article here, and commend the matter to the prayerful consideration of our Christian readers.

Save the Children!

In the street of a certain village stood a kind of skeleton waggon, of the sort used for the cartage of heavy timber. A few loose boards were laid across the axles, and a little boy, four or five years old, sat upon them.

The driver had gone away for a few moments to transact some business, when something occurred which frightened the horses and started them running furiously down the street. As the passers-by stood and looked on with consternation, a woman, who saw the awful danger of the child, clasped her hands in anguish, and cried out with all her might:

“Stop that waggon and save the child! Stop the waggon! Stop it! Stop it!”

A man, standing near, looked at her with an amused expression on his face, and coldly said:

“Silly woman, don't fret yourself! *It is'nt your child.*”

"I know it," cried the woman, "but it is somebody's child. Stop the waggon: oh, stop it!"

In a far more real sense, thousands of children all around us are in terrible danger. They are growing up without God, without knowledge of the Saviour, wandering farther and farther in the paths of sin. Some of us Christians have children of our own, and we are keenly anxious to see them saved. But what about other people's children? We see their peril; have we no responsibility towards them? It may be that seeking *their* salvation will be the means of bringing that priceless boon to our own loved ones.

I have read of a gentleman who lived in the city of Rochester, U.S.A. He had just arrived by train, after a long journey, and was anxious to go home to his wife and children. He was hurrying along the street with a bright vision of home in his mind, when he saw on the bank of the river a lot of excited men.

"What is the matter?" he shouted.

They replied, "A boy is in the water."

In a moment, throwing down his bag and pulling off his coat, he jumped into the stream, grasped the boy in his arms, and struggled with him to the shore. As he wiped the water from his dripping face and brushed back the hair, he exclaimed, "Oh, it is my own boy!"

He had plunged in for somebody else's boy, as he thought, and saved his own! Can it be that sometimes the children of Christian parents remain unconverted because those parents are doing nothing for the salvation of other people's children? May there not be an application in

this direction of the principle that whatever we sow, we reap?

Do not imagine because children attend a Sunday School that they have no further need. In some schools the teachers are themselves unconverted. How can they win those who attend their classes for a Saviour whom they do not know?

Besides, many Sunday Schools are leavened with the wretched doctrines of the "Higher Criticism." The children are taught to look upon the stories of Adam and Eve in the garden, their fall and expulsion, the Flood, the call of Abraham, etc., as mere myths and fables. The seeds of unbelief are thus sown broadcast in their hearts. The fact that children attend such schools as these increases, rather than diminishes, our responsibility to reach them with the gospel.

If there is no Sunday School where you may help, is there *nothing else that you can do?* A Christian lady, known to the writer, gathers a few little children into her house once a week, and sings and prays with them, and tells them simple stories from the Bible.

If your circumstances do not permit of your doing anything of this kind, could you not get a few hundred gospel papers, specially suited for children, and give them to the boys and girls in the neighbourhood where you live?

Above all, will you not carry the burden of the children into the presence of your Lord, and *earnestly pray Him to show you in what way He would have you to help?*

Those who preach the gospel will do well not to forget the children in their audiences.

"O God," said a little girl one Saturday night, as she was praying before going to bed, "*do help the preacher to-morrow to say something that I can understand.*"

Savonarola, the Italian reformer, used to say: "We must fish with nets that have meshes small enough to catch the smallest fish."

Martin Luther, too, never forgot the boys and girls in his congregation. Says he: "When I preach, I sink myself deep down. I regard neither doctors nor magistrates . . . but I have an eye to the multitude of young people, children, and servants, of whom there are more than two thousand. I preach to those."

The late C. H. Spurgeon was wont to say that, of all the hundreds of conversions that took place as the result of his preaching, those of *children* were, generally speaking, the most satisfactory.

The Lord Himself welcomed and blessed children. Alas, that any of His servants in this day should resemble those of long ago who imagined that their Master could be better occupied than with a lot of boys and girls, and would have driven them away, but for the Saviour's gracious words: "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

Hymns have an immense influence in forming the thoughts of the young, impressionable mind. Think of the effect upon such of singing every Sunday such verses as this (taken from a Socialist Sunday School hymn book):

"No Jesus died our class to save
On this or any Calvary;
We paid the price: our lives we gave
To clear the earth of slavery."

And again :

“Have you heard of heaven,
That land so far away,
Where all the little children
Have wings and play all day?

Listen to me, children;
It is a fairy tale;
This land away in heaven
Is ‘Jonah and the whale.’”

The *meaning* of this ribald nonsense is hard to see. But its *object* is evident, to throw ridicule on Christianity and the Scriptures.

Rev. E. L. Macassey, Vicar of St. Peter's, Hammersmith, in a lecture given some weeks ago, quoted a recent instance of a child, eight years of age, being made to kneel down and say a “prayer,” the words of which were :—

“Down with kings. To hell with the capitalists. Down with the patriot, who is an international blackleg. There is only one God,—the Red Flag of liberty.”

“Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.” (1 Chron. xxii. 16). Let us think of the worth of one soul,—a child's soul. Think of its potentialities! Think what God can do with it and in it! Count no time lost in praying for, and no labour wasted in seeking to win, the soul of a child for Christ. Let us lay our time and our talents again at our Master's feet, and then, refreshed in His presence, and encouraged by His smile, return to our work with God-given zeal.

EDITOR.

“AMEN.”

HOW many, (particularly among the young) both in our worship and prayer meetings are never heard exercising their God given privilege of audibly responding from their hearts, “Amen.” (“So let it be.”) What a loss is theirs! What a chill to the one who, offering worship to the Lord as the mouthpiece of the assembly, hears no “amen” at the conclusion of his giving of thanks! Think of thanks being given for the precious emblems of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, with only here and there a hearty “Amen.”

I have known instances of men taking their seats after prayer with inward anguish, wondering what they had said amiss in prayer, as they heard no responsive “Amen,” to learn later that it was the custom. How sad!

Brethren, let us read once again 1 Cor. xiv. 16, “Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?” It was the custom then; it should be the custom now. How it would change our meetings to greater spirituality, solemnity and blessing.

E. NOBLE.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DEWSBURY.—We hardly think that the commission given by the Lord to His eleven disciples in Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, is one on which we can act to-day. But

we will answer your question in the words of others.

"Those who are thus associated with the disowned Lord are sent to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This mission, up to the present time, has never been accomplished. . . . *It is not the Christian mission properly so called.* This is found rather in John xx., Luke xxiv. and Mark xvi."

J. N. DARBY.

"This is the *kingdom* commission. In Luke xxiv. we have the proper Christian commission. A time is coming when this great commission [in Matthew xxviii.] will be carried out **by a** remnant of Jewish disciples, who are represented by the eleven. It is the same remnant as in Matthew xxiv."

ARNO C. GAEBELEIN.

KALAMAZOO.—There are many good expositions of Daniel and the Revelation. As you write us from America we will refer you to two that are published there, and which may be recommended as entirely reliable, and full of wholesome spiritual teaching: *The Revelation of Christ*, by F. W. Grant; and *Lectures on Daniel*, by H. A. Ironside. Both are published by Loizeaux Bros., 1, East 13th Street, New York. In Britain they may be ordered through the Central Bible Truth Depot, 5, Rose Street, London, E.C. 4.

ROCK FERRY.—The plain meaning of the last nine words of Romans v. 8, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," is that, while Paul and the Christians at Rome were yet sinning with a high hand, Christ died for them. Any application of the words to persons living to-day is *only* an application.

WOOLWICH.—Christians are not entitled to pick and choose as to those with whom they shall have fellowship. Scripture chooses our company for us and bids us keep it (see 2 Timothy ii. 22). If you have before you a certain kind of meeting and ministry, and a particular order of procedure, you will probably go to the community where things approximate to your ideal. But if you are determined, by the help of God, to allow His Word alone to be your guide, you will be saved from taking a step that would make you the adherent of any clique or section in the church of God.

SIMPLE TESTIMONY AND MARCHING ORDERS.

“TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE.”

(Ecclesiastes iv. 9.)

YOU hold in your hand a copy of *Simple Testimony*. But it is equally true that you hold a copy of *Marching Orders*. For the two magazines have become one and will henceforward speak to you with a single voice.

For forty years the older magazine has aimed at helping the young subaltern in the army of the Lord as he studies the great principles of the warfare to which he is called. But a soldier's life is not all study. Far from it. In active service, whether in camp or battle-field, he has to put forth his energies, and to listen, with an ear that is ever on the alert, to the trumpet call, the sudden command, the emergency cry. The younger magazine has sought, for the most part, to be the soldier's companion in the sphere of his activity, and the encouragement that it has brought has meant much to many a sorely-tried warrior.

These two lines we hope to pursue. We want to help the young Christian in his quiet hours of study and prayer, so necessary if his

inner life is to flourish. And we want to supply, as far as we are enabled, an ever fresh impetus that shall make him more effective than ever as a soldier on active service.

Will our readers be our co-labourers? They can help us greatly by their prayers. And if they find our pages helpful, they can serve their fellows by enlisting them too as readers.

THE EDITORS.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

“Fear not, Paul . . . lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee,” (Acts xxxvii. 24).

THERE are many lessons to be learned from a careful study of the account of Paul’s voyage to Rome. Taken literally, it shows us in a wonderful way the personal care of the Lord Jesus Christ for His beloved servant in a time of great stress; while, looked at figuratively, it is a marvellous picture of the passage of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome.

The particular incident recorded in verses 21-26 is that to which I especially desire to draw attention.

For long weary days and nights neither sun nor stars had been visible. The captain of the ship was in despair; the mariners hopeless. Then it was that Paul, “the prisoner of the Lord,” became the comforter of all in the ship, comforting them with the comfort wherewith he had just been comforted of God. For to

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him an angel of the Lord had appeared, standing by him, and saying, "Fear not, Paul ; thou must be brought before Cæsar : and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

This settled it for Paul. He knew that not a man on that ship would be lost, whatever might become of the vessel itself ; so he says, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer : *for I believe God*, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island." And so it was. The ship was wrecked ; but every one who had sailed with Paul was saved from drowning and reached the shore alive.

I want to apply this in a spiritual way. First, I would earnestly ask each reader :

DO YOU SAIL WITH PAUL ?

It is not now a question of temporal, but of eternal salvation. The voyage I have in mind is not from one earthly port to another, but that vastly more important voyage from earth to heaven, from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. One thing is certain : you are on a voyage, sailing over the sea of time, bound for eternity. Do you then sail with Paul ? All who do shall reach the port of endless glory at last, whatever vicissitudes they may pass through on the voyage. All who do not sail with the great apostle will fail of final salvation, let their hopes be never so high and their passage never so calm and peaceful.

What is it to sail with Paul? It is to know Paul's Saviour and to share Paul's blessings. Are these things true of you? There are untold thousands in Christendom to-day who are nominally believers, who belong to the Church in its outward aspect, who partake of the sacraments and are more or less zealous in what is called Christian work, but who do *not* sail with Paul. He repudiated all such things as a ground of confidence, and trusted alone in the matchless grace of God.

It is my purpose in a series of papers, to trace out some of the precious truths Paul was chosen to make known for our eternal blessing. Only let each for himself be sure he is one who sails with Paul, for to none other do they apply.

I.

Conversion to God.

He who sails with Paul has been truly and definitely converted to God. Paul's conversion occupies a larger place in the New Testament than any particular doctrine that Paul preached. About this, God would have no uncertainty. He lets us know clearly how Paul began the voyage to an eternity of bliss.

Three full chapters in the Acts are devoted to this important subject. In chapter ix. we have Luke's historical account. In chapter xxii. Paul himself gives what has been called the "Hebrew narrative." He relates his conversion to Jewish auditors in a manner especially

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calculated to appeal to them. In chapter xxvi. we have his "Gentle narrative," where, "being made all things to all men," he again tells of his conversion, but in such style as to be clear to Agrippa the Edomite and Festus the Roman.

In Galatians i. he once more dwells on this wonderful theme, emphasizing particularly the sovereignty of God in it all (verses 15, 16). Philippians iii. is a fifth account, where his special object is to disclaim all human merit. He once more refers to it in 1 Tim. i. 12-17, where he declares that in him as chief, Christ Jesus had shown all long-suffering, "for a pattern (or model) to those who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting."

With such an array of Scripture before us, which I hope each reader will peruse carefully, it is surely manifest that no one sails with Paul who did not begin with conversion.

I know it is unpopular to press this in some quarters to-day. "Don't trouble people about the

HOW, WHERE OR WHEN OF CONVERSION.

The only thing of importance is to determine how they stand now." Such is the unscriptural and misleading instruction often given. And because of this, souls are harmed by an easy-going ministry that does not arouse the conscience, which lets people complacently drift on to a lost eternity who are not sailing with Paul, though they fancy all is well. The

words of the Lord Jesus may surely rebuke all such folly: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3).

Conversion then is a very real experience, and not something that may take place unconsciously. I do not mean by this that all know the day, the hour, the moment, when they were converted. Paul did, undoubtedly; but often young persons go through a prolonged period of exercise, in which, little by little, they learn the folly of self-confidence and the simplicity of faith in Christ alone for salvation. When He is trusted in, conversion has taken place; but, for lack of sound teaching many do not realize this, and so have more or less perplexity in answering the questions, "When, and where, were you converted?"

But there should certainly be no difficulty in regard to the *how*. All people are converted in exactly the same way, however experiences may vary. Conversion is a turning from self to Christ; it is ceasing to rely on one's own fancied merits and trusting in the Lord Jesus alone. Has this great change occurred in your life? If so, you have been converted, and are sailing with Paul.

Let no doubts or fears distress your soul if you do not seem to see things just as others do. Do not allow Satan to torment you with thoughts of your unworthiness, or questions as to whether your faith is of the right kind. It

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has never been God's way to put all souls through some stereotyped experience. No two Bible conversions are alike as to the means of awakening or the way in which the soul was led to trust in Christ. And, on the other hand, it is important to remember that if you *were* worthy, you would not need a Saviour. It is because of your unworthiness you came to Him, the worthy One. Let your soul then be occupied with Him, and not with your own frames and feelings.

And as to "the right kind of faith"—a difficulty felt by vast numbers of young believers—remember it is not the right faith that saves, but faith in the right Person. You might have the strongest possible faith in yourself, in the priest, in the church, in the sacraments, in visions or dreams, and be lost forever. But on the other hand, the feeblest faith in Christ Jesus, God's Lamb, saves for all eternity, and puts you for ever in Paul's company.

In each account given of his conversion we see how God showed him the futility of self-righteousness and human religiousness as a means of salvation, and the absolute certainty of eternal salvation when the Lord Jesus is trusted in and confessed. When He becomes the soul's object, conversion is an accomplished fact.

So when we ask, "How, when, and where, were you converted?" we really mean, "How were you led to trust in Christ? When did

you find out that He *alone* must be your Saviour? Where did you get that sweet rest in Him?"

And if, perchance, your exercises covered a number of weeks or months, out of which you emerged at last resting on His mighty arm and trusting His finished work, do not be distressed that you cannot particularize, but boldly confess Him as Saviour and own Him as Lord; for all who have turned from self to Christ are in the fullest, clearest, scriptural sense converted.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND?

“WHAT is that in thine hand?” (Exod. iv. 2). What power or influence has God given you? See whether it cannot be used for Him.

“My influence is a very insignificant thing.” So you say. But a shepherd’s crook was this, and see what it became in the hand of Moses!

Mary, what is that in thine hand? Only a box of spikenard. A small thing, though it cost three hundred pence. Yet the fragrance of that sweet perfume, lavished upon your Lord, has floated down to us through all the ages reminding us that nothing is too precious to show our attachment to Him.

Poor widow, what is in thine hand? Only two mites that make a farthing. A small thing for the treasury of the Lord; yet the tinkle of those little coins has come down to us like

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music, reminding us that nothing is too humble for the Lord of the treasury to accept.

And so the question comes to us. What is that in thine hand? Not, what would you *like*, or *hope*, to have there? What *have* you? Whatever it be, use it for God, and see what God will make of it!

Nothing will recommend the Gospel to those around us like the personal exertion of those who advocate it. Be it the gift of kindness or only the grasp of sympathy, let us employ it.

My hand? Well may you lose sight of it for a moment, for there are other hands, once spread out for us on Calvary! And what is that in Thine hands, O blessed Son of God? Spikes of cruel iron! Pardon writ in blood! For He was wounded for *your* transgressions, and bruised for *your* iniquities.

Can you keep back anything from Him?

F. TUCKER.

SOME SCRIPTURE "OPPOSITES."

LIFE is a complex affair. We have proverb against proverb, as for example, "Birds of a feather flock together," on the one hand, and "Two of a trade never agree" on the other. Truth is bigger than our statement of it, and it cannot be compressed within the boundaries of a definition. There is more than one side to a question. The fair face of truth has many features, and if we make one feature

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out of all proportion to the rest, we produce a caricature. Hence we are not surprised to find that the Bible contains statements which at first sight appear to be at variance. A closer examination, however, reveals that they are not antagonistic, but complementary; not contradictory, but supplementary.

In Romans iii. 28, we read that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Yet James ii. 24 tells us that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

The scope of the passage in James shows that the writer is pointing out that profession of faith is worthless if it does not manifest itself in works. Such a faith is "dead," for it produces nothing. For if faith justifies the believing sinner, works "justify" faith, *i.e.*, prove it genuine living, for true faith contains in it the germ of a holy life. We may illustrate the matter by thinking of a hen and an egg. In Romans we see the hen only—the egg is inside. In James we see both the hen and the egg which she has produced. The hen stands for a living faith, and the egg for the "works" which are the outcome of it. Paul and James are not fighting face to face; they are standing back to back. Paul is fighting those who say that faith is not sufficient to justify me; James is the antagonist of those who affirm that if a man declares he has faith, his conduct is of no consequence. Paul asserts, "Faith alone justifies." "Quite so," agrees James, "but not any kind of faith."

There are several "opposites" in the Word in connection with the differences between our standing in Christ and our conduct in this

world. For instance, Romans viii. 31, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" is apparently contradicted by the many Scriptures which refer to our warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil. The meaning of the verse in Romans is that if God, the highest authority in the universe, is for us in the sense that He pronounces us discharged, what matters it if any other "authority" declares us condemned? God always has the last word, and from His verdict there can be no appeal.

Against the well-known verse, Ephesians i. 6, can be placed the equally well-known scripture in 2 Cor. v. 9. The first relates to our unalterable, unimproveable standing in Christ, in Whom we are "complete;" the second concerns what should be our master ambition each day, that is, to be well-pleasing to Him. The "keys" afforded by both the contexts and the language enable us to see how both truths supplement each other.

Effort to maintain or improve our status is wrong; for it is secured to us for ever by the perfect work of the perfect One. Effort to live the Christian life in our own strength is also wrong, for "Without Me ye can do nothing." But effort to set our minds on Him, to resist evil in His strength, is right; nay more, it is essential. God has not called us to quietism. Fighting belongs to all life. All improvement involves struggle. "There is no improving the future without disturbing the present." The sword and the trowel is an apt symbol of all successful life, including the Christian life.

Two sentences which seem to contradict each other are found almost together in Galatians vi

Verse 2 exhorts us to bear one another's burdens, while verse 5 reminds us that each one shall bear his own burden. We are to try to help others when in trouble; but we are to remember that each one of us must bear his own responsibility, for whatever we sow, THAT we are sure to reap. Christianity does not recognize transactions "by proxy," although these are some of the main features of Roman Catholic religion.

In Matthew vii. 1, our Lord tells His disciples, "Judge not that ye be not judged;" while in 1 Thess. v. 21, He bids us, through His chief apostle, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." The context in Matthew vii., shows that our Lord did not prohibit all judgment of others, but rather warns us against an evil motive and false standards when we pass judgment. The criticisms of some people, even of some believers, are worth little. They are based on ignorance, and may even be warped by prejudice and personal spite. If whims and fancies sit in the seat of judgment, the verdict should be ignored. Paul told the Corinthians, who had listened to their apostle being traduced by his enemies, that it was a small matter with him to be judged of man, for we were to appear before the infallible Judge in a day that is coming. We are, however, to be constantly "proving" what we hear and read, and bringing it to the test of the Scriptures of truth. Things in the world are not only black or white; they are often different shades of grey. We must learn to distinguish between true and false, between good and bad; and also between what is lawful and what is both lawful and expedient. Life, in fact, is a succession of choices.

PATIENCE.

13

The word "perfect" in Phil. iii. 15 does not relate to our standing, for every believer without exception is perfect in that sense. It refers to those who have attained to maturity of character by habitual abiding in Christ. But there is a "perfection" which even these have not reached and cannot reach in this life. Even the great apostle admits, in verse 12 of the same chapter, that he was not already "perfect." No one in this life can say, "I have attained." There is always an "Excelsior" that lies ahead of our present attainment.

It would be a profitable exercise for the young believer to contrast and harmonize other apparent "opposites" of Scripture. He will thus have his senses exercised to discern good and evil, and the mind will grow in penetration and elasticity, and in the readiness to submit to all truth. Better still is the balanced character that will result from giving each side of the truth its proper place in our lives.

E. ADAMS.

 PATIENCE.

" Does courage fail thee, child of Mine,
 Beneath the scourge of pain?
 Around My love thy fingers twine
 Till thou art brave again.
 Quell thou thy spirit's restless strife,
 In patience bide thee still;
 To bear that hardest test of life,—
 The *waiting* on My will.

Didst give thyself, thy life, to Me?
 Then it is Mine to say
 If conflict or endurance be
 Thy lesson for to-day.
 In patience learn thy lesson's length;
 And be that lesson long—
 Lean thou thy weakness on My strength,
 Until thy soul grow strong."

SISTER ESTHER-CARLOTTA, S.R.

COMMUNION.

A Further Inquiry.*

IN a paper on the Victorious Life, in the September issue of *Marching Orders* it was suggested that one secret of practical holiness, of constant victory over sin, is a life lived very close to the Saviour.

If this is true it will oblige us to take our inquiry further back, and ask *how* we may live closer to our Lord, and prove more abundantly than heretofore His sanctifying grace? And here once more we may ask for the conclusions reached by personal experience, rather than the results of mere study.

As we think over the subject now before us, we may well believe that the whole essence and

* The previous inquiry was raised by Mr. McNair in September last in *MARCHING ORDERS* and proceeded with much interest and profit in the October, November and December issues. We invite our readers' contributions on the subject of the present inquiry. EDITORS.

COMMUNION.

15

end of the gospel is contained in it. "Christ . . . died that He might *bring us to God*," not, of course, for a momentary interview, when first we learnt His grace, but that we might abide in that presence, and go no more out for ever.

And yet how far short of this most of us come in actual realization! Are we even, in continuous experience, dwelling like Isaac by the well Lahai-roi: "God who liveth and seeth me," however sincerely we may be convinced of the truth that the name implies?

Surely in the course of our enquiry we shall be reminded that the two great doors of entry into the presence of God are prayer and study of the Word, and this fact one would not a moment question—indeed, every believer will be able to testify that he has in some measure proved the truth of it.

Yet even here at once one has to face the question: Why, with many of us, is this so *partially* realized? How comes it that "drawing near to God" is not a more momentous thing with us? Why is it that reading His Word is not always "hearing His voice"?

Since Christ died to bring us to God, as He lived here to bring God to us, we may consider everything as important or the reverse in so far as it accords, or not, with that great purpose.

For instance, worldly associations will no doubt very evidently hinder our conscious approach to God, while Christian fellowship is perhaps one of the greatest helps to that end. Indeed it may be that in some sense we really *need* the other members of the Body to make more real and living to us the conscious link with our glorious Head. And if this be so, what

a holy privilege it is to be in any measure helpers of one another's joy in a closer walk with God and His people, and what a very grievous sin it would be to deprive any living member of Christ of something that is essential to his spiritual welfare, to the realization, in his case, of that which Christ purposed when He died to save him. And yet instances might be given of those to whom Christian fellowship has been refused and who have subsequently *drifted from God*. Instead of condemning such with the knowing remark, "It is just what I expected," may we not need sometimes to condemn ourselves for actually contributing to our brother's fall, and to the hindering of God's purpose regarding him?

There is some, perhaps very much, helpful literature on the subject of Communion with God. One thinks at once of the well-known booklet *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, and *In the Secret of His Presence* by Knight, and *Abiding in Christ* by Andrew Murray. And some readers may tell us of other books, less known, but not less helpful. The new book, printed in India, *A Present Day Challenge to Prayer*, tells how at least one man lived daily and hourly with God. But should we take the life of "Praying Hyde" as illustrating the *normal* Christian life?

One realizes that it is often easier to ask a question than to answer it, as also that it is more blessed to give than to receive. In the present case, the writer will be quite content with the less blessed part.

STUART E. MC NAIR.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANXIOUS.—Darby's "New Translation" gives the following renderings of the passages in John i. 9 and Titus ii. 11: (a) "The true light was that which, coming into the world, lightens every man," or (as the translator adds in a note) "'is light to every man.' Not 'enlightens,' but 'sheds its light upon.'" The same writer, in another place, says—doubtless in view of John i. 11—"shone for all men, and not for the Jews only." (b) "For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared. . . ." These renderings will doubtless clear away your difficulty. God's provision for us is as great as the need. In their folly men have turned their backs upon the Light, and have despised the grace of a God who desires not the death of a sinner and whose "kindness and love" toward man have been displayed in the gift of His Son. God will hold men responsible according to the measure of light they have received.

CHILD-LOVER.—The lines you seek are the following:—

"He did not come to judge the world, He did not come to
blame;
He did not only come to seek; it was to save He came.
And when we call Him Saviour, then we call Him by
His Name."

They form part of a poem by Dora Greenwell entitled "A Good Confession," and appear to have been written in 1872. The words are set to music in the book of Choruses published by the Children's Special Service Mission.

IN CORPORE SANO.—We think you take a one-sided view in your zeal, in pressing for a fuller recognition of what you term “the healing functions of the Christian ministry.” No right-minded Christian denies the power of God to heal the sick, or undervalues the promise of James v. 15. The mistake you and a good many others appear to be making is that you put in the *premier* place the welfare of the body and the cure of its aches and pains. So occupied do many folks become with the diagnosis and cure of physical ailments, that they overlook the divine claims upon our time and attention in respect of prayer, the reading and ministry of the Word, the preaching of the Gospel, and even the spiritual needs of the patients themselves. Higher duties and privileges are forgotten in the morbid investigations of bodily ailments—often imaginary—and attempts at their cure.

Not for one moment would we depreciate a simple, child-like trust in the merciful care of an all-wise Creator-God. On the contrary. But, while there are some sicknesses which come upon the people of God as the result of their own carelessness or neglect, we should never forget that in other cases God sometimes sees fit to lay aside His children and servants in order that He may communicate spiritual lessons or give a period of needed rest for mind and body which could not be received during the normal life of toil and service. Have we not all had some such experience? And do we not look back on the time of weakness as a time of spiritual blessing?

Pray do not take this as a plea for carelessness in the matter of our physical health. “The body

is the Lord's . . . the temple of the Holy Ghost." We should, moreover, "keep under" the body, so that it may become the clean and efficient instrument for the fulfilment of whatever service is committed to our trust. The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to "endure hardness," and a modern leader of men counsels his followers to "live dangerously." A little more of the old spirit to "do and dare" for Christ, regardless of the consequences to ourselves, would not be out of place in certain quarters to-day.

The morbid seeking after health and comfort at any price is one of the most disquieting features of the times in which we live. It is the lure of "Christian Science" (so-called) and many another pseudo-religious cult. We shrink from pain—cowards that we are ! Let us read 2 Timothy ii. again, and think of those of whom it is said, "they loved not their lives unto the death."

P. T. S.

"I WILL answer for it. The longer you read the Bible the more you will like it ; it will grow sweeter and sweeter ; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ."

ROMAINE.

"FIVE persons were studying what were the best means to mortify sin ; one said, to meditate on death ; the second, to meditate on judgment ; the third, to meditate on the joys of heaven ; the fourth, to meditate on the torments of hell ; the fifth, to meditate on the blood and sufferings of Jesus Christ ; and certainly the last is the choicest and strongest motive of all." BROOKS.

BOOK REVIEWS.

IN "MESSIAH THE PRINCE," by L. Laurensen, we have a useful and readable outline of the Gospel of Matthew by one whose wide experience among young Christians qualifies him to write specially for such. Mr. Laurensen's successful work for many years in his large Bible class at Edinburgh leads us to expect from his pen something that shall incite and develop interest in his theme in the minds of simple and youthful readers. And this volume of 261 pages does not disappoint us. We congratulate the author on his happy combination of the conversational style with the tabular and analytical, and on the very helpful way in which he combines dispensational and moral teaching. We are sure that this book will bring spiritual stimulus and uplift to its readers. Published by J. K. Souter & Co., Bristo Place, Edinburgh. Price 3/6.

The sorrowing and the suffering are always a numerous company, and any ministry to such often carries with it a special blessing from the Lord. For these, whose burdens are heavy, and whose eyes overflow with tears, are very precious to Him. Mr. R. Elliott has proved himself well able to give cups of refreshment and cheer to the desolate. We welcome therefore a volume from his pen, "ANGELS IN WHITE," containing many of his articles written for those of the people of God who are passing through affliction. Do you know any such? It would be a real ministry of help to present them with a copy of this book. 264 pages. 2/6 from any bookseller, or 2/11 post free from the Author, 73, Durham Road, London, S W. 20.

ISRAEL; A PRINCE OF GOD. A fresh opening up of the remarkable prophecy of Jacob with regard to "the last days," with applications to the walk and welfare of the people of God to-day. Worth reading. 2d. Published by the North of Scotland Bible and Tract Depot, Bridge Street, Aberdeen.

GROWING IN GRACE.

WHEN we greet one another we usually say, "How do you do?" The inquiry presumably refers to the welfare of the body of the person addressed. That is important, of course; "the body is the Lord's." And we should take care of it for Him. We wash, dress, clothe, feed, exercise, and care for the outward man with diligence and regularity, and the physical part of our being flourishes, and waxes strong and vigorous. It grows.

But what of the inner man—that part of the being which is so constituted as to be able to appreciate things which are heavenly and divine? May I be permitted to ask, "How do you do—in spiritual matters?" The worldly-minded man, of course, will not be concerned about his spiritual welfare. Outwardly he appears to flourish; but his poor inner man probably shrinks in the same ratio as his golf handicap diminishes. And he is not troubled—yet.

But you are concerned. Looking back over the past twelve months can you honestly say that you have "grown an inch"—spiritually? Perhaps it is well that we should be dissatisfied with our spiritual progress, for if we were really satisfied with ourselves we should be bursting with sinful pride. Let us not be discouraged, however, but take this opportunity of examining ourselves in the fear of God and in the light of His Word.

The children of God ought to grow. There can be no doubt that this is God's desire for us.

Take the closing verse of Peter's second epistle, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If we have not grown in grace and knowledge, there must be a reason—perhaps there are several. It may be helpful to consider, first, two or three things which will *hinder* growth, or prevent it altogether; and then some of the things which will *promote* true spiritual growth.

Probably the first and greatest of all the hindrances to spiritual growth and progress is

SIN,

the allowance of known sin in our lives.

God desires His people to be holy. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (living); because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy." The writer of the Hebrew epistle (xii. 1) exhorts: "Let us lay aside every weight, *and the sin which doth so easily beset us.*" There can be no growth, happiness, progress, blessing, or fruitfulness if we allow sin to rule in our members. The apostle Paul says in Romans vi. 16, with unanswerable logic, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

Sin has been the cause of more stunted, blighted, fruitless lives than anything else—say it softly, the lives of Christian men and women. We have been redeemed at infinite cost; our redemption cost heaven its dearest treasure; it cost the Son of God the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, the horrors of Calvary, and even

the hiding of God's face when He was made sin for us. And yet we sin, and if we must be quite frank—like sinning. Shame on us! Oh, that we had something of the divine horror of it! None of us can hold up his head and say he is free from it. "If we say that we have no sin," writes the apostle John, "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us . . . we make Him a liar."

I am always very unhappy when I hear a young Christian asking, "What is the harm in doing this, or going there?" What would be the answer if he realized that his Saviour was standing by and hearing every word? Beware, then, of sin as you would of the most deadly poison. "Seek holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Another very probable cause of failure is

LACK OF WATCHFULNESS.

An Old Testament picture well illustrates the cause of failure and the remedy. The Song of Solomon ii. 15 exhorts: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." Think of a vineyard in an eastern land. The owner has erected a stout palisade around it, and the stakes are strong and firmly placed. No fox, however big and strong, will get through that fence, he thinks. Quite true; no big one will. We are rather like that owner. We build around us a fence of convention and respectability. None of the grosser sins have sullied our lives: drunkenness, immorality, theft, murder—the things that are reported in the newspapers—we have never been guilty of these. The big foxes

are kept out. Yes, but look! I can see a troop of little foxes coming, and they are getting through! The stakes are not close enough. That one (his name seems to be *Late-rising*) got through this morning. Another, whose name is *Bad Temper*, follows at his heels. Others, whose names look like *Tale-Bearer*, *Deceit*, *Grumbling*, *Dishonesty*, *Tittle-tattle*, get through without much difficulty.

And they "spoil the vines"—*His* vine. Your life, that belongs to Him now, is "spoiled" because of your lack of watchfulness; your life, that should be bearing fruit for His pleasure, is being spoiled because of your carelessness.

A third cause of failure to grow in grace is

DEFECTIVE CONSECRATION.

What should we think if we bought a new house, paid the purchase money, and, on going to take possession, found the vendor unwilling to relinquish possession of one of the rooms? Or think of a young bride going with her husband to their new home. On entering, the bridegroom says, "Here is our new home, my love. You are mistress of it all, except" (he adds in an ashamed voice) "except that little room which I want to keep all to myself: it is only a little one, and I don't want you to go into it." If the girl had any spirit at all, she would insist on having a clear understanding from the start of their married life: she will be mistress of the whole establishment or of none of it.

We have all, at some time or another, realized the *personal* note in the Lord's words in Revelation iii: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open

the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." We have felt the power of His call to consecration and communion. We long to say, "Come in, Lord! By creation and redemption you have every right to me, and to all that I am and have. Take full possession!" You long to say that. Perhaps you did say it once, and added, "But leave me that room; it is only a little one!" The "little room" was a sinful habit, some cherished indulgence—some little corner of your life which you did not want the Lord to enter. I hear one of my brothers say, "Yes, women have a lot of things they might well do without for Christ's sake." No doubt, my friend; so we will add, for your sake and for the benefit of others like you,—the card pack, the pipe, the hobby, the newspaper, and any other thing which absorbs too much time and attention.

Now, brothers and sisters, both—can it be that we are willing to "come unto Him" and yet not want to learn of Him or share His yoke? Shall it be said of us that we were willing to be cleansed from the filth of sin, but do not want the trouble of keeping free from defilement? And dare we say that we want to be attached to the Vine and yet do not want to trouble about growing or fruit-bearing?

Naaman in the olden time was cleansed from his leprosy by a miracle, and yet desired to go in and out of the heathen temple. He wanted to be cleansed, and was thankful when he had been cleansed; but, valiant man though he was, he had not the courage to break with old associations.

Let the call of King David to his people come to our ears and hearts to-day with a strange and fresh power—"Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" May our response be like theirs! "The people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord."

P. T. S.

[*Next month, D.V.* "Things which Promote Growth in Grace."]

SAILING WITH PAUL.

II.

Forgiveness of Sins.

NO unforgiven soul sails with Paul: which is to say that Scripture recognizes no such person as a believer in Christ Jesus who has not already received forgiveness of all his sins. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. i. 7). And the beloved apostle John joins with his brother-messenger Paul, and says, when addressing the entire family of God: "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake" (1 John ii. 12). Now faith lays hold of this, and cries, "I believe God!"

Some time ago a young man called upon me. I asked him if he were a Christian. "Yes," was the reply. "At some special meetings held lately by Dr. C——, I trusted Christ, and am now seeking to serve Him."

"Indeed," I said, "this is very good news. Then you know what it is to have all your sins forgiven!"

"Oh no," he cried, "I would not dare say that. I have been converted but a few weeks, and do not feel that I have forgiveness yet. But I am hoping to reach it soon."

"And how do you expect to know when you have attained it?"

"I am not quite clear as to that, but the Bible says something about the Spirit's witness to let us know, and I have not got the witness yet, though I am seeking it every day."

"If you have really trusted Christ as your Saviour, as the One who died for you, you already have the witness," I answered.

He looked at me in perplexity, and then said, "I do not understand you. I do not want to doubt God, but I cannot feel the witness at all."

I pointed out that the word *feel* is only once found in the New Testament, and that is in Acts xvii. 27, where Paul says of the Gentiles that "they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him." The word *feeling* is also found but once—in Eph. iv. 19, where the ungodly Gentiles are said to be "past feeling." The word does not belong to the Christian, you see, but to the heathen who have no written revelation. *Our* word is "faith," or "believe." We do not know because we *feel*; but we *believe* God's word, and thus we know.

The young man became deeply interested, and it was my privilege then to put before him a line of truth I would now endeavour simply to unfold to my reader. Through it he was soon rejoicing in the knowledge of forgiveness, and I would that the same result might follow if these lines are read by any doubting one.

We read in Scripture of the witness of the Spirit *to* us, and the witness *in* us. Until we receive the witness to us, we cannot have the witness in us. This is of supreme importance, and, I hope, will be carefully noted.

Open your Bible at Hebrews x. In the first fourteen verses there is a vivid contrast presented between the temporary and oft-repeated sacrifices under the law, and the all-sufficient offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, which needs never to be repeated, because full atonement for the sins of every believer has been perfectly accomplished. On the basis of this, "the worshippers, once purged, have no more conscience of sins." Christ has now sat down on the right hand of God, because His work is finished. Nothing remains to be done. "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" that is, He saves for ever and completely all who are set apart to God through His blood, by personal faith in Him who shed it.

Now see what glorious results flow from this: "Wherefore the Holy Ghost is a witness to us"—the work of Christ being all complete, the Holy Spirit witnesses to what? and where

is the witness found ?

First, He witnesses to new birth : "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." There is thus a new nature, with new desires and yearnings, implanted in every believer. Nor is this all. He further witnesses : "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Thus there is the Spirit's testimony to full forgiveness.

Secondly : This witness, record, or testimony, is found in the Holy Scriptures, written by the Spirit's dictation. The witness of the Spirit is the testimony of the Holy Ghost *in the Word of God*.

Have you believed it ? If so, you know, because God says it, that your sins are forgiven, if you have trusted Christ.

But what about the witness *in us*. We have the witness in us when we believe the witness *to us*. We have then received the Word into our hearts—and, remember, *the Word is the witness*.

Now read 1 John v. 1-13. Weigh every word, but note especially verse 10 : "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Compare with this verse 11 : "And this is the witness (or record), that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." This is the unvarying testimony of Scripture. The Spirit's witness is not a happy feeling in my heart. It is *the record of the Word of God as to the work of Christ and its results*.

When I believe this, the witness is received into my very being, and henceforth "the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). In other words God's testimony, ministered to my soul in the Spirit's power, and my personal faith in that Word, are in agreement. I know I am God's child, and all God's children are forgiven also.

There is also another aspect of forgiveness—that which the child of God needs when he fails; but the forgiveness we have had before us is the eternal portion of all who have rested their souls on Christ.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

MILK OR MEAT.

WE had almost said "Milk *and* Meat," but a consideration of 1 Cor. iii. leads us to make a distinction and a difference. This, no doubt, is implied in the passage.

Here are two conditions, the one "spiritual," the other "carnal." And they stand in contrast the one to the other. As to what is implied by the "carnal," we have only to read the third verse where it is made apparent, "For so long as jealousy and strife continue among you, can it be denied that you are unspiritual and are living and acting like mere men of the world?" They were walking after the thoughts and desires of the old Adam nature, and in that condition were not capable of viewing "the

deep things of God,”—hence the feeding with milk.

The “spiritual” implies that, having embraced Christ as God’s salvation, we have endorsed the sentence of death upon the flesh with all its desires, and are now living and walking in the Spirit. Very pointedly we may put the question to our own heart; “What is my daily diet? Is it Milk or Meat?”

Metaphors are used for a specific purpose and are intended to convey a spiritual truth with a present application. Several are mentioned in this chapter, and we may note that they set forth that which is capable of growth and development. For the moment we are concerned about “feeding.” As believers, having passed through the “little children” stage, we are now following on—or should be—to know the Lord, growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Alas! many are still in their spiritual babyhood, they have not developed, they are stunted, and continue in the nursery, whereas they should now be feeding others. “When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe” (Hebrews v. 12, 13).

It was no commendation for the Corinthians to be told so faithfully by the apostle, “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat.” Do we discern the pathos in the voice of this “nursing father” as he reiterates the negatives throughout these verses, “I could not speak,” “not with

meat," "ye were not able." According to the wisdom given unto him, as also in all his epistles, there was so much he fain would have taught them, if only they had been able to bear it. Indeed, it would have been a well-spread table of the very choicest food,—“spiritual with spiritual” “from glory to glory,” “the finest of the wheat,”—a living Christ in all His fulness and perfection ministered unto them as their abiding and satisfying portion.

Much depends upon our appreciation and appropriation of ministry in the Spirit. It has been truly said, “A carnal Christian is one who has not a quick ear to hear what God has to speak.” We need to get beyond mere extracts if we are to find spiritual food and nourishment for our souls.

A former King George had been listening to a sermon in the Chapel Royal, and on passing out was heard to remark: “That will do; that will feed souls.” May it never be said of us: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” (John xvi. 12).

T. G. COUCHMAN.

LINKS OF HELP.

DOES the Word of God instruct the Christian as to his manner of living the whole week through? Most certainly it does, and the more we fashion our days according to the Scriptures the greater will be our fulness.

Some may have expected to find service to our Master the chief object of the believer's life. But there is something far more important, and

that is **THE SERVANT**. For if the servant is right, the service will also be right and spiritual. And only such will pass the divine test and be rewarded by-and-by.

Seven links of help for daily guidance.

LINK ONE.

First and foremost in my daily life should come the Word of God itself, for it is according to this Book that my life must be moulded. Fellow believers will advise on the one hand and the other, and truly helpful this may prove, but it is always important to do as the Bereans did." "They received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so." (Acts xvii. 11). Put everything you are told to the test of the Word of God, and you cannot go far wrong. To Timothy, a comparatively young man, Paul said, "All Scripture is . . . profitable for **DOCTRINE**, for **REPROOF**, for **CORRECTION**, for **INSTRUCTION** in righteousness: that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17).

DOCTRINE—to show God's truth.

REPROOF—to show my mistake.

CORRECTION—to show how to adjust my ways.

INSTRUCTION—to show how to continue in the right.

The Scriptures are the believer's title deeds to inestimable wealth. As in commercial life deeds of value are carefully studied by their owner to know the extent of his possessions, so in spiritual things we who have been made "**joint-heirs with Christ**" should ponder our

title deeds to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us (1 Pet. i. 4), and the enjoyment of which can be ours now by the Holy Spirit.

Do you read *your* Bible DAILY?

Do you SEARCH your Bible DAILY?

It is often said, "I cannot enjoy my Bible as So-and-so does." Let me ask: do you search your Bible daily? If not, begin to do so, and it will be surprising if your love for the Bible does not grow. The more we study, the more we want to; and we feel the lack if a day passes without our handful of sweet manna.

LINK TWO

is a step in advance of Link one. "Blessed is the man that heareth Me,

watching daily at My gates,

WAITING at the posts of my doors" (Prov. xiii. 34). Who is speaking? None other than wisdom personified: the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching DAILY." How can I hear my Lord speak to me DAILY? Surely through His Word. We noted above that this Link was a step in advance of Link one. It is so, in that as we daily search the Scriptures, Christ is to be the object. Only as we see *Him* in the Word can we understand something of the beauty of the Scriptures. The boy with the jig-saw puzzle puts the different pieces into the complete picture easily as he looks at its picture key. So in studying the Bible, all the seemingly contradictory and difficult passages fit together when, with our eye upon Christ, we see HIM on every page.

Look for a PERSON, not a creed, nor a religion, nor a rule of life, but CHRIST. As He fills the vision the life will be transformed. The two disciples, recounting their walk to Emmaus, said: "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way?" Let HIM talk to us and our hearts will burn within us. WATCHING and WAITING our verse says. Watching implies looking, whilst waiting speaks of patience. Only patient looking will find the treasures of the Word. For the best gems are found under the surface.

LINK THREE

is found in Psalm lxxxvi. 3 :

"I cry unto Thee daily."

Inseparably linked with searching the Scriptures is PRAYER. These two things go hand in hand, and as we search our Bibles for HIM, we shall pray the more intelligently and earnestly. The man of God is a man of prayer, and daily prayer equips the child of God for the daily conflict. Do you know what it is to PRAY? The disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray." Mere saying of prayers is not praying. Do you repeat daily a set formula, word for word the same, the truth of which has never entered your soul? If so, make a change, and with the Psalmist CRY TO THE LORD DAILY. True prayer has an intensity of purpose; it knows what it has need of and pleads through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Father, laying hold of His love, power and wisdom by faith. More prayer, more power. Be simple, brief, definite and in earnest, and God will hear and answer.

LINK FOUR.

Give us this day our daily bread.

(Matt. vi. 11). Daily searching, daily prayer and then daily bread. Our text can be a true prayer for temporal needs, but it can also be a prayer for spiritual food. We may read ever so much, but unless we feed upon it there is little profit.

Can I read my Bible without feeding upon it? Yes; sadly possible it is to read chapter after chapter and yet little growth and progress be made. It is not the amount we read, but what we get from our reading, that feeds our souls. To read, mark, learn and inwardly digest is a necessity in spiritual things, for like the ox, we need to feed and then to "chew the cud." Far better to read a few verses well and read them again and again until they are imbedded in our minds, seeking divine light as to their true meaning, than to read a whole chapter without doing so.

A good rule for the young Christian is to take a chapter and learn one or two verses a day consecutively. Scripture learnt in this way is not easily forgotten and is often found to be a help at a most opportune moment. Those who travel by train or bus to their daily work will find that much progress can be made in spiritual things if they practise this rule in the morning and repeat the verses in the train or bus. Let the Word of God get into you and it will work out in your lives. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. Make the Scriptures your own possession and you will be fortified against the wiles of the adversary.

Now for a personal question: What food have you had to-day? "Oh, I have read such an interesting book." But what have you got out of it? "I have read a whole book of the Bible through." But what have you got for yourself as FOOD? We go to meetings, hear helpful addresses, and come away saying what a good time we have had. But how much do we MAKE OUR OWN? How much can you recall of what you heard? That, and that only, has been *food*. Sitting at the table, looking at food and hearing about it, does not feed and build up. Actually eating and taking food into one's body is what gives strength and growth. Do not starve your spiritual life. "He satisfieth the LONGING soul" and fills THE HUNGRY with good things.

At the Passover the blood of the lamb made the children of Israel *safe*. The word of God made them *sure*. The lamb itself was their *food*: three distinct things. In the wilderness the manna fell daily, and they had to gather DAILY, and eat each day's supply that day. Yesterday's manna turned sour. We must gather morning by morning our handful of sweet manna from the Bible itself.

LINK FIVE.

Having now seen that daily food is essential to growth we are ready to consider our next Link, for which the food fits us. A man who does nothing but feed will soon be in a bad condition. Having eaten, he needs exercise. "If any man will come after Me, let Him deny himself, and

take up his cross daily and follow Me."
(Luke ix. 23).

Feeding our souls daily enables us to bear the cross daily. In Luke xiv. we have the great supper first; *then* we read of the building of the tower and the waging of the war. The angel said to Elijah, "Arise and eat," and then sent him a forty day journey in the strength of it.

Our cross is not bodily affliction or the ordinary trials of life, such as the upsets and disappointments which are common to all men, but what we suffer for Christ's sake. For the true Christian the reproach of Christ is the daily cross, and all such will know something of this. It is to be esteemed greater treasure than the riches of Egypt. It costs an effort to bear a cross and live as a Christian. "Let a man deny himself," the Scriptures say, for self-denial is a true Christian grace.

LINK SIX

is in Hebrews iii. 13.

"Exhort one another daily."

The word here translated "exhort" well may be rendered "encourage." We oftentimes get discouraged because of the way. How much at such times a word of encouragement means! A word of cheer to the runner gives a wonderful impetus, and stimulates to fresh effort. We Christians are in a race which we have to run with patience, laying aside every weight and hindrance and looking unto Jesus, the goal. Along the course, which we all desire to finish well, as the great apostle did, let us encourage one another DAILY. This is to be a daily exercise, and our verse says encourage *one another*. It is not merely preachers and teachers who have to do this. We are all to do

it for *one another*. For there is often so much to discourage. With spiritual eyes let us behold one another's Christlike qualities and encourage one another. It is surprising what a smiling countenance and a cheerful word will accomplish even on the gloomiest of days. Encourage one another *daily*, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

LINK SEVEN.

“Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits.” (Psa. lxxviii. 19).

What better to finish with than this? Whate'er we do for Him, it can never reach one thousandth part of all that He has done, and does, for us. For He *loadeth* us with benefits. Are we conscious of it? Do you sometimes try to count His benefits, and name them one by one? Make an attempt and you will acknowledge that it comes as a great surprise to find how much the Lord has given you. His loving-kindness is great indeed! He does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Thus for all our days and every day this seven-link chain can be our rule:

DAILY SEARCH the Scriptures.

DAILY WATCH for Christ.

DAILY CRY to the Lord.

DAILY FOOD to be gathered.

DAILY CROSS to bear.

DAILY ENCOURAGE one another.

DAILY LOADED with benefits.

G. F. VALLANCE.

RESCUE THE CHILDREN.

When all the world's a sleepy head,
And I am tucked away in bed,
What thoughts and fancies dance and flit
Across my mind! Sometimes I sit
Enthronéd in the fireside's glow,
And little loved ones that I know
Come creeping to my arms, to rest
Their weary heads upon my breast!

Ah, yes! each dimpled arm I know,
For often I have held them so;
Strained to my heart, in love's embrace,
Gazing upon each upturned face,
As I in love's words, sweet and low,
Tell them of One, Who long ago
Took little children in his arm,
And still is guarding them from harm.

But this dream passeth: what is this
That comes to snatch away my bliss?
It is a great, an armed throng,
Of valiant ones,—they pass along
My vision, calling, "Come with me,"
The time is short, a warrior be!
'Tis not a day to sit and dream,
Beside the fireside's golden gleam!

Be up, away! the Master calls
Thee from these soft, these sheltered halls,
To follow where the ranks are thin,—
To leave this scene of bliss for Him,
To rescue other little ones
From Satan's toils, and when 'tis done,
His smile, His word of love, His kiss
Shall give thee what thou now dost miss.

CLARA CATHERINE ATWOOD.

"If it is not our Father's will to grant us
what we wish, He gives us grace to go without
it. If He does not avert the trial from which we
ask to be spared, He strengthens us to meet it.
Thus no true prayer ever goes unanswered."

J. R. MILLAR.

JOHN MARK.

JOHN Mark is one of the minor characters of the New Testament, and is overshadowed by the greater lights, Peter, Paul and John. For this reason he may not have received the attention that perhaps he deserves.

His home was at Jerusalem, and his circumstances seem to have been comfortable. It was at his mother's house that the disciples met to pray for Peter's deliverance, and where the apostle at once proceeded after his miraculous liberation.

He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey as their attendant. It was his business to look after the provision of food, accommodation and conveyance for the three travellers, and the two elder men no doubt found their young and active "minister" of great service in making arrangements for their journey. But soon after landing on the south coast of Asia Minor on their journey from Cyprus, Mark left Paul and Barnabas, and returned home. Paul felt the desertion keenly, but towards the close of his life his confidence in Mark was restored and he desired his services once again, while Peter associates Mark with himself in the salutation at the close of his first Epistle.

It is generally believed that the Gospel according to Mark is really Peter's Gospel, that is, Mark was the medium through which Peter,

under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, poured his vivid, impetuous thoughts. The characters of the two men are similar. There is in both a blending of boldness and timidity ; both are active and impetuous. We can easily understand that the older and more rugged character should have chosen the cousin of Barnabas to be the vehicle of his thoughts.

The Gospel by Mark resembles in some respects that by Matthew, but it is much shorter and contains many vivid touches and sidelights that are absent from the first Gospel. As it was written specially for the Roman mind, it deals with facts and is full of action ; for, while the Greeks loved philosophy and sought to get behind the facts to the reason for things, the Romans were more or less satisfied with the facts themselves, and excelled as men of direct and forceful action. Our Lord in this Gospel is presented as the perfect Servant.

John Mark was what we might call "an average man." Unlike Paul he was not cast in the heroic mould: he was no genius ; his personality was not forceful. He made himself exceedingly useful as a helper, but he was not a leader. He was content to play second fiddle, and, by the grace of God, he ultimately played it well.

Mark, therefore, should make a special appeal to us who are not cast in the heroic mould ; who are not geniuses, and cannot hope to achieve outstanding success in any department of life. We are conscious that our abilities are mediocre.

In short, we are not men with five talents ; we have but our one talent, or at most two.

It is worse than useless to bear a grudge against Providence for not giving us five talents. "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus ?" And it is an evil thing, too, if, feeling that there is so little that we can do, we allow ourselves to give way to cynicism—an attitude of mind that was somewhat fashionable after the great war, as optimism was before it.

We must accept our God-given limitations, and use thankfully the talents with which God has entrusted us. Every healthy-minded Christian, unless undergoing specially heavy trials, counts it a privilege to have life, with all that life's possibilities, including the opportunity of redeeming past mistakes and failures, and of doing better this year than last.

Most of the work of the Church is done by people of one or two talents. Real worth is never to be measured by, and real usefulness is never in proportion to, prominence. It is the *spirit* that counts most in the eyes of the Lord. Loyalty to Christ is the first thing. The lives of John the Baptist, Luke, Silas, Barnabas and John Mark remind us that faithfulness to the will of God, in whatever sphere, *is* success.

And now a word on Mark's desertion of Paul and Barnabas. The circumstances were against him ; he feared the unknown dangers that lay ahead. And he was homesick. He

did what many of us would have done if similarly placed ; he returned home.

At the commencement of the second missionary tour proposed by Paul, Barnabas wanted to take his young cousin with them, as on the first journey, but Paul resolutely refused. Barnabas took the lenient view of a kindly relative in regard to Mark's failing ; Paul's severe earnestness could make, on this occasion at least, no allowance for human weakness. Each of the two men insisted on his own view, and no doubt quoted Scripture in support of it. Probably each regarded his opinion as sacred truth. The result was a separation, which we like to consider took the form of a friendly working arrangement, Paul choosing Silas and going to Asia Minor and Europe ; Barnabas taking Mark with him to Cyprus. When workers cannot agree, is it not better that they should separate, in a friendly way, and seek different spheres ? The new arrangement need not be marked by bitterness, but be inspired by concern for the welfare of the work.

John Mark was restored. Was he the worse after his fall and restoration ? The probability is that he was a better and more useful man after than before he had learnt his weakness and the divine resources of forgiveness and strengthening. Every Christian stumbles ; he may fall ; he may even collapse. But the stumble may be a stumble while going upstairs ; the fall may be followed by the getting up again, humbler, wiser, more purposeful, more

trustful and more obedient, And even a collapse can be overruled to a fruitful, albeit different, after-history. For not only can grace unravel what nature spins, but our miracle-working Friend can bring "good" out of "evil."

E. ADAMS.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

III.

Justification from all Things.

OF the treasure committed to Paul, the blessedness of which God would have all who sail with him enjoy while upon their voyage, no truth is of more importance to the peace of the believer than that of justification. This is pre-eminently what Paul calls "my gospel," and "my doctrine." It will be observed by the thoughtful reader of the Word of God that, while the question "How can man be just with God?" was twice asked in the book of Job, and to Habbakuk it was revealed that "the just shall live by faith;" it remained for the apostle of the Gentiles to develop fully and proclaim widely the great doctrine of justification by faith. It is the corner-stone of "the mystery of the gospel." No other apostle or apostolic writer so much as mentions it, save that Luke as the inspired historian tells us how Paul preached it. But Peter and John never get beyond forgiveness of sins—nor, in one sense, shall any of us; for

our song in heaven shall be of divine forgiveness. Still there is an aspect of forgiveness far higher than that of mere pardon, and it is of this that Paul delighted to treat.

To unfold his special instruction on this soul-stirring theme would be to expound the first eight chapters of the epistle to the Romans, which has most appropriately been called "the epistle of the Forum, or the Law-court." I simply desire, as briefly and clearly as possible, to outline the subject of Justification as treated in Romans and defended in Galatians.

When I think of forgiveness, as the word is ordinarily used among men, I think of a man proved to be guilty but pardoned through the clemency of another. But when I think of justification I think of a man charged with guilt, but, upon being brought into court, cleared on every count. And this is exactly what scriptural justification means. It is "the sentence of the judge in favour of the prisoner." And yet it is the ungodly who are justified by a holy God on the principle of absolute righteousness. How can such an event be brought about?

In the first recorded sermon by the apostle Paul he tells us in what name it is done; he strikes the key-note of the theme so fully developed in the Roman epistle: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things; from

which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Moses' law indeed could but condemn. Through the name of Jesus, God can proclaim justification for every believer. And why? For the simplest of all possible reasons. The Lord Jesus Himself had taken the place of the guilty, borne the judgment due to sin, and, having fully glorified God in this respect, had been raised from the dead and seated in highest glory as Man, in token of God's full satisfaction in His finished work. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25 ; v. 1).

It is the very simplicity of it over which men stumble. That He, the Holy One, should have been made a sin-offering that we might become the righteousness of God in Him is something mere human reason would never have conceived. Yet this is the very pith and marrow of the gospel.

If sin be high treason against the Majesty in the heavens—and it is—Christ has died in the traitor's stead. If sin be a capital crime against the moral government of God—and it is—Christ has borne the full punishment deserved by the offender. If sin be a debt which man could never meet—and it is—Christ has paid the uttermost farthing, and the debtor may now go free.

Look at it in what aspect you may, and you

will find the Word of God reveals that all that He had against the sinner was more than met in the cross of Christ ; and thus God can now be "just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Sin is not merely pardoned. It is atoned for. Guilt is not simply overlooked. It is gone for ever from the eye of God in the cross of His Son. Iniquity is not only forgiven, it is purged by the blood of the Son of the Highest, and the transgressor is justified from all things.

It is after fully establishing all this, that the apostle triumphantly asks : "Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? Is it God that justifieth ! Who is he that condemmeth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us " (Rom. viii. 33, 34).

All the value of the finished work of Christ—ever before God—stands over against all that I was as a one-time sinful, guilty man. This is justification, and this is my standing in the presence of the infinitely Holy and Righteous One.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus " (Rom. viii. 1). And the realization is this : He Himself took the condemnation, endured the wrath of God, and has made full satisfaction for all the believer's sins. Faith rests on this and fears no more.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

GROWING IN GRACE.

II.

WE have seen that, prominent among the things which hinder growth in grace, are the following:—(1) *Sin*—the allowance of known sin in the life of the believer; (2) *Lack of Watchfulness*; and (3) *Failure to Consecrate* the whole of the life and interests to the Lord, to whom they belong by right both of creation and redemption.

But the clearest possible understanding of things which hinder growth will not do much in itself to promote the growth which we all desire, though that understanding may be a desirable (if uncomfortable) preliminary. We trust we may at all events do something towards clearing the ground. It is necessary to translate theories into practice; to leave the negative side of things and be occupied with the positive.

We do well to start with the clear and definite assurance that it is the desire of God that His children should grow in grace and in knowledge. Grace is the principle which characterizes God's dealings with man to-day: it is the love and kindness of God our Saviour made known by His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. (Titus ii. 11; iii. 4-7; John i. 7). God, who has purposed our blessing and whose heart of love has been fully declared, desires those who have been loved and redeemed, and who will be sharers of Christ's glory by and by, should even now become like their risen Lord and Head.

Let us say here that growth in grace and growth in knowledge are not the same thing,

though growth in knowledge and growth in grace and in holiness should be parallel and continuous. Love is greater than intelligence, though true love is supremely intelligent. One would, however, expect growth in grace to be accompanied by increase of spiritual gift, though that does not follow necessarily.

What are the conditions most favourable to growth in grace? Our observation of nature will help us here. No plant, and certainly no sentient being, can flourish without proper nourishment and air; that we all know. Let us get into the sunshine, then, if we would grow—the sunshine of the love and favour of God. “Keep yourselves in the love of God;” and let His peace keep (garrison) your hearts.

Not only should the whole “atmosphere” of the believer’s life be sweet and pure; there should be an observance of certain simple but well-defined “rules of health.”

The apostle Peter who, in almost the closing sentence of his second epistle, exhorts the saints to whom he is writing to grow in grace, gives us help as to one of the things which will promote such growth. In his first epistle (ii. 2) he writes: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere [pure, true] milk of the Word, *that ye may grow thereby.*” First, then, comes

THE DAILY READING OF THE WORD.

There can be no growth apart from the daily reading of the Word of God, and—what is equally important—meditation upon what is read.

If we would be like our Lord, we must do as He did. The Lord Jesus went to Nazareth, “where He had been brought up: and *as His*

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custom was, He went into the synagogue . . . and *stood up for to read.*" The Lord Jesus was no doubt following the practice of His early years at Nazareth. If the reading of the Holy Scriptures was customary and habitual with Him, how desirable and necessary is it that His professed followers should observe the same custom and cultivate the same habit. We may be sure that with Him this was no perfunctory "reading a chapter or so;" it was all part of His life as the obedient and dependent One. He, more than any other, could with perfect truth say: "I esteem the words of Thy mouth more than my necessary food."

There are two divinely appointed means of keeping our souls in touch with heaven. We have referred to one—the Word of God. The other is

PRAYER.

We have noticed Luke's references to the *custom* of the Lord Jesus in regard to the reading of the Scriptures. It is equally interesting to note what the Evangelist says as to his Lord's custom in the matter of prayer, for those who love Him will desire to follow Him in this matter also. "He came out, and went, *as He was wont*, to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place, He . . . kneeled down and prayed" (Luke xxii. 39-41). On fifteen occasions do the inspired writers of the Gospels give us glimpses of our Lord at prayer; and it is important to observe that in Luke, the Gospel which, while guarding His Deity, sets forth the Son of God in the perfection of His manhood, He is seen praying no fewer than seven times.

It has been well said that "prayer is the Christian's vital breath." Though *in* the world, he is not *of* it; and if he would grow in grace he must be much in prayer. He will have, not only set seasons and occasions for prayer, but he will cultivate reverent intimacy with His Lord, which even the stress and turmoil of life and labour in a hostile world will not disturb. Daniel prayed—indeed, he "kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed, and gave thanks before his God."

Let us not be satisfied with "saying a prayer" morning and evening.

"I need Thy presence every passing hour."

Let us cultivate a state of habitual communion, so that praise and worship, prayer and intercession, will each be the spontaneous outcome of a life of close and continuing fellowship. "As your mind is in fellowship with His mind you will think 'God's thoughts after Him' and will sympathize with Him in all His interests. Your heart will thus be enlarged to pray for His glory."

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all the distant and the near
Stand forth in sunny outline, brave and clear!
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong!
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage are with Thee?"

The spiritual life, if it is healthy and vigorous, will not be complete without

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WITNESS AND WORK.

There should be the "working out" in daily life and practice of that which has been "wrought in" by the Spirit of God. The believer who is nourished by "the pure milk of the Word" and is able to assimilate more solid food (see 1 Cor. iii. 1-2), and who is, by communion, breathing the invigorating air of heaven, will desire to serve His Lord, whose companionship he is privileged to enjoy day by day.

It is probably true that there have been cases of babes in Christ "trying to run before they can walk;" it is also certain that there are many cases of under-nourishment and spiritual anæmia. But it is equally true that there are cases of "over-feeding" and slothfulness among the people of God to-day. "Ye are My witnesses," said the risen Lord to His disciples. "Ye shall receive power . . . and ye shall be witnesses unto Me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth," He enjoined at the moment of being parted from them, with which command He coupled the promise: "I am with you alway."

Do we, or do we not, consider His command binding on us to-day? Or do we doubt His promise?

Let there be no mistake. "Inflow" without "out-go" will produce spiritual stagnation. "Dam a spring and it will become a frog-pond." The reality of the believer's profession and spiritual life will be tested by service and perhaps by suffering. Let the service be active and whole-hearted, and the suffering, when it comes, be endured with patience and cheerfulness.

P. T. S.

DO HYMNS HELP ?

MORE than a hundred years have passed since a young lad in England, who belonged to a pious family, was to find God by strange means. He had been the child of many prayers, but to all the entreaties of his pious mother, he answered by inwardly resolving not to become a Christian.

In the good providence of God, however, it happened to his mother and himself to be on a visit to Ireland, and on the Lord's Day they went to a place where a faithful man was that day very earnest in his sermon; he put the question to the unsaved present, whether they would give themselves to Christ or remain rebels? Every time the preacher repeated the question, the young man said in his own heart, "No, I will not yield, I will not yield." His heart was hardened against God. And at the close of the sermon it seemed to be harder than ever it had been. But when the sermon was finished the preacher gave out a hymn beginning :

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched
Weak and wounded, sick and sore.
Jesus, ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power."

And what the sermon could not do, the singing of the hymn did. It broke the hard, unyielding heart of that young man. His pride, his hardness of heart gave way. And he lived to be an honoured preacher of the gospel and the writer of a hymn that has shown the way to God to thousands of souls: Augustus Toplady, the author of:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me.
Let me hide myself in Thee."

Selected.

COMMUNION.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—The question raised by Mr. McNair on the important subject of “Communion” is one that cannot be passed over lightly, for it involves so much in the soul history of a child of God. It should be the normal condition of all who have hearkened to the voice of His Word and obeyed His call.

The five words within the compass of which I wish to keep are: Listening, Looking, Leaving, Leaning, Loving. They may be progressive; or they may be simultaneous.

Perhaps it is “the disciple whom Jesus loved” who will help us most on such a happy theme, for did he not say in the epistle of communion or fellowship, “that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes”? (1 John i. 1). We listened and we looked, and as we looked we listened. *Looking* and *listening* should become a spiritual habit, the continued attitude of the obedient child to its loving Father. “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” It is capable of growth and development, doubtless by prayer and meditation in the Word and the company of those who call upon His Name.

We shall want to be “with Him.” A little girl once said, when asked by her father what she wanted: “I want you, father.” That involves “*Leaving*.” “And the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus . . . and abode with Him that day” (John i. 35, 39). “Straightway they left . . . and followed Him” (Mark i. 18). Shall we fill in what we have left?

Leaning. There was at the table "leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of His disciples whom Jesus loved." (John xiii. 23). Before he reached the bosom he had passed by way of the bason. He had heard those words: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" (John xiii. 8).

Preparation, Partnership, Participation: Communion means all this and much beside, but we reach its height and depth, its length and breadth, when, by the Holy Spirit, we dwell in the bosom of eternal love, and say with John, "We love Him because He first loved us."

Communion is the life of the soul, when alone with Him "in the holy mount," or passing through the vale of tears, or even among the many coming and going.

"Walk in the light, so shalt thou know
That fellowship of love
His Spirit only can bestow,
Who reigns in light above."

T. G. COUCHMAN.

If Mr. McNair's question as to *how* we may live closer to our Lord could be answered in a single sentence, how many would rejoice! If only there were some magic elixir that would infallibly bring about the desired result, how eagerly it would be swallowed!

But while in reality the matter is a very simple one, there is no prescription that can be given to all and sundry which will achieve for them that which can only be enjoyed when *the heart* is powerfully affected.

To have communion with a person it is necessary to *converse* with that person at close range. We can hardly commune with anybody over the telephone, or even by means of a letter. But a heart to heart talk between two persons who find a theme in common soon leads to communion.

The following paper, therefore, we deem to be a direct contribution to the present discussion, and we bespeak for it the earnest consideration of our readers.

CONVERSATIONS WITH CHRIST.

IF I were asked what is the thing which the devil, the world and the flesh try hardest to prevent Christians from getting, I should reply, Conversations with Christ. I say this from my own experience, and from observations of all the Christians I have ever known. A quiet, unhurried speaking to the Lord Jesus alone and hearing His replies—this is what every Christian needs every day, and what many get only once a month, or more seldom still, or never.

WHEN DID YOU LAST SO TALK WITH CHRIST? Stop and answer this question to yourself before you read on.

It is so easy to go to meetings, and listen to addresses. It is so easy to sing to Him, or to pray to Him with others, or to think that we are doing so because we feel refreshed and helped by it. But what if it should turn out that it was a mistake of ours to imagine that

we were actually conversing personally with Him at those times; and that we were really only talking or singing for other people and ourselves to hear! I tremble for people who only pray with other Christians present. Meetings are very blessed helps, but they are not necessarily conversations with Christ; nor is preaching, or teaching, or working for Him. You may be busy all day long about your Lord's matters; you may give time and money and thought to Him, and yet you may never converse with Him. And the danger is that if you do not converse alone with Him each day, you will certainly get thoroughly wrong altogether, and that when you and He meet you will see all your work crumble away and yourself left naked,—suddenly wakened up to the fact that you and your Saviour are strangers to each other. It will be a horrible surprise to you that nothing should remain of all the work on which you spent your life, the solemn words, “without Me ye can do nothing,” having been forgotten by you.

He meant that you should have talked to Him continually about everything you did, and everything you cared about; and should have been always conscious of His sympathy and oversight and working. But, instead of that, you talked only to men and women, and made shift with their sympathy and advice and help.

He meant you to have asked His counsel about that money trouble. He would have arranged it all; but you only asked your lawyer, and it turned out badly.

He meant you to have told Him your anxieties about your son, and He would have ended

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them; but you only consulted your friend, and matters got worse and worse.

He meant you to have asked Him for light about that doctrine which you could not understand; but you went to books to get it explained, and you became more uncertain than before. He would have satisfied you.

He meant you to have committed to Him that painful illness, and He would have been your Physician; but you trusted your family doctor only and got no relief.

He meant you to have asked Him how much money you were to give away; but you settled that yourself, and settled it wrong.

He would have been your counsellor about the profession you chose, the situation you accepted, the servant you engaged, the books you read, the friendships you formed; but you chose other counsellors, or did after your own choosing, and all has been failure.

May the Holy Spirit strike the scales from your eyes now, and may you arise from your enchantment and let Christ be your personal Friend and Counsellor.

E. CLIFFORD.

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CLAPHAM.—You cannot understand how it is that “men of eminent sanctity” can be so hard and bitter towards “those who do not see eye to eye with them, yet truly love the Lord.” It is a real mystery, we admit. While we have no wish to call in question the “eminent sanctity” of the hard and bitter individuals, we must remember that the eye of Christ sees what our eyes do not.

To Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire (Rev. i. 14), the "eminent sanctity" may well appear to be something else! Still, the mystery remains. How could a man, for instance, like Bernard, the writer of that exquisite hymn "Jesus, the very thought of Thee," endorse (as he undoubtedly did) the cruel persecution of the Waldenses, those shining saints of the dark ages, all because they would not conform to the ritual of Rome or acknowledge the decrees of the Pope as binding? If the heart of man sets anything on a pinnacle it will not tolerate non-acquiescence on the part of those who may even be amongst the most godly. The spirit of Nebuchadnezzar and his fury live on, and often show themselves where least expected. The answer to this must not be self-assertion and wrangling, but "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Peter iii. 4), with a readiness to suffer and be trampled under foot for Christ's Name's sake. Great is the reward in heaven that awaits those who thus endure.

WEST NORWOOD.—Have you not mis-read the passage about which you write us? 2 Timothy ii. 22 says nothing about "possessing pure hearts," but speaks of "calling on the Lord *out of a pure heart*," by which we understand simplicity of aim, singleness of purpose, sincerity. Timothy was to look for those who bore this mark. They would be easily discernible. It was not, however, for a *company* of such that he was bidden to seek, but for individual Christians. We could give you the names of some, living very near to you, but would prefer to furnish them to you privately, if you would favour us with your address.

H. P. B.

TALKING TO OURSELVES.

IT is not always a sign of advancing age for one to talk to himself. There is a sense in which it is strength. It becomes a pressing obligation sometimes. Just as we often feel that we must go aside with a friend and have a frank talk with him about his interests, so there come times when we should feel the same duty to ourselves, and hence take ourselves aside for a frank conversation concerning our interests.

I find that I have no particular interest in the salvation of people. It does not stir my heart to any very conscious anxiety. I realize in my better moments that this does not please Him who died for the salvation of men. So I need to sit down with myself and tell myself how recreant I am to be so indifferent to that for which Christ gave Himself. I need to talk over this matter with myself until I feel awakened a desire to show more concern in this important matter.

I find myself readily disposed to speak ill of people, more ready to condemn than commend, eager sometimes to point out a flaw in some lives. In my sober moments I realize that is not a character of big dimensions. I need to take myself aside for a few moments and talk to myself about this weakness, for that is what it is, and talk about it until I pledge myself and my Lord, that I will be charitable before I am censorious.

In my reflections of the day I come to feel that I am too sensitive, easily taking offence when none is meant and certainly when none should be felt. I am in constant worry about the way people treat me. I need to take myself off into some quiet spot and tell myself a few things which I should know : that sensitive people lose much happiness in service, that my Lord never allowed criticism to diminish His zeal or hinder Him from duty. I must tell myself that if ever I do His service I must bear some things. I must thus confer with myself until I become more indifferent to what people say when I know I am trying to do right.

This with some of us is the first duty of life. Some of us are never going to be very happy or useful until we have had a frank talk with ourselves.

J. A. MAXWELL.

A MAN OF "THE MASSES."

NOT long ago a friend of mine was travelling by train in the Midlands. As the train steamed into a station there was a wild rush for seats by the men from neighbouring pits and steel works who were waiting on the platform, for it was evening, and labour had ceased for the day. In a very few seconds the compartment was crowded with grimy workers, some of whom had to stand.

Rising from his comfortable seat in the corner, my friend invited one of the standing men to

take his place, accompanying his offer with the remark, "You are tired after your day's work, while I have been sitting down most of the day, and it will do me good to stand."

After a little hesitation on the part of the working-man, the places were exchanged. As the train proceeded on its way, my friend was conscious of being under a close scrutiny from the man to whom he had given his seat. Then the latter spoke.

"By the looks of you," he remarked, "you might be a preacher."

"I might," came the brief reply.

"And if you were near to me, I would come and hear you preach," continued the man, in this way conveying his appreciation of the kindness shown to him, and implying that one who could thus act must have something to say that was worth listening to.

This was too good an opening to let slip, and my friend at once seized it. "You can't come to hear me preach," he observed, "for I live too far away from here, but I can preach you a sermon just where you are."

Then, drawing from his pocket a little Testament, he spoke briefly of the life and death of Christ, dwelling upon the sacrifice on the Cross with a pathos that went to the heart of his hearer.

"Is that true, mister?" asked the latter, with something like a break in his voice, and being assured that it was all absolutely true, and that the Son of God had actually suffered and died for the world's sins, tears streamed down his face, making little white channel-ways on the grimy countenance. "I never heard that before,"

sobbed the man, into whose darkened soul the light from Calvary was streaming for the first time.

At the next station many of the workers left the train, this one among them, and my friend having used his opportunity to advantage, the man who had heard of the love of Christ for the first time stepped out a new creature in Christ Jesus. I am told that he is going on well in the Christian life.

This little story points clearly to the fact that shipbuilding yards, factories, workshops of every kind, are full of men to whom Christianity seems too remote for practical every-day use. Many of them know nothing about it; they have not been reared in Christian homes, and the claims of religion make no appeal to them. Others may possess a passing acquaintance with Christianity, but they have never come into touch with it, and as it seems to offer no immediate remedy for present-day difficulties they turn elsewhere for the way that leads to temporal betterment.

And the tragedy is that, for the most part, we leave such men alone! While the political agitator, the communist demagogue and the infidel blasphemer make these men the target of their propagandist zeal, and at the best have nothing but husks to offer them, Christians with their rich and glorious message of full salvation both for time and eternity too often pass them by on the other side.

ADAPTED.

"Young man, what is the best investment you can make with the capital of your life?"

DR. PIERSON.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

IV.

Eternal Life.

OF those who in this spiritual sense sailed with Paul, no one was dearer to him than the young preacher Timothy ; and to him he writes, "Lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. vi. 12). The inspired exhortation is for us likewise ; but if we would lay hold on life eternal, it is important that we understand the teaching of Scripture regarding it.

John is, properly speaking, the apostle of eternal life. He it is who fully unfolds it ; but it is Paul who ever presses it as a practical thing.

The Gospel of John presents the Lord Jesus as the Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested here for a time on earth. The first Epistle presents that same life now manifested in the children of God. In both Gospel and Epistle, again and again it is insisted on that this everlasting life is the present portion of all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He gives eternal life to all His sheep, and assures us that they shall never perish. Indeed, they could not, or the life would not be eternal, but simply probationary.

Let there be any doubt or difficulty as to this in the Christian's mind, and true, unselfish service for the Lord Jesus Christ there can scarcely be. If I have any lingering fear of

being possibly lost at last ; or if I suppose that I maintain my salvation by my faithfulness genuine faithfulness there cannot be, for I shall ever have before me—not purely the glory of Christ—but the selfish thought of making my own soul secure.

But all this is rebuked wherever life eternal is taught in Scripture. In the very nature of things a life that is eternal cannot come to an end. And every believer has this life—a life that has no beginning and shall have no ending ; for it is the very life of the Son of God.

It is thus we are enabled to apprehend divine things and have fellowship with divine Persons. “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3).

But in addition to the doctrine of the present possession of eternal life, the Word of God presents that life as a goal and as an experience subjectively apprehended and enjoyed. This is Paul’s special line. He who reads only Paul on this subject might lose sight of the truth we have just been considering ; but there is no need so to do. John’s truth comes first. Then that committed to Paul follows. Eternal life is ours now, but it is also our hope. “In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world (or, the ages) began” (Titus i. 2).

This is the Christian’s goal. He now has eternal life. He looks on with eager, glad

expectancy to the time when, in the fullest possible sense, he will enter into life, and will be in the scene to which eternal life belongs. Now he has eternal life in a decaying body and in a crumbling scene. Then he will possess a body radiant with eternal life, and fully fitted for its display in a "city that hath foundations," and amid scenes that "cannot be shaken."

Take a simple illustration : A child possesses life—natural life—from the moment of birth. But for that child there is a long period of discipline and education ere he really enters into life, fulfilling his chosen vocation. So with the believer. He *has* eternal life ; and yet he daily lives in hope of eternal life ; and when at last earth's discipline is over and the soul's education complete, he goes away "into life eternal" (Matt. xxv. 46).

But Paul's exhortation to Timothy suggests a third application. He is to "lay hold on eternal life." In the same chapter, verses 18, 19, the "rich in this world" are charged "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate ; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life ;" or, as a better rendering has it, "lay hold on the true life," or, "life in reality." The original is quite distinct from the ordinary term for eternal life.

But the one passage throws a clear light upon the other. We lay hold on eternal life as we realize in our souls that we do not

belong to this sphere ; that everything for us is connected with the scene to which we are going. Hence we learn to look very differently upon the things of this life from what we once did. We realize that the true life is life in fellowship with God, and so we are enabled, in the Spirit's power, to use this world without abusing it, walking as Christ walked, who alone fully manifested eternal life in this scene of death. This is, for us, to lay hold on eternal life.

It is most sorrowful to hear people glibly talking of having eternal life and being forever saved, when they are really trying to "make the best of this life" like men of the world who make no profession. If I have eternal life, I am to make it known by living it out, and acting now in the light of the coming day of the unveiling of Jesus Christ.

This was what Paul desired for Timothy, and what he would see in all who sail with the beloved apostle, whose whole life-purpose was expressed in these words : "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Phil. iii. 7, 8), This is to display eternal life in a body of clay, an earthen vessel, while pressing on to the scene to which that life belongs.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

WHAT ABOUT SINS AFTER CONVERSION ?

WE find that this presents a very real difficulty and is a cause of anxiety to not a few. We often hear it said : "I believe in the atoning value of Christ's death, and in the cleansing efficacy of His blood. I quite see that if I trust Him to-day all my sins will be forgiven. But supposing I sin afterwards—what then ? "

We asked such a person recently, "When the Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood, how many sins had you committed ? "

"None," he at once replied.

"So that *ALL* your sins were then future ? "

"Yes."

"This verse says, 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *ALL* sin' (1 John i. 7). That means, surely, *ALL* the sins of *ALL* your life's history, if you believe in Christ."

"That's fine !" he exclaimed, as the light seemed to flash into his soul.

We cannot emphasize too strongly that "*ALL* sin" means "*ALL* sin," and that the moment we trust the Saviour the sin-question is once and for ever settled, never again to be raised against us.

We understand that there are some people who profess to have attained to such a position that they do not sin ; and we have heard of some who have said that they have not sinned

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for several years.

We should like to ask those who live with such persons, and those who work with them, if they could endorse that testimony. 1 John i. 8-10 uses strong language with regard to them, and we are of opinion that the experience of the saintliest men and women confirms the statement of Scripture and refutes that of those who deceive themselves. We quite expect to hear such say: "In 1 John iii. 9, we read, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.'" But we may be quite sure 1 John iii. does not contradict 1 John i. The obvious point is that the person who is "born of God" does not *practise* sin, in contrast to those who are of the devil and who do practise sin. Before conversion sin was the habit of our life. It is so no longer. If a person professes to be converted and practises sin, we must refuse to accept him as a converted person.

Some may remark, "We thought that after conversion we should not sin." True, we *should* not. The Holy Scriptures give no licence for sinning; and we must be merciless in our judgment of ourselves if and when we sin.

"Then," it may be asked, "if we sin, what are we to do? Must we go again for cleansing in the blood of Christ?" No. There is nothing in the Word of God to suggest such a thing. The meaning of 1 John i. 7 is that to

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cleanse is *characteristic* of the blood of Christ. It is not that we require what some call "a fresh application." When we trust the Saviour we learn the cleansing efficacy of His precious blood with reference to *ALL* sin.

What then are we to do? 1 John i. 9 tells us: "Confess." This involves more than merely asking forgiveness. It means that we have judged our sin. What happens? We find that the Lord Jesus Christ as Advocate has been engaged on our behalf, and it only required our confession in order that we might be assured of the Father's forgiveness (1 John ii. 1). Before conversion we had to do with God. After conversion we have to do with Him as Father. While sin interrupts our communion, it cannot affect our relationship. Once a child, always a child.

In conclusion may we be permitted to make two practical observations?

(1) Do not on every occasion of speaking to our Father, at meal times, morning and evening, say: "Pardon our sins and accept us for Christ's sake. Amen." We *have been* pardoned, and we *are* "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6).

What would a father think of a child who never addressed him without saying, "Pardon me for being naughty and accept me"?

(2) When conscious of having sinned, and you are at once aware of it because the delicate link of communion is immediately snapped, do not wait for a favourable opportunity to kneel

down and confess it, but forthwith, no matter where or in what circumstances, confess the sin, get the assurance of forgiveness, and have communion restored.

How our gracious God has taken everything into account, making the most complete provision for us, so that there might be nothing to mar our happiness, our joy in Himself, our delight in His beloved Son, and our testimony for Him in this world !

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

“A VESSEL UNTO HONOUR.”

THERE is an ambition that is a fever in the heart of the one in whom it dwells and a curse to others. The world has ever groaned under the follies and crimes of its rulers, and foremost amongst these crimes has been an evil ambition—one of the chief causes of war. The “covetousness” which is “idolatry” is utterly selfish, for not only does it antagonise the will of God, but is either opposed or indifferent to the good of others.

But there is a true and right ambition. Paul was intensely ambitious, and he bids us “covet earnestly the best gifts.” The great apostle laboured incessantly to be an overcomer, to press on, to be acceptable to Christ, to be useful to men. And many of his utterances are trumpet calls to Christian ambition.

There is one of these in his second letter to Timothy, where he urges his lieutenant to be-

come a vessel unto honour. A vessel to honour is a vehicle for the use of the Spirit of God for spiritual usefulness. To help men's bodies is good ; to teach and train their minds is a higher service, or rather, service in a higher realm. But to minister to their spiritual needs is the highest service of all, although this form of service is not usually appreciated by the world.

The vessels to honour are of all sizes and shapes, and although they are all used for spiritual purposes, that does not mean that the spheres in which they work or the methods by which they are used are all alike. For there are diversities not only of gifts, but also of “administrations” (or spheres of work) and of “operations” (or methods of work).

To be a vessel to honour is within the reach of all. It is not a question of talent, mental brilliance, strength of body or vigour of will. It is a question of quality of spirit.

The believer rejoices that true greatness has been implanted in him, in germ, at the new birth. For true greatness is made up of such things as faith, that lets in the great God ; humility ; magnanimity (or meekness) ; spiritual perception ; obedience ; service. And so true greatness belongs, in varying degrees, to every one of the King's sons and daughters. And if the vessels to honour stand for a “privileged class,” there are no barriers, social, economic or intellectual, to our entering that class. In fact, the King Himself urges us all to become

His aristocracy ; not the aristocracy of rule, but of service ; not of self-aggrandisement, but of helpfulness without meddlesomeness.

The way to become a vessel to honour is indicated in the context of 2 Timothy ii. 21. Indeed, the whole chapter furnishes an answer to the question, “How are we to realize this true ambition of becoming vessels unto honour ?”

Reduced to a sort of summary, we suggest the following :—

We are to maintain sound doctrine (verses 17, 18). “Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine,” Paul urges Timothy in another place. “Hold fast the form of sound words,” that “form of doctrine” or system of truth which the universal history of the Church for 1900 years has proved to be the power of God to salvation and which has been mercifully preserved to us all down those centuries in the Scripture of truth.

There should be, too, ability and honesty in the handling of the Word of God (verse 15). And this is largely a matter of hard work (in study), intellectual honesty, and spiritual perception. And spiritual perception is best got on our knees.

Further, the aspirant after a place amongst the vessels to honour is warned (verses 14, 16, 23), against useless wrangling about matters of mere opinion or whim, of little consequence except to the bigotry or vanity of the wrangler.

And then, in verse 19, the vital importance

of a clean personal life is indicated. Verses 3, 5 and 22 remind us of the need of self-discipline; while verse 4 tells us that we must concentrate on that in which we wish to excel: this means the cutting out of pleasant but unprofitable natural interests.

These injunctions occur in a pastoral epistle and therefore have a special application to those who try to serve the Lord in a public capacity. The principles underlying them, however, are for all believers, whatever their gifts, position, or circumstances.

E. ADAMS.

EFFICIENCY: AN ENQUIRY.

IN previous papers I have asked your readers what their experience has been in the matter of sanctification and communion. I now venture to send a third and last enquiry as to *efficiency* or *spiritual power* in service, such as every true-hearted servant of God desires, but only some experience.

In every department of human endeavour we invariably aim at efficiency, and cannot content ourselves with less. So long as we feel it might have been done better, we are not satisfied with our non-success. May we allow ourselves to assume that the failure to achieve the desired result is less regrettable in spiritual things than in temporal, and that, indeed, "we ought not to have results before us, but Christ"?

The writer has never been able to appreciate the common excuse for inefficiency, that "it

might not be good for us to see results." In every other sort of work "nothing succeeds like success," and any little success in service that has come to one's knowledge from time to time, far from proving an hindrance spiritually, has been found an encouragement to renewed endeavour.

We may recognize three sorts of Christian workers.

(i.) Those who have not been efficient, who have never felt the power of God with their service.

(ii.) Those who have been much used of God in the past, but have lost their efficiency.

(iii.) Those who are proving "the Lord working with them, with signs following" in blessing to those they minister to.

The two latter may help us, as they recall what is most significant in their own experience.

Perhaps all will admit a very intimate relation between power and *prayer*, and between power and *purity*, but there may be other conditions which tell for efficiency, which are more easily overlooked. As to these we shall wait with interest to hear.

Can your readers tell us anything of what is sometimes called "an anointing of the Holy Spirit for service"? Without insisting on the phrase, one would be interested to know if the great preachers who have used it, men like D. L. Moody and R. A. Torrey, have reported a mere illusion, or a reality of Christian life. Dr. Torrey is especially explicit and graphic in describing his own experience of what ministry of the Word meant to him before and after that "anointing." We should learn from Scripture

and we should learn from facts, and since the facts of personal experience cannot be altered, we may perhaps, in some cases, need to modify our deductions from Scripture to account for them.

The literature on this subject is rather abundant. What books have your readers found most helpful? What lessons may we get from such books as Moody's *Power from on High*, Gordon's *Quiet Talks on Power*, and the *Biography of Charles Finney*, the preacher through whom the power of God wrought more notably, perhaps, than through any other from his day till now?

Of course we shall not forget that one reason for failure is the natural indifference of the unsaved to their spiritual interests. "He could not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief." If we were sure that there were no other explanation of our non-success, we should not need to enquire any further. But experience has proved that it is not the only reason. Charles Finney would visit the wickedest places, where the gospel had been rejected for years, and at his first address sinners would be struck down in scores by the power of God, and cry for mercy until the light of the gospel beamed in their souls. What had he that other preachers lacked?

S. E. MCNAIR.

STIR up the unused, inactive gifts that are in you; you are responsible for these. The things that **you** can do, or can learn to do, are the things Christ is calling you to do, and the things He will require at your hands when He comes again.

WHERE DOES THE DUST COME FROM?

I SWEPT and dusted this room this morning, and now you can write your name on the table," says the careful housekeeper, whose "work is never done."

And it is wonderful how the dust imperceptibly settles upon everything. Constant vigilance, unflagging industry, can alone keep the furniture bright and shining.

"Must I then be always working and repeating the same monotonous toil day after day?" asks the daughter impatiently.

"Yes, my dear, as long as we live in a world where dust is, we must be ever on the alert."

Some careful housekeepers take pride in their spotless furniture, but it is to be feared they know little of keeping the dust of this world from the "tables of the heart."

For it is a world where dust is found everywhere, because disintegration is the universal rule. The hardest rock, the loftiest mountains, are gradually crumbling into tiny particles which float everywhere. And these are the witness of death—decay, which is everywhere present.

Dust thus speaks of death, the opposite of life, and it tells of separation from the source of all life, love and blessing. It speaks of the things of this world, in contrast with the things of God.

For dust then to settle upon us means for the heart to be engrossed with the things that are not "really life," and which hinder communion with our blessed Lord. We need not say how easy this is.

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But how can it be avoided? We must give the mother's answer to her daughter—as long as we are in the world, we shall find things interfering with our communion. The things that float in through every avenue to the heart must be watched and judged. “Let us lay aside every weight.” To-day we have judged and put from us that worldly walk, that selfishness, the hard unforgiving spirit. If these had been allowed to remain they would quickly have marred the “joy of the Lord” in our hearts. So we must take the “dust-cloth” of self-judgment, and remove those disfiguring blemishes.

If it be said, “It is only a little thing,” “it makes very little difference” etc., we must remember that it mars communion and hinders spiritual joy and growth. What only *our* eye can detect will soon be manifest to all, if allowed to accumulate and clog the spiritual life.

Did you ever meet a Christian in communion with the Lord? How bright the soul! What love and peace are manifest! How easy and how pleasant to engage in conversation about the things of Christ! How hard on the other hand if the soul is out of communion! Talk about the weather, about politics, about frivolity, and there is freedom. But let the precious Name of the Lord Jesus be mentioned, and there is a hush. What is the cause? *Dust!* And until that dust is removed by hearty confession and turning to the Lord, our souls will be like an unsightly room all covered over with dust. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word.” (Psa. cxix. 9.)

S. RIDOUT.

DISHONEST DOUBT.

IF learned scientific men demonstrated a natural truth by an experiment, and the natural truth was called in question by a doubter, and the scientists then invited the doubter to put the experiment to a thorough test and he refused, such a man would rightly be termed *dishonest*. To deny God's Word without putting it to an honest test is not only dishonourable, but wicked. God says, "Prove Me."

The words of the Lord Jesus are as true now as when He spoke them. For He is TRUTH, (John xiv. 6). "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii. 17).

No one ever acted absolutely upon this direction but proved that God's Word is true and that all His promises are faithfully kept. Hence it becomes apparent that God's Word contains within itself the evidence that it is true.

The real test appears when a man acknowledges himself to be such a sinner as God describes him to be, and thereupon comes with a truly thirsty soul to the Lord Jesus for salvation. Such are never sent away unsatisfied. The man who has trusted his soul to the Lord Jesus knows that if he can trust Him for that which is greatest, he can also trust His Word on all other matters. This is being made *wise* unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. iii. 15), and the man who has received this salvation, being made *wise*, will seek to walk according to God's Word, "with meekness of wisdom" (Jas. iii. 13). P. I. BEEMAN.

IMPEDED PROGRESS.

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?” (Galatians v. 7).

THESE words were sadly true of the Galatian believers. They *may* be true of my reader also.

Perhaps it will be helpful to consider this verse under three headings. And as we dwell upon them may God speak to our hearts, and help us to make any adjustment that may be necessary in our walk and conduct.

(I) THE CALAMITY.

The words “*Ye did run well*” imply that these believers had not always been in the condition in which the Apostle found them when he wrote this letter. They had commenced the Christian life well; they could not have commenced better. During this short period of good running they were rejoicing in two great fundamental truths, the work of Christ on the cross as their only ground of acceptance before God, and the reception of the Holy Spirit by the hearing of faith (ch. iii. 1-3). This is how they began to live the life that is life indeed, and consequently they were rejoicing in those heavenly and eternal blessings which were their spiritual birthright. They were standing fast in the liberty where-with Christ had liberated them; they were walking in the Spirit, living in the Spirit, willing to be led by Him, and manifesting His

beautiful graces. The flesh was in its right place, the place of subservience, and the spiritual life was dominant.

But a sad calamity had overtaken these believers, and the Apostle refers to this in words which are unmistakable. "*O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you (or 'fascinated you with false representations') before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, ('graphically presented') crucified among you? 'Where is then the blessedness ye spake of?' 'Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?'*"

All these interrogations show that something very serious had taken place. What had really happened? Unhappily they had failed to continue as they had begun. Instead of continuing to recognize that Christ's sacrificial work was sufficient, they had gone back to the law with its awful bondage. Like Lazarus when he came out of the tomb, they were bound hand and foot with grave clothes. Instead of continuing to rejoice in the fact that they had received the Holy Spirit on the principle of faith, and seeking to live accordingly, they were endeavouring to perfect themselves by the flesh. This is what Paul means when he says in ch. v. 4, "Ye are fallen from grace." He does not imply that they were lost, because that was impossible if they belonged to Christ. They had backslidden from grace to law, from faith to works. No longer were they living a Spirit-controlled life; no

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longer was the flesh in its right place ; no longer was the spiritual life dominant. On the contrary, they were devouring one another ; each one was apparently doing his utmost to consume the spiritual vitality of his fellow-believer. It is difficult to conceive a more pitiable condition than that into which these Galatian believers had degenerated.

(2) THE CAUSE.

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.”

This is exactly what happened. Some men had surreptitiously crept in and sowed tares among the wheat, and with the baneful influence of their false teaching had succeeded in luring these Galatian believers from the simplicity that is in Christ. They had troubled the calm waters, not as in the case of Bethesda's pool for the purpose of healing and blessing, but for the propagation of evil doctrine. Observe the word Paul uses : *“Who did hinder you ?”* The Apostle gives these men their correct designation when he refers to them as *“troublers.”* (See ch. i. 7 ; v. 10-12). May God in His mercy save us from becoming a prey to the false teachings which abound on every hand, and grant us grace to hold fast His faithful Word with all the tenacity of which we are capable.

But there are other ways in which our running may be impeded, and I want to alter the personal interrogative pronoun "Who?" to the impersonal "What?" There is the love of money, as in the case of Jehoshaphat. He began well by walking in the first ways of David his father, and by seeking the Lord God, and walking in His commandments. Therefore the Lord blessed Jehoshaphat, and he had riches and honour in abundance. But he foolishly trusted in his riches and joined affinity with Ahab, the enemy of the Lord, at the awful expense of his spiritual advancement.

The love of the world may hinder our running, as in the case of Demas. He ran well for a time, but gradually became altogether occupied with the things of time and sense, so that when Paul wrote his last letter to Timothy he had to say, "*Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present age.*"

Love of the old life may hinder our progress as in the case of Simon, the sorcerer, who appears to have begun well. He believed the things which Philip spake, was baptized, and continued with God's servant for some time. But one day he saw that the Holy Spirit was granted by the laying on of the Apostles' hands, when the old desire overcame him, so that Peter had to say, "*Thy money perish with thee.*"

Self-interest may hinder our running, as in the case of the Corinthians. They ran well for a time; they were enriched with every

spiritual enrichment ; they came behind in no gift, waiting for Christ from heaven, but self-interest intruded, and one thing followed another until they were actually divided among themselves, and lost whatever spiritual power and testimony they had.

I wonder if this appeals to *you*, my reader. You may remember when you loved the Lord intensely ; when you rejoiced in His Word ; when you were keenly interested in His service. But maybe that love has declined ; that joy has abated ; that keenness has lost its edge. "*What did hinder you ?*"

(3) THE CURE.

We have seen the Calamity and the Cause. What is the Cure ? Surely it is nothing more or less than *confession and retraction*. Confess the whole thing to God unreservedly, and then retrace your steps. Return to the point where you went astray. Recognize afresh that the sacrifice of Christ is all-sufficient, and is your only ground of acceptance before God. Remember that the Holy Spirit is indwelling you, and is willing and waiting to lead you into all truth as a student, to bless you as a saint, to guide you as a pilgrim, and to use you as a servant. Get into touch with your living Saviour. Renounce your confidence in the flesh with its insidious desires inwardly, and its abominable manifestations outwardly. Let the love of Christ fill your heart and permeate every avenue of your being.

In conclusion I quote two passages which are of superlative importance in this connection. The first is John xx. 4, "*So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.*" The second is Matt. xxviii. 8. "*And they departed from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word.*"

In the first passage we see two brethren running, *but in the wrong direction*. They were running *to* the sepulchre. What did they find on their arrival? *Grave clothes*. They did not find the Lord there, because He was risen. They found nothing but grave clothes.

In the second passage we see two sisters running, *but in the right direction*, running well, notwithstanding their natural disadvantages, running *from* the sepulchre to convey the glorious news that the Lord was risen from the dead. Beloved fellow-believer, don't run toward the sepulchre, because if you do, you will find a sign-post pointing to "grave clothes, law, bondage." Run in the opposite direction, and you will discover a more beautiful sign-post bearing the words, "To Christ risen, and you risen with Him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Him." And as we are thus occupied with our unseen Lord, we shall rejoice in the liberty wherewith He hath freed us. We shall know the supreme joy of walking, living, being led by, and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, to the eternal glory of God.

E. BARKER.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

V.

Acceptance.

IT is a precious truth that God accepts every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, not according to any real or fancied goodness in himself but according to the Father's estimate of His beloved Son.

I remember well a striking illustration of the power of this in practical life, which I saw several years ago. A dear coloured woman, who had herself known the Lord from her girlhood, but had erred in marrying an unsaved man, asked the prayers of a little company of Christians one night for her husband who had become a depraved drunkard and gambler. In wondrous mercy, while we prayed, God heard and answered ; for into our meeting came Alex. Beck himself, and cried : " Friends, I want to find my wife's God ! I was gambling and drinking in a saloon on S—— Street (it was in Los Angeles, California), and twenty minutes ago it seemed to me a voice cried in my soul : ' Alex. Beck, you must be saved to-night or damned for ever ! ' I threw down the cards in fear, and rose from the chair and fled from the place. Tell me how I may be saved ! " It was a solemn moment for us all, thus to see God's power so manifest. We pointed the anxious, trembling man to the Cross, and, perhaps an hour later, he was

rejoicing in God's salvation, and husband and wife were one in Christ.

A few evenings afterward I heard him give his first public testimony. These were substantially his words : " My friends, I want you all to look at me. I know I ain't a pretty sight to look on. I'm just a great big black, ugly man, but in God's sight I'm altogether lovely, for I'm all dressed up in Jesus ! "

He had been truly taught of the Spirit. For this is none other than Paul's doctrine of acceptance, " He hath made us accepted in the Beloved " (Eph. i. 6). Once, all our guilt and sin were imputed to Christ when He hung upon the cross as our Substitute. Now we appear before God's face in all His perfections. " God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him " (2 Cor. v. 21). Carefully observe :—It is not, as theologians sometimes put it, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us. Scripture never so speaks. It is this : that God reckons us, looks upon us, as righteous, because of the work His Son has accomplished and of the new place in which we now stand before Him ; that is, in Christ, perfect and complete in God's sight.

And as so accepted, we are as dear to God as is our blessed Lord Himself, who, when He prayed to the Father, said, " I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and *hast loved them, as Thou*

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hast loved Me" (John xvii. 23). Could language be clearer, or words stronger, to declare the unbounded love of the Father for all who are accepted in His Son? Well may the happy Christian sing with chastened joy:

So dear, so very dear to God,
I could not dearer be;
The love wherewith He loves His Son,
Such is His love to me.

And being thus brought so near to God in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, our security naturally follows. We are in Him, and, consequently, as safe from judgment as He is. He died in our stead, and faith reckons His death as our death. Now He lives for ever beyond the reach of death and judgment. And in Him we are accepted! If He falls (far be the thought!) then do we also fall; but He has said, "Because I live ye shall live also." We have died out of the old relationship, in which we had part by nature, but we have now been raised with Christ and our life is hid with Christ in God. Ponder carefully Colossians iii. 1-4.

Already God sees us as a heavenly company, for Christ is in glory as our representative. So we are told: "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the

exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 4-7). Thus our destiny is for ever settled. Our past, present, and future we know, on the authority of God's Word. Once dead in sins, we are now seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and for all eternity to be to the praise of His glory as an exhibition of the power of His grace!

And it is well to remember that a true Christian life springs from a recognition of our acceptance. So the apostle adds, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (ver. 10). He who has been thus taken into favour in the Beloved is called to show by a holy, blameless life his appreciation of the grace bestowed upon him, and to manifest Christ in His walk and conversation.

The same truth is put before us in the chapter already noticed in Colossians. He whose life is hid with Christ in God is called upon to put off all that belonged to him as a man in the flesh, and to put on the new ways of the man in Christ.

But let it never be forgotten—no merit attaches to the believer because of his godliness and devotedness. He needs none. He is already accepted in the Beloved, and nothing can be added to this. No loving obedience he can render can make him one whit dearer to the heart of God.

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But it should now be the object of his life to be well-pleasing to Him in whom he is accepted. This is what Paul means when he writes : "We labour that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him" (2 Cor. v. 9).

All believers are accepted *in* Him, and this for eternity. Henceforth it should be the object of our souls so to live that we may daily be accepted *of* Him, or well-pleasing to Him. This is to walk worthy of our high and holy calling.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

WHY DID CHRIST COME ?

The last address given by the late Sir James Bird, Clerk to the London County Council.

Sir James Bird's last address was given to the Bible Class of *The Crusaders*, at Crouch End, on Sunday afternoon, February 8th, 1925. It was listened to with rapt attention by about forty boys and young men. The message seemed to be an unusually powerful one, though delivered in quite a homely and conversational style, which always appeals to "Crusaders." We have reason to believe that some received deep impressions and definite spiritual help, not only from the address, but also by personal conversation with the speaker at the close.

The points of the address were the more impressive by being illustrated by events in Sir James' own school life, and by more recent experiences in his private life and official career.

Little did we realize that we were listening to his last address. Two hours afterwards he was taken seriously ill, and on the following Thursday passed into the presence of the One he had served so faithfully. We pray that this last message of his may live in the memory of every

member of the class, and prove to be as the voice of God leading to a full surrender to the One who thus called them so loudly.

“WE KNOW THAT THE SON OF GOD IS COME.” (1 John v. 20).

THE glorious fact that God has made Himself known in Christ was first pointed out, so that we can say with the apostle, “we know.” The word “know,” we were reminded, appears very frequently in the Scriptures, particularly in John’s writings. God wants us to “know.”

After receiving the truth that the Son of God came to the earth, the next thing is to know *why* He came. Sir James said he would give us four reasons for this.

I. “LO, I COME TO DO THY WILL, O GOD.” (Hebrews x. 7).

Members of the class who had failed to bring their Bibles were exhorted not to be like a plumber who came to a house to do some work, and then said that he must go back to fetch his tools! It was a timely reminder, which we trust will have the effect of making us more thoughtful about bringing our “swords.”

Referring to the first reason for Christ’s having come, we were told that to do the will of God is impossible till we had received the Lord Jesus as Saviour, although it was the only object in life worthy of our whole-hearted devotion.

Here came the story of one Kennedy, a strapping young fellow of six feet four. A game was being played, and it fell to him to answer a question taken haphazard out of a hat. The question was “What is your object in life?”

His reply was something like this: "At one time I should have said that my object in life was to be famous, to succeed, and to make money. But on a certain day, some time ago, a great change took place, and now my great aim in life is to do the will of God and to serve my Lord and Saviour." Sir James told us that he was sitting next to his friend Kennedy, and that his manly declaration came with great force to the rest of the company.

2. "HE APPEARED TO PUT AWAY SIN BY THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF." (Hebrews ix. 26).

We were reminded how great was the sacrifice, the price which Christ paid for our redemption. Well might Paul say, "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God."

Here another incident was narrated, which greatly interested us. When Sir James was a youth of seventeen he bought a twopenny exercise book and wrote his favourite text at the top of the first page, followed by his birthday and the date of his conversion, finishing the page by signing his name. Then he asked a number of his friends to do the same, and it gave him great pleasure to find many of them willing and able to do it. He did not tell us the text he wrote himself,—we should like to have known this,—but one of his friends wrote, "Redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ," and Sir James appealed to us as to whether each one could truly sign his name to that. The book, he said, though it only cost twopence, was one of his most treasured possessions. Some of the signatories have "fallen asleep"; one or two are in the foreign mission field, and

the majority remain; several had become eminent men in various walks of life, and all had remained true to their Lord.

3. "HE WAS MANIFESTED TO TAKE AWAY OUR SINS." (1 John iii. 5).

The absolute necessity of our sins being taken away, if we are to be saved, and to be faithful disciples of Christ, was urged, and the fact that Christ came specially to do this wonderful work by His death for us on Calvary.

4. "I AM COME THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE ; AND THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY." (John x. 10).

The Saviour came, not only that our sins may be taken away, but to give us *eternal life*, and He says, as it were, "I want you to have this now, and abundantly." All were lovingly urged to see that they had received this wonderful gift, and not to allow anything to interfere with their acceptance of it. While it is not to be denied that the world affords certain pleasures, they are only "for a season," and cannot be compared with what the Lord Jesus gives, "pleasures for evermore."

Sir James said he had proved this, and told us of a K.C.B., who recently called to see him at his office, and during conversation exclaimed, "Do you know, I really cannot understand you!" When asked the reason for this strange remark, he replied, "Why, because you are always so happy!" The opportunity of telling his visitor of the only source of all true peace and lasting happiness was not lost, and perhaps led to his blessing.

"Some things," said Sir James, "have to be tasted to be known. It certainly is so in these matters of which we are speaking. God grant that each one may respond to the appeal made through the Psalmist, 'O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy is the man that putteth his trust in Him.'"

From Notes by REGINALD K. FRENCH.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DERITEND.—In most of the sad contentions that have occurred amongst Christians there has been wrong on both sides. Yet each has generally managed to make out a very good case against the other. It was probably so in the lamentable disagreement between Paul and Barnabas recorded in Acts xv. 36-40. As Dr. Howson says: "How could Paul consent to take with him a companion who would really prove an embarrassment and a hindrance? Such a task as that of spreading the Gospel of God in a hostile world needs a resolute will and an undaunted courage. And the work is too sacred to be put in jeopardy by any experiments. Mark had been tried once and found wanting."

Yes, Paul certainly had good grounds for refusing to take Mark. But what could be said on the other side? Dr. Howson continues: "Barnabas would not be without strong arguments to defend the justice of his claims. It was hard to expect him to resign his interest in one who had cost him much anxiety and many prayers. His dearest wish was to see his young

kinsman approving himself as a missionary of Christ. Now, too, he had been won back to a willing obedience,—he had come from his home at Jerusalem,—he was ready now to face all the difficulties and dangers of the enterprise. To repel him in the moment of his repentance was surely to break a bruised reed."

Dr. Howson adds a comment: "It is not difficult to understand the obstinacy with which each of the disputants, when his feelings were excited, clung to his opinion as to a sacred truth."

The same may be said as to the disputants in more recent controversies. We are speaking, of course, of conflicts where nothing vital or fundamental is at stake. Before taking part in any controversy, it will be well to read 1 Corinthians xiii. thoughtfully through, and to pray to be kept in the atmosphere of that chapter.

H. P. B.

SCOTLAND.—We sent your enquiry as to the sentence in the article *John Mark* (March issue) to the writer, Mr. E. Adams, and he replies as follows :—

"Certainly it was the Holy Spirit who chose Mark to be the vehicle of His divine communications, but in the paragraph in question it is the *human* side that is referred to. The Bible was not written mechanically, as from mere dictation. The Holy Spirit did not suppress or ignore the personalities of the writers, but used them. Although the Holy Spirit's control of the inspired pen was so complete as to exclude all error and to secure the inspiration of the very words of Scripture, this does not mean that the writer's faculties of volition, imagination, or reason were suspended.

"We see no contradiction between Peter's choice of Mark for his thoughts, and God's choice of Mark

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for His communications. *God's choice operated through the human choice.*

"We should try to cultivate sufficient flexibility of mind to enable us to keep two supplementary ideas in view at the same time.

"All the readers of *Simple Testimony and Marching Orders*, no doubt, believe that God chose Mark to be the inspired writer of the second Gospel. But why do we so believe? The Gospel does not state that it was written by Mark, nor does it claim to be divinely inspired.

"Do we believe this two-fold fact because we were 'brought up' to believe it, or because the group of persons with whom we are especially associated believe it?

"Our belief in its inspiration is based partly upon the testimony of the Christian church from the earliest times, but also upon the witness of the Spirit of God speaking through its pages to our renewed spirit. And we believe that Mark was Peter's 'interpreter' (every non-apostolic book in the New Testament was written by a companion of an apostle and under an apostle's supervision) on the same ground that we believe that Mark was the writer of the second Gospel, that is, because of the testimony of history."

WALSALL.—In reply to your enquiry as to the seeming contradiction between verses 4 and 5 of Proverbs xxvi: Verse 4 tells us not to answer the "fool" *foolishly*. If he uses evil words, we are not to imitate him. If he resorts to weapons such as lying, abuse, spiteful anger, etc., we are not to counter-attack after the same manner. Verse 5 teaches us that if we deem it right to answer the "fool," our reply should be designed to show him his folly. We may sometimes do this by taking up his arguments, and showing whither they lead. Compare Matthew xxiii. 16-22.

E. A.

The following narrative affords an illustration of answering a fool according to his folly, and of *not* doing so.

A certain preacher, crossing the Atlantic held gospel services on board the ship, but was much tried by the interruptions of a blatant infidel who constantly sought to divert the attention of the crowd to himself. However, the preacher kept control of himself and met the coarse questions of his interrupter by a dignified ignoring of the man.

One day, however, when the preacher was proclaiming salvation by faith in the unseen Saviour, the infidel blurted out that he didn't believe in trusting someone you never met, asserting unbelief in things he couldn't see.

A gentleman in the audience turned on the infidel and asked,

"Where are you going, man?"

"To Ireland," he replied.

"Ever been there before?"

"No; I am an American."

"Have you met the captain on this ship yet?"

"No."

"So you are sailing to a land you have never seen, and trusting a captain you have never met. You are a great man to be an infidel! But tell me; did you ever see your brains? Are you sure you have any?"

With the hearty laugh of the crowd, the infidel found it convenient to slink away while the preacher continued his proclamation of a Gospel that saves men who believe.

One man wisely answered not the fool, while the other just as wisely answered him.

Another of the paradoxes of the New Testament is that of 1 Cor. x. 33, where Paul says, "I please all men in all things" and Gal. i. 13, where the same apostle says, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

But if one observes that in the one place, he is referring to *manners* and in the other to his *message*, the apparent contradiction disappears. He would change his manner of approach to men in order to win them; he might even change his manner of presenting his message in order to secure an entrance to the minds and hearts of men. But tone down or change the vital principles of the Gospel? Never! His relationship and loyalty to Christ made that impossible. He would not compromise in his obligations to his Master in order to please any man.

BOOK REVIEW.

DIVINE HEALING. By Harold P. Barker. Pickering & Inglis, 14, Paternoster Row, London. Price 6d. nett, 7d. post free.

THE subject of "Faith-healing" is very much to the front now-a-days and the alleged results obtained by faith-healing leaders are being boomed far and wide. Further, apart from the popular, sensational aspect of the question, there is no doubt that the minds of many of God's children have been honestly, seriously exercised as to what is the present will, or way, of God when sickness overtakes His people. Thus, whichever way we consider it, the examination

of the question, dispassionately and in subjection to Scripture, is most timely and desirable.

Such an examination is presented in the above booklet, written by one of the esteemed editors of this Magazine, and its forty-eight pages form a very valuable contribution to the literature on the subject. While reading it I could not but observe the scrupulous fairness with which the author has presented the point of view opposite to his own. There has been no shirking of argument, no ignoring of passages of Scripture which might be held to bear upon the inquiry. So that, if the result of reading it is the conviction, as in my own case, that faith-healing, *in the common acceptance of the term*, is not God's normal method of dealing with His afflicted children to-day, and is not the ONLY course open to Christians in the presence of sickness, that result will be due, I am sure, not to a partisan presentation of the matter but to the proved inherent weakness of the faith-healing position and its manifested lack of Scriptural support.

Mr. Barker carefully guards the undoubted fact that there may be, and have been, cases of healing in answer to prayer apart from medical treatment, when James v. 14 has been appropriated and obeyed in active faith. But he shews that, to say the least, this is not God's sole way of dealing with sickness, and he clearly distinguishes it from that view of faith-healers which makes healing a "redemption right," inherent in the atonement, which we may humbly and boldly "claim by walking obediently with the Lord."

H. M. MESSENGER.

A CRUCIAL TEST.

THEORY is ever tested by practice. If it does not stand this test, however attractively it may be presented, it is to be rejected. *How does it work?* This is the ultimate test.

So tested, higher criticism and modernism stand discredited as miserable failures. When sitting in one's study, in comfort and pleasant surroundings, theories may attract the unregenerate mind or allure the unestablished believer. But what comfort do they bring in trial, in poverty, in bereavement, in sorrow? What consolation do they give on a death-bed? These are the tests. Above all, how do they affect eternal issues?

Modernism is the thin end of the wedge, of which the thick end is open, rank infidelity. Many a nominal believer has begun with higher criticism, and ended in infidelity. Lawlessness and godlessness lend themselves to national suicide and individual disaster.

Modernism, old as the vagaries of man's mind, cannot be classed as Christian in the remotest sense of the word. It has a genius for pulling down, but not for building up. It loosens every corner stone of morality and truth and involves in a cataclysm of ruin those who seek shelter where there is none.

The following well illustrates my meaning. It is related by the late Dr. J. H. Jowett, as

told him by his friend, the late Charles H. Berry, D.D., and abridged from *The Homiletic Review*.

Dr. Berry received at a very early age the highest honours that the denomination to which he belonged was able to confer. His fame as a preacher was as wide as the English-speaking world. He was a modern theologian when the following incident took place.

"One night there came to me," he says, "a Lancashire girl, with her shawl over her head, and with clogs on her feet."

"'Are you the minister?' she said.

"'Yes.'

"'Then I want you to come and get my mother in.'

"Thinking it was some drunken brawl, I said, 'You must get a policeman.'

"'Oh, no,' said the girl, 'my mother is dying, and I want you to get her into salvation.'

"'Where do you live?'

"'I live so and so, a mile and a half from here.'

"'Is there no minister nearer than I?'

"'Oh, yes, but I want you, and you will have to come.'

"I was in my slippers, and I did all I could to get out of it, but it was of no use. That girl was determined, and I had to dress and go. I found the house, and upstairs I found the poor woman dying. I sat down and talked about Jesus as the beautiful Example, and extolled Him as a Leader and Teacher. She looked at me out of her eyes of death, and said:

“Mister, that’s no good for the likes of me. I don’t want an example. I’m a sinner.”

“Jowett, there I was face to face with a poor soul dying, and had nothing to tell her. I had no Gospel; but I thought of what my mother had taught me, and I told her the old story of God’s love in Christ’s dying for sinful men, whether I believed it or not.

“‘Now you are getting at it’ said the woman. ‘That’s the story for me.’

“And so I got her in, and I got myself in. From that night,” added Dr. Berry, “I have always had a full gospel of salvation for lost sinners.”

What a testimony to the old-fashioned gospel preached by Paul, Wycliffe, Luther, Wesley, Whitefield, Spurgeon and multitudes of sainted men of God,—the old, old story for which Huss, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer and thousands besides have died, rather than surrender its blessing.

Higher criticism and modernism are emphatically not for the slums, for the sick, for the poor, for the dying. The old, old story is for all, from the sovereign on the throne, to the denizens of the slums and the solitary inmate of the condemned cell.

It is still doing its happy work, spite of the flood of evil cast out by the dragon’s mouth. It is still winning its peaceful conquests. Nothing can stop it.

How striking is Dr. Berry’s testimony. Not only was the poor dying sinner saved, but finding the powerlessness of his message to

others when *tested*, he wisely came to the conclusion to receive God's message of power for himself. Preacher and listener saved by the same address ! How delightful.

No wonder that Paul exclaimed : "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. i. 16). It had saved him. It could save others.

For three short years Dr. Berry preached, as he styled it himself, "a full gospel of salvation for lost sinners." God used his message mightily, and then he was called home. One Sunday night as he was about to begin his sermon he was called from serving to resting. He was ready ! I trust none of my readers are deceived by a theory no more able to comfort than prismatic colours lighting up an icicle are able to warm the starving traveller in the Arctic regions.

Why not put the Gospel to the test ? I remember hearing of a sceptical Russian nobleman, Count Bobrinski, who decided to do so. He prayed earnestly, "O God, if there is a God, reveal Thyself." His prayer was answered. He was converted, and for many a long year he was an earnest and successful preacher of the gospel, whose power he had experienced.

A. J. POLLOCK.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

VI.

Communion.

GOD has given us His truth that our thoughts may be fashioned like unto His own. This is to enjoy communion with Him. He, who has so richly blessed us, desires to have us in living, happy communion with Himself, and this is the instinctive desire of every renewed soul. By nature and practice alienated and an enemy to God by wicked works, when grace has wrought in the soul, when new birth has taken place, at once there springs up a yearning for fellowship with the blessed One whom now we address by the Spirit as "Abba, Father."

Now this communion is not a human thing. Man in the flesh can have no fellowship with God. It is only known and enjoyed in the power of the Spirit. The direct means for its maintenance are the Word of God and prayer. In the Bible God speaks to me. In prayer I speak to Him. I use the word prayer here in its widest application; not merely as offering petitions, but as lifting up the heart to God in praise likewise.

We have some instructive examples of this in the experience of Paul. Take, for instance, the first eleven chapters of the epistle to the Romans. In chapters i. to viii. inclusive, God, by His Spirit, unfolds what we might call the

glorious divine philosophy of the plan of salvation ; while in chapters ix. to xi. He unfolds His dispensational ways. What is the result of the soul's apprehension of all this ? It leads to an outburst of praise that fairly bubbles up in exultant joy from the apostle's soul in verse 33 of chapter xi. : "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out !" This is communion ; and a most hallowed and blissful thing it is thus to be taken up with the marvellous counsels and ways of God.

In Ephesians i. we have another lovely sample of the same thing. In the early part of the chapter there is a wonderful opening up of God's eternal purpose. Then from verse 15 the apostle is in prayer that others may enter into and enjoy these precious things, so infinitely beyond mere human comprehension. Again in chapter iii. the truth of the great mystery, which I hope to take up in the next paper of this series, is opened up, and in verse 14 he says : "For this cause (that is, because of the power of this truth over his own soul) I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—and what is the burden of this prayer ? That the believers to whom he writes, "*may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height [of this stupendous mystery], and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness*

of God" (verses 18, 19). And once more a volume of praise goes up from his own heart: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen" (verses 20, 21, R.V.). The truth gets such a grip on Paul's soul that he longs for all saints to share it, and his heart goes out to God, the Author of it, in unbounded adoration. Again, I repeat, this is communion.

It is not a happy feeling or a state of religious excitement. It is the soul's enjoyment of what God, in His Word, has made known for our edification. Christ calls us His friends, and He would have His friends share His thoughts.

There can be no true fellowship with God apart from feeding on His Word. Reading good books will not take the place of this thoughtful meditation on the Holy Scriptures. Undoubtedly, the Spirit-taught soul will soon begin to discern God's mind, and see His glory manifested even in inanimate nature; but he needs a mind well stored with Scripture to lead him up to this.

And now another important point: there can be no true communion with God while unjudged evil is tolerated in the life. You cannot enjoy God and indulge in sin at the same time; even as you cannot enjoy meditation on the Scriptures while practising that

which is unholy. In Bunyan's Bible it was written, "This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book." Don't overlook this, dear young believer. Be clean. Be practically holy: then you can enjoy God's Word, and the Holy Spirit will use it as the means of leading out your heart to God and filling your soul with praise. And this is being in communion with the Highest.

Men talk of being "in touch with the Infinite," who both ignore the Scriptures as the Written Word, and Christ Jesus the Living Word. And by that they mean to reach a state of philosophic calmness of mind which, in the case of men proudly turning from the Cross of Christ is as though a blind man on the edge of a precipice refused the hand stretched forth to save him, and plunged headlong over, seeking calmly to assure himself that he would alight on a bed of down in place of jagged rocks. His calmness would be but foolhardiness; and so is all the empty talk of being in tune with the spirit of the universe while refusing God's testimony.

Do not be deceived by the sham. But, with the Word of God speaking in power to your soul, walk in the Spirit, fulfilling not the lusts of the flesh, and you shall know the real and the true. Thus shall you enjoy, on earth, a sweet foretaste of what is to be the everlasting portion of all the redeemed—participation in the joy of your Lord.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

DISCIPLESHIP.

WHAT is discipleship? What does it mean to be a disciple?

It was in the early days of the church that "the disciples were called Christians," but in these later days there is much need that Christians should come to be called disciples!

The word disciple simply means "one who learns." Those of us who have accepted Christ as our Saviour are *His* disciples. Our great responsibility is now to learn of Him, and to follow Him, not a long way off, but as living near Him.

Is this possible in these modern days, when temptation is often so strong, when it is so hard to stand alone and be thought narrow-minded, puritanical and old-fashioned? It is possible when we have Christ as our Guide, and when the Holy Spirit is active within us. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad . . . for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." We cannot escape persecution if we stand and live for Him as true disciples.

Shall we talk for a few minutes on what discipleship involves? Our first act must be to surrender ourselves, spirit, soul and body, to Christ, to give our lives to Him, a definite act of surrender that puts Him, not ourselves and our own desires, first. (2 Corinthians viii. 5).

Taking the early disciples as examples, we find in their case a definite call to such a coming after Christ, followed by a decision of the will.

This involved

A FRESH LINE OF CONDUCT

adopted in the life. We read: "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men, and they straightway left their nets and followed Him." (Matt. iv. 18-20).

That is a beautiful example of obedience. They did not ask: "Shall we have an easy time? Shall we be well paid? Will our future life be assured?" They *straightway* left their work and followed! It is encouraging, too, to see, that Christ's chosen disciples were ordinary men who had to work for their living. He did not choose a band of rich or learned followers to be examples for the ages after, but men in humble walks of life. This shows us what use Christ can make of simple and humble souls, when their lives are fully yielded for His service.

If Christ were given the chief place in the lives of men and women to-day, strife, class-hatred, selfishness, greed and all the other hideous manifestations of sin in our midst would disappear before the purifying power of His indwelling.

Let it be noticed that Christ does not set before us some stupendous task requiring great talent, much money or social influence, when He asks us to become His disciples. The test of love to Him that He gives us is within the ability of the poorest and the weakest. Every-

DISCIPLESHIP.

III

where around us are His sheep and lambs. All we have to do is to give what we can of our time, our strength, our affection and our service, to feed them.

It may be that we are so poor in spirit that we have only "the two small fishes and the barley bread," but with His blessing the offering will be sufficient to feed thousands. He only asks us to respond willingly with what we have. Sometimes we do not respond at once; we may have to be asked three times as Peter was. But however many times the Lord asks us the question, the test is the same, "Lovest thou Me?"

To be fruitful disciples we must spend time with our Lord. Christ asked His disciples to "come apart and rest a while." If it were necessary for the disciples in those far off days to withdraw from the world occasionally, how much more imperative is it for us, with the crowded, jarring conditions of modern times!

"Come ye yourselves apart"
 From ceaseless toiling in the noontide heat,
 From wandering in rough, uneven ways,
 From cares and sorrows of these restless days—
 With aching hands and hearts, and weary feet,
 "Come ye yourselves apart."

"Come ye yourselves apart"
 To rest beneath the shadow of His love,
 To hear the Master's quiet word for thee,
 To feel His gentle touch and almost see
 The lovelight on the face that bends above;
 "Come ye yourselves apart."

It was not the multitude at large whom the Lord asked to "come apart." The appeal was made to His own disciples. Sometimes it is not till we have laid down every one of our

tools, just giving ourselves up entirely to God, that we realize how tired and worn out we are. We sometimes forget that God takes note of our physical weariness as well as of our spiritual needs. Yet our Lord is the same to-day as when He said to that little group of tired disciples "Come ye yourselves apart and rest a while." The great lack to-day is time for the highest things. We too often pack our time full, every minute of it, with things that are least worth while, scrambling for wealth, rushing after fame and notoriety, tearing about after pleasure. Yet none of these things can ever satisfy our souls. Every human being craves for soul-satisfaction, and this is God's gift to us, through Christ.

It *costs* something to be a true disciple. All the most valuable things are dearly won. When Christ offered the rewards and enforced the duty of discipleship, He was careful to put in the injunction to

COUNT THE COST.

If our discipleship has not cost us anything, then we cannot know what it means to be a true disciple. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross *cannot* be My disciple."

Have we ever thought what it cost the Lord to give His life for us? Or have we heard the story so many times that we forget that it was for *us* His life-blood was given? Is He not worthy that we should give Him of our best, and that we should not wait till we are old, but now, while young, give Him our lives, our talents, ourselves, to be used for His glory and service?

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While we are young, and life stretches out before us, we may wonder whether it is worth while to deny ourselves and bear the cross. But it is worth while. For in doing so we get such enrichment of our lives from God, and He gives an inward peace and happiness with which no earthly joy can for one moment be compared.

When Christ told us to hate our loved ones, we must not misunderstand His meaning. He meant that they must

NOT OCCUPY THE PRINCIPAL PLACE

in our affection. Christ must be first; all others must come after Him if we are to be His true disciples. Does this seem hard? Look how it is made up to us! In Luke xviii. we have one of our Lord's beautiful heart-to-heart talks with His disciples. Peter had said, "Lo, we have left *all* and followed Thee." We remember how he had left his daily toil. Perhaps Satan was tempting him, trying to persuade him that he had made a mistake. Christ's beautiful answer must have set his heart at rest: "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time and in the world to come life everlasting.

Discipleship involves CONSECRATION. What does this mean? The dictionary definition is "To dedicate, to offer ourselves to God, to be wholly His." That is the cost of true discipleship. God will not compromise with us. He demands a whole heart. But He gives

us a whole heaven. The service of Christ yields a magnificent harvest of opportunities for usefulness and much joy of soul. A working disciple can never be wretched; he gathers his sheaves as he goes. We are always happy when we are right with God, happy in doing right, and in the consciousness of our Master's approval. He will sustain us if we try to serve Him as true disciples. His grace is sufficient and there is heaven at the end of our journey.

Discipleship may mean PAIN; but we so often find that the best part of a noble character is that which costs the most. How beautiful a trait, for example, is patience. But it is not often worn by those who walk on life's sunny side in silver slippers. It is the product of dark nights of adversity, of cross-bearing up the mount of suffering. But the trial of our faith worketh patience.

THE BRUISED FLOWER GIVES MOST FRAGRANCE,

and so, when we are bruised for Christ's sake, our life and light can shine more brightly, and our influence be stronger, because we *have* proved what His presence means as we go through the valley of shadow. *He* has been with us and that makes all the pain worth while.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God." It is the special privilege of those whose faith is strong, those who can look beyond the present with its seeming failures to the One Who cannot make a mistake, to be "pillars" in God's temple, the support and strength of others. The choice is before us all.

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If Christ has the first place in our lives, the rest becomes easy. We are glad then to give rather than take, because we know it pleases Him. We find it no hardship to spend ourselves for others, because we are really spending ourselves for Him. The woman who is always giving, spending, sympathising and loving, for *His* sake, cannot help being attractive, because those who see her will in time see beyond her, to the One she loves. And no greater honour, no greater joy can befall Christ's disciples than that they should be used by Him to reflect, even though it be but faintly and imperfectly, His image. There is only one way. We must first of all have our own lives possessed by a love that is greater than anything that earth can offer.

THE GLORY OF LIFE

is to love, not to be loved; to give, not to get; to serve, not to be served; to be a strong hand in the dark to another in the time of need; to be a cup of strength to any soul in a crisis of weakness. This is to know the glory of life.

Our Lord particularly emphasized this great law of love to His disciples: "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." (John xiii. 34, 35). Christ said, "As I have loved you." How does He love us? With a love that exceeds every other love, infinite and divine. If we are true disciples we shall love our neighbour as ourselves. We can only make that possible by having Christ's own love kept alive within our hearts by His Spirit.

- “I had walked life’s path with an easy tread,
And followed where pleasure and comfort led;
And then it chanced in a quiet place
I met my Master face to face.
- “With station and rank and wealth for a goal,
Much thought for the body, but none for the soul,
I had entered to win in life’s mad race,
When I met my Master face to face.
- “I had built my castles and reared them high,
With their towers had pierced the blue of the sky;
I had sworn to rule with an iron mace,
When I met my Master face to face.
- “I met Him, and knew Him, and blushed to see
That His eyes full of sorrow were fixed on me;
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day,
While my castles melted and faded away—
- “Melted and vanished, and in their place
I saw nought else but my Master’s face;
And I cried aloud, ‘Oh! make me meet
To follow the marks of Thy piercéd feet.’”

EVELYN G. GREENSLADE.

THE WAY.

HAVE you ever read Psalm cxix. right through? Do not let its one hundred and seventy-six verses frighten you, but give it a careful reading. You will not fail to notice that it is all in praise of God’s Word. Almost every verse makes reference to it under one name or another; precepts, statutes, law, commandments, testimonies, etc.

The Psalmist, with a full personal experience of the truth of what he says, tells us some wonderful things about the Word. He has

hidden it in his heart, and he tells us why: verse 11. In days past he had made that Word his ground of confidence, verse 74. And he did so still, verse 114.

He assures us that he *loves* God's Word, verse 140. Hence he *meditates* on it, verse 148; and *rejoices* in it, verse 162. As result of this his tongue gladly *speaks* of it, verse 172; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

But I want especially to draw your attention to the contrast which we find in this Psalm between "the way" and "My ways." The first verse declares: "Blessed are the undefiled in THE WAY." But in verse 5 the writer thinks of his own ways, and exclaims: "O that MY WAYS were directed to keep Thy statutes!"

The way (God's way) is ever perfect. *Our ways* are anything but this. Notice how the former is emphasized in verses 14, 27, 30, 32 and 33; while "*my ways*" come into review in verses 26 and 59. The obvious lesson is that we ought to tread in THE way of God's commandments; but, alas! though we may desire with our whole heart so to do, we often wander in ways of our own. The Psalm alternates between walking and wandering. It begins, as we have seen, by telling us of THE WAY. Then there is made bare the heart of one who longs for his feet to be kept in that God-pleasing path, which as the light of dawn shineth more and more unto the perfect day, but who, in spite of a large measure of steady walking, knows what it is to stagger and stumble, yet still to go on.

Light is thrown on the mystery of suffering in verses 67 and 71, affliction being sent to draw

back the wandering heart to Himself,—into
THE WAY.

At first sight the Psalm's end comes as a surprise after all that has gone before. And yet how beautifully human that closing verse is! How true to life as we know it! "I have gone astray like a lost sheep." Prone to wander, Lord, we feel it, ay, right to the end of the journey!

H. A. WOOLLEY.

"ALL ALONG THE WAY."

A Pilgrim Song.

THERE is *sweetness* all along the way,
As we travel homeward day by day;
 There is sweet unfailing rest
 For the heart in Jesus blest,—
Oh! there's sweetness all along the way.

There is *brightness* all along the way,
As we travel homeward day by day;
 'Tis the shining, clear and bright,
 Of the new creation's light,—
Yes, there's brightness all along the way."

There is *singing* all along the way,
As we travel homeward day by day;
 For the themes of sweetest song
 To the child of God belong,—
So there's singing all along the way.

There are *praises* all along the way,
As we travel homeward day by day;
 For the tokens of His power,
 All around us every hour,—
There are praises all along the way

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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There is *conflict* all along the way,
 As we travel homeward day by day;
 We must gird our armour on,
 For the foe is fierce and strong,—
 And there's conflict all along the way.
 There is *trusting* all along the way,
 As we travel homeward day by day;
 For we know our faithful Friend
 Will be with us to end,—
 So there's trusting all along the way.

D. C. STEVEN.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LANCING.—You quote, or rather misquote, the line of a hymn:

“The Church's ailment is fulness of bread,”

and ask, “How can good, full ministry be bad for the children of God?” Your mistake is, if you will pardon us for saying it, a rather careless one, though others, too, have made it. The author of the poem wrote truly, but somewhat clumsily,

“The Church's aliment's fulness of bread,”

which is a very different thing! The distinction drawn is between the “good, full ministry” which is the church's aliment (not *ailment*!) and the famine of the Word of the Lord in heathen lands.

WEST HAM.—The Scriptures do not lay down any rule for our giving. Christians are not under law. But if the Jew was to give one-tenth of his income to the Lord, you would not have Christians give less, would you?

NORTHWICH.—If you are determined to take a certain course, why write to us about it? Our counsel would be to obey the Word of God. But this, it seems, is just what you have made up your mind not to do. Anyhow, your sin will not be a “sin of ignorance.”

SIDCUP.—The “camp” (Hebrews xiii. 13) is Judaism. Going forth without the camp is abandoning Judaism. But it was to be a going forth “*unto Him.*” Judaism was to be forsaken, not merely for Christianity, but *for Christ*. The exhortation had special reference to those who, having believed in Christ, still clung to the Temple worship, the Law, the Synagogue and Jewish traditions.

CANNOCK.—We cannot understand Christians devoting themselves to “sport” under the plea that exercise is necessary. Exercise is necessary, but what finer exercise could you have than to jump on your cycle and visit some distant villages, your pockets well-filled with Gospel booklets? A fine occupation for free afternoons! Even from the worldling’s point of view, too much “sport” is undesirable. Read Proverbs xxi. 17, noting the marginal rendering of the word “pleasure.”

H. P. B.

A mother asked her little daughter to take a bouquet to a sick friend. Joyfully the child went. “I shall get the best of it,” she said. The perfume and beauty were all hers while she carried the flowers. Like that little girl, we always get the best of it when we do the will of God.

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JUST TO PLEASE HIM.

IN these days in which we live there is great need that we be more quiet before the Lord. Just to enter into and abide in such sweet communion with Him that we may at all times exhibit that fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, etc., (Gal. v. 22, 23). These verses are just a picture of what our Lord Jesus Christ is, and what He wants to be to every one of His dear ones. This is very precious to the heart that has tasted that the Lord is good. Oh, that we might enter more into the mind of God about the One whose infinite loveliness is His daily delight, who always pleased Him, who rejoices always before Him. (Matt. xvii. 5 ; Prov. viii. 30).

But when we are rejoicing in His love, do we ever stop to think whether HE is happy? We sing, "That will be glory for me." How good sometimes to sing, "That will be glory for Him." Oh, that we might get so completely away from self and from seeking our own welfare, as to be able to live before Him just to minister to the needs of His own loving heart, to make Him happy! *No one was ever happy who was seeking happiness.* Only those taste of real joy who are seeking to give joy to the heart of another. We come to Him many times to have our own needs met. Do we ever come just to satisfy the longings of His own heart of love?

He is seeking worshippers, those who will appreciate His real worth, His beauty, His

glory. Has He found them in us? Have we been seeking to give Him the joy that was before Him when He endured the cross, when He paid the awful price of our redemption? Will our only joy in the glory be that we are saved and made like Him? Will not the joy of knowing that He is satisfied, that He has been made to rejoice, far transcend all this?

We are so prone to look at everything from our own standpoint, from the effect it will have on *us*, instead of its relation to Him. We have wept with Him over cold stony hearts. Have we ever rejoiced with Him because He found His sheep? We are often made to rejoice by the joy of those dear to our hearts. Are we ever happy for no other reason than that we know He is? How often we sell our ointment—that which should have been poured out upon Him—under pretence of giving something to the poor. (John xii. 1-11). How often we deny Him the time that His loving heart craves, under pretence of being too busy with service. Dr. C. I. Scofield says: *"I grow very weary of the constant spurring of God's people to service, as if any father ever did care so much to have his children toiling for him as loving and trusting him."*

Let us ask ourselves under every circumstance, "Will this bring joy to His loving heart?" We may be doing many things that are not positively evil, but do they contribute to His joy? How much we need to get better acquainted with Him! To know Him

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aright will lessen our care to know anything else, for He is the fulness of God. In Him is comprehended all that God has for us from the moment we are saved to the ages of eternity.

Yet a little while and we shall be for ever with Him. Shall we regret then that we spent much time alone with Him while in this wilderness? My heart longs for that time when I shall never again grieve Him. How patient, how gentle He has been with every one of us! How the lack of appreciation on the part of friends has grieved us! How we have wept when, having exhausted our efforts in some act of kindness, we have seen it received with utter disregard! What, then, must it mean to Him who gave everything to purchase us from eternal death, to have us show no concern about His happiness, about His glory, to see us occupied with everything but Himself?

SELECTED.

ABRAHAM, MAN OF GOD AND SERVANT OF MEN.

“**A**ND Abram passed through the land.”
 “And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent.” “And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.”

These sentences are typical of the life of Abraham the pilgrim. *He was a “passer-through,”* and confessed that he was a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth.

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We, too, take up the profession of being strangers and pilgrims, although we cannot help feeling that the journey through this life is full of interest. It may be that we need to recover the emphasis on eternity. At all events, while using the things of this world, we should rest the weight of our affection on "things above," for, like the father of believers, we are "passers-through."

And *Abraham was a worshipper*. His simple mode of worship stands out in marked contrast to the elaborate ceremonial of Judaism. When the woman at the well, in order to turn the conversation away from her sin-stained past, raised the question that had for centuries been the subject of debate between her people and her Jewish neighbours, as to where was the proper place to worship God, the Lord used her remark as the occasion of making the great pronouncement regarding the spirituality of worship. What is of paramount importance is not the place where our bodies are, but the quality of our spirit. At the same time, as we are in the body, the body shares in the worship, which is essentially of the spirit, by singing, by kneeling, by bowing the head, by closing the eyes.

Abraham was emphatically *a man of God*. How unusual the word seems! "Man of God." We are familiar with such terms as "man of the world," "man of science," "man of letters," "man of the people," and so on; but "man of God" is very seldom heard outside the circle of the Church. And yet the title is one of the highest that any human being can possess.

Abraham knew God as his almighty Friend. God was his home, his foundation, his resting-place, his centre, his teacher, his peace and joy,

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and his "exceeding great reward." He knew the Lord intimately. Human intimacies often produce disillusionment, but intimacy with God begets confident reverence and is a never-ceasing feast to the soul. Love delights to reveal itself to its intimate associate, and Abraham in the Old Testament and John in the New are outstanding instances of saints to whom the Lord loved to reveal His secret things. The name of George Müller, also, will at once occur to the mind as a conspicuous example of a man of God in the last generation. All those who are men or women of God are enthusiastic "listeners-in"—in the spiritual sense. They realise that hurry is the death-knell of prayer, and that although it is blessed to talk to the Lord, it is still more blessed to hear Him speaking to us.

Abraham, too, stands out as *a man of solitude*. He was, of course, surrounded by his family and his tribe and his wealth; still he strikes one as being a solitary sort of individual. And solitude has its ministry. We all know and appreciate the joys of Christian fellowship: in fact "we know we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren." But solitude has its joys and privileges too. God may speak louder in the silence of solitude than in the message of uttered words. Moses and Paul "entered into the silence" and the solitudes of the wilderness as preparation for their life work. Solitude is not the same thing as loneliness. And there is nothing morbid in getting away from time to time from the society of one's fellows in order to do business with one's God. On the contrary, it is the morbid person who is afraid of solitude and is bored with his own

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company! Unfortunately, in this over-populated land the crowd-craze is strong, and it may require an effort to obtain solitude. But the effort will be well repaid, for our deepest convictions are usually born in the silence of solitude, and no man who has not first faced things out alone with God can be of much use in helping others in spiritual things.

But Abraham was not only a man of God ; *he was a public benefactor* as well. He was the ancestor of the most remarkable race the world has ever seen. "Scattered and peeled," hated, despised and persecuted, the Jewish people have survived all down the centuries as a living evidence of the truth of the Word of God. Without national home, without king, president or government, dispersed amongst all nations, they have yet retained their racial characteristics even to their physical features.

The Jew has been the religious teacher of the human family. Through the Jew the knowledge of the true God was preserved in a world almost wholly given over to idolatry. Every writer of the Bible, save possibly one was a Jew; Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah and the prophets, were Jews; the apostles were Jews; and, so far as His humanity is concerned, our Lord Himself was a Jew. The world owes a tremendous debt to the Jewish people. And Abraham was their ancestor. He was, therefore, a public benefactor of the most far-reaching order.

He was a public benefactor, too, to his own generation, for he rescued Lot, interceded for Sodom, and was a living and notable witness to the existence and grace of God in the land of Canaan.

The parallel between Abraham, as father of Israel, and the Church is obvious. The Church, in

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spite of its corruptions, has ever been the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Even Lecky, the rationalist historian, admits that the history of unselfishness during the last nineteen centuries has been chiefly the history of the action of Christianity upon the world. Darwin the naturalist was so struck with the social results of the spread of the Gospel amongst the cannibals of the Southern Seas, that he wrote in his diary: "The story of the missionary is an enchanter's wand." And good Dr. Ryle declared that of all the debts that have been repudiated since the commencement of the world, the greatest is the debt which the world owes to Christianity. We have only to think of the care, spiritual and natural, of the children which received such an impetus from the work of Robert Raikes; of the reform of the prisons by Howard and Elizabeth Fry; of the amelioration of the evil conditions of labour by Lord Shaftesbury; of the orphanages of Müller, Spurgeon, Barnardo and Quarrier; of the social work of the Salvation Army and the Church Army; of the humanitarian movement of a hundred or more years ago that was the direct outcome of the evangelical revival of the 18th century, to realise how true are the words of Ryle. But what interests us more than the indirect results of the spread of the Gospel is its power to cleanse the heart and transform the life of the individual; and that Gospel is in the custody of the Church, each living member of which is a benefactor of the race.

Abraham is both man of God and benefactor of men. And he was benefactor of men because he was first man of God. And with us, too, the most fruitful service will be that which is the spontaneous outcome of communion with God.

E. ADAMS.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

VII.

The Assembly as the Body of Christ.

AT the time of his conversion on the Damascus road, the germ of a great truth was revealed to Paul, which later became the chiefest in the galaxy of doctrines which it was his mission, as an apostle, to make known "for the obedience of faith." It was involved in the challenge of the Lord of glory, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" For the first time it was then declared that Christ and His saints of this age of grace are one. To touch the feeblest of them is to touch Him ; for they are all members of one body of which He is the glorified Head in heaven.

But this doctrine of the one body is never referred to by any other apostle than Paul. He calls it "the dispensation of the mystery" with which he had been especially entrusted. indeed it was the characteristic truth of his large and varied ministry.

It is this that he is speaking of in Rom. xvi. 25-27. "Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets (or, by prophetic writings, *i.e.*, his own), according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for

the obedience of faith : to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen."

The nature of this mystery is unfolded in Eph. iii. 1-12. There Paul writes of the dispensation of the grace of God given him toward the Gentiles, and he adds : "How that by revelation (not through studying the Bible) He made known unto me 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 : that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel : . . . to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ : to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."

It is a passage of wondrous scope and blessedness, and I cannot attempt to expound it here, but what I would have the young believer note is that the truth of Jew and Gentile, when they believe on Christ, being formed by the Spirit into one body, and by that same Spirit linked up to Christ as Head in heaven, was a truth never before made known. The Old Testament will be searched in vain for it. It is not there, because it was "hid in God." It was the secret purpose of His heart, only to be revealed after the rejection of His

Son. It actually became a fact when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. To this Paul refers when he writes : "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body ; so also is [the] Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

To this one body every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ belongs. The gift of the Holy Spirit, who indwells all saved people, makes us one with every other Christian on the face of the earth. This is the only true "Catholic and Apostolic Church." At the beginning there was none other. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts ii. 47). There was no thought of any other membership, though until the special revelation given to Paul it was not seen that this involved membership in the body of Christ.

The fact existed prior to the knowledge of it. Now, every saint should have clear light as to it, because it is everywhere declared, or taken for granted, in Paul's epistles.

· · Ephesians is largely occupied with it ; setting forth the purpose of God to head up all things in Christ, and, preparatory to this, the formation of the one body. Then Colossians gives us the other side, magnifying Christ as Head, and pressing upon Christians their

responsibility to own no other head, but to be in all things subject to Him. I Corinthians takes all this up in a practical way, showing what the outcome should be in our daily walk as members one of another and members of Christ.

Now, in what sense is this great truth "made known for the obedience of faith"? Manifestly it can only mean that it is a truth each believer is expected to hold in a practical way. And this surely involves the recognition of but one body and one Head, which necessarily leaves one outside of all human systems, and apart from all recognition of human heads. "The Church must have a head!" was the Romanist's challenge to Luther, as he began to set forth the claims of the Papacy. "Yes," replied the mighty champion of the reformation, "and the Head is Christ!"

Never allow yourself in any association where you will have to give this up. Hold the Head at all costs. And if you hold the Head, you can consistently own but one body; for one head with many bodies is unthinkable.

"To which of the various bodies of Christ do you belong?" I was once asked by a clergyman. I could only reply, "There is one body, and I know no other."

Nor does this result in unkind feelings or hard, critical thoughts concerning others, equally dear to Christ, who may not be enlightened upon this great mystery. The

very fact that we are all members one of another should hinder this. All may not see alike, and will not till the Lord Jesus comes ; but that need not prevent fervent love going out to every member of Christ's body on earth.

"What church do you belong to?" an evangelist was once asked by a well-meaning lady.

"I am a Christian," was the reply, "I belong to the body of Christ."

"Oh, of course," was the retort, "I know that. So am I, and I am also a member of the —— church."

"Ah, my sister," he answered, "that is just the difference between us. You are a '*Christian and.*' I am only a Christian. Once I too was a '*Christian and.*' But when I learned that '*there is one body and one Spirit*' I ceased to be a '*Christian and.*' I have ever since been simply a Christian."

"But," she exclaimed in evident astonishment, "in that case I do not see how you distinguish yourself from other Christians."

"But I have no desire to distinguish myself from my fellow-Christians" was the quiet reply. "I am one with them all ; and I desire them all to see in me a fellow-member of Christ's body."

This is what I commend to you. When God saved you He put you in the body of Christ. What other membership do you need or desire ? You belong to the Church of God,

the Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven. What more would you have ?

Before the confusion of sectarianism came in, "all that believed were together," and it was said of them on an ever-memorable occasion that "those who received His word were baptized : and the same day there were added unto them—[that is, unto those already baptized by the Spirit into the one body]—about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts ii. 41, 42).

Nothing else is needed for faith to-day. God's Word remains, and it is for each believer to act upon it, regardless of the ever-increasing apostasy. If only two or three do so, there is fellowship, and Christ will be enjoyed as He cannot be when His place as Head is forgotten, and the truth is ignored that "there is one body."

H. A. IRONSIDE.

The August issue will (D V.) include papers on the The Priesthood and Advocacy of Christ ; The Assembly in its Local Aspect ; The Gospel and the Preacher ; A Word to Sunday School Teachers, and other interesting and helpful articles and comments.

THE CHRISTIAN EMPLOYER.

THERE are really three classes of business people, not two only.

1. Those who employ others to work for them, and who themselves are not responsible to any other person (except God), because they own their business themselves.
2. Those who have others working under them, but are at the same time responsible to some other person or persons.
3. Those who work entirely for others, and have no one working under them.

The writer was at one time in group three, but has for many years been in group two. Strictly speaking, the term "employer" is limited to those in group one, but there are not many people, except small business owners and shopkeepers, in this group. All the managers, superintendents, foremen, charge hands and sectional heads in a limited Company belong to group two, and the directors themselves also, as they are responsible to the shareholders, who are the real owners of the business.

The position of those in group one is somewhat exceptional, and they are faced with problems of a special nature of which the writer has had no experience. He writes from the view point of one in group two. The question to be considered in the first instance is, What is the basis upon which an employer should act? The basis is JUSTICE. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3).

Some people seem to think that a business

should be run on the basis of *grace*, if the employer is a Christian. But the idea is surely erroneous. It would be just as correct to speak of "a father loving his family with a rod of iron" as to speak of "a man ruling over men in grace." It is associating two incompatible ideas in each instance. The only possible basis of *rule* is righteousness, or justice. When Christ Himself rules He will rule in righteousness. (Isa. xxxii. 1, and Isa. xi. 1-15).

Those who want businesses ruled in grace would soon want to leave the country they live in if *it* were thus ruled! Suppose that on every occasion a criminal were "let off" if he said he was sorry! The result may well be left to the imagination.

We will now consider the position of the employer from three different aspects.

1. *In relation to those under him.*

(a) He should pay them a just wage.

(Col. iv. 1).

(b) He should treat them with goodwill. (Eph. vi. 9).

In connection with these two matters experience shows that it is not only right and just to do so, but it is far the best from the employer's own point of view. Men work far better when treated with consideration than when they are ground down to the last penny, and bullied, sworn at and oppressed at every turn. See the fearful condemnation of God upon injustice and cruelty to employees (James v. 1-4).

2. *In relation to those with whom he does business.*

(a) He should have a just weight, balance and measures. (Lev. xix. 35, 36).

- (b) He should pay his accounts when due, including taxes. (Rom. xiii. 6-8.)

Every transaction should be just and fair. Short measure, adulteration, false description are alike an abomination to the Lord (Prov. xi. 1 and xvi. 11; Amos viii. 4-10). Especially is the sin of profiteering condemned. There is nothing new in this. Apparently in ancient days people would withhold corn in the hope of forcing the price up high. (Prov. xi. 26).

All the rates and taxes, including income tax, will be justly and fairly paid. Debts will not be incurred for supplies which cannot be paid for when payment is due. (Rom. xiii. 8).

- (3) *In relation to the success of his business.*

- (a) He should see that his employees share in his success. (1 Cor. ix. 9).
 (b) He should honour God according to his prosperity. (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

It is remarkable that God provided that even the ox which trod out the corn should be entitled to special consideration. How much more the men and women through whose labours an employer has obtained a profit! He should provide that those who have assisted him to this end should share in his success.

But, last of all, though truly *first* of all, the employer who owns Christ as Saviour and Lord should honour the Lord with his substance and the first-fruits of all his increase. (Prov. iii. 9). This is not a matter which is a mere duty. It is a privilege, a joy, a delight to all who love the Lord. Those who act upon this principle will find the truth of the Scripture, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth" (Prov. xi. 24).

ALEXIS JACOB.

GONE TO HEAVEN.

IN reply to the notice in our May issue inviting friends to join in a tract distributing party in Cornwall, we heard from our young brother R. C. Grimes of Northampton, saying that he would like to come. The next day while on his motor bicycle, he was knocked down by a heavy lorry and instantly killed. God's mysteries will one day be unlocked, and we shall know the *why* of what perplexes us now. Our young brother was a zealous preacher of the gospel in the open air, and the Sunday previous to his fatal accident had joined in this service to his Master with others. The following lines from his pen were sent us some weeks ago.

When along life's stormy pathway
Everything goes wrong,
Trust in Jesus, and your groaning
Will be changed to song.

Even though in "Doubting Castle,"
Captive of despair,
Trust in Jesus ; He will free you
From all doubt and care.

Fear not any trial or danger,
On your Lord rely ;
His own hand it is which guides you
To your home on high.

Trust in Him whate'er befalls you,
Trust Him night and day ;
And when life itself is failing,
He will be your stay.

SPIRITUAL EFFICIENCY.

OUR readers will remember that in our April issue Mr. Stuart McNair, of Brazil, raised a very interesting question as to *Efficiency* or *Spiritual Power in Service*. He pointed out the intimate relation between power and *prayer*, and between power and *purity*. He thought there were two kinds of people who would be able to help us by recalling what had been most significant in their own personal experience, (a) those who had been used of God in the past but had lost their efficiency; (b) those who find "the Lord working with them, with signs following."

The following reply has been received from Mr. H. A. Ironside, of Los Angeles:—

In an endeavour to answer the question propounded by Mr. McNair I submit the following. (a) *Anointing for Service*. While recognising the fact that all believers—even the youngest babes in Christ—have the anointing (1 John ii). I do not see how anyone can doubt that there is a special filling of the Spirit apart from which no one is at his best for God. The yielded servant will be thus filled and he alone. Such an one is a tremendous weapon in the hand of God for winning souls and combating error. The experiences of Moody, Torrey and others, I believe, have been duplicated in the lives of many, though I question if the correct terms are always used in describing them.

As to books, I believe I was more helped by Miss Havergal's *Kept for the Master's use* than by any book on similar themes.

(b) The believer who would be really used must both live on the Word and give much time to prayer. A lot of heady ministry—correct enough as to the letter but absolutely powerless—would be changed to truly prophetic testimony if this were born in mind.

(c) "All things to all men" suggests a careful and legitimate use of such means as are calculated to get the attention of men and to hold it afterwards. There are too

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many who are literally wedded to worn-out methods for which there is no special scripture, who might use more up-to-date methods with just as much right, if I may use that term. Fishers for men should consider the wisest way to bait and cast the hook or net.

To say "We do not look for results" is wrong. I *do* look for results, or I would not preach. And as the Word is preached in dependence on God I expect results, and—to His glory I say it—there *are* results, in the shape of sinners saved and saints led on in the truth.

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NORTHWOOD.—We have submitted your enquiry as to the two Asaphs to an esteemed brother who is adept in these matters, and he writes as follows :—

There are eleven "Asaph" Psalms (l. and lxxiii. to lxxxiii.) Asaph, son of Berechiah, was a leading member of the orchestra formed at the request of David, and he seems to have had the leading vocal part, at least, in it (see 1 Chron. xv. 17, 19; xvi. 5, 7). The bracketing of David's name with that of Asaph in 2 Chron. xxix. 30 (where he is called "the seer") suggests that the reference is to David's choir-master. The Asaph mentioned in 2 Kings xviii. 18, 37, as Hezekiah's court-chronicler is, of course, a different person. Nothing is said of him concerning praise.

The earlier Asaph may well have written some of these Psalms. Psalm lxxxiii. seems to have for its historical occasion the circumstances of 2 Chron. xx. In that case, the author could not have been the person mentioned with David. Psalms lxxiv., lxxix. and lxxx. suggest the conditions prevailing in the Land and the City after the people had been carried into captivity.

It is well to remember that we know only what we are told, and that speculation is vain where God is silent. Had it been necessary to interpretation that

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the reader should be able to identify the writer of these Psalms, the necessary material, we may be sure, would have been provided.

C. F. HOGG.

You will see by the above that no substantial ground is considered to exist for identifying the writer of Psalms lxxxiii., etc., with the Asaph who held office under Hezekiah.

TORQUAY.—(1) The Lord's appearance to the five hundred disciples (1 Cor. xv. 6), took place on a mountain in Galilee probably eight days after the resurrection. (2) We think it probable that some, if not all, of the five hundred were in Jerusalem at Pentecost. One cannot speak with certainty of matters on which Scripture is silent; and this remark applies with equal force to your third question, as to whether the eleven were baptized.

ARES (Spain).—It seems clear that there were at least two occasions on which Moses fasted forty days and nights. The first was when he was being instructed by God as to the tabernacle and the priesthood and which concluded with his receiving the first tables of the law (Exodus xxiv. 9 to xxxii, and Deut. ix. 9). The second occurred after the people had sinned and before the second tables were given (Ex. xxxiv. 28. and Deut. ix. 18). It is not clear whether Deut. ix. 52 refers to a third occasion. There is a great need in the lives of the Lord's people to-day of mountain-top experience, of prayer and fasting, of communion with God alone. Perhaps the absence of such experience accounts for our lack of power with God and men.

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THE FENCE AND THE AMBULANCE; or, The Priesthood and Advocacy of Christ.

“Grace for seasonable (or timely) help.” (Heb. iv. 16),
(*Darby's Translation*).

“An Advocate with the Father.” (1 John ii. 1, 2).

THERE is an old saying, and a true one, that “A fence at the top of the cliff is better than an ambulance at the bottom.”

The epistle to the Hebrews treats of the priesthood of Christ.

The first epistle of John opens up His Advocacy.

The former has our weakness in view; the latter is occupied with our sins.

There is another saying amongst men, that “Prevention is better than cure,” and the office of our Great High Priest, “Jesus, the Son of God,” is to maintain us in the place into which His grace has brought us; in other words, it is *preventive*. Seasonable, or timely help, expresses the thought, rather than help in time of need, which would be more on the lines of the Advocacy of Christ. If two persons are crossing a slippery and muddy road, and one falls, his companion renders help in time of need by setting him on his feet again. But if he succeeds in preventing the fall, that is seasonable help.

To come back to the saying first quoted,—the priesthood of Christ may be compared to the fence at the top of the cliff, with a view to the prevention of falls; so that there is no necessity for sin. This should ever be kept in mind. But if, in spite of this provision which God has

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made for our preservation, we still do sin, there is also the ambulance at the bottom: or in the words of Scripture, "These things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous."

The priest is in the presence of God, for in Hebrews we are viewed as journeying through the wilderness, as were Israel of old. But the Advocacy of Christ is the Father's provision for His children, which we surely are, though erring; and possessed of the full blessing which that relationship implies.

Thus all our need is met. As High Priest He understands us fully, and sympathises perfectly. Having Himself suffered all that we may be called upon to pass through (and by reason of His holy character feeling it the more intensely) He is able to render 'seasonable help' in every circumstance of our homeward journey. As Advocate, not merely when we confess, nor even when we sin, but always filling that place and office in the Father's presence, He presents the unchanging value of His finished work on our behalf, His precious blood having made full atonement for all our sins, and being in its abiding efficacy, the only ground of forgiveness.

What a Priest! Well may the apostle exclaim, "Such an High Priest became us!" (Heb. vii 26; viii. 1). What an Advocate! Ever presenting the merits of "His own blood" on our behalf. "Hallelujah! What a Saviour!" Loving to the end (John xiii. 1), and saving evermore them that come unto God by Him (Heb. vii. 25).

S. TURNER.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

VIII.

The Assembly in its Local Aspect.

SIDE by side with the truth of the Assembly as the body of Christ, is the counter truth of the local assembly, the company of believers in any given locality.

Perhaps it might be said that, strictly speaking, there is no declared doctrine of the local assembly, but both the Acts and the Epistles give us many illustrative incidents and historical notices which enable us clearly to see the divine method of ordering these companies of believers. The Lord's own words : "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst" (Matt. xviii. 20), clearly apply to all scriptural assemblings of His people. He will ever be the Centre and recognised Head, who will lead the praises and worship of His saints, as it is also written, "In the midst of the church (assembly) will I sing praise unto Thee" (Heb. ii. 12).

In the beginning the local assembly at Jerusalem and the Assembly, the body of Christ, were one. Every member of that body was, for a brief season at least, a part of the local assembly in that city. Then as these believers were scattered abroad, as Pentecostal visitors returned to their homes, or others were driven from Jerusalem by persecution, as the gospel also was carried to Samaria, and then to the Gentiles—wherever a company of members of

Christ's body was found, there was another local assembly. This was the only way in which separate gatherings were formed. "Two or three" in any given locality were drawn together by the one Spirit, and thus a local assembly sprang into existence. To this others were added, as grace revealed Christ to their souls, and they in turn became partakers of the blessings of the Spirit's baptism, owning the rejected Jesus as Lord.

Thus all was simple. There was no human organisation, no cumbrous ecclesiastical machinery, no sectional membership. He who was recognized as a member of Christ's body in Jerusalem, travelling or going elsewhere, upon making himself known there as one subject to Christ the Head, was at once accounted as one of them. He had found his own company. From an early period letters of commendation were given to such brethren, that they might be accredited in places where they were personally unknown (Rom. xvi. i. 2; 2 Cor. iii. 1; Acts xviii. 27). But this was all. There was no "dismissing a member" from the church in Ephesus, that he might "join" the church in Philippi. If a known member of Christ's body in Ephesus, he was gladly acknowledged as such in Philippi when properly attested.

As one goes over all this, how the conviction is forced upon the soul that Christendom has got far indeed from the simplicity of early days! And that very fact leads us to inquire: Is it possible now to act just as they did then?—

when love was warm, and ere evil and pernicious doctrines had honeycombed what should have ever been in an outward way "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii: 15). The answer is that all this declension and failure was foreseen by the Holy Spirit, and directions clearly given how to proceed when such unhappy ruin should have come in. In Acts xx., where Paul delivered his farewell address to the elder brethren of the Ephesian assembly, he warned them of the very things we have been considering; but at the close he simply says, "*I commend you to God and the Word of His grace.*" God's Word therefore is all-sufficient, whatever the cold-heartedness and backsliding that may be prevalent.

What course, then, are we directed to take when such evil days have come? Build sects, walled about with iron creeds and buttressed by human regulations? Not at all. What then? Go back to "that which was from the beginning." Find out how things were at the first, and act on what the Word of God makes known.

But shall we not then be literally swamped by unholy errorists of every description? This does not necessarily follow; for the same Word clearly tells us who are to be accepted for communion, and who are to be refused Christian fellowship. We are called to receive all whose doctrines and ways give evidence that they are members of Christ, and subject to Him as Lord and Head. If a man is not sound in his teaching, he *may* be a member of Christ but he

is not subject to Him, and is not to be received till the evil is judged. And the same applies to moral questions. One who has fallen into unholy ways may after all, be a believer whose failure is but temporary; still we dare not receive him in that state. We must wait till we see the evidence of his subjection to Christ in the judgment of his sin.

This is largely ignored in Christendom generally, which has become like a great house in which valuable and common vessels are all mixed up together. If a man would be a "vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use" he is called to purge himself from this mixture, by separating himself from it. He is then to find fellowship among similar separated ones, and to "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. ii. 19-22); and so, walking together, holiness and truth are maintained. If companies in different places are similarly gathered they occupy the same position, and thus, in principle, go back to "that which was from the beginning."

To do so involves no pretension. It is not "rebuilding the Church." It is owning the ruin of the Church and, in simplicity "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. iv. 3). Difficulties may and will arise. Troubles will come up. Sorrows will have to be faced. But if there be a cleaving to Christ and His truth, the Word of God will be found all-sufficient to meet every case that appears.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

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ODDITY.

WHAT is oddity ? The Century Dictionary says : "The quality of being odd ; singularity ; strangeness ; whimsicality ;" but it also reminds us that *odd* may mean "singular in excellence ; unique ; sole ; hence, peerless."

Now I am disposed to think that oddity is the great lack of the day ; yet it is the pressing need. This is the one thing we all shrink from ; consequently we are all like peas in a pod, we all walk in the same rut, we adopt the same lingo.

Do not misunderstand me. The oddity I mean is not the assumption of something ridiculous, or different from everybody else, with the express purpose of becoming odd ; but rather that which is the natural sequence of an uncompromising fidelity and an unswerving adherence to vital principles that make for truth, righteousness and manhood.

A prosperous traveller in the city quite recently fulfilled an appointment, after which his commercial friend said to him, "Will you have a smoke ?" offering him a cigar.

After respectfully declining upon the ground that he did not indulge in smoking, the friend immediately said, "Oh, very well, come and take a drink with me."

"I do not drink, thank you," was the reply.

"Dear me, well let us go to the theatre together to see a good play."

"It is exceedingly kind of you, but really I never attend theatres."

"What an *odd* fellow you are," he replied, and soon after made an excuse to leave him.

Many young fellows do as others in questionable and unquestionable things simply because they do not like to appear odd. There is a great need of consecrated individuality.

I am positively convinced that in Christian circles and especially in the sphere of the Church of Christ, the man or woman that God can use to the utmost must necessarily appear odd. Christ was considered so when here upon earth. It was so with the apostle Paul.

An honest, unassuming, faithful obedience to the Holy Spirit and the Word of truth, daring to go all the way with God, and to trust Him implicitly must, in the course of things, make one odd, because the natural order and run of things is not on that line in any sphere. I believe when God can find, among His saved men, some who at all costs will follow Him fully, like Joshua and Caleb, in spite of majorities to the contrary, He will use them mightily. Alas! we pull up at certain points, we delay when we should go forward, we hold when we ought to give up something God is asking of us, not because it is wrong but to test our love to Him. We shirk the offence of the Cross, and refuse its deeper work within us.

Who will be an odd man wholly and solely for Christ's sake? Who, with no selfish motive, with no carnal ends to gain, will dare to "go

... bearing His reproach," running the risk of appearing *odd in the religious world*? If you stay to count the cost, you may delay or even refuse it. It requires a holy dash, without staying to reckon the cost. Your trusted friends will think you strange, and perhaps charge you with hypocrisy. They will tell you that for years they have gone on with God, and why should you disturb their peace and comfort? If you are a preacher, you may be boycotted from some pulpits. You will be thought narrow, one who has no large views of life, unpractical. God has had such men: John the Baptist was one. Savonarola was another. Luther may be numbered among them. God is saying, "Who will go for Us?" Shall we reply, "Here am I, send me!"

H. T. CHILVERS, in *The Sword and the Trowel*.

THE GOSPEL AND THE PREACHER.

TO preach the Gospel is to carry out the command of the risen and victorious Lord.

Paul the Apostle owed such a debt to others that he said, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." Immediately after his conversion it is on record: "He straightway preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God."

I venture to say that the preaching of the Gospel is the one great concern of God Himself

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and is before all else. There could be nothing greater than to tell the love of God to man. By the Gospel God has put Himself into direct touch with man, thereby making known His gracious terms for the forgiveness of sins.

“And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?”

God not only sends the preacher but gives him the message. Our blessed Lord began this great work Himself by calling to Him the twelve disciples “that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach.”

I believe they were so fully instructed by Him in private on the mount, that they were well equipped for service. Jesus sent them forth and they were even told what to say. “As ye go, preach saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Freely ye have received, freely give.”

At this time their mission was limited to the Jew. Their instructions were: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

But since the death and resurrection of Christ the scope of the Gospel is unlimited. The command from the risen Saviour is, “Go ye therefore and disciple all nations.”

Christian men of gift as teachers have been known to say that they coveted the gift of the evangelist, as if there could be no greater.

Heaven itself goes into an ecstasy when sinners are bowed at the feet of the Saviour, confessing Him Lord.

Heaven is all attention when the claims of Christ are upheld by the preacher in Holy Ghost power.

How shall we describe an evangelist? All speakers cannot be said to be evangelists. An

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evangelist is one who has power with God to move the hearts of men, and who realizes that Christ has claims over men, which he presses home on the conscience. Yet with a heart big and tender, he warns them of judgment to come if they refuse to bow to Christ.

Every quality and talent he possesses is placed at the service of his Lord. As the Spirit of God has complete control, the preacher is superior to himself, and he closes in upon his hearers with a direct and final appeal. With loving persuasion he pleads with them to yield to Christ, beseeching them even with tears to be reconciled to God, and as the Spirit lingers, hearts are touched and won.

Let our hearers see that we want them for Christ, and plead with them in the spirit of the servant sent out with the message, "Compel them to come in that my house may be filled."

If many are not called to preach, all have the privilege to

SUPPORT THE PREACHER BY PRAYER

especially on Lord's Day evening, when thousands go forth to preach the Gospel of Christ on land and sea. Let our requests cover the whole Gospel field. Distance is no barrier to God. He hears and answers prayer, so count it an honour to pray for the preacher.

I have just read in *The Bond of Peace* an account of the preaching of the Gospel by the late D. L. Moody in the East end of London. Five thousand men took possession of the hall with the intention of doing their utmost against God's servant and defying the Spirit of God. God sustained His servant in power, and as the preaching proceeded the Spirit of God through

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the preacher had the audience in His grip. The men were spell-bound, as the evangelist drove home the claims of Christ to their consciences. A visible change took place in that vast company. The men were unable to do what their wicked hearts had planned. The power of God was so manifest that their defiant wills were broken and their hearts subdued; and as the preacher gave out the closing hymn he ordered the ushers to open the doors so that every man who desired might leave during the singing. But the company rose and sang and sat down again. Not a man left his seat, so great was the power of the Gospel. In response to a final appeal by the preacher five hundred men, their faces bathed in tears of repentance, rose to their feet to signify their acceptance of Christ as their Saviour. So ended a time of great blessing. Glory was brought to Christ; the battle was won. Such a Gospel is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

R. M. SMITH.

"HE PREACHED CHRIST." (Acts ix. 20)

Go on preaching Christ, my brother,

Go on preaching Christ !

Times and scenes and men are changing,

Hearts diverting, minds arranging,

Is it worth your while exchanging ?

Go on preaching Christ !

Go on preaching Christ, my brother,

Preaching only Christ !

Many causes seek your powers,

Claim your wisdom, fill your hours:

Would you see the drops or showers ?

Go on preaching Christ.

Go on preaching Christ, my brother,

Ever only Christ !

Tempting are the spoils of battle:

Critics with their modern prattle,

There's no time for tittle-tattle:

Go on preaching Christ .

A. G. B.

“LEFT”!—WHY?

THE little word is suggestive of melancholy reflections to every superintendent of a Sunday School. Our principal concern now is with the teachers opposite whose names from time to time this word is found.

Left! Why? Because the work was commenced in his own strength, and he soon became tired. In this case the person entered unthinkingly into the responsible position of a Sunday School teacher. It did not strike him that it required any particular exertion. It never occurred to him that for such a simple work as teaching a few children, so powerful an instrumentality as the energy of the Holy Ghost was needed. And so he soon found himself unequal to what he had undertaken, and dropped away. And what else could we expect? We cannot hope that men will thrive apart from God, or that He will honour the intentions or the toil of any who do not give Him His proper place.

Left! Why? Because he grew tired of the sameness of the work. Sunday after Sunday there were the same dull and heavy boys. Very little progress did they make; very little variety was there in the school routine. Our teacher first grew discontented, then tired, and at last he went away. And yet the children were not altogether so dull but that he might have not only succeeded in

interesting them, but in interesting himself with them. Some of those boys have turned out very well under a teacher who took pains with them, who did not spare himself ; for he had a right good heart for his work. But this teacher had neither patience nor energy, and so he left.

Left! Why? Because he was offended. Some of his class were moved up. He was not consulted in some arrangement that was made. He thought someone was put above him, and his pride was hurt. And because of this he left : to gratify his own vanity he deserted his Lord's work, and by trying to make himself something, he became worse than nothing. It never struck such an one that the interests of the School were to be placed above all personal considerations ; that the Lord's people are, or ought to be, on active service, and should therefore think of the service and not of themselves ; that in the School as well as elsewhere a Christian must be content to take the lowest room. If you ever feel inclined to become a deserter on this account, think how very sad a spectacle you must present in the sight of God. He sees you as one who prefers a position of honour amid his fellow-men, to one in the vineyard and the sight of the Most High ; as one who would rather allow souls to perish than abate one jot of his dignity ; as one neither knowing nor practising the example of Christ. What have we, as hard-working labourers, to do with earthly honour or earthly

praise ? To the future, and the future alone, should we look for position and reward, for *then* every man shall have his praise of God.

Left ! Why ? Because he got married, and thought his wife had more claim on him than God. Until he married he was a most excellent and regular teacher ; but after that he first became irregular in the hour of attendance ; then he was absent about once in three weeks, and then he “left.” How can we hope to be blessed in our new relationships of life if we allow them to make us less active for the Lord than we were before ? Is there not much reason to suppose that the Lord will reckon with us in the very quarter in which we sin, and that we shall have no real, no abiding blessing in that which we are making a hindrance to ourselves and to the work of the Lord ? We cannot forget what was said of one who made this very excuse ; “I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.”

And thus we might go on, giving reason after reason for all these melancholy entries in the rolls of our Sunday Schools : but we forbear. We hope earnestly that what we have said may help to keep some of our readers steady to their posts and work.

However voluntary our work may be, our responsibilities are not voluntary, but are on us, whether we will or no. We possess no power to discharge ourselves from the warfare in which we are engaged.

But, surely, far above any sense of responsibility should be the devotion of love. You cannot bring your mind to leave the Shepherd's lambs if you love the Shepherd Himself. Who can tell what mischief might befall them if you are unfaithful—and if they be “left”?

Adapted.

VISIONS IN QUIET PLACES.

THE visions that have meant most to men and through them to their fellows have come to them in quiet places.

We have a striking illustration of this described in *The Early Life of Hudson Taylor*. Regarding his consecration, he says:—“Not many months after my conversion, having a leisure afternoon, I returned to my chamber to spend it largely in **communion with God**. Well do I remember the occasion, how, in the gladness of my heart, I poured out my soul **before God.**”

“Truly,” says his biographer, “it was an hour that left its mark on life, an hour in which the soul began to apprehend that for which also it was apprehended by Christ Jesus. The lad who closed his door that day to be **alone with God**, was a very different being from the lad who rejoined the family circle some hours later; a purpose and a power possessed him unknown before. He had given himself to God. His offering had been

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accepted, and he knew not for what special service the Lord had need of him ; he knew that he was no longer his own, and must be ready for the call whenever it might come."

In that revealing and revolutionising booklet, *The Life that Wins*, by C. G. Trumbull, there is an arresting phrase, pregnant with suggestion : "Alone in my room, I prayed it out with God."

From that divine interview, he tells us, he came forth to face the world with a new Christ. He explains : "What I mean is this,— I had always known that Christ was my Saviour, but I had looked upon Him as an external Saviour. One who did a saving work *for* me from the outside, as it were. One who was ready to come alongside and stay by me, helping me in all that I needed, giving me power and strength and salvation. But now I knew something better than that. At last I realized that Christ was actually and literally within me ; and even more than that, that He had constituted Himself my whole life (save only my resistance to Him), my body, mind, soul, and spirit ; my very self."

B. Mc C. B.

 THE RED HEIFER.

THE blood of the paschal lamb was not only the pledge of salvation from death and the destroying angel, but was also the distinctive mark of separation from Egypt. By it, the people of Israel were sanctified or separated

unto God, in the same way as the believer is now separated from the world and unto God by the blood of Christ.

From His own people Jehovah required absolute purity of life and conduct. Their walk was to be unblemished and free from sin: the slightest thing might defile them, and precaution must be taken accordingly. With the human element present, however, defilement was inevitable, and indeed in some cases, it was even a matter of necessity. The contamination caused by contact with a dead body, or a bone, or by the digging of a grave (all typifying the dead things of the world) were all, of course, absolutely essential.

Once defiled, approach to God was impossible until the defilement had been cleansed away, and Jehovah graciously made provision for this in the ordinance of the red heifer. The children of Israel were to bring to Moses and Aaron a red heifer, without spot or blemish, and upon which the yoke had never come.

Without spot or blemish—the animal was to be pure, clean and undefiled, free from every mark of bruise, disease or disfigurement, perfectly developed and proportioned. In these respects the heifer beautifully typified the sinless nature and character of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we are tempted, our desires go out in response to the temptation, and the sinful nature answers to the call of sin, but in that blessed One, the allurements, attractions and delights of the world and the temptations of the evil one found nothing to respond to their call.

Upon which the yoke had never come.—This qualification admirably portrays in type the

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Lord's freedom from the galling yoke of sin, which every member of the human race bears from childhood to the grave.

The animal was taken without the camp and slain before the face of Eleazar the priest, even as Christ also suffered without the camp. The blood was taken and sprinkled seven times directly before the tabernacle, in token of the value of the slain sacrifice, and then the whole animal—skin, flesh and dung, and even the fat and the blood—was consumed to ashes, (speaking, of course, of the consuming fire of God's judgment, through which the Lord Jesus Christ passed at Calvary). Into the burning were cast scarlet, cedar-wood and hyssop, the significant types of the glory of man, and human nature at its extremes of best and worst. The cross was the end of everything pertaining to the flesh, and the believer now makes nothing else his boast.

The ashes of the heifer were gathered up and laid in a clean place without the camp—a memorial of the sacrifice which had been consumed. The defiled Israelite, rendered unclean by contact with dead things, was sprinkled with the ashes mingled with water.

To the believer the ordinance is full of significance. The slightest contact with the world and the things of the flesh defiles the child of God and hinders communion. God, however, not only saves but keeps; and has graciously made the necessary provision for cleansing. The Christian having committed sin or contracted defilement in the daily walk, the Holy Spirit convicts of sin and then, when conscience has been awakened, brings the

memory of Calvary (the ashes) and cleansing through the Word (the water). As the Lord so clearly explained in John xiii., once bathed (*i.e.*, loosed from sin through the new birth), the only need is for the daily washing of water by the Word. Regeneration has taken place once for all: future cleansing comes from the application of the Word of God by the Spirit Himself.

May God give us tender consciences and keep from defilement in the contaminating world through which we pass!

F. A. TATFORD.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

UPTON PARK.—We are, unfortunately, acquainted with several persons of the type to which you refer. They seem to be eaten up with conceit, yet their ignorance of the Scriptures is colossal. They will pour forth a flood of words in what they call "testimony" if anyone will listen, but it is hard to get them to converse courteously with their fellow-Christians over the Word of God. They are scornful of those who, instead of being taken up with "faith-healing" and "tongues," prefer to set their minds on "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth." The words of the aged patriarch may well define our feeling and attitude with regard to such: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united" (Genesis xlix. 6).

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FALLEN FROM LOVE.

WE read how the Christians of Galatia had fallen from *grace*, through lending a too ready ear to Judaizing teachers. But the fall of those at Ephesus seems to have been still more serious. They were bidden to remember whence they had fallen: they had fallen from *love*.

Time was, when they walked in all the freshness of first love, love to the Lord and to all the saints. At Colosse this was a shining feature in those who constituted the assembly (Col. 1. 4), but at Ephesus it appears that the fine gold was soon dimmed, and the exhortation to "walk in love" and to be "kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another" was needed at a comparatively early stage of their history. By the time John had his vision of the Shining One who walked among the seven lampstands, their first love had been definitely lost.

They had not lost their godly *hate*. They still hated those Nicolaitan practices which were so hateful to Christ Himself. But the *love* which once marked them had faded away. We conclude from this that it is easier to retain our hate than to continue in our love. Do we not find evidence of this to-day? Are there not Christians who are one in their hate of all that is hateful to the Lord, antagonistic to His Word, derogatory to His glory, and

opposed to His truth? Yet it cannot be said even by the most charitable, that they are marked by fervent *love*, by tenderheartedness towards one another, and a readiness to forgive. Is it love to ferret out evil things and uncover them for party purposes? Is it love to emphasize the bad and overlook the good? Is it love to be perpetually at strife with one another and to prolong ancient feuds? Does not 1 Corinthians xiii. teach us something very different?

If it be affirmed that it was love to Christ Himself that they of Ephesus had left, the reply is that it is not so stated. Love to Him and to His saints cannot be divorced. A well-known "New Translation" gives as a rendering of Rev. ii. 4: "You have given up loving one another as you did at first," and there is nothing in the text that makes it possible for us to say that this is not its meaning.

Love is the very nature of God. It is the atmosphere of His paradise, where all are "holy and without blame before Him in love." Christ, the Tree of life, will be the sustainer of that holy scene, and He will sustain it in *love*—eternal love.

We can well understand the prospect then, held out to the "overcomer" at Ephesus. He would be marked by individual recovery of what had collectively been lost (for this is the thought of the "overcomer" in Rev. ii. and iii.), and the *love* wrought in his soul by the Spirit as His fairest fruit (Gal. v. 22) would

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find its holy and suitable environment for ever in the paradise of God, drawing its everlasting nourishment from Christ, the Tree of life.

Oh, blessed culmination of the love divinely wrought here in the souls of those who once were "hateful, and hating one another." Oh, triumph of grace!

May God grant us, in His mercy, to overcome. If love has been lost, it may be regained. And the way to regain it is to be much in secret with Him whose love to us we know and who alone can bring us, even now in spirit, to the fair land where love has its birth.

H. P. BARKER.

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"HOW can the Lord Jesus Christ think of me, and care for me, and listen to my prayers and answer them, when He has so many millions to think of at the same time? I cannot understand it, and it troubles me a great deal."

So wrote a true, but weak, believer to me not long ago. My reply was "I am like you in one respect. I cannot *understand* how the Lord can do it. It completely baffles my understanding. But I believe it and so, unlike you, I am untroubled."

I was invited to tea with a dear old man and his wife in Scotland. In the course of our conversation I asked him as to the size of their family. He could not remember, and turned

to his wife for help. "How many children have we, dear?" he asked.

"Surely you have not forgotten," she replied, "we have thirteen." And she knew the names of them all and the names of their wives or husbands and of more than forty grandchildren. She was as interested in each as though there were only one.

"I cannot understand how she did it" says the mother whose whole heart and life is wrapped up in one solitary child. Quite so: but the mother's heart expands as her family grows, and there is room in it for them all.

And who shall set a limit to the heart of the Lord? Every one of His sheep has a place within it. He calls His own sheep by name, He tells us. He knows them, not in the mass, but individually, so that each of them can say "He is *my* Shepherd; the Son of God loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*."

Fear not, Christian, for—

"His watchful eye shall keep
Thy pilgrim soul among
The millions of God's sheep."

And no detail of your life is too small for His notice. When He told His disciples that the hairs of their heads were numbered, He meant it. And if you will have it that His language was figurative, be it so. But it simply means that those details of your life that are too insignificant for your notice do not escape His.

J. T. MAWSON.

EXALTATION AND SUFFERING.

(2 Cor. xii).

THERE were times when Paul, a man of great spiritual experience, was beside himself to God. He saw visions, and the unseen world was very real to him. The facts of the Gospel were learned in this way and he published them first-hand. His doctrine of "man in Christ" was the outcome of exalted moments in paradise. He "knew a man in Christ." The heavenly light revealed to him the work of redemption, which begins with a man full of sin and transforms him into a man full of Christ.

This wonderful scheme, which is God's purpose for every Christian, was revealed to Paul so vividly that for him it was an ever present and abiding fact. He saw himself associated with Christ in "a new creation" where all things are of God. The flesh had no part in it, yet Paul, as "a man in Christ" was there. "Of such an one" he says, "will I glory." Other things he saw and heard which could not be expressed in human language. The natural eye had not seen them nor had the well trained ear "heard the things which God has laid up for them that love Him." But God had revealed them to Paul by His Spirit.

Descending to earth, however, was for him a painful process. God in His wisdom deemed it necessary that Paul should be given a thorn in the flesh, "the messenger of Satan to buffet" him, lest he should be unduly elated or puffed up by these wonderful communications. This buffeting was not the normal conflict with the adversary in fighting the Lord's battles, but was

directed against Paul himself. In wrestling with the powers of darkness, the apostle was prepared for blows, but these personal "pinpricks" were unexpected and humiliating. He therefore besought the Lord thrice to take them away, but the answer was: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Naturally one would think that an eloquent tongue and a sound body were needful in preaching the Gospel. But Paul was reduced to weakness, and made to appear contemptible whilst engaged in this service. Hence, by a painful experience, he learned that it is not human might or power that wins the Lord's battles.

Christ Himself was crucified in weakness, but LOVE TRIUMPHED nevertheless. His strength was made perfect through weakness at the Cross, and the Lord's work is still carried on in the same way. The thorn in the flesh remained and Paul eventually rejoiced in his weakness in so far as it made him more efficient in the Master's service. "Most gladly therefore" he says, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me: . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong."

We are *sober* practical men whose feet never leave the immediate neighbourhood of the earth. We may have exalted moments; yet most of our lives are spent in the valley. But experience "on the mount" would brighten our lives and inspire us with hope and courage, whilst the common things of every day life would become transfigured in the afterglow. We should learn

"How all things shine in light divine
For those who've seen His face."

The unfolding of God's purpose to the Christian makes him strong to suffer. He is strengthened unto all longsuffering with joyfulness. Abounding in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, he triumphs even in sorrow.

W. TAYLOR.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

IX.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

BAPTISM is the initiatory ordinance of Christianity. It expresses subjection to the Lordship of Christ.

I do not propose here to enter into a discussion as to the subjects or mode of baptism, but to press upon the reader the distinctive instruction of Paul as to the lines of truth exemplified by, or connected with, baptism unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. For in the revelation of the Trinity we have Christianity in its essence. God so loved the world that He gave the Son, who became man, and in the power of the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God for our salvation. This is the grand fundamental truth each baptized one is called upon to defend, if need be, at the cost of his life.

In baptism Christ's death is set forth in symbol. He, in amazing grace, because of our sins, bore on the cross the awful baptism of divine wrath, that we might enjoy for ever the living favour of the God of all grace. This is

pictured as the baptized one is immersed in the water. Every baptism is thus a fresh reminder of what we owe to the Lord Jesus. Like the communion supper, it sets forth His death (Rom. vi. 3).

Secondly, it pictures our death with Him. If He died beneath the judgment of God for sin, it was as taking our place; so we, in this ordinance, are "buried with Him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. vi. 4). For the baptized one to be living a careless, worldly life is a shameful thing. If baptised to death, it is that you should daily own in a practical way that you have done with the world, and are severed from its follies and all its ways through identification with Christ in death, and now living on the resurrection side of the tomb, called to walk in accordance with the new life in Christ risen.

Thirdly, baptism answers to a soldier's donning the regimental uniform: "For as many of you as have been baptized into (or unto) Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). This is not to say that all the baptized are truly Christ's. That would be a grave error indeed. But he who has been baptized unto Christ, has thereby taken upon him the badge of subjection to Christ. A man, on being recruited for the army, is a soldier the moment he signs the articles. But the uniform marks him out as such. Even so baptism is the putting on of Christ and owning Him as Lord.

Closely connected with this is the fourth proposition: Baptism is "for the dead." "Else

what shall they do who are baptized for (or over) the dead [ones]; if the dead [ones] rise not at all, why are they then baptized for the dead [ones]?" (1 Cor. xv. 29). Here it is not baptized for a dead Christ, as some would have it; because the word rendered "dead" is plural in each instance. Neither is it a vicarious baptism by living persons on behalf of others who have died unbaptized. This is a foolish and hurtful heterodox notion maintained by Mormons and other evil sects. But it is simply that each baptized one, since the first generation of Christians, has been, by baptism, filling up the ranks, taking the place of those who have died in the service of Christ. We are *all* baptized for the dead. We have taken their vacated places, and we are now called upon to fight the Lord's battles in their stead. If there were no resurrection, this would be folly. We might better enjoy the world while it lasts, knowing that we must soon depart and then eternal unconsciousness follow! But, in view of resurrection, we take the place of Christ's soldiers, even though we "stand in jeopardy every hour" (verse 30; and note the following four verses).

Let me ask you who read these pages: Is this indeed what baptism means to you? With many, I know, it is merely a *form*. With others, it is a matter of *duty*, a command to be obeyed in a legal spirit. But to the instructed Christian it is a sweet and precious privilege, setting forth what Christ has suffered for our redemption, our identification with the blessed Saviour in His death, and the acknowledgment of His Lordship in the daily life.

If it does not mean, or has not meant all this to you, your place is on your knees in self-judgment and humiliation of soul, seeking grace to turn in singleness of heart from all that is of the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—and to yield yourself unreservedly unto Christ, as one alive from the dead, who can never forget that the Red Sea of judgment rolls forever between you and the world that crucified Him. He is worthy of your highest, best service. He gave Himself for you, and thereby purchased you, spirit, soul and body, for His glory. Take heed that you do not defraud Him of the fruit of His bitter cross.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Apart from the historical accounts of its institution in the first three Gospels, Paul is the only New Testament writer who communicates anything to us on the precious theme of the Christian's "forget-me-not" feast—the Lord's Supper. Yet of such importance is it, that he received a special revelation from heaven concerning it. This he passes on for our learning in the great Church epistle, 1st Corinthians. This letter has well been called "the Charter of the Church," because of the fulness of its instruction in all matters pertaining to assembly life. After Romans it is, I believe, the most important portion of the New Testament for young believers to become well-grounded in. It should be read and re-read until thoroughly familiar with every part of it, and till it controls the reins and the heart.

To chapters x. and xi. we turn for truth in connection with the memorial feast. In chapter

x. we have "the Lord's Table" and in chapter xi. "the Lord's Supper." We need to apprehend the true character of the Table, ere we can properly enter into the blessing of the Supper.

Three tables are brought before us, each standing for a distinct fellowship or communion. In verse 18 we are told that "Israel after the flesh" "are partakers of the altar," which Malachi calls "the table of the Lord (Jehovah)" —see Mal. i. 12. The heathen are partakers of "the table of devils (or demons)," while Christians are partakers of the Lord's table (verse 21).

It is not right for any particular company of Christians to claim that they alone have the Lord's table. Every table spread with bread and wine upon it in remembrance of the one offering of the Lord Jesus on the cross is His. There may be persons received there who should not be, and some excluded who have divine title to participate; but it is the Lord's, nevertheless, and He will judge accordingly. His table may be connected with unscriptural practices and teachings, but it remains His still; and He takes note of every infringement of His rights and authority, and of every unholy thing linked with the table that, in symbol, sets forth His death. It is not incumbent on any one to select one of the many companies of believers in Christendom, and decide which one possesses the Lord's table. What we are responsible to do is to see that we are identified with those who are gathered together in a scriptural way and who observe the supper of the Lord "as it is written."

The symbolism of the table is explained in verse 16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread (or, loaf) which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" This is divinely simple, and in full accord with the words of the Lord Jesus when He instituted this feast of love. At His table we remember Him in death. The cup and the loaf, apart, tell of death accomplished, as when the blood is separated from the body.

A whole loaf upon the table would seem to be indicated by the next verse: "For we being many are one bread (loaf) and one body, for we are all partakers of that one loaf." The bread then symbolizes not only the actual body of the Lord given for us upon the cross, but it also pictures His mystical body, to which all believers belong. We express, in partaking of the loaf, our fellowship with one another, as well as individual communion with the Lord. But this must be in separation from evil, as verse 21 plainly teaches.

In the next chapter the mind of the Spirit is occupied with the supper itself rather than with its symbolism as in chapter x. In verses 23 to 26 we learn that Paul had received a special revelation regarding the Supper, yet fully agreeing with the accounts given by the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke; only that the thought of the Lord's return is added to the remembrance of Him in His death: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till He come*." Thus are the cross and the glory linked together for faith, and ever kept before the soul in this observance of the Lord's Supper.

The word rendered "show" is often translated "preach" in the New Testament. Every celebration of the eucharist (as the early Christians loved to call this feast—a word meaning *thanksgiving*) is in itself a sermon. It is a proclaiming of the Lord's death: and were there more holiness, and consequently more power with it, we might often expect to see 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25 fulfilled when we are thus gathered together.

Some of us will never forget such an instance a number of years ago in Sacramento, California, when an unconverted Japanese was present. We had barely replaced the bread and cup upon the table, before this heathen man rose to his feet in great emotion, and burst out in prayer, about as follows: "O God, I all broke up to pieces. I, a poor sinner. For long time, for one whole year, I fight You hard—but here I see Your people eat the bread, drink the wine, that show how Jesus He die for sinners. O God, I can fight no more—I all break down. I take Jesus; He be my Saviour now!"

And that very day, at his earnest request, he was baptized as owning his personal faith in Christ. For years he has been in fellowship as simply gathered together with others in the name of the Lord. Alas, that such scenes are not more common!

One more point. Never become so occupied with the *form* that you neglect the *spirit* of the Lord's Supper. It is a place for the heart's affections to flow out. Let it ever be an occasion where Christ Himself is before the soul; who has said, "This do for a remembrance of Me."

H. A. IRONSIDE.

A THREEFOLD CORD.

THIS is just a little talk to girls.

If we desire to grow up to be the women that God meant us to be, three things should be true of us: "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." (Psalm cxvi. 8). Let us take the points one at a time and see what they mean to us.

Thou hast delivered my soul from death. Death in the Bible is looked at from two standpoints, physical and spiritual. Physical death is what we meet when we pass a house with the blinds drawn or see a funeral in the street. It is the death of the body and is a direct consequence of Adam's sin. When this takes place it causes cessation neither of existence nor of consciousness. The story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke xvi. proves this. Dives was able to talk and to remember what happened in his lifetime. This death ends in the resurrection of the body.

Spiritual death is much more serious because it refers to the condition of the more important part of us, our souls. A girl who is still in her sins is spoken of in the Word of God as being "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1).

If *you* are still living with your sins unforgiven, you are dead in God's sight. When the prodigal son returned from his sinning in the far country, the father said, "This my son was *dead* and is alive again." What did he mean? Why, that his son was dead as far as his father was concerned, entirely separated from him.

If you are dead in this way, it is possible for you to have life to-day. But if you do not believe that Jesus died and rose again for you, then you have His own words of warning, "Ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24).

If you turn to Jesus He will give you that gift of eternal life spoken of in Romans vi. 23, and then you will be able to say, "Thou hast delivered my soul from death," meaning that that part of you that will live forever is saved by the blood of the Lamb.

Being then alive from the dead, can we also say, *Thou hast delivered mine eyes from tears?*

Does this mean that we shall have no more troubles if we come to the Lord Jesus? Certainly not. We may be called upon to pass through sorrow and suffering, but God will be with us. When Daniel's three friends would not bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's image, they had to go through the fiery furnace. They may have thought that God would save them from this, but He did not. However, when they were there, they found a fourth person walking with them and "the form of the fourth was like the Son of God."

Possibly we shall all be called upon to pass through trials, but we may have the One with us Who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and Who will never ask us to go a single step that He has not first trodden Himself, and so can understand and sympathize.

Do you not want a Friend like that? One Who is able to deliver your eyes from tears. How you would value an earthly friend who could be such a comfort! But such a friend is an impossibility. "The best Friend to have is Jesus."

We can also say of this same Friend, *Thou hast delivered my feet from falling.*

How often our feet get into slippery places and we grieve the heart of our great and loving Friend by our sin!

Have you been continually falling? Have you been constantly grieving God by your sin? Then there is good news. To-day you can say these words with truth: "Hold Thou me up, and *I shall be safe.*" (Psa. cxix. 117). Keep in touch with the Lord Jesus day by day and you have God's word that He is "able to keep you from falling." (Jude 24).

David was kept from falling when he trusted in God. And David's God is just the same to-day.

Can you take the words of Psalm cxvi. 8 upon your lips? Are they true of *you*? The Lord Jesus Christ never changes, and He is "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." (Heb. vii. 25).

MURIEL J. SMITH.

BUTTERFLY OR BEE?

The butterfly will start out in the morning, go out in the garden, light on one flower after another and then return. If you could ask it: "Where have you been?" and if it could answer, it would say "I have seen and heard many things, I have been on many a sweet scented bloom, but have brought nothing back."

A POSTCARD FROM CHINA.

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Sad to say that is the way with some people. They say "I have read forty-five chapters this week." Well, what have you got from those chapters? They cannot write down one thought that the Lord has given them.

Now go to the honey bee and ask, "Where have you been?" "Oh, just to one or two spots. I went to a flower, and went right down into its heart and found a lot of honey there. I brought it back and here it is."

Oh, that God would make us like the honey bee, to gather sweetness and food from the rich stores treasured up in the Scriptures.

A. E. BOOTH.

A POSTCARD FROM CHINA.

ANPING, KWEICHOW; June 11th, 1925.

DEAR SIR,

Before it was barely daybreak on the morning of the 2nd inst., bullets were whizzing everywhere, and our buildings were hit several times, one bullet breaking an upstairs window and penetrating to the far corner of the room. The battle raged for two hours between the military and the brigands, but none of the Christians were injured, though quite a number of civilians were hit and some killed. The text on the CHEERING WORDS Calendar for that day was, "Thou art my hiding-place and my shield." We were able to comfort others with this comfort wherewith we were comforted of God.

Yours in the Gospel for China,

ARNOLIS HAYMAN.

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AN EARTHEN VESSEL.

AN earthen vessel, just of common clay.
Not made for the adorning of some lovely room
To shine amidst its dazzling beauties rare ;
But for the use of homely, hands and eyes
Fulfilling simple, homely, common tasks
Away from curious eyes ;
Perchance affording cool, refreshing draughts
To fainting travellers on life's weary road,
Or pouring water o'er some tired feet
Which need earth's dust removed.
Or else to lie, unwanted and ignored,
Just ready, waiting, for the Master's use.

If by Thy grace I can lay all aside
And simply wait upon Thy will, O God,
Then must my life bring glory to Thy Name.

RUTH D. SMITH.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MANCHESTER.—Why do you write (with quotation marks too!) of being “gathered out” when the Lord Jesus spoke of being “gathered together,” in Matthew xviii. 20? The substitution of the one word for the other awakens a suspicion that you are importing into the passage a thought that is not there. What is referred to is not a position, but an act: not a state of being “gathered out” but an act of gathering together. And we see no reason for changing the “in” of the Authorised

and Revised Versions for the "to" of certain private translations. It is true that the Greek phrase *eis to emon onoma* may be correctly rendered "to My name." But it may with equal correctness be translated "in My name," and we greatly prefer the latter rendering. The preposition *eis* is very frequently used in New Testament Greek with the meaning of *in*. Take Mark xiii. 9. They would not be beaten *to* the synagogues but *in* them. So also in Acts iv. 5, 6: the elders and scribes were not gathered together *to* Jerusalem but *in* it. The construction in these and many similar passages is just the same as in Matthew xviii. 20. The simple meaning of this much misquoted verse is that even two or three of the disciples of Christ may use His Name in prayer, and that when gathered together, (even such a small number as that) may approach His Father as to anything they desire to pray for, Christ Himself being in their midst to lend all the weight and authority of His Name to their petitions.

BATH. We should regard it as profanity of the worst kind to liken the Lord Jesus Christ to one of the demigods of pagan mythology. The ancient Greeks had a notion that their heroes were half divine and half human, something less than their heathen "gods," and something more than mere men. It cannot be too emphatically stated that our Lord Jesus Christ is not like that. He is not, and was not, even in the days of His poverty and humiliation here, one whit less than God. In becoming Man, He did not cease to be all that He eternally was. But He became a real, true Man. Dependence upon God is the glory of manhood, and He, in the perfection of His humanity, became the most dependent Man that has ever trodden the earth. Seven times in Luke, the Gospel which portrays Him in the grace of His Manhood, He is shown to us in the act of praying. But in His Manhood here He was alone. In every other man, sin had

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done its defiling work. At the Cross He, the spotless One, was *made sin* for us; and all the holy judgment due to us was poured out upon Him. Not only did He bear our sins, but by His death He ended our status as men in the flesh before God. Now, as newly 'created in Christ Jesus, we are linked with Him in His risen life. He lives, a real Man, in all the love and delight of His God and Father. And *in Him we live*. His place is ours. We are His brethren, of His order.

CHELMSFORD. It is a common mistake for zealous workers to think that everybody ought to be doing what *they* do. Martha was right in the service which she rendered to the Lord, but wrong in her interference with Mary. Be a *diligent* Martha, by all means; but pray do not be an *interfering* Martha.

PLUMSTEAD. The understanding of prophecy is not a mere matter of study. Preparation of heart and a certain moral condition are necessary. The spiritual lessons of the first half of Daniel must be laid to heart if we would rightly apprehend the astounding revelations of the second half.

BELFAST. You want to know how you may discern among the pleasures of life and your various "hobbies" things that may be a hindrance to your spiritual progress. Two men were passing along a country lane very early one morning. "What a lot of cobwebs!" remarked one. "Yes," replied his friend, "*the dew brings them out.*" He did not mean that the dew produced them, but that it made them manifest. In spiritual things dew stands for the freshness of soul that is the result of the Holy Spirit's work within. If we do not grieve Him by our inattention and self-will He keeps our souls moist with heavenly dew, and this brings out in all clearness the things that hinder. When you are puzzled to know what they are, go to God in prayer, and let the dew that falls upon the soul in His presence bring them out!

WESTCLIFF. The heavier the spread of canvas that a yacht carries the deeper is the keel that it must have. The more your service brings you into prominence, the greater is the need that you should be much in secret with God.

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TALKING WITH.

HOW wearisome, often almost beyond endurance, it is to have people talk *to* you! They pour out a torrent of words, and when you make a remark or two you can see they are not listening, but only waiting, with ill concealed impatience, to continue talking. Perhaps, with a score of things needing attention, they will waste your time by giving you long accounts of persons with whom you have no concern whatever, and if you tell them, in return, about anyone in whom you may be deeply interested, their attention, you observe, is purely formal. It makes you long for an opportunity to rush to your room and ask God to help you to forget every detail concerning the people whose description has been forced upon you.

But how delightful to have a friend who will talk **WITH** you! Some one who will not want to converse about persons whom you have never seen, nor about things in which you have no possible interest, but will find a theme of conversation that draws from you a glad response, and who will *listen* with sympathy and attention as well as talk with consideration.

Now this is what the Word of God does. "It shall talk **WITH** thee." (Proverbs vi. 22). We must, in this passage, distinguish between the "them" of verse 21, referring to the

commandment of a father and the law of a mother, and the "it" of verse 22, which refers to that commandment which is "a lamp" and "light," as verse 23 puts it,—the Word of the Lord.

It talks WITH us. It tells us of wonderful things, holding us breathless with interest, and exciting a response from our hearts, so that we talk back again, in prayer and praise. And how tenderly and sympathetically we are listened to! Our poor, and often ignorant words, poured unto the ear of God, receive an attention that surpasses that which we give to the important words addressed by Him to us.

His Word has this *conversational* quality, if we may call it so. Two beautiful instances of this are given right at the close of the Bible. In verse 16 of its last chapter, the Lord Jesus speaks with the churches. "I am the root and the offspring of David," He says, "and the bright and morning star." Then He pauses for a response, and it comes from His Spirit-taught bride, whose voice is heard in the Christian assemblies (not in the synagogues, for the Church, not Israel, is the bride), saying "Come." The bride, unlike Israel, has the Holy Spirit dwelling with her before the coming of the Lord, and Spirit and bride, with united voice, respond to Him Who has just declared Himself to be the Morning Star. They reply "Come."

A similar response is begotten in the heart of the individual saint by the glowing words

“HE LEADETH ME.”

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of verse 20 : “Surely I come quickly.” The immediate reply springs from the lips of the one who hears, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

This is how the Word talks WITH us. And the reading of our daily portion has not had its full and proper effect upon us unless a response has been awakened in our souls, and we have been sent afresh to our knees to utter it in contrite prayer and grateful praise. “O Lord . . . let me talk with Thee.” (Jer. xii. 1).

H. P. BARKER.

“HE LEADETH ME.”

THERE is melody in this sentence. The heart can sing it, and does. For it enfolds in its short compass of three words the tender pity, the intimate care, the personal love of the Lord to *me*. I am an object of interest to Him ; He has a destiny in view for me, and He does not commit me to another to bring me to it. “HE leadeth me.” Does not that strike a chord in the heart ?

He does not drive me as though I were reluctant to take His way, nor drag me as though He were impatient with my weakness. “He *leadeth* me.” Yes ; His heart is in it. It is Himself that does it, and He does it as only He can.

I called to see a young mother. Her baby boy, the first, was just learning to walk, and she was anxious that I should see how well he

could do it. So, taking his small hand in hers, she led him across the floor. I noticed that she did not make him take long strides that she herself could have taken, nor go the pace that she could have gone. No ; she shortened her steps to his and went as he could go, and steadied his weak effort until the task was done, and then she caught him to her breast and kissed him in the ecstasy of a mother's love.

"That is it," I said. Thus "He leadeth me." And all the tenderness of that love that made Him die to win me is in the way He does it. He knoweth our frame, considers every infirmity and is able to succour. When our steps falter He is near to support. And if we tire in the way He will carry us.

"He leadeth me." I walked away from the house where I had learnt that sweet lesson with a light step and a glad heart that sang a song of praise to the Lord, for I had had a fresh glimpse of His grace, and I felt that the way must be a right way, a path of righteousness, if *He* leads me in it, and that His grace will be sufficient to uphold me to the end of it. Then the eternal embrace of love. What a wonderful Saviour is He !

J. T. MAWSON.

All the grace I got out of my comfortable and easy times might almost lie on a penny, but the good I received from my trials is incalculable. What do I not owe to the fire and the file, the crucible and the furnace, and the Hand that thrust me into the heat ?

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GET YOUR SHOVEL.

The wells that Abraham's servants dug had become choked. Unfriendly hands had filled them with *earth*, and before the water could again spring up within them, this had to be dug out.

The "earth" is not necessarily the "world." The latter is a defiling thing; it corrupts and spots our white garments. Things of "earth," on the other hand are often innocent enough. They are often useful and even necessary.

The more the pity, then, that we should allow our wells of joy to be choked up by things which in themselves are not evil!

The following article, by Miss K. MacPherson, deals with this subject. We trust that the effect of perusing it will be that many a reader will fetch his or her shovel, and throw out the *earthliness* that has been choking the well. Throw it out by big shovelfuls, and sing again the ancient song: "Spring up, O well."

THE water supply of a South African town had for a few years been dwindling. Anxiety increased in the minds of the inhabitants as they saw ruin facing them which they were powerless to avert. Every imaginable plan was tried to tap a new source from far off or near. Neither labour nor money was spared, but in vain.

One business concern after another which had depended on water supply for power had slowed down and eventually stopped working. Families were leaving by scores in search of employment elsewhere. Houses stood empty with no hope of new tenants. Grass grew on streets which had only recently been thronged with traffic. Churches and schools were half empty, though not yet closed. Never before had things been so hopeless; even the most optimistic, who had

for long refused to believe the worst, were forced now to admit themselves mistaken.

The strange situation brought to men's minds with irresistible force the outstanding fact that for want of *one* essential everything else was useless.

Just then, in one day, one hour almost, the dark skies cleared, the outlook was changed, and the process of disintegration and desolation checked. A few words went round from one to another; and lo! dull eyes flashed with interest, limp limbs became strong. Men and women hurried along in one direction, hope and doubt fighting in each heart. The strain was too intense for words. But when they saw water, clear and abundant, issuing from the ground in a field, tears flowed down many faces and gratitude rose even in hard hearts. For the water of life was again within their reach.

How had it come? What had happened? No miracle, though it looked like one. Some barrier which had dammed the underground current, sending it away from them in another direction, had burst and freed the life-giving water to rise up, right at their feet.

For a time they were as "men who dreamed." It seemed too good to be true. The water might soon dry up, leaving them cruelly disappointed. But gradually, certainty took the place of fear; a new-found joy was experienced as pails were filled with the precious gift. Faith in the future once more arose in men's hearts, and set them to work. Soon machinery was whirling cheerily, hands long idle were busy executing orders, which came in rapidly. For the country round them for many miles had heard the good news

and rejoiced too. Hearts were gladdened as homes, which had been stripped and emptied, were replenished anew. Everything took on a new lease of life, and the songs and shouts of boys and girls resounded through the streets as of old. Squalor and disease, which had been lifting their threatening heads, disappeared as the cleansing, health-giving cold water cure was utilized in every department. Nature rejoiced and put on her fine dress, glad in the general joy. Never before had the flowers been so gay or their fragrance so sweet.

All this had been so *near* to them, all the weary time waiting to be tapped; flowing *past* them though they had not realized it. They had been looking elsewhere and *missed it*.

Now they knew, out of the depths of a sore experience, the inestimable value of this great gift of nature, pure water.

Spiritually, something akin to this sometimes comes in the history of a soul. It was so in the following case. In Scotland many years ago, a young man yielded himself to Christ, and for years showed every evidence of having received a rich measure of spiritual power. Fervour in prayer and deep interest in the condition of careless companions characterized him, combined with exceptional joy and inward peace. This was all the more remarkable because his home surroundings at that time were more than usually trying.

By and by he married a Christian woman; business prospered, and most of the trials seemed taken out of his path. One boy was born to them, who grew up a pleasant, affectionate laddie. Neighbours whispered that Peter was

spoilt because he got more of his own way than was usual in these quarters, and had all sorts of things denied to his companions. Most of them were rich in brothers and sisters, while he had none. But the lack gave him no trouble. He was as the apple of the eye to his fond parents, and that sufficed.

Gradually in these years of outward prosperity, a change came creeping over this man. He was an office bearer in the church, and as a matter of course attended regularly. But attendance at the prayer-meeting slackened and by and by ceased entirely. No longer did he find it easy to converse on spiritual things, and public prayer came to be a burden from which he evidently shrank.

Something vital seemed to have dried up in his being. No anxious soul now sought comfort or guidance from him. The joy which had shone out in his face even deteriorated into an easy-going joviality, and occasionally he joined with farmers and business men in a friendly glass at the public house.

In spite of outward forms of religion, his wife slowly fell under the power of drink so completely that her mind gave way, and she had to be confined in an asylum as incurable.

This was a severe blow, but it is doubtful if its effects were very deep. The hardening grip of money-making was upon John Murray, and the finer things in him were benumbed for the time. It may have been, however, that in hours of loneliness he began to be wistfully conscious of something lacking; a lost chord for whose music he listened in vain. But outwardly no sign appeared; only more energy into business;

more pride in his son, in whom now all his hopes were centred. The young fellow in his own way responded, but took no interest whatever in the business. Thinking that a trip abroad would do him good, and make him settle down to real life, the father sent him off to South Africa for a few months. Letters came frequently with descriptions of life and scenery there, showing keen enjoyment on the part of the boy, then one giving the date of his probable return.

A great happiness was in Mr. Murray's heart, and he counted the weeks while watching the papers for news of the steamer's arrival in Glasgow. It had been arranged that Peter should stay with a few friends there before going home.

Then, one morning, a telegram was handed in and opened gleefully in certainty of good news. But an awful change came over his face as he took up the message. His son had developed some fever on the voyage and died on the day of his arrival, in their friends' home.

It looked for a time as if the stricken man would never rise out of his agony of mind. The poor empty heart could find no comfort. God seemed far off, only a name without meaning. Human sympathy availed nothing. Money and business were a cruel mockery and sham, now appearing at their true value.

In these weeks of darkness he was forced to look into his own heart secrets. His inner life lay bare; his ears were opened too, and God spoke again, interpreting both past and present in the light of truth. He saw what a wilderness he himself had made of what was once God's garden. Smitten with deep repentance, the

soul of the man yielded anew to the eternal love, which had for so long been slighted and neglected, and a great peace returned and took possession of him.

The crushing burdens of sorrow were rolled on his Saviour and Friend. The things which had turned aside the living waters and robbed him of their fertilizing power, were flung aside, and the Master of life entered, making all things new.

From that time on, everything was transformed. Money was freely given for the work of the Lord. Business transactions were squared. Everything was lifted on to a higher level, and the whole neighbourhood felt and shared the blessing. There was no doubt either as to the secret of this marvellous renewing. His tongue was loosed as well as his purse. Every faculty seemed charged with abounding power for service of faith and love. Freely he had received, and freely he gave. The fragrance of his life was a continual benediction to many discouraged, weary fellow-travellers on the highways and among the hedges.

As in the case of the South African town, the cure for barrenness and decay was there, close beside him all the time, only waiting to be released, welcomed, and enjoyed for everyday use.

Thou of life the fountain art,
 Freely let me take of Thee;
 Spring Thou up *within my heart*,
 Rise to all eternity.

How little have we thought, when God has sent us one trial, of the many His love has withheld!

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SAILING WITH PAUL.

X.

The Testimony of the Lord.

TO Paul, the testimony committed by the ascended Lord was dearer than life. Faithfulness to it involved a martyr's death, and that he met with a Christlike resignation and calmness of soul that is wonderful to contemplate.

It was his desire that those associated with him in his special ministry should be men of like spirit. Hence his words to Timothy: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God (2 Tim. i. 8). And again he says, "That good thing (or deposit) which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (verse 14).

The testimony of the Lord embraces the corollary of truths connected with Christ risen and glorified. Some of these precious themes we have been briefly examining in the foregoing papers, and we are yet to speak of others, if God will. But what I would now press upon the conscience of each saint who may read these lines is individual responsibility to make known this testimony and hold it oneself, as a sacred deposit, in the power of the Holy Ghost.

There is all the difference in the world between holding particular "views" of justifi-

cation, sanctification, acceptance, the one body, the Lord's second coming, and kindred lines of truth, and maintaining the testimony of the Lord. One may hold the correct view of sanctification and yet not walk in subjection to the Word that cleanses. One may subscribe to scriptural prophetic teaching and not "love His appearing." One may hold the doctrine of the one body and yet remain in human systems that by their very constitution deny it. One may have the right view of eternal life and yet live as if this world were all. But no one can maintain the testimony of the Lord who is not personally a self-judged, humble saint, walking in the truth, holding the Head, and laying hold on that which is really life. Yet to keep the good deposit thus every believer is called ; and there will be eternal loss for all who fail to do so. This cannot be done in the strength of nature. Only as one walks in the Spirit will the needed grace be given.

What Paul calls "the testimony" in 2 Timothy he designates as "the faith" in his first letter to the same devoted young servant. Note his solemn words, and remember they are as truly applicable to you, if a child of God (excepting, of course, the strictly personal element), as they were to Timothy when first written : "This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies as to thee preceding, that thou by them mightest war the good warfare ; holding faith [literally, *the* faith ; *i. e.*, the truth believed] and a good

conscience, which some having put away, have concerning the faith made shipwreck." Now, carefully observe, you can only hold the faith of God's elect in a godly way, as you maintain a good conscience. If you ever put away a good conscience—if you allow yourself to go on with any thing of which your conscience does not approve when instructed by the Word of God—you will lose the faith and make shipwreck of the testimony.

Many people seem to think of doctrinal error as a comparatively small and unimportant thing; but where people give up a line of truth once enjoyed in the Spirit's power, or once controlling heart and life, close investigation will generally prove that moral evil of some character was behind it. When men get out of touch with holiness, they lose their grip of the truth; or, rather, the truth loses power over them. In the third chapter of 1 Timothy the deacons are described as "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (verse 9). This emphasizes what we have just been noticing: there must be activity of conscience if the testimony of the Lord is to be maintained and the good deposit kept.

Further exhortations, addressed to Timothy, each young believer may profitably take to himself; in chapter iv. 6, and in verses 12 to 16: "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister (or servant) of Jesus Christ, *nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine, whereunto*

thou hast attained. . . . Let no man despise thy youth ; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine Meditate on these things ; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy profiting may appear to all. *Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine ;* continue in them ; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." All this is most salutary instruction and must not be overlooked.

I sincerely hope that many young men who read these lines may some day be called of God to preach the Word and declare the testimony of the Lord publicly. If so, I trust the principle laid down in the passages we have been noticing will never be forgotten. "Thyself" first ; then "the doctrine." God wants holy men to serve in holy things.

It is to be feared that many a young man has been unwisely encouraged to preach, because of a glib tongue and pleasing address, who did not have the necessary godliness behind it that would insure success as a winner of souls and a helper of saints. Gift, divorced from piety, may do untold mischief ; but as James Caughey used to say, "a holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God." Where this personal fitness is lacking, there may be brilliant service for a time ; easy-going Christians may applaud and admire ; but the end of it all is likely to be a crash that may

bring many others down with the poor fallen preacher, who was all the time "trafficking in unfelt truth" and whose true condition has at last been exposed.

The testimony of the Lord is like the ark of the covenant which was borne through the wilderness on the priests' shoulders. So should the truth of God be proclaimed by priestly men, who live in fellowship with Him whose testimony it is.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

THE TEST.

VERY interesting are the accounts given in the Bible of the way God's servants are tested before being entrusted with special service for the Master.

In some cases the test is a small one, perhaps hardly recognizable as a test until we see how God judges the results. Who would have thought Gideon's army was being *tested* when he brought them to the water to drink (Judges vii. 5). Yet God judged, by the result of that simple test, those who were best fitted to go forward to the battle!

Many of us in these days are, perhaps, kept back from service for the Master because we fail to pass the test—a test so simple that we do not realize it *is* a test. Perhaps it occurs in our every day life, at home, at school, in the office; and we do know that the little thing *there* that so ruffles us, so tries our patience,—a bit of self-indulgence that has no harm in it—or whatever

it may be, is God's test to see if we are yet ready to be used by Him in some special bit of work He has for us to do.

I have been greatly interested in the big test that came to Joshua immediately after the children of Israel had passed over Jordan. Read carefully the fifth chapter of Joshua, and see all the circumstances which led up to verse ten, where we find it says the children of Israel kept the Passover.

Now note the next verse: "They did eat of the old corn of the land." This would, of course, be very acceptable to them all—but what followed? "The manna ceased"! All the past years they had had an unfailing supply of manna—now they had eaten but once of the food of the land of Canaan (we are not told how they obtained that first supply) and the manna ceased. We read at the end of verse 12 that "they *did* eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."

Joshua was faced with a great host of men, women and children whose food supply had suddenly stopped. All the wilderness journey God had provided manna for their daily need—now that supply had ceased. Certainly there was plenty for their need *in Canaan*; but before they could enjoy that, Jericho—a city "straitly shut up," must be conquered. I think even the generals of our day would feel the burden of such a problem! When we think of that helpless host of women and children and how little training for war the men of Israel had had, we can understand the reason for the solitary walk Joshua took in order to think things out.

How wonderfully God reassures our hearts at

the time of our deepest need! Who has not, in some measure, proved this! Joshua sees a man with a drawn sword in his hand, and at once faces this fresh contingency. If only we followed his example we should often find, as he did, that what looked like a fresh difficulty would prove to be a deliverance. Joshua was determined to know where he stood, so he asked the question, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" He received the reassuring reply, "As Captain of the Lord's host am I come." We can say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

A point that we might well consider is this, how quickly Joshua recognized who this stranger was. He must have had the trained ear that knew the Master's voice. There are times with us when we lose the assurance of His being "for us" because our ears are filled with other sounds and we cannot distinguish His voice.

At once and without question Joshua—very gladly we may be sure—hands over the leadership and the responsibility to the only One capable of bringing them through to victory.

Then comes a very beautiful thought given to me by a friend. We do not find that the Captain at once begins to give directions for service. No! the *first* thing He wants is the homage of the heart. "Put off thy shoes," He says to Joshua, "the place whereon thou standest is holy." Truly this is what the Lord requires first from each of us, the adoration of our hearts.

Then followed the directions for the taking of Jericho. There were no doubts in Joshua's mind as to the outcome. He had passed his test; there only remained for him to go

forward to victory, strong in the Lord and in the power of *His* might.

This was the result of a big test. Joshua was a leader. But do not let us forget the 300 men in Gideon's army. They too passed *their* test, and they too went on to victory. We cannot all be *leaders*, but we can each of us be one of the army if we pass the test.

K. M. IRELAND.

BOOK REVIEW.

"NEW LIGHT ON THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." By F. W. Pitt. The West London Bible Institute, Kensington Park Road, London W. 11, and in U.S.A., the Moody Bible Institute, Chicago. 6d., by post 7d.

Mr. Pitt, as we have discovered by reading other books of his, is no mere compiler or collector of other men's words and thoughts. His contributions to the subjects on which he writes are manifestly the fruit of original study and thinking. His booklet on the deity of Christ, *They Took up Stones to Stone Him*, is a masterpiece; and his *New Light on the Tongues Baptism* should be read by all. We have learned what to expect of Mr. Pitt, and this new book of his does not disappoint us. Does the reader know why, when, and how the truth as to the Virgin Birth of Christ was made known? How many people were in the secret during His life on earth? Did Joseph, His supposed father, make any communication on the subject? Did the Jews *expect* that their promised Messiah would be virgin-born? These, and other questions of great interest, Mr. Pitt not only asks, but answers, and his line of enquiry is illuminating and convincing. If any one has difficulties as to the subject, this booklet is the thing to put in his hands,

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

BUNTINGFORD. If we are guided merely by the preponderance of "authorities" we should have to conclude that in Romans v. 1, Paul wrote the Greek word which means, "let us have" peace, and not the word which means "we have" peace. For this reason the Revised Version gives the former rendering.

We should not, without the very weightiest reasons, disregard the preponderating evidence of the ancient texts. But in the case of this passage such reasons exist. We cannot do better than quote the words of Dr. Brown, in *Fausset's Commentary*. Writing on Romans v. 1, he says:—

"There is another reading of this verse for which the external evidence is so strong that, until lately, we thought ourselves bound to regard it as the true one. It differs only by a single letter from that of the received text; but it converts the indicative into the subjunctive mood, or the declaratory form of the statement '*we have* peace' into the hortatory form '*let us have* peace.'"

After quoting the preponderating evidence in favour of "let us have peace," and remarking that it is considered decisive by such editors as Scholz, Fritzsche, Tregelles, and Green, Dr. Brown continues:

"But . . . there are three *internal* evidences in favour of the received text ('we have peace'), to which, on mature reflection, we feel constrained to yield.

"(1). The sense is beyond all question indicative or declaratory throughout all this section, specifying as matter of fact the various privileges of the justified believer; and if so, it certainly is more natural that the first one should be put in the indicative mood, '*we have* peace,' than subjunctively, '*let us have* peace,' while all the others are specified as matter of fact in the indicative form.

"(2). The testimony of the fathers in favour of the subjunctive form is of very little weight, and is fitted rather to create a suspicion against it, from their tendency to give an ethical and hortatory form to simple doctrinal statements. Chrysostom, for

example, though one of the most accurate of the Greek expositors, entirely misses the sense of this verse, not only throwing it into the hortatory form, but regarding it as an exhortation to cease from sinning. His words are, 'Let us have peace with God,'—that is, 'let us no longer sin'; and Origen, Theodoret, and other Greek fathers go equally far astray in interpreting this verse.

"(3). The interchange of $\bar{o}$ long and $\breve{o}$ short—which is the whole difference between the two readings in the present case, and is technically called *Itacism*—is so common in ancient Greek manuscripts, that the question whether more of them have the one form than the other ought not of itself to decide the question in which form the word came from the apostle himself. And as this is the one ground on which the subjunctive reading has any claim to be received, it ought to give way before the very strong internal evidence in favour of the indicative or declaratory form of the statement. (Accordingly, Lachmann and Tischendorf abide by the received text, of which DeWette, Meyer, and Philippi approve)."

We shall therefore continue to read, "*we have peace*," convinced that this is what Paul wrote.

WORKING. Thank you for your kind words of appreciation. We are glad that you have found spiritual stimulus and help in the pages of *Simple Testimony and Marching Orders*. You are quite right in saying that magazine articles and books are only of value as they lead us to study the Scriptures. To read this magazine, or any other, instead of the Bible, would be a terrible misuse. What is intended to be helpful would become a hindrance. We believe that one of the greatest needs among Christians to-day is diligent, original, thoughtful study of the Word of God itself. This should be accompanied by prayerful meditation. For it is not the amount that we read, but what we understand, what we feed upon, what gets built into our souls, that ministers to our growth and promotes communion with God in secret.

A COLONY OF HEAVEN.

“OUR citizenship is in heaven” says the Revised Version, in its rendering of Philippians iii. 20. A “New Translation” vividly represents in English the saying of Paul by the words “We are a colony of heaven.”

And that is just what, by the grace of God, we Christians are. Not a colony in the sense that Nigeria and Jamaica are colonies of Britain, but in the sense in which we use the word when we speak of “the English colony” in Pekin, in Constantinople, or in any foreign city.

We are a colony of heaven in that we do not belong to earth. We are but sojourners here : *strangers*, because our home is elsewhere ; *pilgrims*, because we are in movement towards our own country. Our Sovereign, our politics, our attachments, our headquarters, our interests are *there*.

The English in Pekin do not mix themselves up with Chinese politics. Nor do Chinamen in England march to the polling booths on election days. They are foreigners in a land that is not their own. Even so is it with us Christians.

We are a colony of heaven in that Heaven is our fatherland. We are “burgesses of the skies,” as a French version puts it ; our names are on the register there (Heb. xii. 23) as native born citizens.

At least one member of the English colony in a foreign capital is his country's ambassador.

Heaven, too, has had its ambassadors on earth. The Apostles were pre-eminently such. Perhaps none to-day can claim as emphatically as Paul did to be an "ambassador for Christ," but Heaven's embassy is still here, and we may regard ourselves as "attached to the Embassy," or employed in connection therewith. An honoured position indeed

Born from above, and heavenly men by birth,
Who once were but the citizens of earth;

* * * *

We are but strangers here, we do not crave
A home on earth, which gave Thee but a grave.

In a foreign capital may sometimes be seen, early in the morning, a fair haired, rosy cheeked English lad with a green baize apron girt around him, diligently polishing the brass fittings on the front door of the British Embassy. He fills but a minor post, but he works away at his task as if he found special pleasure in keeping the brasses bright, and were serving his country by so doing. Sometimes he gets laughed at for his energy by passers-by whose methods are more leisurely, but he smiles, and rubs away, and if one says "You seem busy, my lad," he replies, "Yes, I am *doing my bit*."

Our position in connection with Heaven's Embassy here may be a very minor one. We

may hardly rank as *attachés*. But if it be no more exalted than that of our young friend of the green baize apron, God help us, at least, to be doing our bit, and filling our niche, as those who belong to Heaven !

Let us remember that though one of our leading ambassadors has, contrary to the recognised law of nations, been most outrageously treated here, and even loaded with chains (see Eph. vi. 20), the Embassy is instructed by our Sovereign still to pursue a policy of goodwill to the men of this nether country. And we are all to deport ourselves accordingly. Every member of Heaven's colony on earth is to aim at giving a true impression here of our gracious Sovereign, whose very name is "love."

The Embassy is not to remain here indefinitely. All will be withdrawn at the coming of the Lord. The colony will cease to exist, and those who constitute it will have been recalled to the homeland.

With God's help let us be in practice and manner of life the heavenly men that His grace has made us (1 Cor. xv. 48), so that those among whom we move may perceive that we are not of their race and nation, but "a colony of heaven."

H. P. BARKER.

SAILING WITH PAUL.

XI.

The Coming of the Lord.

SOME time ago I listened to a well-known clergyman giving a lecture upon a recently completed world-tour. He frankly told his audience that he did not believe in the personal pre-millennial coming of the Lord. Yet in candour he felt compelled to make the following admission : Wherever he had found special devotedness among missionaries labouring in distant lands, and inquired what it was that enabled them not to count their own lives dear, but to toil so earnestly for the salvation of the heathen, the answer had invariably come : " Because the Lord's return is near ; I look for Him to come again, and I want to accomplish what I can while waiting for His advent."

This is indeed as it should be. The truth of the second coming of the Lord was the guiding star of Paul's whole life and service as a Christian, and God would have the same true of us.

A century ago, almost total ignorance prevailed among Christians as to the manner and object of the Lord's second coming. To-day this precious truth has been carried into practically every nook and corner of the earth. No thoughtful person, it would seem, could fail to recognize in this the sounding forth

of the midnight cry : “ Behold, the Bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet Him ! ” — though the setting of dates, and confusing the Church’s hope with Israel’s expectations has been used by the enemy also ; for when the Word is not “ rightly divided ” on these two subjects, confusion and uncertainty are sure to result.

The proper hope of the Church is the Lord’s return in person, in the clouds, to raise the dead in Christ and change the bodies of the living believers, who shall “ in a moment ” be “ caught up together ” to meet Him in the air. There are no dates or time-periods connected with this event. The early Christians were taught to wait expectantly for it (see 1 Thess. 1 : 9, 10) ; and it is still our present hope. It is this phase of the coming that is presented in 1 Thess. iv. 13 to the end : also 1 Cor. xv. 51-56, and many other scriptures.

Israel’s hopes are of a different character, and with them the “ times and seasons ” are linked. They were taught to look for the descent of Messiah in great power and glory to the earth, to scatter His foes, regather His chosen people, judge among the nations, and establish His earthly, visible kingdom upon the ruins of all human dominions. Such is the teaching of the prophets ; and Paul shows clearly that all this is not superseded by the Christian revelation : but when the appearing of the Lord to the earth takes place, all the Christians of the present age, or Church period,

previously changed and glorified, will appear with Him in glory as a special bridal company in the day of His triumph. Of this 2 Thessalonians largely treats.

These two stages of the Lord's return are *not* two comings, but one. Only He pauses in the air on His way to the earth, to receive the heavenly saints, to reward each one and apportion to each his place in the coming kingdom, according to the measure of their devotedness in the period of their testimony here. Of this I wish to write more particularly in the next paper, so shall not dwell on it now.

It is often said by objectors to what is called the "pre-millennial coming," that the Lord will not return till He comes as Judge at the expiration of the thousand years' reign of righteousness. To meet this, I want to make several statements which I believe to be incontrovertible.

1. There can be no millennium till Christ comes, because the resurrection of believers takes place *prior* to the millennium, and at Christ's return : consequently there can be no millennium till He returns (Rev. xx : 5, 6 ; 1 Thess. iv. 13-16).

2. There can be no millennium till Christ comes, because Antichrist is to be destroyed at the second advent ; consequently, Christ's return must precede the millennium (2 Thess. ii).

3. There can be no millennium till Christ returns, because Satan is to be bound

immediately preceding the second advent. There can therefore be no millennium till Christ appears (Rev. xx. 1-3).

4. There can be no millennium till Christ returns, because the millennial kingdom is to be the scene of the risen saints' rewards. These get their reward at Christ's second coming; so there can be no millennium till He returns (Rev. xx : 4 ; xxii : 12).

5. There can be no millennium till Christ returns, because Israel must be regathered to their land and purged of their sins before the millennium. But Israel are to be regathered at Christ's second coming; therefore there can be no millennium till Christ comes (Zech. xii ; 10).

6. There can be no millennium till Christ returns, because Gentile dominion is abolished at Christ's second coming; consequently there can be no millennium till Christ returns.

7. There can be no millennium till Christ comes, for the Church age only ends, and the fulness of the Gentiles will have come in, at Christ's second coming. There can therefore be no millennium till Christ comes (Rom. xi).

To these propositions many more might be added, but these are sufficient, I feel certain, to prove the case for any Berean who will "search the Scriptures daily whether these things are so."

But a word of warning ere closing. It is a poor thing simply to hold correct views of the coming of the Lord, if the heart be not

engaged with the blessed Person who is so soon to return. We are called to "wait for God's Son from heaven." If He be not the object of our souls, correct views will avail little to keep us from the power of the world and in the path of devotion to Himself. But if He indeed be ever precious to us, we shall know the truth of what is written: "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself even as He is pure." At the sound of His voice we shall fly to Him as the steel to the magnet. Till then, be it ours ever to be held by the power of His attraction.

H. A. IRONSIDE.

THE CROWN.

"That fadeth not." Oh, glorious crown,
 Though all things here decay.
 "That fadeth not," is ne'er laid down,
 A bright and everlasting crown,
 In that eternal day.

"A crown of glory," "crown of life,"
 Of righteousness divine,
 Of joy supreme, of endless praise,
 Throughout the everlasting days,
 When we with Jesus shine.

A crown to lay at His blest feet,
 Whose due it is alone;
 Glory and majesty and power
 To Him who won in Calvary's hour,
 And shares with us the throne.

S. TURNER.

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD.

(**Ephesians vi. 11**).

GOD be thanked that we have a complete suit of armour divinely provided for our conflict with the devil and his hosts, and we need to put on the whole of it, and to keep it on, for the enemy's attacks are constantly recurring.

The word for "wiles" combines both craft and power, and our foe knows the best weapons to employ, the weakest side to attack, and the favourable moment to deliver the onslaught. Unless we have a due sense of the great superiority of the devil in capacity, skill and cunning, we shall lack a due sense of our need and fail to equip ourselves with the panoply.

Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood (where there would be some equality), but against the principalities, or chiefs, the actual leaders of the various groups of rebellious spirits, "the world rulers of this darkness" (R. V.).

It is in the heavenlies where are all our blessings, and in which, in some real sense, Christians are: the term must therefore have to do with our highest spiritual privilege.

The kingdom of the heavens is on the earth, but the heavenlies themselves are not at all of earth but spiritual.

The "evil day" refers to this dispensation marked by the rejection of Christ, but there are special conflicts and trials that occur in all lives from time to time. The warfare is a prolonged one, and when a battle is over, the war is not.

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After each struggle we must be prepared for the next.

The man of God who came out of Judah (1 Kings xiii. 1), fought a splendid fight of faith, but he failed to "stand"; he sat down under an oak and was killed by a lion.

Beautifully has TRUTH the first place in the armour of God. I must know that what I am resting on is really true, or how can I withstand any attack thereon? Mark, it is *truth*, not facts, or history, for these may, and do, leave out God. Truth never does. The truth is inclusive of all God's revelation to men; and one might as soon expect to get a sum of addition correct whilst leaving out the largest item, as to think one has "the truth" without God and Christ.

To-day all truth is attacked by Satan, and his subtle darts fly thick on every hand. All that has been accepted in the past is questioned: the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the virgin birth, the eternal punishment of the wicked, a literal resurrection. These are the very girdle of truth. God does not ask us to believe absurdities, or anything contrary to the reason He has given; but surely in His revelation there must be much *beyond* our reason, or we might fairly reject it as not being divine.

Be quite sure you have *the truth*; then put it on as a girdle, and let nothing and no one pull it off.

Next, we have the BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which is the external consequence of truth in the life, the practical walk in accord with the truth held. This is a very weak spot with

many to-day, who have much truth, but little to correspond with it in their conduct. This makes one very vulnerable in the breast; for one's affections become sadly chilled. It may be truthfully said that never, since the days of the Apostles, was as much truth known as to-day; but are Christians as devoted, as unworldly, as tender in affection to every fellow-saint as they ought to be? Are not many, in this respect, holding the truth in unrighteousness?

After this comes the FOOT-ARMOUR, making one always ready and alert; for unless properly shod, one can neither stand securely, walk easily, nor fight victoriously. For this *peace* is of the first necessity. The Israelites in Egypt were not fighters but slaves. The Passover was to them, "the gospel of peace"; and they ate it with shoes on their feet, shoes that, as a figure, were never put off, for they never "waxed old," and with them they were always prepared to stand still, to go forward or to fight.

Since the shoes of the Israelites waxed not old and the feet of the younger pilgrims grew and would have been greatly cramped if the shoes had not also expanded, so without unduly pressing such literal details there can be no question that the narrative compels us to assert of the antitype, "the preparation of the gospel of peace," that shoes made of this material do expand as the wearers grow. There are some Christians who think otherwise, and who remain at the most elementary truths of the gospel all their lives, and never enjoy the deep things of God. There are others who think that they have outgrown the shoes; and look down on gospel truths as mere milk for babes.

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Both are wrong. The gospel grows as we grow. As we grow, we find greater depth, greater breadth, and greater length to meet the greater need in ourselves.

The SHIELD OF FAITH is an important item, for the wicked one is the particular spiritual foe it is to counteract.

He throws darts that are fire-tipped, causing, if not caught on the shield, intense pain. Job caught them when he said "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Days of sorrow are peculiarly favourable for these darts; when circumstances appear to confirm the awful suggestion that God does not love or care for us at all. Oh, for the shield of faith; of such knowledge of Him, and His love, seen in the Cross, as nullifies all these efforts of the enemy.

Whenever we are tempted to doubt God's love to us let us ask ourselves two questions; Who hung on that central cross? Why was He there? We shall find thus that the shield of faith catches the doubt.

We take the HELMET OF SALVATION, which is for the head, where it sits very comfortably.

Many people seem to think that this piece of armour belongs to the heart: that is, they make salvation a question of feelings. Put it on the head, which surely stands for the intelligence, the reason, the conscience, and you will find it very easy; and indeed, bringing a kind of sunshine with it, that must be distressing to the "world rulers of this darkness," for they hate to see anyone enjoying God's salvation. Never mind, for we do not put on the armour to please them!

THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD. 213

But we must have an offensive weapon too, and that is a sword—the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, which is the Word of God.

Divine love has provided it, and put it into our hands. Let us note carefully that it is not the sword of the flesh, but of the Spirit. In how many of the wretched contentions between saints has this sword been thus carnally used? In a figure, Samson so wielded it, when he caught the 300 foxes and tied torches to their tails; for the only result was the destruction of corn, vines and olives. What was there of blessing in that?

Apart from the Spirit, even the most intelligent Christians are apt to misapply scripture, and get a wrong word for the occasion.

There is some saying of God to meet every attack of the wicked one; and the Holy Spirit alone can direct us to it; and He will, if we do not grieve Him.

There is still one other piece of armour called “ALL-PRAYER.”

This weapon must be at hand in prosperity as well as adversity; in joy as well as in sorrow; in health as well as in sickness; in the gains as well as in the losses, in business as well as the home. Every state, every season, every place has its dangers, so prayer is needed in all.

But further; supplication is added. Supplication is for times of special pressure. Prayer is the general spirit of dependence; supplication meets special needs.

Let us, then, press upon our souls the need of practical use of the entire armour of God. It is not like those antiquated suits we are

accustomed to look at with curiosity in the Tower of London; it is for present use and has never been improved upon. Modern weapons are out of date in a few years—this armour, never. God does not tell us to look at it, or admire it, but *to put it on*, for armour is of no use till put on.

Communicated by H. A. MATIER.

CHILDREN OF THE DAY.

IN the beginning we read of day and night. "God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night."

At the end of Holy Scripture we read of a day without a night. All connected with the night has passed and gone forever, and a new day has dawned. "Behold I make all things new." In between—the long interval of time, during which Jesus, the sent One, has come, has run its course. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Christ lived here, died, and rose again, and has now gone back to Him who sent Him.

His work and stay on earth completed, He makes the secret known to His disciples, saying, "Again I leave the world, and go to the Father." During the long night of His absence we would patiently wait His sure return to usher in the Day, the Day of glory.

What a priceless blessing it is to be brought consciously into the favour of God, and into the

secret of His ways, both with regard to this world and the world to come.

“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.” Therefore we are not of the night nor of the darkness, but through grace have been delivered from the power of darkness and “translated into the kingdom of His dear Son.”

The great moral lesson to be drawn is this: while some are in the light, many souls are still wrapped in the darkness of spiritual night. We would gently lead such to the light. No one need be in the dark since the light has come, “The true Light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man” [R.V.]

Light is the form that blessing from God takes when we receive it, for “Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” Both light and understanding come from the Lord. Of Judas we read, “Satan entered into him. He went immediately out: and it was night.” There was moral night in his soul. He was in utter darkness, so blinded by Satan until the course He took ended in his self-destruction.

Man naturally, blessed as he is with natural gifts, is completely in the dark about God and his own future destiny. “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart”—moral night in the soul—and must remain so until light from God breaks through and dispels the darkness. “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” And in His wonderful grace He has made it possible to be known by His creatures. “God who commanded the light

to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts."

Night speaks of a state of things where there is no seeing, of distance, of distress, of sorrow, of tears, of separation from God.

How sad it is to think of a soul shrouded in darkness. And still more so to think of such an one passing out of time into the night where no light can ever penetrate, for be it remembered, that will be a night without a day. But light has come: Jesus said, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me should not abide in darkness." "While ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." We are called, Children of light, and of the day.

Often one longs for the break of day, even to realize some passing pleasure. But what will it be when our hopes are realized in sight, and with worshipping gaze, the beauty of the Saviour in that day will dazzle every eye, "In the crowning day that is coming." Oh, the splendour of that day!

When I see Thee face to face,
Know the wondrous depth of grace,
Know the precious love that sought,
And the countless price that bought
My poor soul from Satan's sway,—
That will be a glorious day.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." When far removed from clouds and mists of earth, we shall bask in the sunny altitude of the Homeland, and night shall be no more.

The glorious description of the heavenly city is beyond the capacity of our finite minds to grasp. No created light is needed there. "The

city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof." The redeemed of the nations shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour unto it. All this concentrated glory is in order to exalt the Lamb. We may well say, "Oh, the glory of that day!"

"And the gates of the city shall not be shut." The curse shall be removed; all evil done away, every foe excluded; and "there is no night there." Think of it, if you can! What it will be to spend eternity in that happy home above, the complement of Him whose glory we are to behold! His word is "Surely I come quickly." We respond and say, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."

Then, then, the church completed
 God makes no more delay,
 Oh, Lord, with shouts of triumph
 We pass into the Day.

R. M. SMITH.

THERE are some spiritual maladies which the Bible and the hymn-book, and even prayer, may not cure. Let the invalid try a little exercise in the open air, go down the street with a handful of tracts, visit a poor neighbour, or carry a message of mercy to a lost soul, and he will find half his ills banished. If no one else is better for such service, the servant will be.

A LETTER FROM BRITISH GUIANA.

OUR young brother Harold Wildish, whose cheery face was so often seen in our Friday evening gatherings for Young Men in London, and whose voice was often heard amongst us in prayer, has gone in the Lord's service to British Guiana. He sends us a few extracts from his diary which our readers, we are sure, will thank us for sharing with them.

June 28th. Leaving Queenstown early we reached Danielstown by 9.0 a.m., and found a large crowd gathered. . . . Looking round the crowd one saw a mixture of races, there being African blacks, East Indians, Chinese, Portuguese, and several aboriginal Indians, all of whom speak English in some measure. . . .

July 20th. The last few days Mr. Nicholls and I have been spending on the island of Wakenaam in the Essequibo river mouth. The local brethren seemed highly delighted at the sight of a new face, and having procured an old bell, I was marched round, the brethren calling out, "This is our preacher," and "Come and hear our preacher." When the time for the meeting came, the hall was crowded out, and many faces were seen peering through the large open shutters.

I am trusting later to spend a month on this island for a series of Gospel meetings. Please pray, so that the ground may be well ploughed up for the good seed of the Gospel.

July 25th. Leaving Queenstown soon after dawn we proceeded along the coast road for twenty miles until it terminates on the bank of the Pomeroon river; here we embarked on a small boat and proceeded fifteen miles up the river to the mission house and Meeting Hall, which are built on the river bank.

The people come to the service by river, and one can often see thirty or more canoes tied up in a bunch by the bank. Work on the river is extremely interesting, as it is all done by boat or canoe.

Starting for a morning of visiting work one has to paddle along between banks covered with thick virgin

A LETTER FROM BRITISH GUIANA. 219

forest, but every now and then you notice a clearing where some man has built his house. These people love a visit and will sit and listen very attentively while you read a chapter from the Word of God.

Out of this river alone, there are many creeks where a good work might be done amongst the Indians, if only there were workers to come and settle there, for a stray visit, while itinerating, may do much, but an established worker in the district does far more.

Although there is great darkness amongst the masses, one is struck by the depth and heartiness of the Christians.

I shall never forget the old black saint whom we visited. I said to her, "Do you love Jesus?" Clasp- ing her hands she said, "My Massa Jesus, He be eberyting to me." This old soul remembers many stories of the old slave days, when her mother was dragged from her home in Africa to be beaten, kicked, and herded with men and women into the common hold of a slave ship.

August 29th. Please join with me in praise that the Lord is graciously blessing His Word in a very marked way at Georgetown. The numbers have been growing during the last four weeks, maybe attracted by a new face and voice, so that last week we were crowded out and many were standing. Better still, some who are anxious are coming to the enquirers' meeting and finding the Saviour. One soul especially I would ask your prayers for. He came two Sundays ago for the first time and, after listening, was so deeply moved that he stayed to speak with me; he is Portuguese and has been brought up a Roman Catholic, but of course, does not know his Bible at all. We believe his confession is a real one, but fear he will suffer great persecution in his home and business in days to come. He is about eighteen years old. Please pray that he may be strong in his new found Lord, and that persecution may only develop his Christian backbone.

September 1st. The open-air work is a great feature in the city. Disturbances are almost unknown out here at an open-air meeting and the people will listen as long as you are able to go on speaking.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WALTHAMSTOW. We are not particularly attracted by those Christians who are for ever ejaculating "Praise the Lord," or some such phrase. Christian joy is a wonderful thing, but it does not express itself by frothy vociferousness and parrot-like ejaculations. It is a true proverb that says, "Still waters run deep." When they are noisy, waters are generally shallow.

FULHAM. You want to know why it is that the younger Christian men are not more encouraged by their elder brethren in the service of the Lord. It is difficult to say. For our own part, we have found that there is ample encouragement for any young brother who is unassuming, modest, spiritually minded, and devoted. But is there anything in the Scriptures to lead such an one to seek to "secure engagements"? Did the early preachers of the Gospel, of whom we read in the New Testament, "secure engagements"? Their hearts were so full of gratitude and love to Christ that they were ever ready to speak of Him, in private or in public. Public preaching is not the only way, by any means, of winning sinners to faith in Christ. If we might offer you a word of counsel, it would be this: Give yourself much to prayer, and if you feel called to evangelize, do so by private conversation, or take a few tracts in your pocket and knock at some doors and get in a word for your Master in that way. If it appears that grace is given you to be a winner of souls, you will find doors of opportunity opening on every hand.

A new booklet on the Lord's Coming, entitled "Our Future," by Mr. H. P. Barker, is now on sale. Price 1d.

Also, "The Old Soldier of Chichester," a four-paged illustrated Gospel tract, explaining in a simple way how deliverance may be obtained from the *power of sin*, as well as from the penalties of our sins. 1/6 per 100; 1/8 post paid.

Also other two-paged and four-paged leaflets by Mr. H. P. Barker and others for children and for adults. Send for list to G. F. Vallance, 98, Kinfauns Road, Goodmayes, Essex.

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ONE YEAR TO LIVE. .

RECENTLY *The Baltimore Sun* gave a prize of twenty-five dollars to a certain Mary Reed for an answer she sent to the question, "What would you do if you had only one more year to live?"

Remarkable was the decision of a secular paper to give one of their prizes to an answer that contains such noble and spiritual sentiment, and to recognize the worth of one who feels that in the last year of life she would want to live for God.

This is Mary Reed's answer:

"If I had but one year to live;
One year to help; one year to give;
One year to love; one year to bless;
One year of better things to stress;
One year to sing; one year to smile;
To brighten earth a little while;
One year to sing my Maker's praise;
One year to fill with work my days;
One year to strive for a reward
When I should stand before my Lord.
I think that I would spend each day,
In just the very self-same way
That I do now. For from afar
The call may come to cross the bar
At any time, and I must be
Prepared to meet eternity.
So if I have a year to live,
Or just one day in which to give
A pleasant smile, a helping hand,
A mind that tries to understand
A fellow-creature when in need,
'Tis one with me—I take no heed;
But try to live each day He sends
To serve my gracious Master's ends."

LUKE AND JOHN.

Why did they Write their Gospels?

LUKE.

THE key to the object that Luke has in view, in the writing of the Gospel that bears his name, is the word "us" in Chap. i. 1. He writes of the things believed among "us." It is *Christians* that Luke, the companion of Paul, has in view in his narrative of the Lord's birth, ministry, death and resurrection.

He writes to one who had already been instructed as to these things, but who was more or less at the mercy of the many accounts that were then in circulation, accounts, it seems, based upon mere hearsay or tradition, and not entirely trustworthy. They were well-meaning, but merely human, narratives, without the guard of the Spirit's inspiration.

Luke does not claim that the things which he records were made known to him by *revelation*, but that he possessed accurate knowledge of them, and had traced out their course from the beginning, as handed on by those who were eyewitnesses and sharers in many of the events recorded.

His object is that his readers might have a more substantial basis for their faith than that afforded by the numerous uninspired "Gospels" that had obtained currency, and that *certainty* as to the "things most surely believed among us" might be possessed.

It is important to distinguish between *inspiration* and *revelation*. Some things that are recorded in the Scriptures were made known

by direct revelation of God, as for instance, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the great doctrines of Christianity that we find in Paul's epistles. But in the case of Luke, it was his own accurate knowledge, acquired by investigation and study, that the Holy Spirit used, and which He inspired him to put in writing for us. In this way Luke's knowledge, authenticated for us by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is made *to us* a true revelation from God of what really happened.

JOHN.

John wrote at a later date, when Christianity had spread, was attracting the attention of enquirers, and had become the subject of widespread criticism. His Gospel was evidently intended as a kind of tract for general circulation among these enquirers and others, with the object, first of all, of convincing them that Jesus was indeed the long-promised Messiah of Israel, the Christ. (See Chapter xx. 31).

But the Spirit of God, through John, also aimed at showing that Jesus was something more than Israel's Messiah. He was THE SON OF GOD, and as such had claims to faith and allegiance which none, whether Jew or Gentile, could ignore with impunity.

John, however, did not merely aim at closing the mouths of gainsayers, and convincing them that Jesus was both Christ and Son of God, by the record of the seven "signs" which we find in his Gospel. He aimed at winning them to personal *faith* in Him, so that not merely conviction as to the truth of His Person, but *life* through His Name, might be the result.

Perhaps this is why John's Gospel, though the profoundest of the four, has been so pre-eminently used of God to the blessing of souls. Think of the thousands whose hearts have been bowed and broken at the thought of God's great love, manifested in the gift of His Son, as brought before us in John iii. 16!

What numbers, too, have been brought to rejoice in the knowledge of their *present* possession of everlasting life through the golden words of John v. 24, and of *future* security for time and eternity through John x. 28.

But Luke's Gospel has also been greatly used of God, especially the matchless parables of the Two Debtors, the Good Samaritan, the Great Supper and the Prodigal Son. For in all these, and in the varied incidents recorded in that great evangelic chapter, Luke v., the *grace* of God shines out. And this, the main-spring of the Gospel, must stand well to the front in any enumeration of the "things which are most surely believed among us."

"It is a good thing," says the epistle to the Hebrews, "that the heart be established with grace." And what so establishing as to keep company with the Lord Jesus in His life-work here as traced by Luke in his Gospel? It is pre-eminently the book for the young convert, and for one who is just beginning a study of the Bible. Renan, the French sceptic, left on record his opinion that it is the most beautiful book ever written.

H. P. BARKER.

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SAILING WITH PAUL

XII.

The Voyage Ended :

The Judgment-seat of Christ.

SOON those who sail with Paul will have weathered the last gale, endured the final storm ; and, the voyage over the sea of time completed, will have reached their desired haven. Even though the vessel of testimony may seem to fall to pieces, still, either swimming to shore, or "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship," all shall escape safely to land—not to find themselves among strangers either, needing what charity's kindness might bestow, but welcomed there by all their brethren of all ages, and above all by Him whose loving care had watched over all their way, and whose grace will have safely brought them home.

Depend upon it, no self-denial for His name's sake will then seem to have been too great ; no trials because of His truth will appear to have been too many ; no suffering or toil for the spreading of His gospel too much in that day. On the contrary, how many will there be who would then gladly give the wealth of a world, if they had only been more devoted to Him in the day of His rejection, more unworldly, more Christ-like, and more concerned about the dire need of the perishing

thousands about them. But the day for faithfulness to an absent Lord will then be over, and the hour of manifestation will have arrived.

Paul himself looking on this solemn time could write : " I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. iv. 6-8). It was not the final "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" that he had in view. Paul had no thought of ever being judged for his sins. He knew all that had been settled in Christ's cross. Hence for him, as for all believers, there could be no judgment in the future, so far as the question of sin was concerned. But elsewhere he tells us that " we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10). And he shows us that, for the Christian, this will mean a complete manifestation of all his works and motives, that the Lord may express His own mind regarding them, and reward all that was of His spirit in the life of His people after His grace had saved them.

1 Corinthians iii. is most instructive in this

connection. In its primary application, the subject under consideration is the building up of the assembly of God in its local aspect. But the principle involved applies to all Christian work and service. Every believer is building on the rock-foundation which is Christ Himself. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious [or, costly] stones, wood, hay, stubble ; every man's work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire : and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is " (vers. 12, 13). I have little doubt that an historical incident was in Paul's mind as the Spirit led him to pen these words.

Among the "seven wonders" of the ancient world was the magnificent temple of Diana, outside the city of Ephesus. It was built on marshy ground, and before the building could be erected, a great rock foundation had to be laid—the work of years. On this foundation the superstructure was reared under the direction of the most famous "master-builder" of his day. The building was entirely composed of gold, silver, and costly stones. But the roof and the rooms adjoining the main sanctuary, used by the priests and priestesses of Diana, were made of wood, hay, and stubble. On the night that beacon lights on every hill-top of Greece and Asia Minor flashed the news of the birth of an heir to Philip of Macedon (who became celebrated as

Alexander the Great), Erostratus the Ephesian set fire to this temple of Diana. In the morning it was found that the gold, silver, and costly stones remained unharmed, while the wood, hay and stubble had been devoured by the flames.

Now every Christian is building upon the foundation laid through the gospel. All that is in accordance with the Word of God is likened to gold, silver and costly stones. That which is of the flesh is pictured by the wood, hay and stubble. At the judgment-seat of Christ all will be tested by the fire of infinite holiness. Then everything that was not the fruit of the Spirit will be destroyed. Notice, that "the fire shall try every man's work of what *sort* it is." It does not say "how much it is." It is not quantity, but quality that is in question. A vast amount of so-called Christian work will be destroyed in that day; but all that has really been for Christ will stand the test. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (vers. 14,15). This last clause supposes an extreme case where, if even not one thing is found that can be rewarded, still, so absolutely is salvation of grace that "he himself shall be saved" though all his works be burned up.

The rewards are pictured in other scriptures as "crowns." These crowns should never be

confounded with salvation, which is entirely of God's sovereign grace ; while the crowns are given for individual faithfulness. There are five different designations used, as follows :

The "incorruptible crown," promised to all who in godliness and self-control run the Christian race (1 Cor. ix. 25-27). The "crown of rejoicing" for the winner of souls (1 Thess. ii. 19 ; see also Phil. iv. 1). The "crown of righteousness," for all who love Christ's appearing, and labour now in view of that day (2 Tim. iv : 8). The "crown of life," for those who witness amid trial with unyielding perseverance (Jas. i. 12 ; Rev. ii. 10). The "crown of glory," for shepherding faithfully the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock (1 Pet. v. 1-4).

In Rev. iii. 11 the Lord Jesus says : "I come quickly : hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." This is an exhortation we may all take heed to, remembering that the Lord's work will be accomplished according to His purpose, whether we have a share in it or not. But it is our happy privilege to be "fellow-labourers under God," working in subjection to His word, to be rewarded when our Saviour comes again. The opportunity to serve will soon be over. May grace be ours, to labour on in hope, remembering that "If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully" (2 Tim. ii. 5).

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With this paper, our present series comes to an end. Let me, in closing, urge each Christian to live in view of the end of the voyage, so fast approaching, heeding the farewell message of the ascended Lord : "Behold, I come quickly ; and My reward is with Me, to give each one according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12).

H. A. IRONSIDE.

**"WHEN THE LORD TO BETHANY
CAME."**

OF the individuals and groups of persons brought into contact with our Lord Jesus Christ during His three years of public ministry the household at Bethany is, in some respects, the most interesting. His conversation with them and their attitude towards Him on the occasions on which He met them furnish much instruction for us to-day. This is particularly true of the two sisters, Martha and Mary.

These two women present most interesting character studies. The one busy and active, the other quiet and meditative, offer such a contrast that we cannot fail to notice the strong individuality of each. Our sympathies are often with Martha in the well-known scene depicted in Luke x. 38-42. She is so obviously anxious to do honour to her Guest, so eager to extend to Him her full hospitality, that the request for help from her apparently idle sister seems at once reasonable and justifiable. But He who

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knew both far better than they knew themselves, and could read each heart perfectly, gently points out that the one at His feet, seemingly indifferent to the work of serving which engaged and worried Martha, had chosen the good part which was not to be taken from her. Mary was not shirking the work as a casual onlooker might suppose, and as Martha judged, for the Lord would not commend this; nor was she indifferent to the welfare of the Guest. Was it not rather that she possessed a spiritual vision, an insight into her Lord's mind, and a sense of what was pleasing to Him (as well as of her own spiritual need), which her more active sister lacked? This is borne out by the beautiful incident recorded in John xii. 3, where Mary is seen engaged in service of a very high order indeed.

The two sisters are broadly typical of two great classes which have been found in the Church all through the centuries. On the one hand there have been and are those whose great aim is active service. Full of energy and eagerness, they are here, there, and everywhere, planning, organizing, preaching and lecturing, they hardly seem to have time for the quiet prayer meeting, the periods of drawing aside for meditation and devotion. On the other, there are the meditative ones, the mystics, the devotional writers, and those whose deepest joy is to be found in quiet worship.

Generalizations of this sort are, of course, dangerous and liable to be misunderstood. It is not suggested for a moment that the energetic, eager worker is wrong or even necessarily inferior in spiritual calibre to his quieter and,

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at times, less active brother. But the lesson which the cases of Martha and Mary would seem to convey is that the most efficient and acceptable service is that which springs from, and has its roots in worship. The Father seeketh worshippers who shall worship Him in spirit and in truth, and they serve best who rise from such worship and go forth to serve in the inspiration of all that such worship means.

And here, it seems, the Lord's Day morning gatherings around the Lord's Table occupy a position of supreme value. The first day of the week, when, freed from earthly avocations, we are able to devote our time and energies to Him, most appropriately starts with this cherished meeting. Before we get to our Sunday School classes, to our preaching, or whatever form of service we are called to, we have met for worship and for quiet meditation around the Lord. We have sat at His feet and listened once again to His voice. We have remembered Him.

In this age of rush and turmoil the Lord's Day morning meeting is invaluable in the opportunity it affords of drawing aside into the quiet of the Lord's presence. We should guard jealously this holy season and place. Anything which tends to spoil the purpose for which we so gather, to introduce aught of the noise and activity of a preaching meeting or a lecture should be avoided. We come to remember the Lord and for that purpose alone. The Spirit will, no doubt, sometimes lead to the reading of a passage of Scripture or to suitable ministry, and such will surely only tend to increase the outflow of praise and worship.

Mary is introduced on three occasions, *viz.* Luke x. 38-42, where she is sitting at Jesus' feet; John xi. 32, where she falls down at His feet; and John xii. 3, where she is anointing His feet. Might we not find in these three attitudes an analogy of three things which characterize our worship. We sit at His feet listening to His voice. This may be the quiet communion of the heart as we sit in silence, or the thoughts resulting from the reading of a portion of Scripture. We prostrate ourselves in spirit at His feet as the Holy Spirit leads in praise and worship. Finally, we anoint His feet in hymns of devotion, remembrance and praise. We would covet this good part.

Young people, blessed with health and strength, are eager to be about the Master's business. There is so much to be done and so many things to see to. But stay: He knows all there is to do and will give the time in which to do it. Nothing will be neglected or overlooked. We will sit, first, awhile at His feet, and then go forth to work in such wise that others will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

E. L. HALES.

THE SON OF MAN LIFTED UP.

(John xii. 12-36).

MIRACLES for a time made Jesus popular. A man who could feed the poor, heal the sick and raise the dead was sure to gain adherents. The Pharisees said among themselves: "Behold the world is gone after Him."

Even the Greeks expressed an interest, saying to one of His disciples, "Sir, we would see Jesus." When their request was made known, Jesus said: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified."

As He approached the royal city a great multitude came forth to meet Him, crying, "Hosanna." Signs and wonders had appealed to their imagination and self interest, but alas! produced no exercise of conscience. They salute Him with palm branches, but to-morrow they will cry, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Nevertheless, the Son of man must be glorified.

The people enquired, "Who is this Son of man?" The answer was obvious. Had He not on many occasions spoken of Himself as being the Son of man? Their treatment of Christ, however, would serve to make manifest Who He is (compare John viii. 28) and, at the same time, demonstrate what they themselves were.

It is interesting to note that in John's writings the *shame* of the cross does not appear; it is transmuted. The moral perfections of Him who was nailed to the tree transfigured it. The event of Calvary was the lifting up of the Son of man. The cross afterwards became a thing in which to glory (Galatians vi. 14). Yet it was all so real in the experience of the Lord,—the suffering, the anguish, the physical and mental torture. Whilst the crowds were cheering, the shadow of the cross fell upon His spirit. In distress of soul, what did He say? "For this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify Thy Name." Had Jesus "pitied Himself" (compare Matt. xvi. 22), had He pursued

the line of least resistance, the kingdoms of this world would have been already His, but the tempter, who suggested this course, was foiled by the unswerving obedience of Christ to His Father's will, and faithfulness to His mission. There could be no compromise with the deceiver of men, for He had come to bear witness to the truth. Pontius Pilate hearing this exclaimed, "What is truth?" but, betraying his indifference, he did not wait for an answer.

Indifference to truth indeed marked the state of men everywhere; so completely had the power of darkness enslaved them. Hence it was imperative that the truth should be unveiled and that God in His attributes and nature should be made known. The Son of man must be lifted up in order to express the love of God who gave His Son for the salvation of sinners and for the life of the world. Man, too, must be exposed; things must be shown to be what they really are instead of what they seem to be. Men must realize their desperate need of a Saviour. Sin must be put away by His sacrifice, so that repentance and forgiveness of sins might be preached in His Name.

Christ saw that His going into death would yield much fruit, even as the single grain of wheat, when sown, brings forth many grains. Many disciples would spring up of the same nature and disposition as He; imbued with His spirit, they would walk the same path of self-sacrifice and lowly service. Loyal subjects of His kingdom, they would be honoured by the Father. He realized that His death would bring about a world-crisis. The prince of this world would be cast out, while the Son of man

lifted up would draw, not merely Jews and Greeks but men of all nations unto Himself.

Knowing that the cross was inevitable, the Lord set His face towards Jerusalem, where, outside the city wall, He was crucified. On His cross in characters of Hebrew, Latin and Greek, was written: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." But the Roman centurion who witnessed that sight said, "Surely this is the Son of God." Ere He bowed His sacred head, He exclaimed with a loud voice, "It is finished," The conflict was ended, Christ had conquered! Satan's power was broken! God was revealed in righteousness and holy love! With the eyes of faith men now behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Gazing on Him, they are transformed, whilst "The Son of man lifted up" is endeared to their hearts.

The desire of the Greeks to see Jesus was granted to Stephen. Through the opened heavens he saw "the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." To him was also given the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake and, like his Master, of praying for his foes, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." He realized too the promise contained in the Lord's own words: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be." First-fruit of the "many grains" Stephen, servant and follower, is now with Christ waiting for the harvest, when all the precious grain will be garnered, and mere professors who are swayed by self-interest, will be scattered like chaff before the wind.

If we have a right estimate of values we shall prefer Christ to ourselves. (Phil. iii. 7). We

shall live for His interests and seek to follow His steps. God forbid that we should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

W. TAYLOR.

THROUGH THE BARS.

I PASSED along a street in Glasgow one April morning and heard the clear singing of a lark above my head. Being such an unusual sound in the city, and especially so early in the year, I looked up to see if I could detect the songster that was warbling so sweetly on such a dull morning.

But it was not until I had walked some steps farther that I caught sight of it, and saw, to my surprise, that it was not flying high in the sky at all, but was in a tiny cage hung from a top window!

I said to myself that, with the bars that imprisoned it, the dingy looking cage, the dull morning, and the fact that summer is not yet here, that lark had sufficient to silence its song, but it evidently was not occupied with these things, but with its sweet singing heralded the approaching summer, and by this means cheered people on their way.

Yet how often we, who have such glorious prospects of the coming day, and are enjoined to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord, are occupied with the things which produce care and depression. Certainly there are plenty of things which are not as we wish them, but, knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God,

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instead of being discontented with our lot and thinking we are badly treated, might we not follow the example of the two servants of the Lord when imprisoned at Philippi? Their position was anything but pleasant, their backs smarting with the cruel flogging, chained down, having been publicly disgraced and classed with the lowest criminals, in loneliness and darkness, and probably suffering from hunger and thirst, they prayed and *sang praises* to God.

What was the result? The prisoners heard them, and a mighty work of God broke out there, and many had cause to thank God for the songs of Paul and Silas.

In the day about to dawn we shall sing a new song, and every hindrance will be removed. But it is our privilege now to anticipate that day, and, even if it be winter, and though it be "through the bars," sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord.

A. TYSON SEWELL.

A LETTER FROM PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA.

Bié; July 9th, 1925.

I was sorry to find a week or two ago that we had never acknowledged your kindness in sending us the CHEERING WORDS Calendar again this year. The fact is, I had reckoned on my wife's doing so, and she has been almost overwhelmed with letters. Please forgive our negligence, and accept our very hearty, if much belated, thanks. Many times we have been cheered and helped by the words of the Calendar, especially since March, when we have been much in prayer concerning our future. Amongst many texts which have helped us in this connection, I might mention two instances: one, when still in the dark and faced with two or three alternatives,

THE HEART OF A CHILD.

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Proverbs iii. 5, 6, appeared on Mr. Howes' Portuguese Calendar in my office, and encouraged me to go on waiting on the Lord alone for definite guidance.

The other was later (May 8th), when we had had many indications that the Lord would lead us to open up new work amongst untouched tribes, and this was the date arranged to commence a long journey of exploration with future settlement in mind. The text on CHEERING WORDS was, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you." We set off with the elements apparently trying their best to discourage us, but fortified by these words, and from that day to the end of our journey of from 500 to 600 miles, we were constantly reminded of the Lord's presence and care. The result was the choice of a site for a new station, away in the heart of the untouched territory, and we believe the Lord will, in due time, lead us there, though the way is not yet opened up. We were joined last December by a young brother named Wilson, from Belfast, and we hope to go together to the new site.

We are given some encouragement in the work here at Hualondo, and we have abundant cause to praise the Lord for His help experienced throughout the last year, since we were left in charge of the station. It has not been a very easy time, with constant pressure of work and difficulties peculiar to the circumstances, but in regard to health and strength I, at least, have found it to be the best year since our arrival in Africa.

With hearty greetings in Christ,

LANCE W. ADCOCK.

 THE HEART OF A CHILD.

THE importance of reaching and influencing the hearts of children has often been emphasized. Early impressions remain through life. This undoubted fact is vividly brought to our remembrance by the following lines by Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Smith, labouring for the Lord in Chih-li, China. We trust they will

especially encourage every Sunday School teacher who reads them to aim definitely at winning the children to faith in Christ.

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day;
And, as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.
I came again when days had passed;
The bit of clay was hard at last.
The form I gave it still it bore,
But I could change that form no more.

I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it day by day.
And moulded with my power and art
A young child's soft and yielding heart.
I came again when years were gone;
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that early impress bore,
And I could change him nevermore.

ETERNAL LIFE.

JESUS, the sent One of the Father, brought to me here the gift of Eternal Life.

He came all the way to reach me, cost Him what it might! To do this, He became man. He entered into my conditions. He met me and bestowed the gift upon me. That done. He went back. "I go my way to Him who sent me." He has united me to Himself by the Spirit, so that, by occupation with Him there, I might enjoy the gift here.

He has gone back to whence He came, and I am born of God, and have eternal life.

R. M. SMITH.