

WORDS OF HELP

FROM THE
SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

Edited by
W. G. TURNER

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WORDS OF HELP

from the
SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

Ignorance.

HOW often this word occurs in Scripture! The Lord's first words on the cross were: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The apostle Paul (in 1 Cor. ii.) when speaking of the wisdom of God, says, "which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." And later on in the same Epistle (ch. xv. 34) the apostle complains that some of the Corinthians were without the knowledge of God. He says, "Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." *It is a shameful thing for those who profess the Christian faith to be ignorant of God and His holiness.* We cannot be surprised at men of the world groping about in the dark, and the apostle when speaking to the men of Athens dealt gently with them in this respect. He found in that city, a city boasting of its learning and its philosophy, an altar with this inscription: "To the unknown God"; and making this his text, he said, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." The apostle was not ignorant of God: he knew His majesty, His power, His goodness, and knew how He should be worshipped. The Athenians were quite wrong in thinking that the God-head was "like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art and man's device." Such had characterised men in the past, and the apostle calls such times "the times of ignorance." The Athenians did not think themselves ignorant, but such they were so long as they had no knowledge of the One True God, and while they were worshipping things of their own invention. Besides,

in so doing, they were belying the saying of one of their own poets: "For we are also His offspring," that is, the offspring of God. "And the times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." This was the grand announcement which the apostle made to the men of Athens, and the words are recorded for us also. God is going to judge the world in righteousness. He has appointed the day and He has appointed the Judge, a Man Whom He has raised from the dead, and in view of this judgment He commands all men everywhere to repent.

ADELPHOS.

The Marrow of Peace.

WHY is it that the people of God are not in the full enjoyment of the gospel? Many whom one recognises as fully the Lord's, have but little joy in the Holy Ghost. The reason often is that they have not got a clear view of the gospel; and in others, where it has been clearly seen, it is not sustained as it should be for their comfort and the glory of the Lord Jesus.

If I fail as much as Peter, or more than any other, the truth is that Christ is still sitting at the right hand of God for me: all my inconsistencies cannot change that truth of God. They had heard from the beginning that "Jesus is the Christ." He says, "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which we have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father." This is the marrow of peace, when the soul is tried: God's certificate to the soul that the value of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to it individually. People say: "It is mine, because I have had such a deep experience; I feel so and so." But God has not said that. He has said that there is the testimony

of His Christ, and that if that dwell in me, I shall continue in the Son and in the Father.

Keep fast hold of the testimony of God about His Christ. A person keeping hold of this, cannot have a single bit of rest apart from the Person of the Lord Jesus and God's testimony about Him. There is nothing more gracious than God not allowing peace apart from the way in which He has given it, for nothing else has sanctifying power.

God's plan is to have a people connected with Himself, with His house on high as their dwelling place, and for them to act here according to the position that God has set them in there. And can any thus placed go and connect themselves with that which crucified the Son—with that whose friendship is "enmity with God"—without losing, as an immediate result, peace of heart and conscience? Why does a Christian's peace ooze out? Often, one must reply, because he is walking carelessly through the world, forgetting it is the place where Christ was crucified. My cup of joy can never be full if the world be the place where I am found, and I am walking in its spirit.

G.V.W.

Take Heed Unto Thyself.

SAINTS of God, is it not time for us to take seriously to heart the state of things which prevails in our midst?

God has, in wonderful mercy and grace, restored to us many a truth that has been lost sight of for ages. We know that our sins are now forgiven and for ever put away. We know that God has justified us from all things. We know that we have eternal life in the Son of God. What would not some of our forefathers have given to possess the assurance of these priceless blessings, which are matters of most common knowledge amongst us?

Moreover, we know that we are indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and thus united to the Lord Jesus Christ as the members of His body. We know that the present

favour in which we stand, and the future glory to which we shall be shortly introduced, can only be measured by the delight which the Father has found for His heart in the Person and work of His beloved Son. And we know that Jesus is coming to take us to Himself, when His heart shall be satisfied and our joy shall be full for ever.

I say we know these things, and by this I mean that they are common subjects of ministry amongst us, and as doctrinal truths the saints are familiar with them. But where is the practical godliness, the zeal, the devotedness, the watchfulness and prayerfulness, which should be the result of knowledge so extensive and blessing so rich as this?

That there is much separation from open worldliness, we have to thank God for; but alas! is it not oftentimes lest our reputation among the saints should suffer, rather than because we have found in Christ a present portion of heavenly joy?

Do we not often come together to read the word, to pray, and even to break bread, in a cold, formal way, without having the springs of praise, desire and worship, touched and opened in our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost?

Are not our seasons of private prayer and meditation frequently cold and powerless, lacking in fervour and devoid of blessing, even when such seasons are not wholly neglected?

Does there not exist among us an appalling indifference to the interests of Christ, plainly evidenced by the lack of prayer, private, social and public?

Have we the same desire for the blessing of others which the apostle had, who could say, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"; and again, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved."

When we speak to other Christians are we not often more intent on proving that they are wrong and we are right, than on ministering something that will be

strength and blessing to their souls? And is there not often an assumption of spiritual superiority on our part, which counteracts all that we say?

Oh! brethren, beloved of God, may our hearts take warning! How terrible would it be if we became nothing more than a sect with a beautiful, correct, scriptural, but lifeless and cold, theology! The special device of the enemy to-day is to reduce the blessed revelation of our Father's will to a theology that may be discussed and reasoned over and made the subject of controversy. Remember—saints of God—that though the apostle says, "Take heed to the doctrine," he puts before it the solemn admonition—alas! well-nigh forgotten to-day—"TAKE HEED UNTO THYSELF."

The question may be asked in surprise by those who have not noted with sorrow the declension that has been gradually creeping in for so many years, and which is now so manifest to every godly heart — "What would you have us to be or to do?"

The desire of the heart of God is expressed in the word, "Be filled with the Spirit." In affectionate earnestness let me ask you—Do you know the fulness of present joy; the ineffable peace; the plenitude of power for prayer, worship and testimony; the abounding hope; that are the fruits of being "filled with the Spirit": do you know these things?

Are you habitually controlled, directed, energised and filled with the Holy Spirit of God? Or is this a state of soul you desire to cherish?

If so, do not mourn the lack of power and dearth of blessing which are so frequently noticeable in the meetings for prayer, ministry and worship; and will you not go in brokenness of spirit into your closet, there to pour out your heart to God in confession of the low spiritual state everywhere apparent, and to beseech Him to visit us with a true revival in the power of the Holy Ghost, that we may be found a waiting, watching and working people at the fast-approaching moment when the Coming One, with His shout, shall call us up to meet Him in the air?

And oh! my brother, if your soul is not bright and fresh and happy in the realised love of Christ; if you are not in the deep secret of your own heart walking in fellowship with the Father and the Son through the power of the Holy Ghost; oh! suffer not the enemy to deceive you by leading you to think that you are becoming more intelligent. You understand "church truth" perhaps, much better now than you did five years ago. Is Christ more precious to you? Have you more real delight and joy in thinking and speaking of Himself? In intelligence you may be more advanced, but is your affection deeper, truer than when you first learnt that He loved you and gave Himself for you? Does your heart glow with the ardour and fervour of "first love," the memory of which is even now so precious, as you recall it? Remember His appeal to the gifted and "advanced" assembly in Ephesus, "Nevertheless I have against thee, that thou hast left thy first love." Oh! what is the worth of a greater amount of intelligence as regards His Person and work, if it be gained at the expense of that soul-affection which He prizes so dearly?

And then as regards His Coming. Are you longing to hear His shout and see His face, with a desire that grows deeper and permeates your life more and more every day? Correct and orthodox you may be as to the doctrine of the Lord's Coming, but let me ask, Is it a hope you dearly cherish, and for the fulfilment of which you are hourly waiting? Is it a doctrine you merely hold, or does its power hold you tenaciously in its embrace, separating you in practice from this present evil age, and occupying your thoughts with the Person Who is coming again?

Oh! that in this solemn, critical moment the cry may be heard—above the strife of tongues so prevalent, and amidst the indifference so widespread—ringing down in heavenly power to the depths of every ransomed soul—
"BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM! GO YE OUT TO MEET HIM."

ANON.

Different Conversions.

I HAVE been looking at the different characteristics which mark the divine operation on the soul in the different conversions recorded in the Gospels and the Acts. Such, for instance, as that of Nicodemus and of the Samaritan in John.

It is sweet to inspect the way in which the light of God approached and entered the soul. Sometimes it was *gentle*; sometimes it was *full of force and rapidity*; sometimes it intimated a work more fully on the *heart*; and sometimes a work more on the *conscience or understanding*. But it was always *God's* work; that we know, though the *material* operated on may have been various, and the *mode of operation* various.

Look at Acts viii., ix., x. The eunuch was evidently in the hand of God ere Philip met him—he was under the drawings of the Father (John vi.) and that his heart was deeply engaged is evident, because he forgot the common order, as I may say, of the world, when he bid Philip come up to him in his chariot. He waited for no introduction. The stranger was no stranger, since he referred to that object which at that moment was everything to his heart. He was another Zaccheus, who forgot his place in society, and pressed through the crowd after Jesus.

Look at Saul. He was full of religious *zeal*—the zeal of an inquisitor. Look at Cornelius. He was full of religious *devotion*—gentle, benevolent (instead of persecuting others), disposed to judge that all others were better than himself.

Here were different materials, and the mode of operation upon them was different. The work was carried on in Saul's soul with characteristic force—that in Cornelius's with like gentleness and grace. But both of them equally needed Jesus.

So the jailer and Lydia in chapter xvi. Lydia was something of a female Cornelius. She was devout, and

gentle, and gracious, and the Lord, by a very gentle operation, opened her heart. The jailer was a kind of Saul, at least in his apprenticeship; he was *beginning* to practise his hand in that work of persecution with which Saul had been *long* familiar. But as far as he had gone, he had learnt his art well, and the operation on him, like that on Saul of Tarsus, was in characteristic force. An earthquake accompanied the unlocking of the bars of his strong and iron heart, as "the still small voice" had done the business with Lydia's.

But again; neither the gentle Lydia, nor the fiery jailer, could do *without Jesus*. Till Lydia knew Jesus, Paul could *teach* her; but he did not *worship* with her, though she was a devout woman. (See verses 13, 16.)

May the souls of sinners be precious in our sight! and these witnesses of the grace of God, and of the power of the Spirit, be acceptable to our hearts. J.G.B.

NOTE.—Of the persons whose conversion is dwelt upon by the above writer, two of them, it is clear, showed no sign of a previous work of grace in their souls. We refer to Saul of Tarsus and the Philippian jailer. With both conversion was sudden—the one at high noon, the other at midnight, emblematic respectively of the religious light of the one and the heathen darkness of the other. And their souls were definitely saved; the former after three days, the latter in the course of the same night in which his conscience was so manifestly reached. But with the others—the eunuch, Cornelius and Lydia the case was far different. Already they had evinced true faith and were accepted of God, for they had had to do with Jesus, though they knew Him as yet only under His Old Testament name of Jehovah. What they lacked was faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus. This they could not have until they were privileged to hear the gospel of the grace of God. When the Lord opened their hearts to attend to the word, and through His mercy the servants of the Lord were enabled to present that word concerning not only the Person of the Christ, but also the work He wrought and completed on the cross—when they heard these things they believed them and were sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, or in other words were saved. Joy and peace in believing were the manifest tokens of the great work God had wrought *in* them through the testimony, being believed concerning what Jesus had wrought *for* them. Editor, *Words of Help*.

Nothing Counts But Christ.

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

A FEW days ago, the grave closed over the mortal remains of one who, “in labours more abundant,” had been permitted to serve Christ for half a century.* More than one of his children in the gospel took part in the last service of love and fellowship in sorrow around his grave; and many more surrounded it with tears of mingled joy and sorrow.

The servant proves already the reality and the sweetness of his Lord’s words, “And where I am, there shall also My servant be.” After long years of active service, richly owned of Him Who had “wrought all his works in him,” the servant was called to be a sufferer. The labours had been most abundant, the sufferings were scarcely less so. It was then that the good ointment of most precious grace sent forth its richest fragrance. Matured and mellowed for the heavenly ingathering were “the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God”; deepened and widened the knowledge of “Him that is from the beginning” which characterises the fathers (1 John ii. 13).

After the burden and heat of the day, in the eventide of retirement, this beloved servant of Christ could look forward and judge of everything *in relation to Christ*. Even his sufferings became a link of his soul with Him. “NOTHING COUNTS BUT CHRIST,” he said, with an emphasis which could not but burn the words into the hearts of those who heard them.

“Nothing counts but Christ.” All else is without value. All else will perish. The knowledge of God revealed in His person, and communion with Him by the Holy Ghost, satisfy the soul here, and they never pass away. True service to His name, humble and obedient following of Him, devotion of heart to His interests here below, will “count” in courts above. “If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.”

* Andrew Miller fell asleep May 8th, 1883, aged 73. Devout men carried him to his burial at Abney Park, May 12th.

How feebly have we learned the thoughts of our God as to Christ, His blessed Son! For Him, Christ is exclusively the centre, the purpose, the object and end of all. The *ways* of God are all for His glory: the *purpose* of God is, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father"; and the *heart* of God:—"This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."

For God, "Christ is all." Faith receives of His fulness and enters into His thoughts. Christ is for faith what He is for God, whatever the measure in which it is given to us down here to enter into it. The more simple faith is, the more the soul is with God. Kept by His Spirit simple and humble in His presence, it thinks and feels and judges according to God. Christ becomes its *one* object. Faith ever judges of things as they affect the honour and the interests of Christ. It lifts the soul above the influences and motives which would naturally govern us, and gives a new and divine test by which to try everything. An ambitious man is governed by his love of power, an avaricious man by his love of money, a Christian by Christ. To rule is the passion of the first; to amass wealth, the second eats his bread with carefulness; and the third—"for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," "that I may win Christ," "according to my earnest expectation and my hope . . . that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ, shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death; for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain,"—such is the object, such the life of the Christian.

"Nothing counts but Christ." What does power over his fellows avail a dying man? It would be less than vanity to one going to be with Christ, and a nether millstone round the neck of one sinking to the "place of torment." What is money to a miser, as he crosses the threshold of eternity? What means will he devise to take it with him? And if he could keep his grip of it, what value would it have for the soul that dwells with everlasting burnings?

But *Christ* in that solemn hour—so far from our having to part from Him, it is then that the soul knows how precious He is; it is then that His presence is fully enjoyed. When the eye is bright and clear for things down here, how the soul “sees through a glass darkly”! But now the lid droops, the eye is fixed, it sees no more! It is the very moment when the “glass darkly” is gone, the “heavenly vision” is in all its brightness, the ransomed spirit is with Christ. In the hour of death, wealth does not count, nor power in this world, nor a fair name in it;—“Nothing counts but Christ.”

Paul had been a prisoner some four years. Personal liberty is sweet,—sweeter for him because of his labours for Christ. To the one who, even in prison, could exclaim, “Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,” it must have been a keen trial to be withdrawn from the field of free labour. He loved the work, he had wrought at it as one who loved it—a model for us! But year after year he hears about it in prison, he thinks about it, he dwells upon it in memory, in interest, in longing. The walls which confine him, the chain which binds him to the soldier that keeps him, forbid the activities in which he has grown grey, but for which his heart is still fresh.

And now, the imprisonment is likely enough to end in his death. He is about to appear before Nero. He writes to his beloved Philippians, and we see down into his heart, as he opens it to them. One word sums up its breathings and longings, its hopes and expectations—CHRIST. He hears of some who, taking advantage for their own exaltation of his absence from the work, are preaching Christ of envy and strife, supposing to add affliction to his bonds. At once, his soul refers it all to Christ. He measures it, not by Paul’s reputation, but by the interests of Christ. It is Christ they are preaching. Had they been false teachers of the law, he would have wished them “cut off.” But it is *Christ* they preach. The savour of His name reaches souls, hitherto

dry and cold, having no hope, and without God in the world. Not a word of reproach, nor even of righteous indignation; his bonds have turned to the furtherance of the gospel he loves. Christ, the covering of his eyes, "Christ Jesus, *my Lord*," is preached. He rejoices, yea, and will rejoice.

Thrice happy prisoner, what liberty is thine! Thine, in the third heaven for a moment, to taste the joy of thy Lord; and thine in the prison to prove His presence, and in its rest and liberty to forget thyself! Hallowed courts above where Christ fills the free and happy gaze! Hallowed prison-house and hallowed heart (spite of flesh within and conflict all around)—

Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone!

As to his fate, how shall he decide? for it does not depend upon Cæsar. "What I shall choose I wot not." Blessed choice, though difficult to make, when either way it is Christ! For if it be death, Christ will be magnified in his body, and he will "depart and be with Christ which is far better." If he still live in the flesh, he will have the fruit of his labour, and Christ will be magnified in his body; *to live is CHRIST*.

For Paul, with the need of the saints on the one side, and the joy of being with Christ on the other, "nothing counts but Christ." His work for Christ is not finished. Christ in the persons of the saints has still need of him down here. His choice is made. The decision is come to, not in the court, but in the prison. Read Phil. i. 24-26, and see how Christ *counts* in the heart of the Apostle. The happiest man in Rome was not the emperor, but his (apparently) helpless prisoner. The purple cannot make the former happy, nor can the prison make the latter unhappy. Cæsar has not Christ—he has nothing! Paul has Christ—he has everything! "Nothing counts but Christ."

Later, the same blessed servant of Christ is again in prison. Circumstances are greatly changed, but not

Christ! Paul the aged has lived long enough to find himself all but *alone*. The energy of his faith, the steadfastness of his purpose, the devotedness of his heart, the faithfulness of his love, had carried him too far for the lukewarmness of those who, under God, owed everything to him. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook me." But it was *Christ* for him to live. Not a regret that two years before his happy spirit had not escaped to be with Christ, and this isolation been avoided. Christ *had* been magnified in his body by life. In nothing is he ashamed, for Christ stands by him now. Sweeter that company, more blessed that communion, because of the moral desert in which he tasted it! His "earnest expectation and hope" were gained; by him the preaching was fully known.

And now the "heavenly kingdom" of that same Lord stands bright before his unwearied eye. His days are numbered. He has no choice to make. His service is complete, save the service of death; and he is "ready to be offered up." Bright, and not far off, he sees "a crown of righteousness" in the hand of the One Who stood by him when all forsook him. How well, through grace, he knew Him! It was He Whose love he tasted, when, with bound feet and bleeding back, he sang praises at midnight in the inner prison at Philippi. It was He Whose power and smile raised him up after the stoning at Lystra. It was He Whose presence cheered the long, lone day and night he passed in the deep. Happy servant, sweet has been thy toil and blessed thy sufferings with Christ so near to thee! But toil is past and suffering over. "The mark for the prize" is reached; CHRIST in heavenly glory is "WON."

The day of reward with its "crown of righteousness" hastens on, but already the rest of His presence, and the joy of being with Him are the portion of the one who learned so well, in the desert our feet still tread, the power of His name, and the sweetness of His company.

In heavenly courts, the noble descent of Paul, his high attainments, his lofty position among men, and his

righteousness in the flesh, count for nothing. But all the knowledge of Christ he gained in paths of keenest trial and lonely sorrow, all the communion of His love that he there proved, all His service for Christ—these count with God as costly jewels to shine in undimmed splendour throughout an eternal day. They count *according to God's estimate of the worth of Christ.* "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour." Priceless honour in that everlasting home of love! There, "NOTHING COUNTS BUT CHRIST!" T.N.

"My Saviour, keep my spirit stay'd,
Hard following after Thee;
Till I, in robes of white array'd,
Thy face in glory see."

Abigail, the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

1 Sam: xxv.

IN order to have practical communion with the mind of God, through the Scriptures, whilst the conflict still remains between the flesh and the Spirit, it is needful that the soul be established in grace. Now Satan seeks to hide the simplicity of this grace; but it is simple grace towards those who were dead in trespasses and sins, that has met us. As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so was Jesus on the cross, and He is presented to us by God as the object of our faith. When we look to Him God says, "Live." The next thing that Satan seeks to hide from us is God's preserving grace; and this he does by bringing in many inventions of his own. God preserves us by something hidden in heaven. We may be looking at our experience,—to outward observances,—to an outward priesthood, and the like; but if it is not that which is hidden in heaven, connected with the precious blood of Jesus, and *His* priesthood, to which we are looking, it must come from him who is

the "father of lies." All those things which tend at all to promise the soul preservation, apart from this, lead astray.

There is, then, to all believers, sure and everlasting acceptance, because of the precious blood of Jesus which has been shed for them. "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves; but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption," Heb. ix. 11, 12. This secures their blessing and peace for ever. Nothing can shake or alter the peace that subsists between the Father and the Son, nothing that crosses our path here, none of the circumstances of earth, can alter the peace of the sanctuary. It is established, for ever, between the Father and Jesus. So that, whenever a believer seeks it, whatever the condition of soul in which he may turn towards God, the peace of the sanctuary is there—unchanged. How precious the assurance of this! The soul that has learned anything of God, and of His holiness, knows how every hour many a thing crosses the path likely to affect this peace—that soul must prize the *unchanged* peace of the sanctuary.

But we know other blessings also. God would have the saints understand and love Him and His ways *here*—His actings in the midst of an unholy earth, where Satan's seat is. He (God) desires that we should have communion with Himself in His thoughts about all around. By and bye the church will participate with the Lord in the exercise of power towards the earth—we shall share His glory, for we are "joint-heirs with Christ." But besides this, there is the place of present association, in service. And this must be in humiliation. Jesus served God, in the midst of circumstances of evil, and the "contradiction of sinners."

We read of the apostle Paul saying, "By the *grace of God*, I am what I am; and His *grace* which was bestowed

upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the *grace of God* which was with me." Now very often (our thoughts are apt to dwell so much and so exclusively on acceptance) this passage, "by the grace of God I am what I am," is looked at as only having to do with acceptance; but the Lord desires that we should abundantly serve Him in the midst of Satan's world—having, it may be, to conflict not only with evil in ourselves, but with evil in others; and nothing but *His grace* can enable us to do this. It is as much the "grace of God" that has given us to serve, and the "grace of God" that strengthens for service, as it was the "grace of God" that saved us at the beginning.

When "Christ ascended up on high," He "gave gifts unto men; some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for (or, in order to) the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," Eph. iv. You will perceive how the grace of God leads that way—viz., to strengthen and qualify for service. Thus, if any teach you, they do it, not merely that you may be blessed, but so blessed as to become *servants to others*—life in you ministering to life in them, and strengthening that which needs to be strengthened. Now, suppose this be not understood, that I do not see it to be my privilege, I may be very thankful to have one to teach me, but my faith will be weak, and my prayers hindered, I shall not have the right object before me. Teaching amongst the saints is not intended simply to open up truth unto them, to tell them what salvation is, or to give them comfort; but, also, to open out, and direct the soul to, those things which God desires should be the objects of service in faith, as it said, "your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father." I need not say, beloved friends, how often we stop short of this, and rest in our own personal blessing. When the soul once recognises it to be the intention God has in view, in strengthening us, that we should serve him

in serving others, it gets quite a new motive for which to live—something worth living for.

Now, I know nothing more important or more blessed, than the being able to *discern the true servant of Christ* in the world. Nothing more marks the difference between a soul taught of the Spirit, and one untaught of Him, than this. It was a blessed thing—the great test of faith, when the Lord Jesus was here, to be able to discern and confess Him, as what He really was — the Son, and Sent One of God. And so, at the present moment, the leading of the Holy Ghost is always towards the distinct recognition of that which is of God in the world. Till Jesus comes again, this will be found in the lowly place, that which the flesh likes not to own, but which the Holy Spirit loves to recognise. He leads the enlightened soul to say, “There will I cast in my lot, for, there, blessing is.”

Such parts of Scripture as that on which we are now meditating, bring us into communion with the servants of God—the family of faith, in past ages. They show us, that, in principle, their trials were like our trials; their conflicts, like our conflicts; and, thus knit our hearts to them, in a way which nothing else can.

David had gained the place in which we find him here, because he was of faith, and because Saul was one who was not of faith. He represents the person with whom the truth and the calling of God are. As a simple stripling, David had been taught to trust in God—the God of Israel. When the lion and the bear came, he had faith to meet the lion and the bear, and to overcome them. This was a matter between David and God in *secret*. But very soon after, David’s faith enabled him to come forward, not for his own deliverance, but for that of God’s Israel. Faith led him to take up the current of the counsels of God. As a Christian goes onward in his career, though the trials he has to encounter may be greater, he goes on in the current of the counsels of God; and thus, as Paul says, he is led about in triumph in Christ. Greater things may be done, yet, in one sense, they are felt to be easier, because he be-

comes more acquainted with the strength of God. But this path must begin in *secret*, and then shall we be led onward of God.

To return to the scene before us. God had anointed David king. Saul was still in power, having offices, etc., which none but one who was of faith ought to have had. David did not lift his hand in vengeance against Saul—he *left* all that was connected with the place of the flesh, and took his place as an outcast, simply and singly in the *wilderness*. There he was glad of any countenance, of any support. Just so is it at the present hour with the servants of Christ who seek to walk in the truth — those, in a spiritual sense, of the lineage of David. The more they walk in it, the more sensitive will they become to anything of kindness and love which comes in their way, for their hearts will be often worn and weary. I suppose there is nothing more gladdening to the soul that desires the good of others and the glory of God, than to see any uniting with itself *for the truth's sake*. The “cup of cold water”—any little act of kindness connects such with the *truth of God*. In this there is distinct and precious service—“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto ME.” God only sees the heart; but where there is one who says, “I receive, and countenance, and desire to cast in my lot with persons who are walking in the truth, suffering for righteousness sake”—there blessing will be.

David was in need,—here was another not in need. Rich in the earth, surrounded by this world's goods, living in abundance,—such was the character of Nabal, v. 2. David grudged him not his prosperity (nay, doubtless, he felt that he would not have exchanged his place for Nabal's); it was no hard message that he sent—“I do not ask thee,” he says, “to leave thy riches and follow me; I say, peace both to thee, and peace to thy house, and peace unto all that thou hast; only wilt thou show kindness unto me; wilt thou give me that which I need?” v. 6-8. The heart of David was large enough to have rejoiced in anything that would have identified Nabal's

place with his. And so ever, when the heart of a saint is in a gracious state, there will not be the grudging of those around, nor yet the disposition to say, "see what I am, and what you are not." No, that heart will rather seek to bind the connecting link between another and itself.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

Hidden in the Clift.

OH! put me in that clift secure BY THEE,
And though Thy face, my God, I cannot see;
Oh! let Thy goodness pass before my eyes,
And may my faith NEAR THEE triumphant rise.

Oh! put me in that *safety* place BY THEE,
And let Thine outstretched wings o'ershadow me;
O Father! keep me safe beneath Thy care,
As those who kept by Jesus ever are.

Oh! put me in that *secret* place BY THEE,
And let my faith the glorious vision see;
Reveal Thyself to me in that vast place,
Thy glory let me see in Jesu's face.

Oh! put me in that *holy* place BY THEE,
Where joy and hope and truth must ever be;
Oh! place me near Thee, in that living *Rock*,
To learn the secret of a holy walk.

Oh! put me in that *happy* place BY THEE,
There comforted my griefs must lightened be:
Tho' storm-clouds roll, and tempests rage below,
Kept by Thy hand, what danger can I know?

Oh! put me in that *peaceful* place BY THEE,
And let Thy peace and joy flow into me;
And, like the swelling waters of the sea,
Let Thy great love surround—envelop me.

A place *secure* if Thou, O God, art there,
 From storms a covert—a refuge from despair:
 A place of sweet communion and delight,
 Where clouds disperse beneath Thy heavenly light.

A *safety* place if Thou, O God, art there,
 For me and all who need and claim Thy care,
 A port of refuge for each storm-toss'd soul,
 A hiding place and tower of strength for all.

A *secret* place and Thou, O God, art there,
 My *hidden life* to nourish by Thy care:
 Oh! let me dwell in secret with Thee, Lord,
 There, hourly feed and live upon Thy word.

A *holy* place if Thou, O God, art there,
 And what am I that Thou should'st put me there?
 A sinner! yet so safe,—so satisfied,
 A sinner near his God,—yet justified.

A *happy* place if Thou, O God, be there,
 To banish by Thy presence sin and care:
 Tho' far from friends, apart, bereft, alone,
 Thy presence and Thy love can make this home.

A *peaceful* place if Thou, O God, be there,
 Thy love and peace will lighten earthly care:
 Life's storm-clouds will disperse, when close to THEE,
 As those who love Thy name Thy goodness see.

O Father! keep me in the clift by Thee,
 Where I shall peaceful, safe, and joyful be:
 Oh! let Thy goodness pass before me, Lord,
 And comfort me according to Thy word.

A.M.

We regret to have to inform our readers that the beloved Editor, W. R. Kelsey, was called Home on December the eleventh.

One of the last of his many labours of love for the Lord was to edit this present issue of the "Words of Help."

On Faithfulness.

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings."—Proverbs xxviii. 20.

IN these days of declension and apparent confusion, when so many of GOD's dear children are inclined to do "that which seems right in their own eyes," it is well that we should examine ourselves in the light of the word of GOD as to what is due to the LORD.

The apostle Paul, writing to the Philippians (i. 9-11), says: "And I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all judgment; that ye may approve *things that are excellent*; that ye may be *sincere* and *without offence* till the day of CHRIST; being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by JESUS CHRIST, unto the glory and praise of GOD."

Faithfulness to CHRIST should be our aim, in our daily walk, in our relations with our brethren, in our associations with other Christians, and in our business intercourse with unbelievers.

By grace we trust we are among those to whom the LORD addresses the message, "Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word and not denied My Name." We can truly say, "LORD, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." We enjoy precious communion with the FATHER, and His Son, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and with one another. Yet there is a lack somewhere, from which many assemblies suffer, and this is real faithfulness to CHRIST.

One of the great causes of our present weakness is undoubtedly the worldliness that has crept into our individual lives, in our homes, in our general outlook. We tolerate a certain broadness of view, which formerly would have been condemned. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the FATHER is not in him; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the FATHER, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 15, 16). And the apostle John closes his epistle with the heart-searching exhortation, "Little children, keep yourselves from

idols." We know only too well what these are. "The little foxes spoil the vines" (Songs ii. 15).

Faithfulness to the LORD leads us in separation from everything that is not in accordance with the teaching of the word of God.

Another source of weakness amongst us is our lack of fellowship. Fellowship does not merely consist in attending the meetings, but in *a real partnership in spiritual life and activity*. We get interested in work outside the assembly (however good it may be), and this results in a general weakening of loyalty to the assembly. Others are attracted to co-operate, and the members who have realised their duty to the LORD become discouraged and suspicious; tending thereby to a progressive lowering of the spiritual tone of the assembly. There is a tendency in all of us to seek congenial service; this leads some gifted servants of the LORD to spend some of their time in ministering the word among Christians with whom they are not in fellowship at the LORD's table.

We greatly rejoice in, and thank God for, the work of every true gospel preacher and minister of the word, of whatever denomination. We naturally should like to attend their meetings, which we should find perhaps most pleasant and also edifying. But what would the LORD have us to do? Some time ago a brother, speaking on Mark ix. 38-40, where the LORD rebukes narrowness in the disciples, appeared to justify his own position and that of collaborators in work outside the assembly. "He followeth not us," said John; "he that is not against us is on our part," replied the LORD. Graciously our blessed LORD did not blame the man for "not following," but it cannot fairly be implied that He would encourage the disciples to associate with that man. In the passage above quoted, Phil. i. 10, we are exhorted to approve things that are excellent. It may be very pleasant to go and hear an eloquent and eminent speaker, but among the things that are *more excellent* (J.N.D.'s version), surely fidelity to CHRIST stands foremost. Another rendering of the passage, "That you may

discriminate between things that differ" (v. 10, marg., R.V.), which implies that, if we are led by the SPIRIT, we shall have that spiritual discernment as to what is the LORD's will for us. A soul that lives in conscious communion with the LORD will be quick to detect anything that may grieve Him. Our aim should be that of the apostle: *"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings"* (Phil. iii. 10). The LORD said: "One thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke x. 42). Mary sat at JESUS' feet, and heard His word. She wanted to know Him, to know His mind, to understand His love, and in John xii. 3-7, we find that she had that discernment given to her to enter into the LORD's thoughts as to what He would commend and be of refreshment to His heart. If we are willing to submit ourselves entirely to the LORD, *we shall certainly come to the cross, have fellowship in His sufferings, and be made conformable to His death* (Phil. iii. 10). Oh! for the approval, the smile of satisfaction of our blessed LORD, in being His faithful servants!

What should then be our relations with the children of God belonging to the various denominations of Christendom? To this question we may safely reply that we should never see a believer, nor think of him, except as a member of the body of CHRIST, who cost the SAVIOUR the same sacrifice, and has been redeemed by Him as ourselves; the weakest saint being equally loved by the LORD. Love to all fellow-believers (John xiii. 35; Heb. xiii. 1; 1 Peter i. 22), which is inseparable from our love to CHRIST, should govern us in all our relations with Christians, whose fellowship we are deprived of at the LORD's table.

Gathered around this table, on the principle of the unity of the body of CHRIST, our hearts embrace all the members of that body, represented by the one loaf, symbol of the one body. Our love to CHRIST comprises them all; and this thought should keep us from the sectarian view that we alone are the assembly of God.

Our love should, as the text expresses it, abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment; and this love should lead us to help our brethren to seek the path of obedience and realise the precious blessings attached to submission to the word of God. To be such helpers it is necessary that we ourselves should submit to the word; feed on CHRIST; live in constant communion with Him. Is our walk such as to commend itself to believers in the systems? Have we not often much to learn from the godly walk of other dear children of God, to whom we might communicate doctrinal truth, *but who surpass us in the practice of the truth they possess*? Does our love abound in knowledge and judgment, to discern the things that are more excellent? If our practical walk does not correspond to our knowledge, we shall stumble our fellow-believers instead of being a blessing to them.

In these days of weakness may our hearts be exercised as to our individual walk, so that it may be in harmony with the mind of CHRIST. May we honour our blessed LORD by faithfulness to Him and His word. Then shall we be able to serve Him, as we live nearer Him; and the problem of our relations with other Christians will be solved. May we be able to exclaim with the apostle: "I live, yet not I, but CHRIST liveth in me," and "To me to live is CHRIST."

L.F.

On "His Way."

Jesus "passing through the midst of them went His way."
—Luke iv. 30.

HOW beautiful is "*His way*" as presented in Luke's gospel! Let us read again the words of the HOLY GHOST penned by Isaiah the prophet; words which the LORD Himself read in the synagogue of Nazareth: "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the*

captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

He delighted to walk in JEHOVAH's way, and we can see how what He read was true of Him as recorded in this gospel. The first part: "Now when all the people were baptised, it came to pass that JESUS also being baptised, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the HOLY GHOST descended in bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art My beloved SON; in Thee I am well pleased."

Then what gracious words, and words of truth, He preached to the poor in that same synagogue of Nazareth! What was the response? Alas! "All they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong." But He "*went His way*"—the way of salvation—healing the broken-hearted. None but the HOLY GHOST could paint in so few words such a wondrous picture of compassion and power as was shown by the LORD nigh to the gate of the city of Nain: "Behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her. And when the LORD saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier: and they that bore him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother, as He *went His way*."

What a scene, too, is depicted in Simon's house! A searching word for Simon, and a healing, comforting word for the woman of the city who had been a captive to sin. The LORD felt the discourtesy of Simon, and valued the grateful ministrations of the woman. What a balm were the words of the One at Whose feet she knelt; those words addressed to Simon, and then those

spoken to herself: "Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much . . . Thy sins are forgiven . . . Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Man's arch-enemy had the poor man of Gadara in his toils—he wore no clothes, he abode in the tombs, chains and fetters could not restrain him, the devil drove him into the wilderness. A stronger than Satan was, however, now on *His way*; He released the poor captive, who then sat at his SAVIOUR's feet, clothed, and in his right mind. He longed to follow JESUS in His way, but the LORD would make him his willing servant, telling those in his own house "how great things God had done unto him. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city how great things JESUS had done unto him."

"*His way*" to enter into His glory was by way of suffering; it led to the cross. It was revealed unto Simeon by the HOLY GHOST that he should not see death before he had seen the LORD's CHRIST; and with what joy he took the Child JESUS in his arms "Mine eyes have seen THY SALVATION." Now when more than thirty years had elapsed the LORD said to His disciples, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God." "And about an eight days after these sayings" He displayed the glory of the King to five favoured men: Moses, who brought the people to the knowledge of JEHOVAH; Elijah, who brought them back to that knowledge; Peter and James, who afterwards were killed for His sake; John, who was exiled "for the word of God, and for the testimony of JESUS CHRIST."

The subject of their conversation, we read, was, "*The decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem*"; the foundation of all blessing for fallen man. Then the voice from the SHECHINAH, "This is My beloved SON, hear Him." *He went His way* as "He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem."

In words that reveal the love that is in His heart for poor mankind, rendered helpless by sin and Satan, He answered the lawyer who tempted Him. It is impossible

to improve, and one is unwilling to curtail, what He said. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead . . . But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

In "*His Way*," nigh unto Jericho, "a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging; and hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him that JESUS of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, JESUS, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me . . . And JESUS stood, and commanded him to be brought into Him: and He asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? And he said, LORD, that I may receive my sight. And JESUS said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God." "*Recovering of sight to the blind.*"

"The Son of man goeth, as He '*went on His way*,' as it was determined." "And when they were come to a place that is called Calvary, there they crucified Him." Yet in that time of anguish and suffering He would set at liberty one that was bruised. The dying robber who acknowledged his guilt, but was taught of God to testify about JESUS that "*this Man hath done nothing amiss*" had his prayer more than granted, for instead of having to wait for the kingdom he was that same day enjoying ineffable bliss with the SAVIOUR Who had died for him.

Thus did the LORD JESUS perfectly accomplish the purpose for which JEHOVAH anointed Him, as He "*went His way*."

H.L.B.

On Sunday School Work.

IT is a privilege to be engaged in the work of the Sunday School. As the disciples when they were used of the LORD to distribute the food to the hungry multitude were brought constantly into touch with Himself, ere they ministered of His bounty to the people, so is it with us. We receive from Him and pass on to the children what we ourselves have been enriched with. What a privilege indeed! We are, as teachers, at the point of contact and *it is important that at the point of contact, everything should be right*. If those disciples, in distributing the bread, had failed in their work, had been disobedient, self-willed, negligent, careless, what a loss it would have been!

On some new dock works, I was looking yesterday at a big machine—an excavator—a steam navvy. As it works, a great scoop at the end of an arm of steel takes up a cartload of earth at a time. The edge of this scoop is sharp and provided with strong teeth. How important that this cutting edge should be kept in order. *It is the point of contact*.

This machine would be useless without steam power or fuel. How useless our work would be without *power* behind it. If this machine were not wisely guided by the man in charge, what harm it might do! So shall we, unless we are wisely guided by the all-powerful One.

Now I have been thinking that, like this marvellous machine, so efficient in the hands of the skilled engineer, we may regard ourselves as tools in our Master's hands; and that there are many qualifications, many conditions, that are requisite in a tool that are important for us to observe.

First of all, the tool must *be suited to the work* it has to do. Is our right work for the LORD, Sunday School teaching? No doubt, we have looked to Him to put us into the right work. It is not everybody's

work. The tool needs to be suited to the work, and yet let not this be used as an excuse for anyone to say that "I know there are gaps in the ranks of Sunday School teachers, and there are classes waiting for instruction, and cannot get it because there are no teachers, yet I cannot do it, because I am not fitted for it."

Sometimes when you cannot get the right tool, you have to use another not quite so good. In these days, the LORD sometimes uses servants of His for that work for which they are not *most* fitted, but He sees to that. If you see there is work to be done, and you do not feel fit, *ask Him to make you fit*. He will enable you to do it.

The second requirement is that the tool should be prepared for its service, and that it should be kept in order. There is a word in one of the prophets, in which Israel says: "Thou hast made me a polished shaft." May we as followers of His footsteps, be polished shafts, prepared instruments in His hand, prepared by Him for the work which He has for us to do. Tools kept in order should be kept clean, and should not we? "*Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the LORD.*"

Then again we need to be ready for use always. We need to be there. The LORD cannot do great things through me in the Sunday School, *if I am not there*. Let it be our endeavour, our aim, our ambition, to be vessels sanctified, and meet for the MASTER's use, prepared unto every good work.

The third requisite in a tool is that it shall be under control, and linked with power. We need to be under control. We need to be linked with power from on high. Unless we have this power from heaven we can do nothing. "Without Me," our LORD has said, "ye can do nothing."

The fourth condition is that the tool or implement, shall be charged, or loaded with that which it has to apply. For instance, what is the good of a seed-drill going up and down a field, with no seed in it? What is the good of going to Sunday School classes, if we have

not received from the LORD what He would have us to give.

The fifth requisite does not apply to all tools. Some in order to do their work, have to be warmed. *It applies to us. We need to be very warm, very human.* There was a lad once, whose family moved from the neighbourhood of the Sunday School, to a considerable distance, and yet he continued to attend his old Sunday School. It puzzled some, and he was asked—why? His answer was that he went to the old school because “*they love a fellow there.*” We need to be warmed by love that we may gain the children’s hearts, not for ourselves, but for the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The sixth requisite applies to most tools, and to us. They should be sharp. A chisel that is sharp is not easily turned aside by the grain of the wood. Tools need to be sharp that they may be proof against disconcerting things. We are all, more or less, familiar with disconcerting things. I was telling my own little boy of about four, of the coming again of the LORD JESUS, and he seemed, as he looked at me with his eyes wide open and his mouth closed, as if he were taking it all in, and I believe he was, and understood. When I had finished, he said, “Draw me something, daddy; draw me a doggy.” I do not think it proved that he had not taken in the matter. We should not be turned aside from our purpose by such things as that. We need to be sharp tools.

The seventh requisite—we need to be well-tempered tools. The tempering of steel involves that it passes through a furnace. It is not pleasing to be passed through the furnace of affliction, is it? But if it results in bettering our temper as tools in the hand of our MASTER, surely we should not grudge the pain, if it enables us to be more efficient in our service for Him? Well-tempered tools are not easily affected.

A.T.B.

On "Science—falsely so-called."

SCIENCE is literally "knowledge," and used in its strictly literal sense, means the aggregate of human knowledge of things material. But what is called "modern science," by dealing largely with surmise, enters into the realm of philosophy; it takes in the conjectures of the human mind in its attempts to discover what is at the back of things material, and represents man's groping quest after the reason for the universe.

Now, a man need be neither a scientist nor a philosopher to be able to detect the chief features of this "science" of to-day. Any layman who reads and observes realises that it has gained a very high authority in the world. In fact, "Thus saith science," is with many an end to all controversy; and a man has only to say that "science" declares such and such a thing to be the case, and vast numbers accept the statement without hesitation. Having discarded the Bible, people pin their faith with touching confidence to what has come to be regarded as a counter authority to the word of God. Even Edison said, "There are more frauds in modern science than anywhere else." And the believer will remember that he is expressly warned against "science falsely co-called." The saved man refuses to say to science and speculation, "These be thy gods, O Israel!"

"Modern science" is essentially godless, and is really another name for unbelief. "Natural laws" take the place of God and the CREATOR is virtually ruled out of His own universe. Seeing that the heart of the unregenerate man is enmity against God, there is little wonder that the world is so ready to welcome any philosophy which, by rejecting all accountability to a personal, almighty, Holy God, makes man responsible to no one but himself. The foundation of this modern cult is, "There is no God": and hence it is the science of "fools," for "the fool has said in his heart, 'No God.'"

The believer will be aware that it is the great aim of the arch-enemy of the human race to make man

occupied with anything rather than the things of God. Men are ready enough to try to turn this world into a sort of godless Utopia, where they will be able to carry out their own wishes without regard to the gospel of CHRIST. And so they will eagerly hail any philosophy or religion that will help them to feel that they have no use for the SAVIOUR. Hence we see that the great concealed purpose of "modern science" is to rob man of the deliverance from sin which is alone to be found in obedience to the gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

E.A.

On The Lord's Supper.

FROM Acts xx. 7, it is plain that the saints should break bread on the first day of the week, not of the month or quarter. But it is the resurrection day, not the day of His death, as if we were summoned to be there in mourning as for the dead. He is risen, and therefore, with grateful, solemn joy, we take the SUPPER on the day that speaks of His rising power. I cannot but believe that the HOLY GHOST records the day for our instruction, as well as the object that called together the believers primarily. No doubt the apostle, passing through after a short stay, discoursed to those who assembled; but they came together on that day to break bread. Have we consented to other thoughts and arrangements? Or do we act as if we believed the HOLY SPIRIT knows and shows us the best and truest, the holiest and happiest way of pleasing God and honouring CHRIST? The death of the LORD keeps constantly before the soul our utter need as once guilty sinners, proved by the cross; the complete blotting out of all our sins by His blood; the glorifying of God up to, and above all in, death itself; the manifestation of absolute grace, and withal the righteousness of God in justifying us; the perfect glory of the SAVIOUR;—all these things and infinitely more, are brought and kept before us in those simple but wondrous words—*"The Lord's*

death"! To take the SUPPER in remembrance of the LORD, and thus show forth His death, is what gathers us together as our prime desire. There can be no doubt about the meaning of the word of GOD which records this for our comfort and edifying; yet how could one infer that such was His will if one looked at the practice of Christians? Compare what they are doing LORD'S-DAY after LORD'S-DAY with the obvious lessons of scripture, and intention of the LORD in so revealing His mind to us; and say whether for the most part this simple, touching memorial has not been slighted by real saints, and whether its character has not been changed universally in Christendom. I speak not of points of form, but of principle—of such an interference with its mode of celebration as leaves hardly a simple shred according to the LORD's institution.

Beware of thinking anything can be of equal moment with duly showing forth the LORD's death.

The SUPPER of the Lord claims an unequivocal prominence in the worship of the saints . . . The all-important thing is, that the LORD's SUPPER should be the governing thought when the saints are gathered for this purpose on the LORD'S-DAY; that neither the prayers of many, nor the teaching of any, should put that great object in the shade. In ministry however spiritual, man has his place; in the SUPPER, if rightly celebrated, the abased LORD alone is exalted. . . .

Again it may be that you sometimes go to the LORD's table and return disappointed, because there has been no exposition of the word, or no exhortation. Is it possible that you have gone to remember and show forth the death of CHRIST, and yet have come back with feelings of dissatisfaction? How can this be? Is it not the morbid influence of the present state of Christendom? No doubt there is that in the natural heart which suits and likes what is now the vogue; and the excitement of Egypt's food is readily craved, where the heavenly manna is loathed as light food. Unquestionably we have that within which helps what is found outside; still it is humbling and afflicting to my own

mind that a discourse should seem indispensable to garnish the breaking of bread, and that there should be a thought of want in the meeting where the LORD's death has been before the heart; when one has met around the LORD in His own name with those that love Him! Do you suppose that there is any service more acceptable to GOD Himself than the simple remembrance of CHRIST in His own SUPPER?

I admit ministry most fully; but the LORD's SUPPER has no connection with it. Make it a necessary function of those that rule to administer the bread and wine, and it bears not even an outward resemblance to the LORD's SUPPER. It becomes a sacrament, not His SUPPER; a manifest innovation, a decided and complete departure from what the LORD has laid down in His word. The very idea of a person standing apart and claiming to administer it as a right alters and ruins the SUPPER of the LORD. That SUPPER, according to scripture, leaves no room for the display of human importance in the pretensions of a clergy; least of all when the apostles were on earth. Blessed and honoured of GOD as these were, at the celebration of the LORD's SUPPER, *they were there in His presence as souls that were saved from sin and its judgment by the LORD's death.* In the regulation of the churches, in the choice of elders, in the appointment of deacons, they had their own proper place of apostolic dignity.

The word of GOD clearly and fully proves that the administration of the SUPPER by an official is a figment and tradition of men, wholly wanting the support of scripture.

The LORD's SUPPER is no more a sweet privilege than a solemn duty for all His own, save those under discipline; and when we think of the love He has shown us in the boundless sacrifice He has made for us—the deliverance wholly undeserved He has wrought for us in His own deep abasement and suffering under GOD's wrath on the cross, together with all the gracious encouragement He has therein brought before us for our comfort, admonition, and support in our conflict through

the world, we cannot but regard the thankful commemoration of the LORD's death as a paramount obligation which under no circumstances ought to be neglected.

Another person's fault should not keep me away; if it rightly acts so on one, it ought to hinder all. Is the LORD then to be as it were forgotten because somebody deserves censure? Let the faulty individual be reproved or otherwise dealt with according to scripture; but *my* place is to "*do this* in remembrance of CHRIST."

Again, a sense of my own faultiness should not keep me back. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat"—not stay away. He who abstains from the LORD'S SUPPER virtually says he is none of His.

W.K.

Words of Help from the Pages of the Diary of an Old Disciple.

FOUR score years of the power and goodness of God lie behind me, and glory with CHRIST and those that are His, stretches away before me with all its brightness.

So I feel constrained to write a little of how from my childhood days, at every stage of life, youth, manhood, and old age, the Invisible, but ever present God has dealt with me, in His watchful care over me.

In the year 1837 I first saw the light of day, and in the year 1861, the light of life broke in upon my sinful course, and revealed to me my real state as a sinner in the sight of my CREATOR-GOD.

Although surrounded by His goodness, yet I was afraid of His presence.

"I thought He'd spurn me from His face;
Instead of this He showed me grace;
For He rescued my soul from the power of the foe
And is leading me along to glory."

And still, I am so surrounded by the freshness of His mercies, having been preserved all these many years

through dangers known and unknown, that my heart is often filled with thanksgiving and my mouth with praise to His great and holy Name. Indeed, what has He not done for me, and what has He not taught me of His goodness and grace since first I was brought to know Him! What a day in my history when I first knew the LORD JESUS to be my own personal SAVIOUR and FRIEND!

* * *

At the age of eleven years I was left a motherless lad, but with a father who not only loved his children, but one who sought above all else to impress on their minds their own personal need of a SAVIOUR. How well I remember him at prayer with us all, using the words: "*For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.*" It made me think, and impressed me deeply with the thought, that what "was settled in heaven" no thoughts of men on earth could possibly unsettle.

I have long since learned that the bed-rock for our souls is found in the words of Him Who came from above, but I somehow felt this even then, though but a lad.

The last words of my mother, too, made a deep impression, thank God, never since effaced. Just as she was leaving us, she whispered with a calm smile:

"JESUS does made the dying bed
 Feel soft as downy pillows are,
 While on His breast I lean my head,
 And breathe my life out sweetly there."

But in spite of these impressions then made upon my boyish mind, sin within me, and sin outside me soon began to draw me down the broad road; where, alas! for years I wandered forgetful of God though surrounded by His goodness in so many ways.

I have no intention of bringing to light the sinfulness sin produces, even in a youth, whose mind may be stored with Scripture, if CHRIST has not been received as a personal SAVIOUR. I was just such an one. My

godly father and mother, now with Him Whom they loved here on earth, passed away many years ago, but not their words and ways, their influence; for the sweetness of my mother's voice that charmed my childhood days still rings afresh in my mind as I recall her singing of her SAVIOUR, of His home above, of the bliss of one day being with Him there.

* * *

One day a kick from a horse for a long time prevented me from being able to follow my employment; and then on going back to work, a severe illness overtook me, so that my life was despaired of. Not only were all hopes of recovery gone, but the doctor's verdict was that I should not live after midnight.

That night still lives before my mind in all its awful reality; as my condition as a sinner dying in his sins with the judgment to come afterwards, passed before me. I felt terrified, and as the hours slowly passed—what resolutions I made if only God would spare me, and restore me to health again. The crisis passed; health was restored after a long illness; and on my recovery, every one of my sick-bed resolutions faded away. I went back to my old companions again, and Satan's hold on me seemed stronger than ever. I had no real desire to be a better man, because as a sinner I had no place in my heart for the SON OF GOD. And this went on, although some time later I was again nearly cut off in my sins by a savage bull in an open field. I was only narrowly saved from being gored to death by some men running up with pitch-forks from a neighbouring field. Again the goodness of God in His preserving care was over me in those days of godlessness and sin when I cared nothing for Him. With thankfulness my soul reviews His patience with me, on many occasions in my career when what appeared fatal accidents were prevented, and my sinful life spared, to one day come to the knowledge of His mercy and grace in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Gleanings.

THERE was a wise old teacher, Sophronicus by name, who, so the story runs, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright. "Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day, when he forbade her, in company with her brother, to visit the volatile Lucinda, "you must think us very childish if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it." The father took in silence a dead coal from the hearth and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child; take it." Eulalia did so, and, behold, her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened, and, as it chanced, her white dress also.

"You cannot be too careful in handling coals," said she in vexation.

"Yes, truly," said her father. "You see, my child, that coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the evil."

* * *

"Give me, O LORD,
A heart of flame towards Thee;
A heart of flesh towards my neighbour;
A heart of steel towards myself."

A prayer of St. Augustine.

* * *

"The tree can never reach the sun with its branches, but it keeps trying to, as long as it has life."

* * *

"A sheep may slip into a slough as well as a swine. The difference is that the sheep dreads a fall, and speedily rises from it; while it is a habit with the swine to be unclean, and to love the same condition the other abhors." We must make our own application.

The following from a trade journal may serve to suggest some timely lessons:

"The 120-years-old ketch, 'The Three Sisters,' of Cowes, recalls the 'Old Trulove,' of Hull, whose longevity was attributed to its participation in the northern whaling trade, by which its timbers were so saturated with oil that decay and shipworm failed to find a lodgment there.

"Those agents, animal or vegetable, were warned off; theirs was not to take on with the odour or flavour of that vessel; it was one from which they could neither drink nor sup; and so the ship went on to a wonderful old age."

Does the Owner of so many "vessels of mercy" find surprising usefulness in them because they are filled with the SPIRIT; or are they a disappointment to Him, on account of decay, because the worm of worldliness has found a lodgment in their lives?

The odour and flavour of the 'Old Trulove' was such that neither decay nor shipworm could find any place in her; so it will ever be with the life of one who being filled with the SPIRIT thus becomes a vessel meet for the MASTER'S use.

"Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow, if thou
Another soul wouldst reach:
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.

"Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed."

H. BONAR.

Scripture Gems of the Old and New Testaments Contrasted.

Old Testament.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering.—Gen. iv. 4.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.—Gen. iv. 8.

And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.—Gen. v. 24.

Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. And Hezekiah wept sore.—2 Kings xx. 1 and 3.

And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.—Ex. xxv. 8.

New Testament.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Heb. xi. 4.

And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 1 John iii. 12.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.—Heb. xi. 5.

For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.—Phil. i. 23.

In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.—Ephes. ii. 22.

He That Winneth Souls Is Wise.

(Proverbs xi. 30.)

THIS text surely applies to all believers. Quoting it the other day when addressing two sisters at their baptism, a brother changed the *he* into *she*, "She that winneth souls is wise," and pointed out to them one of the ways in which they could serve the LORD in seeking to bring others to the SAVIOUR. We keep our souls in health by reading the word; by communion in prayer; and by seeking the blessing of others. Our desire to win souls is in direct proportion to our love and faithfulness to CHRIST; and, if this be true of an individual, it is equally so of an assembly. It has often been said that one may judge of the spiritual state of an assembly by the activity of its members in the Gospel.

In Daniel xii. 3, we read, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and *they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*"

It was the great purpose of life of the apostle Paul "that he might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22). The love of the SON of GOD Who loved him and gave Himself for him, awoke an answering love in his own heart, and that love found its expression in "labours more abundant." He realised the deep joy of service, when he called the Philippian believers "my joy and my crown." And anyone who has been used of GOD to bring a soul to CHRIST knows of that deep joy which leads to thanksgiving and praise to GOD.

Andrew has often been spoken of as one who, having made the discovery that JESUS was the MESSIAH, was ready to act upon his convictions; and not satisfied with telling his brother Peter about CHRIST, he at once "brought him to JESUS."

A soul that has realised the LORD's love cannot keep this knowledge to itself, but must make it known. If CHRIST has brought joy into our lives, it is the veriest ingratitude to Him if we do not share the good news

4

with others, and seek to bring them also to the SAVIOUR.

So it is the duty and privilege of Christians to tell others what CHRIST means to them. Individual work of that kind is most important, because nothing can surpass the power of an individual Christian persuading and leading the unsaved ones to Christ. There are plenty of lazy Christians who leave the LORD's work to preachers and missions, and who at the judgment seat of CHRIST may have to confess with shame that they never brought a soul to JESUS.

"He that winneth souls is wise."

Every believer should be a soul winner. His object should be to bring souls to CHRIST; but he must *win* them. What an example the LORD Himself has given us, in the way He approached every class of men—Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalene, and all those whom He healed.

To win a soul requires infinite wisdom, that wisdom, which if any of us lack, we must ask of God, that giveth to all liberally. The soul winner is wise because he is thereby laying up treasure in heaven. L.F.

The Sheep Gate.

(Nehemiah iii. ; John v.)

THE LORD in both Old and New Testaments alike seems to take delight in referring to His people as His flock, His sheep. Typical chapters, of course, are Ezekiel xxxiv., and John x., but there are many other passages. With the New Testament revelation of Himself as the *Good Shepherd*, the *Great Shepherd* and the *Chief Shepherd* to supplement the Old Testament references, we, as the sheep of His pasture, may well find our delight in this subject also.

The enjoyment of this relationship is very real at times of restoration, as in the days of Nehemiah, for example. Then a remnant of the Jews had escaped from the Captivity and were dwelling in Jerusalem. The wall, however, was broken down, and they themselves were in great affliction and reproach.

But the hand of his God was good upon Nehemiah, and so he was sent by the King Artaxerxes with authority to build the palace, the city wall, and a house for himself. In faith that the GOD of heaven would prosper them, he stirred up the remnant of the Jews to begin *the building of the wall*. The wall would surely typify the fact that the Jews were to be ever a separated people. The remembrance and practical recognition of this fact are the first characteristics marking revival among the LORD's people in the present or any day. If it is revival in the heart of an individual, will it not begin with self-judgment in regard to worldly entanglements, and with separation from associations which are found to be contrary to the Word of God? Then, it may be, other individuals become similarly exercised; and thus there is found a remnant company somewhat parallel in character to the company of Jews in Nehemiah's time.

Now it is remarkable that the account of the building of the wall begins with *the sheep-gate*, and is traced, piece by piece, right round the city to the same gate. Undoubtedly Nehemiah was guided in this by the HOLY SPIRIT. Does not the LORD JESUS Himself when speaking of the shepherd and the sheep begin by talking about the door? Later He says, "*I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*" May it not be said that in Nehemiah's day the Jewish remnant was reminded, first of all, that they must take the place of sheep who had gone astray, but were now being led back to their right place before God?

This gate, the sheep gate, was built by the high priest and his brethren the priests. The former typifies the LORD Himself, and the remaining priests correspond with believers in the LORD JESUS acting in the character of worshippers, who are conscious of the holiness of the work of separation in which they are engaged. So this gate is sanctified, or hallowed. Believers have had to rebuild the wall again and again and they learn afresh, in times of revival, both the importance, and holiness

of it. The sanctification goes as far as the tower of Meah and the tower of Hananeel. Meah is the ordinary Hebrew word for the number one hundred. Is there not a link with "What man of you having a hundred sheep" (Luke xv. 4)? The number seems to stand for the whole flock. Though the company at Jerusalem in that day was only a remnant, there was to be recognition that there was room within the wall for all the sheep. If, in these days, the LORD gathers a remnant of His own in separation to Himself, those so gathered must not think of themselves *in an exclusive way*, but should have in mind the whole flock of God. Hananeel means "God is gracious." Is not the whole passage an illustration of this sublime fact?

"Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep market ('gate' in margin, and in New Translation) a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches" (John v. 1). What a scene is here! To all that we have read in Nehemiah is added the pool Bethesda ("house of mercy"), but in those porches lay a great multitude of impotent folk. The beautiful teaching of Nehemiah iii. is not cancelled, but rather augmented. Man's weakness and inability to avail himself of God's grace and mercy by his own efforts is abundantly illustrated in order that the work of the SAVIOUR may stand out in unique glory. The pitiful struggle of helpless sinners to attain wholeness in the sight of God by their own efforts—the greater the need the more hopeless their case (if comparison is possible at all)—is changed in a moment by faith in the word of the SAVIOUR. "Immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked." One moment the man was in sight of the types but unable to enjoy or practise what was typified. The next moment he was walking in strength given by the LORD JESUS.

May the LORD stir up our hearts that we may walk as the sheep of His flock, following Him, separated to Him, recognising in our hearts that there is one flock and one Shepherd, remembering our calling is holy, rejoicing that God is gracious!

J.C.K.

Words of Help from the pages of the Diary of an Old Disciple—2.

IN the fifties I enlisted as a soldier, and, filled with pride and ambition, succeeded in doing better than some who joined up at the same time. This soon brought a step in promotion, and in time a further advance in rank. But as I now survey my past, it is very clear to me that the enemy of God and man was always at hand working through my sinful pride and desire to shut God right out of my thoughts.

Things still fresh in my mind of places where companions in sin were cut down and I was preserved, solely by the mercy of God, are too numerous to mention here.

Then another almost fatal accident arrested me, and again after a long convalescence in hospital I was discharged and went home to my father's house in Wiltshire. A few friends were in that night, come together to pray for the wandering wayward soldier lad, not knowing that I was so near at hand.

One of them rising from his knees as I entered the room, put his hand on my shoulder and said: "Edward, we love you, and God loves you." This broke me down completely; and I too knelt down at an old ash-bottomed chair, and there and then confessed my sins, accepting CHRIST as my SAVIOUR. If you had been in my earthly father's house as he embraced me, you would have seen joy on earth, as well as the joy there is in heaven "over one sinner that repenteth."

"My son, my son," exclaimed my father, as tears of gladness coursed down his face, "thy mother's prayers are answered."

These heavenly transactions of God on earth in saving poor sinners through the atoning merits of CHRIST's precious blood, shed for sinners—shed for me—are often spoken of as foolishness by those who are still blindly perishing in their sins. Not so by those who have perished. No, there the eyes are at last opened, but

then, alas! too late. The LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself tells us of the earnestness of those in that place of hopeless misery, where mercy never enters, to prevent others from sinking as they themselves have done. (Cf. St. Luke xvi. 27, 28.)

None but the LORD Himself could have described the place and state of those who die in their sins. None but the LORD Himself could make peace for us and reconcile the sinner to God against Whom we have all sinned; and in Whose presence sin cannot remain unpunished. Yet, mystery of love, it is God Himself Who says: *"Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."* *"While we were yet sinners Christ died for us."*

"There as a Victim in our stead,
The Blessed SAVIOUR bowed His Head;
There all was done that God required,
And peace was made as God desired.

This then is the love that God commends to us and would have us know and believe.

* * *

I married when thirty years of age, and for four short years our home was lighted up by mutual love; above all by the love of our SAVIOUR. Then came what seemed at the time an unbearable load, but God was the strength of my life; and this I learned as sickness and bereavement entered our little home.

As she was about to leave me, fixing her eyes upon me she said: "Our path has been different from our expectation, but through all we have proved what we sang together on our wedding day:—

" 'Tis JESUS, the First and the Last,
Whose SPIRIT shall guide us safe home;
We praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

So firm was her faith and so bright her expectation, that with loving eyes still fixed on me, she said as her

very last words: "Instantly I leave you here, I shall be with JESUS there."

Without a struggle or seemingly a thought of anything but JESUS she quietly entered into rest.

Her departing to be with CHRIST had been spoken of in the usual way and in her hearing as "death." At this she seemed to rise in the freshness of divine life. "Death!" said she; "there is nothing but life for those who have CHRIST as their SAVIOUR. Those who belong to CHRIST will never taste death." Then she began to tell us what was filling her own soul. "I believed the truth of GOD through dear Mr. Trotter's lips, and now I am proving what I then believed. I heard that JESUS, my SAVIOUR, in passing through death, had by His death abolished death for all the people of GOD, that He had in His death made atonement to GOD for the sins of His people, so that those who believe might pass through time into eternity without having to taste death, as this had been suffered by JESUS for them."

(To be continued, D.V.)

Some Last Words of William Trotter

"**A**S I may not be able to express myself distinctly by and bye, I wish now to say that I am in perfect peace, resting alone on the blood of CHRIST, the *precious* blood of GOD's Son, which cleanseth from all sin. I find this amply sufficient to enter GOD's presence with. "When I see the Blood I will pass over you." Oh, the *precious, precious* Blood of CHRIST!

A little later in the evening he said, "I desire my special circle of friends and fellow-labourers to know that I find the Foundation stands fast, the ground beneath my feet is firm, and the prospect brighter than ever. I wish them to know, too, that *I give God unfeigned thanks for the path of separation in which He has led me these last twenty-three years and that though it has been attended with much failure, I have*

not once had a doubt that it is the right one. The nearer I draw to the close, and view things calmly in the light of Him whose presence I am about to enter, the more assured I am this is so, and that it is the path He blesses and delights in. *This has reference to the differences that have arisen amongst us,* and as it has been my lot to write and publish with respect to these matters, I wish my brethren to know that at a moment like the present I am perfectly at peace as to the past, and feel more strongly than ever that there can be no *neutrality in questions* touching the Person of our blessed LORD (and surely the godly were ever of one mind as to this) nor communion where there is indifference to *His Name* and power. Firm decided action in separation is the only course. If things are prolonged, *God may in His own way loosen things a little* and love and *tenderness with faithfulness* is to be sought after. *If the Lord tarry, I have a conviction that fresh and deep blessing is at hand for His people."*

This is the Mr. Trotter to whom reference is made in "The Diary of an Old Disciple"; and it is interesting to note the absolute confidence in the precious Blood of CHRIST expressed by each, unknown to the other, in their solemn hour of passing from this scene.

William Kelly as I knew Him—I.

MY first meeting with William Kelly was near the end of his long life and very early on in my own. The combined importunity and impecuniosity of a young Sunday School secretary faced by the difficulty of raising funds for the summer treat moved me to write him asking for a donation. Promptly arrived a postcard covered with microscopic hieroglyphics, the gist of which I made out as an invitation to call at his house. Upon doing so a most courteous reception was given me by Mr. Kelly, who, however, put his visitor through a fairly stiff cross-examination as to the whys

and wherefores of Sunday School treats. He then intimated that the whole matter was rather outside his line of things; and further that my arguments had not at all convinced him of the necessity for Sunday School excursions.

Just as I was rather sadly taking my leave, he smilingly remarked: "Ah, well, if *I* do not feel at liberty to assist you in your undertaking, I see no reason why I should not recommend you to some persons who very probably will do so." This he proceeded to do by giving me the names of several likely donors, with gratifying results financially.

My next personal meeting with Mr. Kelly followed upon a rather ambitious literary excursion of mine into the realm of biography. Current stories of the late John Nelson Darby had so interested me, that I set to work collecting every scrap of reliable information concerning him, putting it down in a more or less orderly fashion for my own satisfaction.

Finding the material accumulating, it occurred to me that others might be interested, and so the idea of publication once entertained speedily grew. At last, having with some pains completed the MS., I submitted it to Mr. Kelly, in my youthful audacity, asking for his criticism, knowing him to have been not only an intimate friend of J.N.D., but also Editor of all his voluminous writings.

At this time, as often as possible, I attended his Wednesday lectures at Blackheath, and never thinking he would recognise me among the congregation, duly went on the next occasion after despatching it. To my surprise, at the close of the lecture, he asked me to wait awhile, and then to accompany him to his house. Two or three leading men among the brethren escorted him home that evening, and even at this distance of time I can hear him mentioning that our young friend here has written a paper on J.N.D., contrasting him with E. B. Pusey and the Oxford and Plymouth movements. He also mildly catechised me as to my motives, and apparently, more or less satisfactorily, as upon reaching

our destination, he invited me to call on the next Sunday afternoon and discuss it more fully. The chief men gave an impression of being somewhat bored, but Mr. Kelly, on the other hand, seemed to have a real interest in the matter. I went my way light-heartedly because he was the only one who really counted, so far as I was concerned.

Sunday afternoon at three o'clock duly found me at Venner Lodge, his house in Lee, and having been shown into the library, I found Mr. Kelly awaiting me. Bidding me make myself at home, and drawing up to the fire, he for the next hour conversed in his own inimitable way, completely setting me at ease by the charm of his conversation. I found he had critically examined my poor effort, had corrected errors, made suggestive rearrangements of paragraphs, and supplemented it from first-hand knowledge of J.N.D. with invaluable matter of exceptional interest to likely readers.

A chiming clock caused him to look up sharply, and then he remarked: "You'll stay tea with me?"

One's nervous hesitation at the unexpected honour must have been pretty evident, for he quickly added: "I told them I had a friend coming, and that we'd take tea together here."

Now comes an incident which made a deep and lasting impression, for tea having been brought in, he gave thanks, asking a blessing on the meal with the greatest reverence of manner. Only a few short sentences, it is true, but the tone in which he uttered the words: "Our Father," betokened intense reality, and seemed to bring one into the very audience chamber of the King Eternal. A small thing but of great significance, and worthy to be pondered.

That afternoon spent with William Kelly in his library enabled one immature believer to believe more fully in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of believers. For, frankly, the interest shown by such a man in an unknown lad's first serious literary attempt surprised me, at the same time giving an insight into the true greatness of his character. Long afterwards, I

was to learn that William Kelly's towering abilities had received frank recognition by some of England's greatest scholars, but his humble, unassuming attitude, and brotherly kindness that afternoon is gratefully remembered and recorded by the writer. He was at that very time engaged in bringing out a great work which from its erudition might well have occupied every available hour; and this made his kindness the more marked. To help a poor unknown scribe struggling with a task too big for him, he placed his own work aside and opened the treasures of his well-stored mind, without the faintest trace of that awful patronage which is the bane of much well-meant helpful effort. He so encouraged one by advice and hints as to writing for publication, thereby making him a life-long debtor. Upon attempting to stammer out my grateful appreciation of this to him, Mr. Kelly replied (and memory treasures the very words): "Pray, don't name it; come again if I can be of any further service. It is a real joy to be of assistance to those who are His."

A characteristic remark he once made to me, possibly discerning my particular need of it, was: "Pains and labour; pains and labour; nothing worth doing is accomplished without pains and labour."

At one time when two seaside gatherings were contemplating breaking fellowship with their Brethren and starting independently, I happened to call on him at his house to be greeted with "I have just sent off a loving appeal to — and —," and the tone betrayed the feeling prompting this eleventh-hour effort to avert division. He had a hard head and a soft heart. I think it was that day also when Mr. Kelly showed me a page of the MS. of his last book on Revelation, corresponding line by line with, and of the exact size of the rough proofs lying alongside. I always pitied the printer who had to decipher the almost microscopic copy.

How much he could manage to include on a postcard will be seen from the following one written in answer to an enquiry as to the vocation of a preacher, and

general habits of study. It also possesses a peculiarly tender and pathetic interest, being written on the evening following his dearly loved wife's death.

"22 Kid: Gr: B'heath.

Tuesday evening. Feb. 4/84.

Dear Bro.,

When I say that it pleased the Lord this morning to deprive me of a devoted sister wife, mother of several children, you will not expect more than a few words from me.

One who believes the Lord has called him and given him a gift to preach or teach, need not be hasty or anxious. Power makes itself felt; and it is well to begin in a small, proving one's gift and so be gradually led into a larger, way. But if sober brethren, who have heard, invite one to preach in their Room, one ought to have good reasons for declining. Love would lead to help; especially if gift were lacking among those older, or not of the kind to win souls. As to *studying* the word, it is well when reading papers of interest to search generally. But this should not hinder the regular *reading* of O. and N.T. daily. Both ways are profitable, and should be combined. And it is not amiss to learn how to read Gr. and Hebr. words, even if one knows no more of the language; for this helps to better understanding of remarks, made by those who do know them. I do not think well of a slight knowledge of Gr. and Hebr., and most men, even if they spend many years, could only acquire a slight knowledge. If one just learns enough to appreciate good remarks it is far better than spending time for what is generally pretension. The A.V. compared with the Revision and other helps, give better results than most are capable of acquiring. And remember, 'prayer and the word,' Acts vi.

Yours aff:

W.K."

(To be continued, D.V.)

A Complete Surprise.

(BIBLE STORY FOR OUR YOUNGEST READERS)

MANY, many years ago there lived in the city of Jerusalem, a man who was lame from his birth. As a little boy of about a year old, his mother and father no doubt often tried to teach him to walk. Soon they would discover there was something wrong with his feet and ankles, for try as they might their little boy could not possibly learn to walk. He probably would not be able even to crawl. After months, perhaps years, of anxiety, his parents at last faced the fact that their little boy was doomed to be a lifelong cripple. Unable to obtain good advice and treatment, as we say now, for him, his parents had to watch him growing up with this terrible handicap. Imagine, too, how he must have felt when he saw other boys and girls playing and running about, while he himself could only sit down and watch them, and never join in their games.

At last the time would come for him to leave school. How was he to earn his living? He could not depend on his parents to support him all his life. Yet he needed food to eat and clothes to wear even if he was lame; and how were these to be secured? So when we meet him in the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we find he had become a poor beggar. Every morning his friends used to carry him to the Beautiful Gate of the temple, through which crowds of people would enter. There were some people who still went there and offered sacrifices to God, hoping these would take away their sins; not yet realising that a few months before JESUS of Nazareth, our LORD and SAVIOUR, had died on the cross of Calvary for that very purpose; nor knowing that they now had only to trust in His Sacrifice and so receive forgiveness of all their sins. Every evening this lame man's friends would call for him to carry him home again, and see how much money he had had given to him during the day, and hear what he had heard or seen.

One morning he was carried to the temple as usual, and left at the Beautiful Gate. He settled down for his day's begging. There seemed to be a great many people about, going in and out of the temple as the day wore on. Presently in the early afternoon, about three o'clock, along came two men who looked at the poor handicapped man with pity in their eyes. The crippled man lifted his eyes up to them and began to beg for money. These two men, however, were Peter and John, who were disciples of JESUS, and had been with Him in the days before wicked men had taken and crucified Him.

Peter with his eyes full of pity for the poor cripple said:

"Look on us. Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I will give. In the Name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Then taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up; at the same time his feet and ankles grew suddenly strong and steady. What we call a miracle had happened; for the crippled man found he could walk at last through faith in the Name and by the Power of JESUS. He was now so happy at being able to walk, that he was soon seen to be not only walking and leaping for very joy, but all the time thanking and praising God. So he entered into the temple with Peter and John. No need for him to sit at the gate begging; he would be able to earn his own living, and not any longer have to depend on other people's chance kindnesses. So you can just imagine how very happy he was; and how grateful to God he was, too. And when the enemies of CHRIST wished to deny the Power of His Name "beholding the man which was healed, they could say nothing against it."

M.R.T.

Victory.

THE LORD had said unto Abram, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they serve, will I judge?"

Threescore and ten persons, Jacob and his house, went down into Egypt. In course of time they increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty. Pharaoh set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. "And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage . . . all their service wherein they made them serve, was with rigour." Pharaoh did not know that God had said to Abram that his seed was to be as the dust of the earth, so his efforts to diminish their number were futile.

When the time of the promise drew nigh, the people had increased to six hundred thousand men, besides hundreds of thousands of women and children.

For eighty years God had been training His servant Moses, and He appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob . . . I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land."

God had spoken. Pharaoh might say, "I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go"; but what folly to stretch out his hand against God, and to strengthen himself against the ALMIGHTY!

God knew that the king of Egypt would not let them go, and He told Moses, "I will stretch out My hand, and smite Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go."

God wanted a redeemed people, but Israel, like the Egyptians, had sinned: death was the penalty when

God's judgments were in the earth, so God provided a sacrifice, a lamb without blemish to meet the need. This was slain, and the blood sprinkled on the two side-posts and on the upper door post of the houses of the Israelites, and God said, "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." And it came to pass that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon, and there was a great cry in Egypt. Pharaoh then thrust out the Israelites altogether, bidding them begone.

Then in the hardness and impenitence of his heart, seeing that the people fled, Pharaoh made ready his own chariot, and all his chariots, and his horsemen, and his army, and said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them." But instead of leading his army to victory, he led them to utter destruction.

JEHOVAH was to fight for His people. He opened a way for them through the deep, so that the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. Not a single man, woman or child was lost, and of their cattle not a hoof was left behind.

The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea; God caused darkness to enshroud them; He took off their chariot wheels; He blew with His wind, the sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters. The waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh; there remained not so much as one of them.

The Israelites had not to unsheath a sword, or make ready an arrow on the string, or even to raise a shield! They had but to stand still and see the salvation of the LORD; He had wrought the victory; He had taken a nation from the midst of a nation; taken a redeemed people from slavery and sorrow, from the iron furnace,

even out of Egypt, to be unto Him a people of inheritance.

How this ancient story of deliverance by blood and by power throws CHRIST's victory into high relief! God had said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." CHRIST has conquered a more powerful foe than Pharaoh. By His work deliverance has been wrought, not only for Israel, but for multitudes out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. A sacrifice was provided—CHRIST "as a lamb without blemish—foreordained before the foundation of the world." Not now the blood of a lamb, but CHRIST's blood that God looks upon, and which is the believer's shelter from judgment.

Israel had to stand still and see the salvation of God: to-day we have to do nothing, but by faith to behold what CHRIST has done. What hath CHRIST wrought? He delivers believers from the power of Satan; He forgives their sins; He turns them from darkness to light; He gives them eternal life; and inheritance among them that are sanctified. Also the work accomplished by Him at Calvary will be the ground on which God will effect the restoration of His people Israel; and the destruction of him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

"His be the Victor's name,
Who fought the fight alone;
Triumphant saints no honour claim,
His conquest was their own." H.L.B.

Abigail, the Wife of Nabal the Carmelite—2.

(1 Sam. xxv.)

GOD deals in grace. He knew what the end of Nabal would be, yet this was the gracious test which He put to him. And if there had been a spark of grace in Nabal's heart, of anything according to God, it must have answered to the test. But there was not. His eye was fixed upon outward circumstances; his rough, out-

ward thought about David's position was this, "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants that break away nowadays, every man from his master," v. 10. Now we must remember, dear friends, that we have all of us, naturally, this Nabal feeling (there is no heart without it), as well as other evil; and about this, even as believers, we have to watch and judge ourselves. I ask you, whether, because you desire to serve God, there is ready willingness, in full freedom of heart, to give all that countenance and fellowship which you are able, to others who may stand in need of it. This may be done in the way of support, or comfort, or sympathy, either in temporal or spiritual things. Love will find out many a way.

In the present day, there are not a few, who, it may be, seem to some of us, to shrink from and shun the circumstances in which they find themselves placed. But about this we may misjudge them, and be saying, in principle, the same thing that Nabal said, little aware of the deep inward struggle and anxiety there has been. David had given up much; many a tie had been broken, many a struggle gone through; ere he took this position. So that, though it was true, in one sense, that he had "run away from his master," *how different was the act in the eyes of God and of man*. That which is outward soon attracts the eye, when perhaps it requires patient, diligent investigation to find out the truth. If the soul desires fellowship with God in His thoughts and ways, there must be this diligence, otherwise we shall never know what to encourage and what not. Depend upon it, all truth, the more it is known and acted on, the more will it lead into the isolated place.

But we may learn a deep and practical lesson from what is shown out here of David's heart—

David was still in the flesh, and (as many of us are often found, when anything comes upon us unexpectedly) he was unprepared to meet, in *steadfastness of grace*, that which God allowed to be in his path.

No doubt he considered the slight and dishonour put upon him by Nabal, "most uncalled for," "most unjust," "rather too much to bear." But he was wrongly roused.

And how often is this the case with the saints of God. They dwell on circumstances, instead of turning from circumstances to God and then acting amidst them according to Him. They say, perhaps, "How unkind! How unjust! Do I deserve this treatment? Is it not quite right to be angry?" Thus the place of *grace* is lost. Day by day, a thousand things act on our spirits, in one way or another, which are calculated to produce trying and painful effects. Now, if these be met in fellowship with God, they afford an occasion for bringing forth blessed fruit; but if not, we ourselves become contaminated, and have to confess sin. So that, instead of (as the hymn says) Satan trembling and fleeing from us in every conflict, he often thus gains advantage over us. It is a blessed thing to be able to praise God for having enabled us *practically* to triumph and overcome. And this we should seek to attain. The apostle Paul could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," and "none of these things move me," etc. We can always praise God for what He is in Himself, and for what He has made us in Christ, but we might also praise Him for our own practical victory over Satan and over the world.

"'Mid mightiest foes—most feeble are we—
Yet trembling in ev'ry conflict they flee;
The Lord is our banner, the battle is His—
The weakest of saints more than conqueror is."

Very often, beloved friends, the state in which we are, would forbid our thus praising God. I mention this, not at all to discourage, but rather that we may be able to separate between what we are *in Christ*, and our own *practical* condition as overcomers. Look again at David. He was in danger, not only of not overcoming, but of being overcome and falling into deep sin. How did he act?—as the *servant of God*, bearing meekly Nabal's taunts and cutting reproach? Did he take it up *in the name of God*? No, it was in the spirit of *his own wounded pride*.

There was one, however, in the house of Nabal, and bound to him, too, by a tie which none but God could

break, of altogether a different character to Nabal; one who belonged to the Lord—a woman of faith. Abigail was able to discern in David (outcast and needy wanderer, though he was), the anointed one of the God of Israel,—him whom God was surely about to bring to greatness, as the chosen head of His people. *“The Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord.”* Abigail was able to follow the path of David, with the eye of faith, and to put herself on to the hour of his glory. Now this shows that her soul was deeply taught of God. But then the very circumstance of her being thus taught of God, must have made her situation in Nabal’s house most painful, and her connexion with him a yoke. Harassed every day,—finding hindrances from, but having no communion with, him to whom she was bound,—able to see the folly of Nabal’s position, and to contrast it with that of the man of faith; she might have felt this to be a strange dealing of the Lord towards her. But her heart was being prepared for a service which before she knew not. She might have said, “Why is it thus with me? Were I in other and different circumstances, what blessing, what happiness should I feel in serving the servants of God; but here I am hindered.” Many a soul is thus brought (not by self-chosen paths) into a very trying and painful position, distinctly from the desire to serve God. *Now no real desire to serve God will ever be in vain.* God may make some way for its being answered, even now, and the time will come when this will be fully the case. Meanwhile there is great profit and discipline of heart in having our neck bowed to the yoke, in being brought to submit to God. Moses was not bound to Pharaoh’s house, and therefore in faithfulness he quitted it for the Lord’s sake. So with Abraham and his father’s house. But there may be circumstances, as those of Abigail, which must be endured, where the soul is called to bear the yoke and to wait upon God. Yet these will be full of abundant blessing. There is in them a secret breaking of the will, and bruising of the flesh, which will be found most profitable in after service to God.

On the Road to Emmaus.

“**A**ND behold two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus.” So the sacred writer introduces one of the most beautiful stories ever written for the comforting and strengthening of the people of God.

“*Two of them*”—not apostles, but just ordinary disciples, like the writer and reader.

“*That same day*”—the gladdest day that had ever dawned; yet, as they walked and talked they were sad, because baffled and bewildered by what appeared most perplexing providences. “The things which had happened.” Heavy-hearted they had started on their journey, and heavier-hearted they became the more they discussed these mysterious doings of the past few days. It was spring-time in the land; the time of singing of birds had come in a twofold sense; the Paschal season; holiday time; and the high road would be thronged with travellers going and coming on that early April afternoon.

But as the wise man of the Old Testament observes, it is no use “singing songs to a heavy heart.” So the two of them that same day pursued their sad course until met or overtaken by Another Who is never far from sad hearts that love Him and miss Him.

The Blessed SAVIOUR, the Risen LORD, finds time on that day of His triumph to comfort and cheer the hearts of two insignificant disciples on whom the nightmare of disappointment seems to have fallen.

“Thy Risen life but fits Thee more
For kindly ministry;
Thy love, unhindered, rests upon
Each bruised branch in Thee.”

So the LORD JESUS listens to their tale of sorrow; discloses to them the state of their own hearts; and opens the Scriptures as the sure remedy for their condition. What a picture of His present gracious ministry by the Spirit and the word. He could have immediately dis-

pelled their gloom and sadness, but how much has been gained because He acted as He did.

Generations of His heavy-hearted disciples since have in their turn toiled the dusty highroad of life filled with gloomy forebodings because of perplexing providences. In their turn they have learned that joy and peace come through believing the written word, and hearts have been strangely warmed as the gracious Spirit has made the Lord Jesus a living, bright reality again thereby.

"Two of them," at first walking with heavy hearts because of unbelief; knowing indeed the Scriptures, but needing light through them. Mere human thoughts of their loved Master but filled them the more with sadness and perplexity; but when He opened to them the Scriptures, at once divine thoughts of the same Person filled their hearts with gladness and assurance. As He talked with them by the way their hearts began to burn within them. How full the ancient Scriptures were found to be! Moses, the Law, the Prophets, all pointing with prophetic finger or pictured type to Him, His sufferings, and the glories that should follow.

How their hearts kindled with a new passion for Him as they listened to His explanation of the Paschal Lamb, the Brazen Serpent, the Smitten Rock, the Manna; and of Isaiah and the Suffering Servant of JEHOVAH—God's salvation to the ends of the earth; of Daniel and Messiah cut off; of Zechariah and the Shepherd sold and smitten; of David and other Psalmists with their sad dirges of One forsaken by God, despised by man, yet the Head Stone of the corner.

Time passes pleasantly and rapidly in such conversation, and arrived at their home, hesitating as the latch of the garden gate is lifted, with one voice they invite Him so earnestly to come and abide with them.

He had made as though He would have gone further, and thus gave them opportunity to entreat Him to stay longer with them. He needs no second invitation and yields at once to the desire created by Himself. It is always so. The heart that truly, earnestly longs for more of His company always finds it.

"He went in to tarry with them," and then came the momentary unveiling, as it were, when they knew Him and He, having accomplished His kindly, gracious ministry, ceased to be seen of them.

But weariness, sadness and sorrow have passed away, and with joyful haste they retrace the steps along the same highroad, but in what different case! "The joy of the LORD is your strength." "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." "Rejoice in the LORD always, and again I say, Rejoice."

This is the message heard and learned on the road to Emmaus.

"And they that woo His visits sweet,
And will not let Him go,
Oft, while His broken bread they eat,
His soul-felt presence know;
His gathered friends He loves to meet
And fill with joy their faith,
When they with melting hearts repeat
The memory of His death

But such sweet visits here are brief,
Dispensed from stage to stage
(A cheering and a prized relief)
Of faith's hard pilgrimage.
There is a scene where JESUS ne'er,
Ne'er leaves His happy guests;
He spreads a ceaseless banquet there,
And love still flames their breasts.

W.G.T.

"Our wants are fathomless! our help infinite! none but God can tell the uttermost a God can do. Oh! what a blessing we are not left to ourselves, that when we drag the skein of our life into the most desperate tangles, mercy will sit down patiently to unravel." — *Viscountess Powerscourt*, 1830.

On Individual Witness and Testimony.

(Philippians i. 19-21.)

ALL the grace our God bestows upon us, brings with it responsibility. As we indeed thank God for all the mercy granted us while still here, while we walk by faith and not by sight, waiting our LORD's return, the very nearness of His company stirs up increased desires to be firm and true, holding fast what has been committed to us. So while we rejoice, we rejoice with trembling and with distrust of self. What is to keep us? I do not think doctrine will, for we have seen teachers go astray. What *will* keep us?

Here in the Epistle to the Philippians we have a special character of the Apostle's teaching which, carried out in practice, is particularly suited to keep us. It will not, however, do merely to seek to be of one mind—for where may that not lead us?

It is having the same mind that was in CHRIST JESUS, as in ch. ii., that will keep us; subjection to the mind of CHRIST. What needs pressing upon us constantly is *the great importance of the individual state of soul*; and our own individual witness and testimony springing therefrom. The Apostle Paul, when called by God, was not only called to be a *minister*, but a *witness*.

All are not called to be ministers of the word, but all without exception are called and privileged to be witnesses. This is an important point; a matter to be dwelt upon; and yet one often not sufficiently considered.

Another has said: "To set CHRIST before the world is the high and holy privilege of every man of God." It is a privilege we each enjoy, or may enjoy.

Who knows the extent of the opportunities for witnessing to CHRIST in daily life?

According to the right use or neglect of these opportunities there will be the shining out of what the HOLY SPIRIT has put in.

The Apostle Paul says he bore in his body the marks of the LORD JESUS; that is, he had been branded as a slave in the faithful following of CHRIST; and verse 20

of chapter i., expresses his great desire. It is a wonderful thought—that “*Christ shall be magnified in my body.*” He is the Chiefest among ten thousand; He is the Altogether Lovely One; and God *has* given Him the place at His own right hand, and decreed that in all things He *shall* have the pre-eminence. But what does the world know of CHRIST? Only what they see of Him in His people. Well, what *do* they see? What in our daily life reminds them of Him?

The writer lived for over twenty years in a town, where a man, very well known there indeed, built a church so that the gospel might be clearly preached in the place. But when he left the town he did not leave a good character, nor take one with him. His transactions had hardly the character of righteousness, to say nothing at all of grace.

How is it possible, then, for CHRIST to be magnified? We had better each answer this question for ourselves; but certainly so that the world may think better of Him because of it. CHRIST is written in our hearts by the HOLY SPIRIT; and it is our desire that others should be able to speak well of Him.

How can this be accomplished? we ask.

The Epistle of Jude tells us how we are to keep ourselves in the love of God; by prayer, by building up ourselves on the most holy faith, by looking for the mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal life; counting upon His merciful help and interest every step of the way.

The love of God is always the same. The sunshine of His smile is always the same though clouds may intervene.

“Keep yourselves in the love of God” is the word; and if even we should fail, there is in verse 24, the note of triumph that He is able to keep. “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our SAVIOUR, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

I repeat, what a note of triumph!

J.M.W.

On God's Perfect Servant.

LOVE produces true devotedness in service. In the case of the LORD Himself as the Sent-One of the FATHER, there was mutual love. In His service He enjoyed fully the love of His FATHER; "I have kept My FATHER's commandments and abide in His love"; and side by side with this, "But that the world may know that I love the FATHER; and as the FATHER gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence." Further, we must add, "Therefore doth My FATHER love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again . . . This commandment have I received of My FATHER."

To Nicodemus the LORD—Who was "the only-begotten SON, which is in the bosom of the FATHER"—revealed the great love of GOD to the world; and following this we have an example of how He manifested it. Wearied and thirsty, JESUS sat on Sychar's well. He asked Samaria's daughter for a drink of water from Jacob's well—but she never gave it Him; instead He gave her living water, which was in her a well of water springing up into everlasting life. What satisfaction to Him to have thus brought blessing to this poor erring woman; for it was the will of Him that sent Him—yes, it was the FATHER's joy to bless, and JESUS shared that joy. He said to His disciples, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of . . . My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." Nor was that all; many of the men of the city heard the woman's testimony, and many more believed because of His own word, and knew that He was indeed the CHRIST, the SAVIOUR of the world—the fields were white already to harvest.

The works of GOD were made manifest in the giving of sight to the man that was born blind. JESUS said, "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day." The man was doubly blessed! Not only was he granted natural sight, but was able to look upon the

One that had granted it, and to know and to worship Him as the SON of GOD.

The glory of GOD was manifested by Him by the raising of Lazarus from the dead. What wisdom, love and power were exhibited in what He said and did! How reassuring His message to the sisters, whose brother Lazarus was sick! "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of GOD, that the SON of GOD might be glorified thereby." Then what care for the spiritual welfare of His disciples—"Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." Further, what painstaking grace in instructing Martha, and what desire for the blessing of the people that stood by, expressed in prayer to His FATHER, "That they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Nor is this all—you, dear reader, are not forgotten, for, *"These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name."*

Then the crown of His service here seen in obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. "The cup which My FATHER hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" This He did. "JESUS, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst...when JESUS therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

* * *

Having considered some of the wondrous things in the pathway of Him Whom "the FATHER hath sanctified and sent into the world" as recorded in John's Gospel, let us now look at the presentation of Him by the HOLY SPIRIT in Isaiah's pages, as JEHOVAH's Servant.

JEHOVAH directs our gaze to Him: "Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold; Mine Elect in Whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He shall

bring forth judgment to the Gentiles . . . He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth."

Then we hear JEHOVAH speaking to Him: "I the LORD have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold Thine hand, and will keep Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Then the LORD Himself tells of JEHOVAH's calling and purpose concerning Him, "Listen, O isles, unto Me; and hearken, ye people from far. He hath made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid Me, and made Me a polished shaft . . . And said unto Me, Thou art My Servant, O Israel, in Whom I will be glorified. Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought and in vain: yet surely My judgment is with the LORD, and My work with My God. And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give Thee a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My Salvation unto the end of the earth."

How does He exult in what JEHOVAH was to Him!

"The LORD GOD hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary; He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the learned.

The LORD GOD hath opened Mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting.

For the LORD GOD will help Me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

Behold the LORD GOD will help Me; who is he that shall condemn Me?"

Again JEHOVAH directs our gaze to Him: "Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at Thee; His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men."

He came unto His own with the SPIRIT of the LORD God upon Him, preaching good tidings to the meek; binding up the broken-hearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; yet He was received with hatred, with scorn, with envy, and with unbelief: "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Was JEHOVAH's purpose to be frustrated even by the crucifixion of Christ? No! JEHOVAH would "prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand." JEHOVAH's Servant "shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

JEHOVAH had said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Israel was to be "saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation." In the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, God reveals what will be the language of Israel when He will open their eyes to see that JESUS of Nazareth, Whom they had rejected and crucified, was their promised Deliverer. Learning this they will confess "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities . . . JEHOVAH hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

The cross is the foundation of their blessing, and we know that JEHOVAH's Servant was not to die "for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

O Zion! when thy SAVIOUR came
In grace and love to thee,
No beauty in thy royal LORD
Thy faithless eye could see.

Yet onward in His path of grace
The Holy Sufferer went,
To feel, at last, that love on thee
Had all in vain been spent.

Yet not in vain—o'er Israel's land
The glory yet shall shine;
And He, thy once rejected King,
MESSIAH, shall be thine.

His chosen bride, ordain'd with Him,
To reign o'er all the earth,
Shall first be framed, ere thou shalt know
Thy SAVIOUR'S matchless worth.

The nations to thy glorious light,
O Zion, yet shall throng,
And all the list'ning islands wait,
To catch the joyful song.

H.T.B.

Words of Help on Preaching and Sunday School Teaching.

THERE are certain counsels which one servant of God may offer to others engaged in His happy service. Among them the following are tendered for careful consideration, and deal chiefly with practical ways and means.

First, it is essential to find CHRIST in the subject you present to your hearers. He is the One Who matters supremely for you as His servant, and for those whom you would seek to serve for His dear sake. You will agree their greatest need is to be brought to know Him as you do—as SAVIOUR and LORD.

Secondly, if you tell the Bible story in Bible fashion children will be interested, and unless they are, you can do no good. Experience and reverence teach us all sooner or later that it is impossible to improve upon the simple, solemn, significant language of Holy Scripture.

Thirdly, to cultivate the pictorial faculty, so that they quickly grasp the point of your lesson, is a very great asset to teachers and preachers alike. "*I see,*" is a favourite exclamation when the matter has been put so that they can do so.

It is helpful to remember that Impression and Expression are the inner and outer sides of the seal of truth. How much you are impressed by your subject will determine your expression of it, and your hearer's impression by it.

As Sunday School teachers, we need to picture, point, and press home the message with which we are entrusted by the LORD our MASTER.

Every Sunday School lesson and gospel sermon should have at least three things interwoven in its texture. Solid thinking, spiritual passion and stirring appeal. "*Preach the word*" is the apostolic injunction, and for this one must know what it is, and do some real solid thinking. For example: *Who the Lord Jesus is. What He has done. Why He did it. What results for God and man come from it.* This will call for much prayerful mental exercise, since, however spiritual you are, you can only think with your mind; and the subject is so vast, so deep, so heart-searching, too.

Spiritual passion is generated by personal love to CHRIST, personal sense of indebtedness to Him, and personal desire for others to know and own Him.

The stirring appeal is not that hateful manufactured simulation of earnestness so easily assumed, but is naturally produced by a Scripturally well-furnished mind and a heart aflame with the love of CHRIST. Then it will be urgent, tender, loving, but not sickly, nor sentimental.

Every Sunday School lesson, gospel sermon, and lecture or address should, of course, contain (1) An argument; (2) a testimony; (3) an exhortation.

1. An *argument*, not in the sense of being argumentative or controversial, but as being reasonable, and of a nature to be commended to creatures gifted by the Creator with minds able to understand. The

holy faith is the most reasonable thing on earth; but some preachers and teachers appear to imagine that gesticulations, boisterous repetitions, and such like, make up for coherent, cogent, crystal clear, explanation and exposition. What we have to say when we preach and teach is so reasonable that it would appeal to any thinking person were it not that the god of this world hath blinded their eyes lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine in. As the late C. H. Spurgeon is credited with impressing upon his students: *"At least tell them WHAT and WHO it is they have to believe."*

2. A *testimony*, in the full sense of bearing personal witness to the efficacy of what you are endeavouring to press upon the acceptance of others. "We speak what we do know and testify what we have seen," is the word of the LORD as He graciously joins Himself to His servants. "We believe, therefore, we speak," says the great Apostle, quoting a Psalmist.
3. An *exhortation*, that is an urgent stirring up by the speaker of the hearers because of the immense importance of the matter in hand.

The art of alliteration, or the use of acrostics, may be a great memory help.

For the gospel preacher or minister of the word to neglect solid thinking upon the word of GOD, and then imagine that a frantic appeal to GOD for help a few minutes before the address is due, will bring the blessing down, is sheer lazy superstition. God is very gracious; the LORD is very pitiful, *but He knows exactly what time and opportunity we each have, and deals with us in government accordingly.* At any rate, this is the writer's firm conviction. Store the mind by study, reading and meditation; and fan the flame of devotion by secret prayer, self-judgment and contrition; thus having given yourself to the work, your profiting will appear to others. Listen to the call of the need of souls. They are, alas, often unconscious alike of their need and of the One Who can fully meet it.

Oft when the word is on me to deliver,
 Lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare;
 Desert or throng, the city or the river,
 Melts in a lucid Paradise of air,—

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
 Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be
 kings,—
 Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
 Sadly contented in a show of things;—

Then with a rush the intolerable craving
 Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,—
 Oh, to save these! to perish for their saving,
 Die for their life, be offered for them all!

QUARTUS.

On Springtime in Nature and Grace.

(FOR OUR VERY YOUNGEST READERS.)

IT was a lovely spring evening when a band of bright young folks, all in the springtime of life, filled the hall for the children's special meeting. They made a pleasant picture in the cheerful-looking room where they met. The speaker, too, was a young man who was also bright and cheerful; one who knew how to make the most important subject on earth very interesting to his little listeners.

Placing two glasses of water upon the desk, he gave them an object lesson. One of the glasses was filled with pure, clear water, but the other did not look pure or clear at all. It appeared to *be* water, but with some red colouring in it. The children paid great attention, being very curious as to what he was going to do with the two glasses of water. But among the children there was one girl who had come to the meeting with her mind quite made up to listen to what the speaker would say, because she was not very happy, and just a wee bit afraid of something which might happen.

She had been brought up in a godly home, and often

heard about the LORD JESUS coming again for His own people. For weeks she had been wondering what would happen to her if He did come for them. She knew she was not really ready herself, but oh! how she wished she were. So she had come, as I said, with her mind made up to see if this speaker would make the way of salvation plain enough for her to know just what to do about it. Somehow it often seems just as though when one is in real earnest, then the enemy of souls keeps them from seeing the vital point of contact between the SAVIOUR and the sinner. Sometimes it does not get put in a way one can grasp. If only speakers, and preachers, and writers, too, remembered this.

But on this spring evening, our speaker began with the A.B.C. of the gospel: "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,*" saying, as he showed the tumbler of coloured water, this is like us, all stained and spoiled by sin, not pure and not clean. "How many sins will keep you out of heaven?" he asked. "One," replied the children, for they all seemed to know this answer. Then putting just one drop of the red-coloured liquid into the glass of pure clear water, he showed how it at once lost its purity. What else he may have said, or done, the girl cannot now remember; for all at once she seemed to see her true state in the sight of GOD as a sinner, who, respectable though she was, knew she had committed many more sins than one, and so was sure to be shut out of heaven by this.

But the LORD JESUS had come into our world to save sinners, and the blood of JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S SON, cleanseth from all sin. This she believed; and upon reaching home just gave her heart to the LORD JESUS, asking Him to make her whiter than snow and to receive her as a lamb into His fold, which, of course, He did. His own word is so clear and plain about that: "*Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.*"

If I ask Him to receive me
Will He say me nay?
Not till earth, and not till heaven
Pass away.

Next morning, on awakening, the tempter seemed to say to her "You do not feel any different this morning, even if you did come to JESUS and are saved." Then, some words she had often heard read in her home, came with real comfort to her. "*The Lord knoweth them that are His.*" And from that moment until the present, she had no doubt that when she came to the SAVIOUR He really received her. Did He not say that: "*Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out,*" and of course He meant what He said. And, if He knows them that are His, it is all right.

So in the springtime of that year, and in the springtime of her life, the more wonderful springtime of grace came to the child who listened to the word of God in that children's service. It is still springtime, and children are always welcomed by the SAVIOUR Who loves them. It really was in the springtime, too, that He died for them.

H.A.H.

William Kelly as I Knew Him—2.

SOME have asserted that William Kelly was a dry preacher; it is always possible that such complainers were very dry hearers. It was once the writer's privilege to hear this "distinguished alumnus of the University"—as a literary compatriot once termed Mr. Kelly—under somewhat unusual conditions.

Many of the assembled company, rarely, if ever, attended any so-called place of worship. The building, a disused Methodist Chapel, still retained the quaint old-fashioned box pulpit with a latched door—one of the sort designed apparently to prevent nervous preachers from hastily beating a retreat.

Here William Kelly delivered an interesting, instructive and very earnest discourse. His short, but very dignified figure, as he entered the tiny pulpit, and the assured manner in announcing the opening hymn, gave an impression of a master of assemblies. Two verses of

the well-known hymn: "One there is above all others," followed by prayer offered with deep reverence and confidence in God, and a brief scripture reading from Luke xxiii., brought us to his address, based upon verse 33 of the chapter read. How would he, the cultured scholar, the man of books, impress this humble working-class audience, composed chiefly of tired women? They had to be interested, held, impressed and converted to God if possible; and the preacher's manner clearly indicated his recognition of all this. With studied simplicity of language, in words at once simple and arresting, he told the old, old story of the love of God in CHRIST JESUS. Who the holy Sufferer at Calvary really was—why He so suffered—His ability and readiness to save any—the necessity of accepting so great a SAVIOUR—the peril of delay—the certain doom of the unbelieving despiser of God's mercy—all were dwelt upon and emphasised with a persuasiveness born of the constraining love of CHRIST. Then, in concluding his address, he earnestly besought his hearers to avail themselves of the present opportunity for deciding for CHRIST. A very impressive warning was given as closing the Bible he exclaimed, not loudly, but with great earnestness: "Remember, one robber was saved — so none need despair; but," after a pause, "only one, so none may presume."

His work as an evangelist has been belittled by some, mostly little men, but J. N. Darby had quite a high opinion of Mr. Kelly as a preacher. At the Portsmouth Conference of 1860, where he happened to preach, Mr. Darby remarked to several: "I wish I could appeal to people in the gospel as William Kelly does."

At a gathering of brethren, labouring in the LORD's work, held in a London meeting-room, many elderly and leading brothers were present, and the question of gospel preaching was under discussion. After several including himself had spoken freely upon the subject, Mr. Kelly, looking across the room at a young brother who had been very useful and acceptable as a preacher, remarked, "Let us hear what our young brother oppo-

site has to say on the matter." Immediately several brothers who happened to be on the other side of the room, none of whom could be styled young, save by courtesy, looked up; and upon one of those beginning to express his substantial agreement with what had been said, Mr. Kelly interrupted with, "Yes, yes, but it was our brother, the young evangelist behind you to whom I referred." The opinion of the young fellow in question was probably of little value, but the memory of the kindly recognition by the great man of the gift of CHRIST in him will be ever prized by him. The Christian courtesy exhibited by Mr. Kelly may well serve as an object lesson to some, who, in their anxiety to curb the display of "flesh" in their meetings, forget that an inspired apostle could write to a young man, "Let no man despise thy youth," and to the gifted Corinthian assembly, "If Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the LORD as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him; but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren."

(To be continued, D.V.)

Words of Help from the Diary of an Old Disciple—3.

MY beloved wife gone, my business gone, or as good as gone, and my health nearly gone through the unceasing strain of the past few months; it seemed to me as everything had left me except my two motherless boys. But what I had seen of faith in GOD, and love to Him working in my dear wife at the time of her departure somehow filled me with hope in Him myself. As to my future I could only feel in the presence of the One Who knew me so well as an old hymn puts it:

"SAVIOUR, guard me by Thy presence;
I desire to do Thy will,
Moving on by Thy direction
Thine own pleasure to fulfil."

At this time my brother in London invited me to come up and stay with him for a little change. He lived in Greenwich, and I often walked in the Park there to take the air. One day while resting for a while on a seat, a fit of coughing came on so badly that a gentleman passing, paused by me, and said, "Excuse me, young man, but if you do not get rid of that cough it will soon get you into your grave." I told him that every thing known to me had been tried but without avail. He then told me of what he considered a certain cure, and I went at once to obtain it at the shop to which he had directed me. During my walk that afternoon I rather too literally followed the advice he had given me earlier in the day; with the result that I became very ill. I had not noticed that the dose prescribed on the bottle was but one tablet thrice daily, so had been taking one every few minutes whenever the cough came on. It was a marvel that I was not poisoned; but strange, though strictly true, from that day the cough completely vanished, and I had never again had any further trouble of that nature. Strength began slowly to return, and I felt the truth of Cowper's lines:—

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

Looking back over the forty-eight years since, I adore the goodness, wisdom, and power of God in leading me through trials into which none but Himself could enter. His dealings with me all along my pilgrim pathway have proved Him to be the unchangeable Lover of my soul.

* * *

There came a most trying season once, when not only my worldly affairs were specially difficult, but sad and sore troubles arose among the people of God with whom I was closely connected. This created a doubly trying situation. God, however, so ordered it that I happened just at that time to hear one of His servants speak upon the testimony of Caleb in the book of Numbers.

He pointed out that the lesson for ourselves taught by

God's dealings there, was that His children should always count upon Him to bless them according to His promise, whatever the present, pressing, difficulties of their pilgrimage journey. Further, that what appeared to be so much against them, God could make to become food for them. He closed by reminding us that Caleb, the man who believed God's goodness, purpose, and power, was still seen to be a living witness some forty-five years later of what He can do for the soul that wholly trusts Him.

This so encouraged and cheered my heart that I took fresh courage: this has often been my experience as He has led me on the way home. It may be a help to others also.

* * *

Three years later my two motherless boys found a mother, and I a dear wife, one who for the rest of my days blessed me by her quiet cheerful godliness and companionship. Many years back, when the children were all young, on the occasion of a serious illness which we feared might prove fatal, and when we thought the end was coming, she looked up and said:— "If it is the LORD's will I should like to stay with you until the children are grown up." To our mutual joy this desire was granted, and we have had the happiness of seeing all our family brought to know their mother's SAVIOUR as their own personal SAVIOUR too. God, in His goodness, has crowned our days with His mercy thus calling forth united praise from our hearts to His great and holy Name. The brightening up of our last days here together too, by the assurance of soon being at home in His blessed presence for ever, was a great joy right to the end of our long pilgrimage of forty-six happy years.

* * *

Now she has gone; but I still wait. She literally fell asleep saying only a moment before, simply, "Good-night."

Thus after more than eighty years in this world, during which the gospel of the Grace of God has in very

deed brought to me a personal SAVIOUR even the LORD JESUS CHRIST Who died for my sins; I say all praise to His great and glorious Name. Not a SAVIOUR only, but a present and unchangeable FRIEND, Whose words have caused me to know the very presence of the invisible GOD near me, in all my helplessness, protecting and assuring me that in what may yet be before me, He will never leave me nor forsake me, till the end is reached. All praise again to His great and glorious NAME.

[The end *was* reached in perfect peace, some years ago.—Ed.]

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(HYMN FROM THE DIARY OF AN OLD DISCIPLE.)

Those who sweetly trust in JESUS
Day by day will surely find
Ever flowing from His presence
Solace for their troubled mind.
As He keeps them now from falling,
They may stem a world of strife;
Every comfort springs from JESUS,
Blessed precious Fount of life.

Living 'midst a world of danger,
None but JESUS can supply
What we need to bear us upward,
What we need if called to die.
Weak as little helpless nestlings
Driven from the parent nest,
How we need that great compassion
Dwelling in our SAVIOUR's breast!

How we need His loving kindness
And the covert of His wing!
All around us snares are springing,
Calling to our foes within.
How we need our precious SAVIOUR
Ever near us, by our side!
Having Him as our Protector,
And through life our constant Guide!

Heavenly glory, what a prospect!
 Travelling homeward day by day,
 Through the HOLY SPIRIT's guiding,
 CHRIST becomes their light and way.
 And when with Him there in glory,
 Dwelling in those courts above,
 Sweeter still—through JESUS having
 GOD as Light and GOD as Love.

* * * * *

"Soon our tale shall be finished, and the history of our lives put by in the library of God, as an *old volume of His faithfulness*."—Viscountess Powerscourt, 1829.

The "Lord's Day" and the "Day of the Lord."

("I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."—Rev. i. 10.)

"JOHN was in SPIRIT on the LORD's day. It is his place and privilege, however, then, as a Christian, which is spoken of, *not the prophetic period* into which he entered. In the day of resurrection—his own place—the day on which Christians meet, the apostle, removed from the society of Christians, still enjoyed the special elevating power of the HOLY GHOST, though alone; and is thus used of GOD, allowed to be banished for the purpose, for what He could not, in an ordinary way, have communicated to the assembly for its edification." (J.N.D., Synopsis v., p. 498.)

"It was on the LORD's day or first day of the week. For the 'LORD's day' is not at all the same thing as the *day of the Lord* (*heméra kuríon*). The same expression (*kuriakós*) was used with regard to the LORD's supper, because it was not a common meal, but a holy and divinely instituted memorial of the LORD. So the LORD's day is not a common day, but one specially set apart, not as a command, but as the expression of the highest privilege, for the worship of the LORD. The

Sabbath was the last day which JEHOVAH claimed out of man's week; the LORD's day is the first day of God's week, and in a sense, we may say, of His eternity. The Christian begins with the LORD's day, that this may, as it were, give a character to all the days of the week. In spirit the Christian is risen, and every day belongs to the LORD. Therefore is he to bring up the standard of each day that follows in the week to that blessed beginning—the LORD's day." (W.K., Lectures on the Revelation, p. 19.)

"*The Lord's day* occurs but once in the Holy Scriptures, afterwards it became the common appellation of the Christian's special day of rest and worship. That the first day of the week is meant seems evident from the following considerations: First, the difference of the expression used in the original from that employed to set forth the prophetic *day of the Lord*, for which see 1 Corinthians v. 5; 2 Corinthians i. 14; 1 Thessalonians v. 2. Second, the character of the first vision (vv. 12-20), which is of *present* application. CHRIST glorified in the midst of the churches could have neither place nor meaning in the period of coming judgment, spoken of in both Testaments as the *day of the Lord*, and which is dependent upon the setting aside of the church as a public witness for GOD on earth. These, and other considerations, forbid the application of the disputed term to the *day of the Lord*, yet future. Two great facts stamp their character on the first day of the week, the resurrection of the LORD from the dead (John xx.) and the founding of the church at Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 16, with Acts ii.). Thus the LORD's day is no ordinary day, nor is the LORD's *supper* an ordinary meal. Both the *day* and the *supper* are distinctively His. The sacred character of the *day* and of the *supper* should be maintained in their fullest integrity. The rude hand of the spoiler would rob us of these precious heirlooms which significantly speak to the church of His resurrection and of His death." (Walter Scott, Exposition of the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST, p. 35.)

On the first day of the week CHRIST appeared to

Mary Magdalene (Mark xvi. 9); to the two on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13); to the disciples (John xx. 19). Then we find Paul preaching at Troas on the first day of the week (Acts xx. 7), when the disciples came together to break bread. See also 1 Corinthians xvi. 2.

It seems clear that Jewish Christians, up to the time of the fall of Jerusalem at any rate, observed the Sabbath also. In Acts xvi 13, we read that Paul and his companions went, on the Sabbath day, out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and in Acts xvii. 2, "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures" (Acts xviii. 4).

The Sabbath day gave special opportunities to the apostles to preach the gospel, but there is no doubt that the LORD's day was set apart by the first Christians to remember the LORD in the breaking of bread and in praise and worship.

The early Fathers frequently refer to the first day of the week as the LORD's day. TERTULLIAN (circ. A.D. 200) states that there is no obligation on Christians to keep the (Jewish) Sabbath, and that there was to be abstinence from work and secular occupations on the first day. ST. AUGUSTINE compares the LORD's day with the Jewish Sabbath in these terms: "The carnal Sabbath has given place to the Spiritual Sabbath."

CONSTANTINE, by a famous edict, in A.D. 321, enacted that Sunday was to be set apart for public worship.

L.F.

"The important thing to bear in mind is that the understanding of scripture depends much more upon what is moral, than what is of the mind—upon a single eye to CHRIST. The HOLY GHOST can never give us anything to save us from the necessity of dependence and waiting upon GOD."—*W. Kelly.*

"Go, and He Goeth."

I said, "Let me walk in the fields?"

He said, "Nay, walk in the town."

I said, "There are no flowers there."

He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the skies are black;

There is nothing but noise and din";

And He wept as He sent me back:

"There is more," He said, "*there is sin.*"

I said, "But the air is thick,

And fogs are veiling the sun."

He answered, "Yet souls are sick,

And souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,

And friends will miss me, they say."

He answered, "Choose you to-night,

If *I* am to miss you, or *they*."

I pleaded for time to be given.

He said, "Is it hard to decide?

It will not seem hard in heaven,

To have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the fields,

Then set my face to the town;

He said, "My child, do you yield?

Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine,

And into my heart came He,

And I walk in a light divine,

The path I had feared to see.

GEO. McD.

On Being Truly Converted.

“Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now ? ”—John xiii. 37.

HOW much we may know of the truth, how truly be saved and blessed, and even be used in the blessing of others, and yet come short of true conversion, according to the high and noble use of the word as spoken by the LORD to Peter:— *“When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.”*

Is it not worthy of devout enquiry what real conversion is? In the realised presence of the LORD, as the searcher of hearts, Peter made a sincere confession of himself as a “sinful man,” and was met at once with that “abundant mercy” of which he loved to write to his brethren. “Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men” were words of inexhaustible comfort, come death, come life. By the teaching of the FATHER he subsequently made such a full confession of CHRIST as to be pronounced “blessed,” and that emphatically and signally so.

That his conduct and ways should be according to the abundant mercy he had received, who would question? Certainly he himself was the last to do so. At a very solemn moment he declared himself ready to maintain what he felt was due to his LORD and SAVIOUR, come what might. “LORD I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and into death.” “Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.” Bold words, and not those of a hypocrite, for Peter truly loved the LORD; but “I am ready,” “I will never be offended”—tell that he had not done with “savouring of the things that be of man,” he was not converted. Give Satan this fulcrum and he will overturn the stoutest and the most sincere.

The LORD JESUS had clearly and distinctly told him “Thou canst not follow Me now but thou shalt follow Me afterwards.” Yet so engrossed was he with his own feelings and thoughts that he refused to be robbed of them by the plainest teaching. It is as clear as light can make it, that there are Christians who do not

welcome all truth, but who refuse some that, as in Peter's case, is vital for their blessing, and which they cannot ignore without being as unconverted as he was at that time. Let us make no low use of the word. He was saved, used and "blessed," but to be converted he must be turned from himself and all things of man. A saved, used and blessed man, may have to go out and weep bitterly because he refused a teaching that would have preserved him from following his own thoughts. "Old things" for him are not gone, and "all things become new and all things of God" (2 Cor. v.).

There was no helping Peter when he thus refused instruction. He must learn by experience what he might have known by the gracious words of Him, Whom he rightly called his MASTER and LORD.

But further, Peter was warned of the perilous times in which his lot was cast, even as we now. Satan saw the signs of weakness in the apostles generally and in Peter in particular and he had succeeded in drawing away Judas to perdition. Why should he despair of drawing away others? He will at least try. He therefore asked to have them that he might sift them as wheat. Peter, the most impetuous, as is often the case, was the most heedless, and the LORD warned him especially of this malice of the adversary. "Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to have you . . . but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Beside this, the LORD JESUS graciously took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with Him to Gethsemane and said: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death; tarry ye here and watch." Even this with its touching intensity of grace was in vain. Every word fell on natural soil and bore no fruit. They neither watched nor prayed. The contrast between the LORD and these favoured brethren is overwhelming if we meditate on, as well as read, the story of Gethsemane. What is man? Oh! to cease from ourselves altogether, to be converted.

The devil, as yet, had the power of death. Till sin was put away, this power was not overcome. But

for this JESUS must die, and as Peter afterwards so strikingly expressed it for ears accustomed to Old Testament scripture,—must “Himself bear our sins in His own body on the tree.” Never was death more terrible and never did the devil put forth greater power than when JESUS died. Hence His gracious word, “Thou canst not follow Me now,” hence the greatness of human folly to question the word of the LORD, because we do not see the need of it. What is this but to be led by our own will, (or what is as bad, by another’s will), and not the LORD? It is presuming to know better than He.

Yet we must never forget that at this very moment Peter had faith; “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not,” and that

“He is safe and must succeed,
For whom the LORD vouchsafes to plead.”

He was eventually converted and did strengthen his brethren; and the grace of God—that “true grace” of which he loved to write—led him step by step, through JESUS CHRIST, from the place of bitter weeping to boundless joy. The special message sent to him after the resurrection by the angels, and the LORD Himself appearing to him in private before being seen of the other apostles, and again on two occasions when the disciples were together, are some of these steps. But it is in John xxi. that we see his cup of joy filled to the overflowing. It is a scene we can never weary of dwelling on, but a word only now must suffice to help in the understanding of true conversion. It cannot be without the fullest, most absolute confidence in the LORD.

Now, Peter’s rest was in His omniscience, His perfect knowledge of all. His eye, that could not err, would see His own work in his soul; and all else was judged on the cross. That cross had reached to everything in him, and there was nothing for him now but to let the life he had in CHRIST react to everything he had

to be, or do, down here. And how this whole-hearted confidence in Peter—"Thou knowest"—was more than responded to by the LORD, Who entrusted His dearest to him, and even lifted the veil of the future for him. He should serve him while he lived and die for him, a martyr's death, when he died. W.B.

On the Lord Washing the Disciples' Feet.

(John xiii.)

HERE at the opening, the LORD's action, *washing the disciples' feet*, is an exhibition of one great branch of His heavenly service.

The washing of the feet was among the duties of hospitality. The LORD rebukes the neglect of it in his host in Luke vii. (cf. 1 Tim. v. 10). It conveyed two benefits to the guest, it cleansed the traveller after the soiling of the journey, and refreshed him after the fatigue of it.

Abraham, Lot, Laban, Joseph, and the old man of Gibeah, are eminent amongst those who observed this duty. Gen. xviii., xix., xxiv., xliii., Judges xix. And the SON OF GOD, as receiving into the heavenly house, would give His elect the full sense of their welcome, and their fitness, that they might take their place with happy confidence, in any department of that royal sanctuary. It was a sanctuary it is true. But this washing fitted them for such a place. The SON OF GOD was doing for the disciples the duty and service of the brazen laver towards the priests, the sons of Aaron, in the tabernacle according to Ex. xxx. 18-21. He was taking on Himself the charge of having them fit for the divine presence. It is the common way of every well-ordered family, that the servants keep themselves clean, or leave the house. But such is the grace of the SON OF GOD, the Master of the heavenly house, that He

charges Himself with the duty of keeping the household in even priestly sanctification and honour.

“Unfathomable wonder and mystery divine!” All we need is the spirit of a simple unquestioning faith which rests in the reality of such surpassing grace.

But His service for us in the sanctuary, as the High Priest of our profession, His cleansing of our feet as the true Laver of God’s house, JESUS did not enter on till He had accomplished His passion on earth, and ascended into the heavens; and, thus, it was not, as we read here, till after the supper was “ended” that He took a towel and girded Himself to wash His disciples’ feet. For the “supper” was the exhibition of His passion and death, as He had said “Take, eat: this is My body.” Accordingly He seems to go through the whole of this mystic scene in the consciousness that He had now finished His sufferings, had ascended and was looking back on His saints; for it is introduced in these words, “*Having loved His own which were in the world*”—words which suggest the apprehension of His saints being still in the world, while He had left them for higher and holier regions. In the sense of all this, though glorified again in and with the FATHER, as the gracious servant of their need and infirmities, He girds Himself with a towel and washes their feet; giving them to know, that He was abiding in the heavenly sanctuary, just to impart to them the constant virtue of the “holiness,” which, as their High Priest, He ever carried for them on His forehead before the throne of God. Ex. xxviii.

Thus there is a difference between the mystic import of *the supper* and of this subsequent *washing of the feet*, and the difference is the same as between *the day of atonement* and *the ashes of the red heifer*. The day of atonement, like the supper, set forth the virtue of *the blood* of CHRIST; and the ashes of the heifer, like this washing, the virtue of His *intercession*. The day of atonement was but one day in the Jewish year, a great annual day of reconciliation, on which the sins

of Israel were put away once for all; the ashes of the heifer were provided for every day's transgressions, for all the occasional defilements which any Israelite might contract, while passing through the year. So with the bloodshedding first, and the priestly intercessions of CHRIST afterwards: as a scripture says, "*For 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.*"

We have the same blessings in the same order in another form; viz., *the paschal lamb* once and for ever redeemed Israel out of Egypt, but in the wilderness it was *the intercession of Moses* that turned away wrath from the occasional trespasses of the camp. And so the blood of JESUS our Passover and the intercession of JESUS our Mediator — *the supper first* and then *the washing of the feet*; *the death here* and then *the life in heaven* for us. He that is once washed in the blood, needeth not save to wash his feet; and that washing of his feet, that removal of the soil which the saint gathers in his walk along this earth day by day, the High Priest Who is in heaven for him accomplishes by His presence and intercession there.* He is the *Mediator of the new covenant*, and His blood is the *Blood of that covenant*. Thus, the love of the SON of GOD for the Church, as it had been *from* everlasting, so must it be *to* everlasting; as it is here written, "*Having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end.*"

Every age and scene must witness the same love in some of its services, and in its abiding fervour and truth. No change of time could affect it. The dreariness of this world and the glories of heaven found it in His heart the same. Neither sorrow nor joy, suffering nor glory, could touch it for a moment. His death here, and His life in heaven, alike declare it. Nay, much more. He had served her in this love before the world was, when He said "Lo, I come," and in the kingdom after the world, He will serve her still

* See also Eph. v. 26.—Ed.

in the same love, making His saints to sit down to meat, while He waits on their joy. Luke xii. 37.

Such *was* the LORD, such *is* the LORD, and such *will be* the LORD, in His unceasing service of love towards His saints; and He tells them to be His imitators. "If I then, your LORD and MASTER, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." He expects to see, among us on earth, the copy of that which He is doing for us in heaven. He is there daily washing our feet, bearing our need, and meeting our defilements before the throne; and He would have us daily washing one another's feet, bearing one another's infirmities, and helping one another's joy, here on the footstool.

J.M.W.

On Real Giants.

(FOR OUR VERY YOUNGEST READERS.)

WE have all heard fairy stories about giants; but we read in the Bible, that a real giant lived about 3,000 years ago in Philistia. He worshipped idols made by men, and actually prayed to them. Is it not foolish, dear children, to bow down and pray to an idol? Isaiah shows this when he tells of a man who cut down a tree; with part of it he made a fire and warmed himself, and said, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire"; and with the rest of the tree he carved an idol, and fell down before it and said, "Deliver me, for thou art my god." In this country many people take bones of animals, or wood, or silver and make idols representing the LORD JESUS dead on the cross. God raised the LORD JESUS from among the dead and He is alive in heaven, and He is able to hear when a boy or a girl prays to Him. He looks down upon us, and saves every boy or girl who believes in Him. We believe in the living God, and we believe in the living SAVIOUR, JESUS.

Well, this giant's name was Goliath. He was very, very tall, and strong, and had learned to fight even

when he was quite young. But he had never learned that there was one living God, so he was very proud, and thought he could do what he liked.

A war broke out between the Hebrews and the Philistines. The Hebrews knew the living God, but strange to say did not trust Him; at least most of them did not. One man had eight sons, and when the youngest, David, was able to work, his father Jesse said he was to be a shepherd; so David took care of the sheep in the fields. David did trust God, and once a lion came to steal a lamb and take it to its den. David prayed to God and actually took the lamb out of its mouth and killed the lion. Then a bear tried to do the same, and David prayed to God and delivered the lamb and killed the bear. He was not proud, but said that God had enabled him to do it.

The Philistines knew that their giant was stronger than any Hebrew, so they asked Goliath to say to the Hebrews that he was ready to fight any one of them. He did so, and looked so strong and terrible that the king of the Hebrews and his soldiers were greatly afraid.

David's brothers were soldiers in King Saul's army; and their father Jesse told David to go with a carriage to take some corn and loaves to his brothers, and some cheeses to their captain. David was obedient and went. When he got to the battle-field he heard the giant shout to the Hebrews that he was ready to fight any one of them; and all the soldiers were so frightened that they ran away. But David said that the living God was stronger than Goliath, so he told the king that as he trusted in God he was not afraid of the giant, and that he would go and fight him. He took his shepherd's staff, and his sling and five stones, and ran to meet the giant, who, when he saw this boy coming was very angry, and thought they were making a fool of him. David told him that he came to fight in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, and God would give him victory. He slung one stone and killed the giant, and ran and took the

giant's sword and cut off his head, and took the head to King Saul. Then the king knew, and the soldiers knew, and David's brothers knew, that their God was the one living God and able to save.

Now we have an enemy stronger than Goliath, and the only one able to conquer him is the LORD JESUS. He was obedient to God His FATHER, and became a man and met Satan and conquered him. David did not die when he met Goliath, but the LORD JESUS did die to save us from Satan, but God raised up JESUS from among the dead, and He is now a living SAVIOUR. Satan is still our enemy, but when he tries to make us do naughty things, or say wrong things, or think wicked things, we, who believe in JESUS, can ask help, and He will help us at once to defeat our strong enemy, for the LORD JESUS is stronger than Satan. When a boy or a girl gains these victories, he or she knows that it is not because they were strong, but because they trusted in the strength of the LORD JESUS. H.L.B.

On the Lord's Servants.

IN the February number an article "*On Sunday School Work*" referred to the work of the *Excavator*. This article has suggested to me another comparison with the *Machine tool* which comes into my special domain.

The LORD's servant is but a *tool* in God's hand for the carrying out of the service for which he has been created and qualified (Ephes. ii. 10) and we may thus compare him to a machine created by men for a special use.

MACHINE-TOOL

The use of the machine-tool is to produce pieces of determined shapes according to the capacity of the machine.

THE LORD'S SERVANT

The LORD's servant is a tool in God's hands to do the work for which God has qualified him.

Constructed with the best materials and after the most modern improvements.

To be useful the tool is to be in my own service, and, better still, belong to me.

The tool has to be in its right place in the factory.

The tool has to be connected with an independent driving power.

The machine has to be regulated according to the work to be done and the cutting instruments are to be kept with a keen edge.

The machine remains under the control of the competent workman.

The machine has to be cleaned from time to time and kept in perfect working order.

Formed in God's school through the ministry of God's word and the HOLY SPIRIT.

The LORD's servant is solely in His service and belongs to Him entirely.

The LORD's servant has to be in the place where God can use his services.

The LORD's servant has to be animated by the power from on high, an exterior power independent of himself.

The LORD's servant is qualified by God for His work. God, Whose word is likened to a two-edged sword, will keep him keen.

The LORD's servant is kept under the control of the HOLY SPIRIT and is guided by the sublime example of the Perfect Servant who is our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The LORD's servant is kept by His grace from all iniquity. He has to purify himself from every defilement. *"Be ye holy as I am holy."*

The machine must have its hours of rest.

The product of the machine must be exact to a hundredth of a millimetre after the model or pattern subjected to the approval of the client.

The production of the ready machine should find a sale and be absorbed by a satisfied and regular clientele.

These considerations present an analogy between the services of a tool in the hands of men and a servant in the hands of God.

These are also striking contrasts.

A machine-tool once constructed is either good, mediocre or bad. It cannot be improved upon if it rests on a wrong principle of construction or defective work.

It is impossible to do good work with a bad machine or bad tools.

The LORD's servant must have time for rest. He cannot give continually. He must also receive in solitude and communion with God.

The LORD's servant must be punctual, proclaim the pure gospel, and not tolerate any error of doctrine. He has to submit to the control and criticism of his brethren in the faith.

The fruit of the preaching of the LORD's servant should be such as to be approved of by the assemblies of God, in view of the salvation of precious souls and edification of the saints.

The LORD's servant, on the contrary, being always in the school of God is called upon to improve himself.

God is able to make good work with bad tools.

R. FORRER (Zurich).

On Service.

THE number of persons in the world who do not profess any connection with the LORD JESUS CHRIST is estimated as not less than 150,000,000. We are in great danger of forgetting those who have never had the truth of God proclaimed to them.

In Ezekiel ii. we have the picture of a servant of the LORD in difficult times, and what guided him in his service. The enemy puts excuses into our hearts—things are very bad, it is no good our trying to do anything.

Ezekiel found it a difficult time; and we can well imagine the prophet sitting down and weeping when he thought of what had come in; the rebellion against God; and all the glory that had passed away.

But God gave him a vision of His real governmental seat and of His providential dealings still with the earth. Earthly government had been removed from the Jew and given to the Gentiles, but in chapter i. the wheels and the cherubim are all acting according to the counsels of God.

Having shown the prophet this, He directs his attention to a throne, and a Man above upon it. This brings before us our LORD JESUS CHRIST, once crucified and rejected, but now seated on the throne of glory.

Here is the scene then, and the rainbow which now speaks to us of the mercy of God going out towards man because of the death of CHRIST—the rainbow round the Throne. The prophet now falls on his face in worship and wonder. That is the place, too, for us.

There is a Man sitting on the throne of God, and when we have His glory and majesty before us, we get down before that Throne as it were upon our faces. If we would serve Him aright we must acknowledge Him as the One Who is high above all, in reverence and worship, and then go out and serve as He appoints.

In chapter ii. we see the prophet ready for service, standing upon his feet to receive his commission from

GOD. Am I, as His servant, standing on my feet? Am I in that attitude of attention, ready to go forward at His behest? Am I standing on my feet, ready to go at the MASTER's orders to reclaim even one soul? We profess to be so. In our Christian service, what value do we set on a soul? Only a child! only a poor dying man! only a soul!

"I will speak unto thee." How important to get before Him and hear His word! *"I will speak unto thee."* Not only to be ready for His service; but to hear His voice, is the one indispensable condition of true service.

Then comes the power for service. "The SPIRIT entered into me." Here stands the prophet, and GOD now puts His SPIRIT in him so that in the power of that SPIRIT he may go forward. We look around and see how bad things are; how trying the place where we live; but "Greater is He that is in you than all that is in the world." He is the power for all service. It is as it always was, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, said the LORD."

The consequences of service the prophet must leave with the LORD. As servants of the LORD JESUS CHRIST we also must learn to go where He appoints; to say what He gives us to speak; and then leave results with Him. They "shall know that there hath been a prophet among them," for they would feel the power of God's word, whether they acted on it, or not.. It is ours to preach the gospel that many people call "old-fashioned," to go on preaching it, and leave the results with our MASTER, Whose we are and Whom we serve.

In verse 6 we have courage mentioned. We need courage in service for the LORD, for all who truly serve Him soon come to a place where they realise this. It needs courage to read the word of God; to speak of it; to confess that you believe it. In the Sunday School class; or at the street corners, you need courage and the LORD gives this.

Then the message is stated in verse 7. "Thou shalt speak My words unto them, whether they will hear, or

whether they will forbear." God does not hide the difficulty of the task from the prophet. He does not minimise the difficulty or hardness of the place, but He says, in effect, "Take care that you speak *My* words." Does not that encourage you? It is not *your* word, it is the word of God, that does the real work.

"*Speak My words*"—that is the order. To this comes, of course, personal obedience. Ezekiel was dwelling among a people who were stiff-necked and most rebellious; and the word came to him "THOU, son of man, hear what I say unto *thee*." There was obedience and submission to God. The prophet, dwelling among such people, in danger of being affected by his surroundings, has the message come to him—Be obedient yourself. His circumstances were far more difficult than what we have been called to pass through. So amidst all the ruin and departure from God and assembly difficulties, in our own day, we need, like the prophet, first a vision of the Throne of God; then to fall on our faces before Him, as the sovereign One Whose will shall be done; then, knowing that He is calling out a people to His Name, may we stand on our feet, ready to go at His command, with His message, in the power of His SPIRIT and leave the results with Him. We need personal exercise and obedience, so that we may be valiant and diligent, encouraged by His word. The Vision, the Message, the Power, the Courage and the Obedience are all here seen to be linked together in effective service for the LORD.

C.A.H.

On Brotherly Love.

"Let brotherly love continue."—Hebrews xiii. 1.

"**B**ELOVED, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten SON into the world, that we might live through

Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His SON to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us." (1 John iv. 7-12).

"Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing . . . Love suffereth long and is kind . . . Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. *Love never faileth.*" (1 Corinthians xiii).

We are undoubtedly in the last days, and it seems that, even amongst God's people, the love of many has waxed cold. In our zeal to maintain rigid principles and what we quite rightly consider godly order in the assembly, we forget what might be done, in faithfulness to the LORD, in a spirit of love and conciliation, in lowliness of mind and esteeming each other better than ourselves, to bring about unity amongst us in the bond of peace. The LORD came to gather in one the children of God. We are so prone to scatter them, ignoring the divine way of love. Certain brethren in their zeal for the gospel act in independence, associate themselves with other Christians in denominations from whom we have had to separate, enter into their organizations and even accept their financial support, and if reproved with, immediately retort, "Then put us out of fellowship," as if this were not a most sad and humbling course to take. On the other side, brethren sit in judgment, spend valuable time, better used in the LORD's service, to enquire into the shortcomings and possible excesses of zeal of their opponents and when called upon to realise the present state of things before the LORD in all humility and grace, do not feel the need of so doing, pretending they have nothing to confess, as they are ecclesiastically right. How terribly heart-searching this all is, and grievous to our blessed LORD, the Head of the Church.

When we say, "Who shall separate us from the love of CHRIST," it means also "Who shall separate us from one another." How precious is the intricate and inseparable union of all believers, so precious to our adorable LORD. *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."* (Ps. cxxxiii. 1.)

Now, what is the way of love? What does the apostle mean by "let brotherly love continue"? W. Kelly writes: "God is love; and he that abides in love abides in God, and God in him. When this fails in the practice of the saint, brotherly affection will ere long give way, and hasty speech engender variance, or suspicion cloud the light of love." This love must not be in word, but in deed and in truth "Let all your things be done in love," says the apostle Paul (1 Cor. xvi. 14). "Walk in love, as CHRIST also hath loved us" (Ephes. v. 2). To cultivate brotherly love demands first of all obedience to the LORD JESUS, dependence on Him, submission to the guidance of His word, and to the leading of the HOLY SPIRIT. The chief preservative of brotherly love is the love of CHRIST Himself, which will always necessarily expand in love for the brethren. We must be on the watch to do those actions which will promote and strengthen brotherly love. If our brethren need admonition or to be reminded of "those things that are more excellent," it should be done in such a way that they may be won over in love.

"Let brotherly love continue" in the midst of individual infirmities and peculiarities. One brother is rash, another slow; one is self-conscious, another over-humble; one is rude, another sensitive; one is shy and timid, another forward and obstinate. Amidst all these imperfections, we need that brotherly love, meek, generous, thinking no evil, seeking not its own, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things. Kind words, readiness to forgive and accept explanations, friendly intercourse in the fear of God, will triumph where severe condemnation without grace, would lead to estrangement and division.

Brethren, let us remember the injunction of the apostle Paul, *"to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love and endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Ephes. iv. 1-3).

L.F.

William Kelly as I Knew Him—3.

THE strenuous life was drawing to its close; the good fight had been fought; the faith had been kept; and now the course was rapidly finishing.

He who had hoped to live to welcome the returning LORD, was instead to be put to sleep by JESUS, to await with CHRIST that moment of rapture when "the dead in CHRIST shall rise first."

Several years before the home-call came to him, in reply to one who asked whether "he would desire to depart and to be with CHRIST," or be amongst those who are "alive and remain at the coming of the LORD," he said, "I have no choice, neither would I choose if I might."

"But, surely," persisted the interrogator, "you would like to be alive and meet the LORD on His return?" Turning to his questioner, who was also a dearly loved relative, he replied, affectionately, "I have no wish at all in the matter, my dear——, it will be as He wills, best either way."

After a year or two of gradually failing health (during which, however, he, although an octogenarian, steadily did the work of a man in the prime of life), he began to realise that his life-work was ending, and that shortly he must lay aside the sword and the trowel with which for sixty years he had respectively warred against evil, and built up the saints of God. One premonition of his recognition of this fact was seen in the disposal of his valuable library of fifteen thousand volumes which at the suggestion of the then Archbishop of York he presented to the town of Middlesbrough, where

a special wing for their accommodation had to be added to the public library building.

This magnificent gift was entirely unhampered by any conditions, one characteristic request only being made, namely the entire anonymity of the giver.

The great Codices (some in facsimile); all the great Polyglots; the works of the Fathers, and the great Schoolmen; were comprised in this gift; as well as many rare and valuable volumes in every department of Science, Philosophy and History; it was specially rich in Classics, Ecclesiastical History, and Theology.

His wish for anonymity was respected, but upon his decease the Middlesbrough library authorities were compelled to make a statement with reference to this, which they did in the following terms:—

“The Free Library,
April, 1906.

Anonymity no longer.

We have been repeatedly asked why we have avoided all notice in our pages of the recent death of our ‘anonymous benefactor.’ More particularly as the bond of silence laid upon us has been removed by the publication of his name: we, therefore, take this opportunity of assuring our readers that it was not because of forgetfulness, or the lack of a sense of duty, but of the express wish of his family. Mr. Kelly was a man who preferred to do good by stealth, or rather he held himself a steward only, of possessions either physical or mental, and only last summer (1905) he reiterated to us his hope that his name might not become public property as the donor of the valuable library which has come to us. We guarded the secret well, and it was with surprise and regret that whilst paying the last tribute of respect and gratitude to one whom we owe so much, that we learned that *The Times*, in an obituary notice, had stated his connection with the donation to Middlesbrough. Then it was that his daughter signified her wish that we should remain silent, but the paragraph in *The Times* was copied

and expanded, and, eventually, our local press published the information to our townsmen. It is greatly to be regretted that the donor's wish has been disregarded by others, for it was the only obligation he laid upon us. His donation was a free one, without any of the onerous conditions which so frequently accompany such gifts, and perhaps the spirit in which the presentation was made can be best appreciated by the following fragment of conversation:—

Standing in his Library where the books were being packed for their transit to Middlesbrough, we asked, 'It must be painful to you, Sir, to thus part with your old friends, is it not?' 'Well, no,' was the reply, 'I cannot hope to require them long, and I do wish to see them settled where they may be of service to others.'

It was not our good fortune to know Mr. Kelly intimately, but as we did know him he was ever the cultured gentleman, a profound scholar without a shade of pedantry, whose knowledge was freely bestowed when sought, and whose friendship must have been a privilege."

Resuming his weekly lectures at Bennett Park Hall, Blackheath, on Wednesday evenings, he now commenced his final course. This was on the Epistles of John; and at the conclusion of the first lecture, he said, "I trust, if the Lord will, to continue these lectures on St. John's Epistles without intermission," and this, happily, he was enabled to do.

These lectures (since published) were characterised by all his accustomed vigour of intellect, and incisive speech, but to these were added a sweet graciousness of spirit which made a great impression on his hearers at the time, and is still remembered as giving a singular charm to these last discourses. The glory of the sunset was resting upon the last phase of that faithful ministry, and as the year 1905 ran out, it became very evident that the time of his departure was near.

Acting upon medical advice Mr. Kelly went to stay awhile at Exeter, where he was the guest of his friends,

Dr. and Mrs. Wreford. The closing days of his life, told in sympathetic detail in a volume entitled "Memories of the last days of William Kelly," from Dr. Wreford's pen, is familiar to many.

A few short weeks he lay waiting the summons to "go hence," and on the evening of Tuesday, March 27th, 1906, the silver cord was loosed, and the watchers by the bedside realised that William Kelly "was not, for God took him." "With CHRIST; far better."

No need to pray for the repose of his soul, for long years it had rested in undisturbed repose upon the finished work and faithful word of his LORD and SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST.

"Weep not for him;
He has no need of tears."

His soul, unfettered, unencumbered by limitations of the body, as he himself had expressed it, "neither mortal nor to sleep" had gone to join the great host of those who having "crossed the flood," now wait in the immediate Presence of Him, Who is the "Prince of Life"; Whose are the keys of death and of hades; and Who will ere long claim again the precious dust of all whom He has put to sleep; refashioning them like unto His own glorious Body, when "the dead in CHRIST shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the LORD in the air." Amen—even so, come, LORD JESUS.

If I think of the *world*, I get *the impress of the world*.
If I think of the *trials and sorrows*, I get *the impress of my sorrow*.

If I think of my *failures*, I get *the impress of my failures*.

If I think of CHRIST, I get the IMPRESS OF CHRIST.

On Watchfulness.

AN attentive reader cannot fail to be struck with the fervency of our LORD's exhortation to watchfulness. In the notable discourse near the end of the Gospel of Matthew, where the LORD is evidently speaking of the time of the end of this dispensation, He concludes His address with the words: "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your LORD doth come; therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not *the Son of Man* cometh" (Matthew xxiv. 42 and 44). Again, at the end of the parable of the "Ten Virgins," He repeats the warning in similar words—"Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the *Son of Man* cometh" (chap. xxv. verse 13).

We must remember that both these passages refer to the coming of the "*Son of Man*," a title which does not occur even once in any of the *epistles* of the New Testament; nor is ever used in scripture in relation to the Church of God. This fact alone should save us from the error of confounding *the coming of the Son of Man* for the deliverance of His earthly people, and the judgment of the living nations on the earth, *with the coming of the Lord* to call home His heavenly people, for which through grace we watch and wait.

Where the LORD so graciously said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go, I will come again and receive you unto Myself," there is no reference to time. Yet what a comfort and help these words have been to His saints down through all the ages since; something to live upon, and something to die upon; or at least to brighten the hour of death.

"For if we believe that JESUS died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in JESUS will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the LORD, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the LORD shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep; for the LORD Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in

CHRIST shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the LORD in the air: and so shall we ever be with the LORD. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. iv. 14-18).

No definite word had been addressed to His disciples during His lifetime as to this preliminary coming of the LORD JESUS into the air to call up His believing people to meet Him; although His return *was* a distinct point in their faith.

If the disciples were exhorted to watchfulness by their LORD when speaking of events that belong to a time yet to come, that follows certain other events; how much more important is it for us to be watchful that believe the LORD may come at any moment, and that it depends upon no other events, but is the first great act in "*the things that are to come.*"

Three times in the last chapter of the Bible, the LORD Himself says, "Behold, I come quickly"; "Surely, I come quickly."

It is said that there are now more Christians on the earth who believe the truth of the LORD's coming, and are waiting for Him, than at any time in the Church's history. We can thank God if this is so. Some can remember when one was a marked person that believed this, but if we do, "what manner of persons ought we to be?" Will not such a hope have its effect upon our walk and ways?

Let us consider briefly what this means—that every true believer, every child of God by faith in CHRIST JESUS will be suddenly caught up to meet the LORD JESUS in the air. How great will the change be in certain places, and how small the difference in others. Think of some two or three members of one household being taken away without warning, or alarm, and in other households the whole family gone.

If we are the LORD's children we need not fear being left behind, for "*the Lord knoweth them that are His.*" "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed: in a moment, in the

twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51 and 52).

The LORD grant that this hope may be seen to have its true effect in our walk, faith and service. T.R.

On Following Christ.

"FOLLOW ME."

"**H**E that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me, let him FOLLOW ME; and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me, him will My FATHER honour" (John xii. 25, 26).

The LORD JESUS uttered these words, most weighty words, which we should take deeply to heart, shortly before, and in connection with, His death on the cross.

Natural man clings to his earthly life, inherited from Adam; he forgets that through sin he has forfeited it and that it has come under the judgment of God. He seeks to make life as comfortable as possible in a world which is under the curse. He is estranged from God and even loves a life without God and without hope. He will not realise that "life is a vapour, that appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14) and shuts his ear to the fact "that the wages of sin is death" (Romans vi. 23), and also "that it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27).

"God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7). The body may be put into the grave and fall into corruption, but the soul is immortal, and will be clothed upon again with a body. This is true of all men, with a distinction: those who have hated their life, that is, have recognised its evil and judged it, and come to the SAVIOUR Who for such has borne the judgment, these shall come forth

from their graves to the resurrection of life and receive a body like that of the body of the glorified Son of MAN. But those who have loved their life will come forth to the resurrection of judgment, to appear before the great white throne and be judged according to their works.

Through disobedience man has become a slave of Satan and no power in heaven or earth is able to deliver him. Only the death of a holy Substitute could bring help and deliverance, and "through death CHRIST has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

Being thus delivered, at such a cost, it is our duty and privilege to serve the LORD. And what does the Lord expect from each one of His redeemed ones? The answer is: "If any man serve Me, let him *follow Me*." That means, follow in My footsteps, walk as I walked in this world.

Our blessed LORD walked as a heavenly stranger through this world. He did not enter into its organisations, nor wished to improve them; He did not seek for its recognition, nor feared its mockery. When Satan offered Him the kingdoms of the world and its glory, He refused them, and when the crowd wished to proclaim Him King, He disappeared into the mountain. When His brethren wished Him to show Himself to the world, He told them that His time had not yet come. So little did He possess of the goods of this world that to pay the temple tax a fish had to bring forth the money. All the treasures of the universe were at His disposal as God, and yet He was poorer than the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky. He never vindicated His rights, never withstood His enemies. "*When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously*" (1 Peter ii. 23). He was the perfect Servant of GOD His FATHER, doing His FATHER'S will

always, and obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

We are called upon to consider Him, the Heavenly Stranger in this world, and to follow Him, as not belonging to this world any more than He did. But does our walk and witness correspond to our calling? Once, the enemies of the believers had to confess that these had been with JESUS (Acts iv. 13). How is it in our days? Is there not much cause to humble ourselves for our superficiality and worldliness? There was a time in our *Christian testimony when our separation from the world, both social and religious, was much more realised, and the coming of the LORD filled our hearts, stimulating a more holy life. Let us remember the exhortation: "Call in remembrance the former days" (Heb. x. 32).*

The LORD "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."

A real and decided following in the footsteps of our blessed LORD is impossible without self-denial. Such a path is not pleasing to the flesh. To tread this path we must come to a practical realisation of our being dead with CHRIST, our eyes turned away from self and everything visible unto Him, Whom we desire to serve, in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT. And what a happy and blessed path, that has the promise, "and where I am there shall also My servant be, and him will My FATHER honour." What a honour!

The principle brought out in the verses above quoted, says W.K., "is not ease and honour and advancement for self (which is truly the greatest loss), but suffering and shame, and if need be death, now in this world for CHRIST's sake. Such is practical Christianity. . . . It is in what the HOLY SPIRIT alone can guide and sustain, in serving CHRIST—a service inseparable from following Him, its beginning life eternal in the SON, its end the same life in glory with Him; for such as serve and follow Him will the FATHER honour. May we be strengthened to discern and do the truth." (*Exposition of the Gospel of St. John, p. 204.*)

L.F.

On being "Brought out" and "Brought in."

[The following narrative is a continuation of the story of a Naval man, whose conversion is told in the "Messenger," New Series, No. 27, of tracts issued by the publisher of "Words of Help."

A brief synopsis will help our readers to better understand these most interesting spiritual experiences through which the writer passed. It was at the Institute for Soldiers and Sailors at Burmola, Malta, where late one afternoon he wandered into a social tea and entertainment. Here after spending the evening listening to sentimental recitations and popular songs, sandwiched between humorous speeches, he was surprised to hear a tall seaman of H.M. Navy give a clear and striking Gospel testimony, by permission of the Chairman. In his own words the result for him at any rate was: "That night I came to JESUS as my SAVIOUR, and it was indeed the turning point in my life."

What follows is the account of his search for Christian fellowship in the ardour of the new life. It is told by himself in the simple, artless, straightforward way, so characteristic of Naval men.—Ed.]

"BROUGHT OUT AND BROUGHT IN."

IN those days there were but two recognised Churches in H.M. Navy—Church of England and Roman Catholic. When in Malta, the Roman Catholics were allowed to land in a boat belonging to each ship on a Sunday morning to attend service. All others were compelled to attend the Church of England service on board their respective ships. I had attended these Church of England services so often that I knew it nearly all by heart, or perhaps I should say, by memory. Shortly after my New Birth I was attending as usual, but coming to the words in the General Confession, "But Thou, O LORD, have mercy upon us miserable offenders," I stopped. And again in the first four responses in the Litany, "Have mercy upon us, miser-

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able sinners," I could not repeat the words, for the simple reason that I had recently learnt from God's Word that God had forgiven all my sins (Colossians ii. 13), and therefore was happier than I had ever been. And all as the result of JESUS' precious Blood being shed on Calvary (see chapter i. 14, also Ephesians i. 7).

There were about thirty who were not ashamed to own their LORD—three denominations as I remember—Wesleyans, Baptists and Presbyterians. There may have been others, who lacked courage on account of persecution. We used to gather in the evening on one side of the upper deck, after the boatswain's mate piped "Hands to dance and skylark." We would sing a hymn or two, then one or two would pray fervently, and to the point, for the salvation of our shipmates; and occasionally one stronger in the LORD would speak to those standing near. Some would scoff at us, others hurl wet swabs among us and soil our clothes, and do many other things to annoy us; but it soon ceased when they found that we took no notice of the insults.

The boatswain, Mr. Layton, I cannot write or speak of without a deep sense of affection—a dear godly man, a lovely Christian, a veritable father in CHRIST. Occasionally, I think one evening a week, we were invited to a prayer meeting in his cabin. What a help those meetings were! I do not know what denomination he was attached to, but of this I am sure, if everyone who professed to be a Christian were like him, there would be very little trouble in the religious world. We did all love him so very much, and he loved us. I love to think of it now. So our little band was knit together in love, and all spare time after meals, and in the evenings, we would study together the precious word of God, and the HOLY SPIRIT guiding us taught us many things which seemed to us so much better than what we had known before.

The chaplain held a Bible reading once a week, and some of us attended it, during which he frequently put forth statements that differed from the Holy Scriptures. I remember on one occasion I said to him,

"Dear Sir, what you have often said in reply to questions, seems to be a little different to this Book," holding up my Bible, and asked his permission to read a few verses; but he did not show any opposition, and kindly allowed me to do so.

Soon after this I associated with several Wesleyans who were godly men, and we approached the chaplain to request the privilege of going on shore to the Wesleyan church on Sundays. He did not oppose, and so it came to pass that the next Sunday morning a boat was allowed us for that purpose. The Wesleyan minister was a good man, and we learned many things from him. But the same thing happened to detach us from Wesleyanism; for we continued to read the word of GOD, earnestly seeking the help and guidance of the HOLY SPIRIT to open the eyes of our understanding, and were shown of Him that some of the Wesleyan teachings were not according to Divine truth. The idea, or doctrine, as to "Final Preservance" was incompatible with the words of our blessed LORD and SAVIOUR, "*He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life*" (John vi. 47), and "*I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand*" (John x. 28). It is such blessed words of assurance that give stability to the soul.

Not long after our break with Wesleyanism we came into contact with Dr. Wisely, a noted Presbyterian preacher, and a splendid man, whose church was on the hilly ground, Margherita, Burmola, Malta. I, with others, were greatly helped, and might have gone on indefinitely with him, but that we relied on the guidance of the HOLY SPIRIT, our very best Teacher. The Fleet left Malta about this time for the summer cruise, and after being away seven or eight weeks, during which time we were seeking the truth as it is in JESUS, on our return, we did not go back to the Presbyterian fold.

The first time I saw the Breaking of Bread was on this summer cruise, and my soul is devoutly stirred now as I write of the occasion. Our ship lay at anchor in a place in Sicily called Catania, with others of the Fleet.

On the Sunday afternoon I was on shore taking a walk, and leaving the town came to a lovely green plain stretching two or three miles, with olive trees scattered here and there and bordering the road. I walked on, delighted with this lovely scene, when another of a distinctly heavenly character came into view. How can I adequately describe it? A distance away from the road, no habitable dwelling in sight, sitting on the grass were twelve or fourteen Royal Naval seamen in a circle. All heads were bared to heaven's canopy; in the centre a small white cloth; on the cloth a small loaf, a small bottle of wine and a glass. There was no mistaking their occupation. Even the few passers by (Sicilians) doffed their hats as they looked, and passed on. I went to the tree nearest to them, and leaned against its trunk, hat in hand, awe-struck and immobile till the meeting was over. They were gathered to the "Name of JESUS," showing forth His death in a way I had not seen or heard before. As I waited, the profound silence was broken by one who read a hymn, then they all sang it. A short, holy pause ensued; another read a Scripture—another short pause. This was repeated two or three times, not in the same order, all leading the soul up to the Breaking of Bread, when one arose, took the loaf, and reverently looking up to heaven, gave thanks, and breaking it passed it to the one nearest him, and so they all partook of it. Then the cup (glass) in like manner. A few minutes' quiet meditation, then one thanked God for the blessed privilege accorded them, and sought blessing from Him and help to stand fast in the liberty wherewith CHRIST had made them free. As they arose and were walking away, I moved and went on. I do not know who they were, or to which of H.M. ships they were attached, and I was so absorbed with what I had witnessed that I did not stop to enquire. I did not want to lose the power of it in my soul. I realised the power of the HOLY SPIRIT in the conduct of that meeting, and the Presence of the LORD JESUS in the midst, in a way that I have never felt more since. I knew for the first time the meaning of the words of

the LORD JESUS when He said, "DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." From that time I longed to know the blessedness of being a partaker, and thus to announce the LORD'S DEATH till He come. But that opportunity did not come for several months, and for that I must go back to Malta. I was so full of what I had seen and heard that in a day or two, while at sea, I spoke of it to several fellow-believers, as we sat on the deck together, but they were not so interested in my description as I was in the reality, which is ineffaceable from my heart, and very precious to think of now. Anyone reading this will not wonder at my saying that all other devices for celebrating the Holy Communion remind me of the words in Judges xvii. 6, "*Every man did that which seemed right in his own eyes.*"

In Malta I frequented the Burmola Institute, the place where I had turned to the LORD, and in the evenings many of the seamen and soldiers attended the Bible readings, often more than one hundred were present. Sometimes a certain two or three were there who were able to correct any mistakes made. Often questions were asked them, and answers were quickly given from their well-thumbed Bibles. I thought I should like to know my Bible like those dear Christians.

These Bible readings were conducted by the Scripture Reader, who was also resident caretaker. One evening two Royal Naval men came to the meeting. The old man, as soon as the meeting had begun, attacked these two men, asking question after question, and they as quickly turned over the leaves of their Bibles, giving their answers from that Divine Source, the Holy Scriptures. And although I cannot remember much of importance, I was quite sure these men were right, and doubly sure after the last question had been asked and answered. The old man was wroth with them and said in his anger, "I'm wiser than you!" These words only increased my longing to know my Bible as well as those two men. I sought to know them, and where they assembled, but on making enquiry only met with

rebuffs. I discovered they met with many others of various ships at No. 10 Strada, Margherita, Burmola, and was warned many times not to go near them. "They belong to the Plymouth Brethren; beware of No. 10!" I had never heard of such people before, therefore, being warned by Christians I loved, I avoided them. But I could not shake off the vehement desire to know my Bible as they; for I did, and do to this day, love it more than any other book. After a few days one of those "Plymouth Brethren" (they did not own that name, only "Brethren" simply) was coaxing me to come and see No. 10. I replied: "If I come with you I shall not be able, or allowed, to go anywhere else." The answer was quickly given: "Come and see"; but I resisted the coaxing, though I could not forget it. About three weeks later I went round stealthily to No. 10 (something like Nicodemus) as if I was doing wrong, but I received a cordial welcome, and, once there, was irresistibly drawn to the place from that time forth. Every evening, and sometimes in the day should 24 or 48 hours' leave be given, there were meetings. No special routine; we would gather in the large upper room and wait on the LORD. The meetings would be decided by the promptings of the HOLY SPIRIT. If Bible readings, then wait on the SPIRIT for the portion of Scripture; if Prayer, then praying in the SPIRIT; if Praise, then singing and thanksgiving, and all was so precious and so new to me. Then on the LORD'S DAY, the Breaking of Bread, sometimes in the afternoon and sometimes in the evening, according to the convenience of those attending. For instance, no one would be on shore on LORD'S DAY mornings, but after dinner the privileged leave men could go on shore, and when at No. 10, which was called "The Lord's House," enquiries would be made whether any more would be coming, and if not, the LORD'S Table would be spread before tea; but if others could be there after tea whose duty prevented them from coming sooner, then we had tea first, and the Breaking of Bread afterwards, the words of the Apostle being applied, "Therefore, when ye come together to

eat, tarry one for another" (1 Corinthians xi. 23). The first time I was present, yet not a partaker, I saw again what I had seen in the field in Sicily, before described.

In the large room appointed for assembly meetings there was a round table in the centre surrounded by chairs for those breaking bread. I have known as many as forty, and that number may have been exceeded. The four sides of the room were filled with seats for those not in fellowship. The white cloth covered the table upon which was placed the loaf on the plate, and the decanter and glass, not covered over with a cloth as the manner of some, for the gathered ones preferred to see the memorials of the DEATH of the LORD JESUS. The waiting on the LORD, and the promptings of the HOLY SPIRIT were so entrancing, and the pauses between the hymns, the Scriptures, the giving of thanks, the breaking of the loaf, and the passing of the cup, were all soul elevating. This way of remembering Him is, I am convinced, the one the LORD appreciates most. It is according to His Own Mind and Word. Not a company of believers pleasing themselves in their service, but the LORD receiving His portion from willing hearts of those saved by His precious Blood. The first time I partook of that loaf, and drank of that cup of the LORD, seated at His Table, my soul was filled with joy. The being gathered in His Name, He manifesting Himself to our spirits is an experience for ever to be remembered by those who have the privilege of thus remembering Him till He come.

We had Bible readings or Prayer meetings every evening, when any were on shore to attend, as the SPIRIT directed us. Recreation such as one meets in Institutes, Church Army, Y.M.C.A., etc., never once entered our minds. "Redeeming the time," we spoke of the Word of GOD before and after meetings, and thus encouraged one another in the LORD.

J.P.C.

(To be continued, D.V.)

On Preaching the Word

"The Gospel of God, concerning His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord."
It is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

WE who preach the Gospel have, through grace, accepted "the faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners"; we believe and are saved; and GOD has put the same promptings in our heart as caused the woman of Samaria, after CHRIST had revealed Himself to her, to go to the men of the city and say, "Come, see a Man, which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the CHRIST?" They came, and many believed on Him.

Was it not the same when John the Baptist, being taught of God, recognised the One upon Whom the SPIRIT descended and remained on Him, as the SON of God? Looking upon JESUS as He walked he said: "Behold the LAMB of GOD"; two of his disciples heard him speak, and they followed JESUS. Then, after abiding that day with JESUS, Andrew (one of the two) finds his own brother Simon, and brought him to JESUS. Then Philip answered the call of JESUS, and he findeth Nathanael, telling him about the wondrous Person Who had called him, "Him of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, JESUS of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Notwithstanding a demur, he persuaded Nathanael to come to JESUS, and at the end of John's Gospel he is named with other disciples of JESUS. Thus many are turned to the LORD.

And, dear fellow preacher, this finding CHRIST as SAVIOUR, and in turn telling others of Him, has been God's means of blessing precious souls, among them yours and mine, ever since. What a crown to our preaching if *one* is brought to CHRIST. It *must* be that a believer tells others of his SAVIOUR. Has not CHRIST given *you* living water, which is in you "a well of water springing up into everlasting life"? The water of this fountain not only refreshes you, but runs over and blesses others. Also, is it not true of *you* as well as me

that "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the HOLY GHOST which is given unto us"? And this love must go out to others.

Now before becoming a preacher we should learn what to preach, and our teacher is the HOLY GHOST, "*the Spirit of truth*" of Whom the LORD said, "When He is come . . . He shall not speak of Himself . . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you." The HOLY GHOST uses GOD's word, "Thy word is truth," and if any "speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We have to learn for ourselves what we want others to know; and it is not mere head knowledge, but "it is a good thing that *the heart* be established with grace." We should be "established in the present truth" (2 Peter i. 12, 13). We should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." We have also the privilege of gaining instruction from the servants of God whom He has gifted to teach; and this applies not only to oral instruction, but to what has been written. We must, however, in these things be like the Bereans, who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

When speaking of the authority of Scripture, one must always bear in mind what gives it authority is that it is *the word of God*. Thus when Paul asks "What saith the Scripture?" he answers from the word itself: he knows it is what God says: no doubt remains, the answer is definite and conclusive.

There is a wholesome word for us in Proverbs iii. 1-8. Attention to verses 5 and 6 is a very present help to those about to preach, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." You express your trust and acknowledgment of Him in *prayer*. It is good to trust in the LORD, and to ask His help and guidance in every detail of every preaching. *He knows the hearers and their state, and*

is able to make His word meet their case. It goes without saying that first of all there must be private prayer, "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy FATHER which is in secret." Then, if there is opportunity, let others join their prayers with yours that through you the name of the LORD JESUS may be magnified.

In asking God's blessing on His word when about to start the preaching we should be careful always *to let it be a prayer.* We sometimes tell out the Gospel in great fulness when we are supposed to be asking God's blessing on the souls of those present. When we think of this we realise that this presentation of the Gospel should be addressed to the hearers and not to God. *Similarly at the close of the meeting,* refrain from repeating the address under the guise of prayer.

May we respond to the exhortation, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the LORD is."

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself, and God even our FATHER, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."

H.L.B.

On Being Charitably Minded.

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong: Let all your things be done with charity."—1 Cor. xvi. 13, 14.

IF these verses were deeply rooted in our hearts, what different fruit would be seen in our individual lives, and in the assemblies of God's people throughout the country!

Sometimes things arise that grieve us, because we feel the honour of the LORD is at stake. Then how easy it seems, when the time comes for dealing with it, to entirely forget to be charitable. We have brooded and maybe fretted over the matter, and in seeking to adjust

matters, often say things in haste that do incalculable damage to our brethren. If the alleged offender is in an uncharitable mood, and we also speak uncharitably, the original cause of offence is not removed, but the difficulties in dealing with it are increased.

What a joy to think that all the LORD's people have a desire to please Him, although some of us show it perhaps in a peculiar way! Most of the unwise actions on the part of real believers are probably due to want of thought and lack of consideration for the feelings of one's fellow-believers; though ignorance of our LORD's mind from lack of quietly pondering His word is likely to be at the bottom of most difficulties betwixt brethren, who should "dwell together in unity," as the Psalmist so happily puts it.

Not wilful unkindness, nor intentional uncharitableness, but simply a forgetting to lay to heart the verses at the head of this article accounts for much unhappiness amongst Christian people to-day.

The writer knew a very dear brother in CHRIST, who has now for some years been "at home with the LORD," a man who though never heard by him to mention the above verses, must have known them well, for he certainly lived accordingly. Always standing firm in the faith; and true to the LORD; yet never becoming ruffled and giving offence to others in his zeal for the truth. Upon any point that concerned the honour of the LORD JESUS he was adamant; but yet was always ready to listen to reason, and to seek to help any who could not see so clearly as himself into the matter.

Surely this attitude is the LORD's mind for us all; and the influence of such an one cannot be estimated. It goes on, long after he has gone.

"None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself" (Rom. xiv. 7). The man with an easy flow of language may make, and keep stressing his points; but another whose heart is equally full of the LORD's glory though not possessed of so extensive a vocabulary, may yet in a few words say what is of more weight than all

the eloquent brother's torrent of words. A man's influence is not measured by his speech, but by the faithful, charitable life of the speaker. Those of us who are apt to say more than we should when matters are in dispute must take more deeply to heart the latter of the two verses, "*Let all your things be done with charity [i.e., love]*"; while those who are too quiet should be encouraged to remember the stirring exhortation of the former verse, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*"

The two verses blended together in our hearts by the SPIRIT of GOD would, if acted upon, bring about a revival of all the very best "things of JESUS CHRIST" that appear to be gradually losing hold on our spiritual lives. So should we as individuals and assemblies of GOD's people be enabled to deal with all matters arising with faithfulness and consideration, firmness and charity in a way pleasing to our BLESSED LORD, Whom we all desire to honour and serve.

B.E.

On Prince Mephibosheth.

FOR OUR VERY YOUNGEST READERS BY ONE OF THEM.

LONG, long ago there was a great King called David. Just a little time before, Saul who had been King before David, had been killed in battle, and also Jonathan, Saul's son, whom David loved very much.

David was so sad about it that he wanted to do something that Jonathan would have liked. So he asked his old servant whether there were any girls or boys living that belonged to Saul or Jonathan, because he wanted to show the kindness of God to them.

The old servant named Ziba said that there was one of Jonathan's sons still living, but that he was lame. Do you know what his name was? It was Mephibosheth; would you like to have that name instead of your own? When this Mephibosheth was a little boy of five years old, his nurse one day received such bad news that she

caught up the little boy, and, while running away from the danger, fell over, or dropped him anyhow, and he was always lame afterwards on both feet.

When King David heard of him he sent the servant Ziba to fetch him to the palace. I expect Mephibosheth felt very excited, don't you? And when they got near to the palace I imagine he felt very shy. As soon as he saw King David he fell on his face before him. (All Eastern servants and people like that fell on their faces to their masters, it seems.) So King David spoke to him in a very kind voice calling him by his name, "Mephibosheth."

What do you think Mephibosheth said? "Behold thy servant."

Then David said that he would love and take care of him because of his father, and would give him back all the lands of Saul, his grandfather. He also told Ziba and his fifteen sons to plough the land of Mephibosheth and to look after it all. King David was very kind to Mephibosheth and let him live in Jerusalem where the palace was. So he showed the kindness of God to him.

* * *

Our young friend who wrote "as one child to another," does not believe that anybody reads the moral of a story, and she left this to someone else to add.

So the Editor of our magazine would just say that the kindness of King David to poor Mephibosheth, which was shown for the sake of Jonathan, the man who died, is a kind of picture of the kindness of God, the great King Eternal, to us through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. It is for the sake of the One Who died that our sins are forgiven; and the Kindness of God is shown to all who, like Mephibosheth, come to Him when they are invited. And just *now* is always the time when this loving invitation comes to you. For it was the LORD JESUS Himself Who said: "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then we also ought to be kind one to another, forgiving one another, even as God for CHRIST's sake has forgiven us who have come to Him.

Scriptural Query and Answer

Query.—Whilst the mental faculties of most are able to apprehend the types as appertaining to Israel's need, the confused preaching and teaching about "the Blood of Christ" or the "Blood of the Lamb" in these days is bewildering in the extreme whether to sinner or saint. It seems to be assumed that the hearers have a perfect and intelligent apprehension of the symbolic language used. This, I venture to say, is very far from being the case. Such statements are made as:— "Washed in the Blood of the Lamb," "the Blood before and on the Throne," "the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," "There is a fountain filled with Blood," "Precious, precious Blood of Jesus, Ever flowing free," and these are quoted indiscriminately. The result is that there is created a mental imagery which beclouds minds, weakens faith, leading to unstable walk.

What is the "Blood of Christ" intended to convey to sinners for salvation and to saints for cleansing? In simple concise language suited for us Gentiles and as far as possible, unsupported by O.T. typology. M.B.

Answer.—By "the precious Blood of CHRIST," as the HOLY SPIRIT speaks of it in 1 Peter i. 19, is meant the DEATH of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who laid down, and yielded up, His life upon the Cross as an atonement to God, and as a propitiation for our sins. "The life is in the blood."

Its *value* immediately penetrated into heaven itself, in token whereof the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, showing that the way into the holiest of all was now open.

Its *effect* upon the believer is that of "cleansing from all sin (1 John i. 7). To this the HOLY SPIRIT bears witness, namely, full remission of sins in His Name. This is due to CHRIST Who died for our sins, and by Whose DEATH they have been put away for ever from the sight of the HOLY GOD with Whom we all have to do.

It is the Death of CHRIST which is of all importance to God and to man; and this DEATH was accomplished by the blood-shedding of the SON of GOD Who became MAN in order to be able to die, and thus "give His life a ransom for many"; for all who put their trust in Him.

He is the propitiation for our sins, which thus enables penitent sinners believing in JESUS to be justified freely

by GOD's grace through the redemption that is in CHRIST JESUS.

He is the RIGHTEOUS ONE, Who as our Advocate with the FATHER, deals with erring saints who are defiled in walking through the world. But for such there is no second cleansing by the BLOOD, but the application by the HOLY SPIRIT of the work and Death of CHRIST to them in their defiled state. This is illustrated clearly by the ordinance of the Red Heifer in Numbers xix. (See "Notes on Numbers."—C.H.M.)

With reference to the statements mentioned by our correspondent, such as "Washed in the Blood of the Lamb," and "the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," these are simple Scripture statements to which others might be added. They positively affirm the *cleansing virtue and effect* of the Death of JESUS CHRIST, HIS SON, the LAMB of GOD, the SIN-BEARER; Who is the Anti-type of all those temporary provisional sacrifices offered by Divine appointment under the Jewish law.

The other statements quoted, namely, *The blood before and on the throne; a fountain filled with blood; precious, precious blood of Jesus, ever flowing free;* are none of them Scripturally accurate; but are all of them attempts by godly souls to express what is true, but with more pious sentiment than exactness of phraseology. Of course there is no "fountain filled with blood"; and it is manifestly untrue to speak of the "Precious blood of JESUS as ever flowing free."

"Once, only once, and once for all
His precious life He gave."

But the fact of the eternal value, and consequently the abiding efficacy of the DEATH of CHRIST, and its availability in cleansing power for every one who believes in Him, is a standing bulwark of the holy faith once for all delivered to the saints.

The Blood has been shed once for all. It was shed *on earth*; and as we are distinctly taught in 1 John v. 8, *the blood bears witness in earth.*

On the Yoke, the Cross, and the Thorn.

(1) THE YOKE. —

OUR LORD's allusion to a yoke in Matthew xi. 29, 30, was easily appreciated by His hearers. They were quite familiar with the frame of wood joining oxen at work. And the Scriptures use the yoke as illustrative of national bondage, of afflictions, and of the ritual of the Mosaic law.

The yoke of Matthew xi. stands for our service to God, understood in the widest sense. A yoke always remained a yoke; it was always a weight, and there was always the tendency to chafe the neck of the ox. Every believer realises that in his life as a service rendered to God there is the element of pressure and control, and that against which the natural desires tend to rebel. *Discipleship involves discipline.*

How is our LORD's yoke easy? It is easy compared with the service of sin, for sin is a cruel tyrant and the great enemy of our souls. And the service of CHRIST is light compared with the heavy burden of the Mosaic law—a yoke which, as Peter said to the conference at Jerusalem, "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."

The yoke of CHRIST is easy, too, because we have the desire to please Him. "I ought" is reinforced by love for Him. The heavier end is upon His shoulders, for upon Him rests chiefly the responsibility for the direction and success of our lives. In our effort to co-operate with the LORD, let us remember to lay the emphasis upon *His* working for and in us. And it is as we learn of Him, and submit to God, that we prove His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

(2) THE CROSS. —

OUR LORD's Cross was unique; Calvary stands absolutely alone in its majestic grandeur. It is the awful yet blessed centre of our redemption, and the source of all our hopes for time and eternity.

But the Christian has a cross, too. The Christian's cross is not the common trouble that is the lot of all men; it is a sort of reflection of the Cross of CHRIST, and is peculiar to the followers of the Crucified.

The Christian's cross means the refusal of sin and self, and it may include the loss and suffering inflicted upon him by the world, especially in countries where the influence of Christianity is weak. The cross means our saying to the self-life, "I do not know you." *Discipleship costs*. To the early Christians the cross was not an ornament dangling from the neck, nor one placed upon the top of a church steeple. It was the symbol of the Christian life: the symbol of their faith, of the love of God, of the victory won by the Captain of their salvation over death and sin and hell.

But the Christian's cross is not merely a symbol; it is a reality of daily life. There are time when he feels the nails go through his desires, his hopes, his will; he cannot escape. The cross for the Christian means living for the higher at the expense of the lower; for the future at the expense of the present; for the spiritual at the expense of the natural; and—how little we know of this—for others at the expense of self.

"At Thy feet, O CHRIST, we lay
Thine own gift of this new day;
Doubt of what it holds in store
Makes us crave Thine aid the more;
Lest it prove a time of loss,
Mark it, SAVIOUR, with Thy Cross."

(3) THE THORN. — /

The apostle Paul was not alone in having to endure his thorn in the flesh; probably no believer has been exempt. The thorn may be lodged in the body, the mind, or the circumstances. But it is always something sharp and provoking; something that hurts and stings; that irritates and harasses.

The thorn is to keep us humble, dependent and spiritual. Our hearts are proud; and spiritual pride

was described by John Newton as "the worst of abominations." We need to be reminded that we must constantly depend upon the LORD for daily and hourly grace; and that we are not yet at home, but still at school.

What shall we do with the thorn? Well, you would not allow a splinter to remain in your hand. And we should try to get rid of the thorn—by means approved by the Word of God.

But what if the thorn cannot be removed? "What cannot be helped must be borne, not blamed." The LORD can give grace to enable us to look to Him although the wind blows the sand into our face and eyes. He is able to take away the fret and annoyance from the mind, and turn even thorns into an occasion of blessing to ourselves and others. The hearts that bend will never break. *The best way to bear trial is to use it.*

Our prayer is that we may so bear the yoke, the cross and the thorn that, when we get Home, we may know that they have done the work that God intended.

E.A.

The Righteous Judgment of God.

WHEN man fell, righteousness fell with him, and fallen righteousness* has ever since characterised the dealings of all men to the present moment.

The one exception is the Holy and Just One Who in grace has trodden a divinely approved pathway in this world; Who also in due time will reign in righteousness over this world.

That God's judgment is righteous (Rom. ii. 5) should be cause for the deepest thankfulness in our hearts, though it is more often a cause for fear.

When man appears before an earthly judge, however upright that judge may be, the righteous judgment of God will not be exercised, but the nearest that man is

*If we may use such an expression. •

capable of, and which, if meted out in the fear of God and the integrity of an upright heart and mind will bear characteristics of God's righteous judgment, but He alone is "*great in counsel and mighty in work: for His eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*" (Jer. xxxii. 19.)

After the solemn appointment with death (Heb. ix. 27) comes "the judgment," when God "will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. ii. 6); but at present in His longsuffering mercy He withholds that judgment.

The essence of righteous judgment is that no deed—either good or bad—of any one man shall pass unrewarded, and such cannot be righteously carried out without the full knowledge of the motives, the environment, the opportunities, and the pros and cons of each man's life; these are alone known to Him Who is the righteous Judge.

In Rom. ii. 7-9 God has clearly laid down His standard of righteous judgment—very briefly and solemnly—that each man will receive in accordance with his deeds, "to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life," etc.

We might think that on those terms Abel and Enoch would be entitled to eternal life, for there is no failure recorded in either of their lives, but Heb. xi. 2 tells us that it was *by faith* Abel offered a sacrifice and Enoch was translated, so that in neither case was it by patient continuance in well doing, but by faith they received eternal life.

Eternal life is a reward in Rom. ii. 7, but a gift in vi. 23; the former is a reward in the future as it can only be awarded after the life has been lived, but the latter a gift for the present time, but in either case it can only be on the terms of the Awarder.

But why this change from a reward to a gift? Because in the intervening chapters God shows that eternal life as a reward is completely out of the reach of man, be

he Jew or Gentile, and proves that so far from continuing "in well doing," all are "under sin," and there is "none righteous, no not one," the law has manifested "all the world" as "guilty before God," for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," therefore any thought or hope of man to receive eternal life as a reward is entirely swept aside.

How well for man when he realises the solemn fact that eternal life as a reward is beyond the reach of his greatest efforts, then only he will realise that while God takes away from him every possible hope of this, he learns that in some way or other he can receive it as a gift obtained for him by the merit of Another, for it is God's gift "through JESUS CHRIST our LORD."

But does this seem righteous? Even man's idea of justice shrinks from the idea of proving a man guilty and letting him go free without any penalty, but on the contrary bestowing on him a gift which he in no way deserves.

This would be to allow a man to commit sin and have no fear of any penalty being required of him.

Must not the sinner do something with regard to his sins before he can be allowed to receive the gift?

That is clearly impossible, for even the deepest repentance cannot atone for a single sin, and what can a man do more? No mortification of the flesh will blot out one sin, for let a man do what he will when he has become an awakened sinner, all his past sins are indelibly recorded against him. Yes, as far as man's power is concerned, nothing can erase one of them.

But what man cannot do, God can, but He cannot do so unrighteously; so before the gift can be bestowed, the penalty for sin must be paid, and that is a death penalty, for "the wages of sin is death," "the soul that sinneth it shall die."

Man cannot pay the death penalty and have eternal life at the same time; there is only one alternative; either the sinner must die or another must be found to pay the death penalty.

But it might be asked: "Is it righteous for one who

has committed no sin to suffer instead of the guilty one?"

Among some heathen tribes the custom is still carried out of a human victim being forcibly sacrificed to appease their gods, but there is no righteousness in this; on the other hand, when a man nobly sacrifices his own life to save another, righteousness cannot be questioned.

Here is shown the wonder and grace of a loving God, Who has given His SON as a willing sacrifice to make atonement for sin. Who can refuse to give to Him Who has been sinned against the right to name and provide the sacrifice that will meet His righteous requirement? Then this sacrifice is also a purely voluntary one on the part of our SAVIOUR, "*Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God*"; no compulsion of an unwilling victim, but the full surrender of Himself in answer to the will of GOD and the need of the sinner. This voluntary suffering and laying down of His life as the sacrifice is that sin may be fully atoned for, and the sinner saved; so that such can go on his way rejoicing that One has borne his sins in His own body on the tree, his SAVIOUR, his substitute, JESUS the LORD.

Righteousness cannot demand the penalty from the guilty one as well as the guiltless, but the penalty having been paid by the substitute, the guilty one goes free, and that righteously.

Now we see why a sinner should have every cause to be thankful for the righteous judgment of GOD; not a single sin will be overlooked, no favouritism manifested; the judgment pronounced will not be unduly severe, or unduly lenient; all will be divinely weighed and the sinner's utmost need met by a perfect and eternal sacrifice. Thus the sinner can rejoice that he is fully manifested in GOD's sight and that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do (Heb. iv. 13).

The more sins uncovered and brought to the light, the more praise and worship will go up from the sinner's heart in that his SAVIOUR has borne every one, "*in His own body on the tree.*"

But there is not only the righteousness of God, but there is also the unbounded love of God, for "*God commendeth His love (not His righteousness here) toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Rom. v. 8).

It would ill become us to divorce the righteousness from the love, or magnify the one at the expense of the other, for "God is light," and "God is love," but the subject of this article is the former and not the latter.

The above is written with the desire to confirm the faith of younger readers of this magazine and to encourage such to a further study of the Epistle to the Romans.

F.A.

On a Letter to Heaven.

(FOR OUR YOUNGEST READERS.)

IN a pillar-box of a small township in Southern Poland a letter was found which attracted considerable attention on account of the strangeness of the address.

On the envelope, written in crude, childish characters, was the address: "To the Honourable Mr. God, in Heaven."

The letter was opened by the postmaster. In the envelope was found a small piece of paper torn from an exercise-book, and written on it the following message: Dear Mr. God,—Keep death from the Rogala family, and arrange that the danger about which I know does not overtake them."

The postmaster handed over the letter to the police, who at once began to search for the writer. A police agent found that the envelope in which the letter was enclosed had been bought at a certain shop by a little girl of eight or nine years.

She had particularly asked for a nice envelope, as she stated that she was writing to a very high person. The

little girl was very soon found. On questioning her, the following history came to light: One night she was lying in bed and could not sleep. In the same room was her father, an agricultural labourer on the estate of the farmer Rogala, talking with another man.

The little girl was horrified to overhear the two men plan to murder and rob the farmer when he had received money for horses which he was about to sell. The robbery and murder was carefully planned in every detail and the date fixed for its execution.

The girl, mortally afraid of her father, could think of nothing else to prevent the crime save a letter to a Higher Power. On the night fixed for the murder the police surrounded the house of the rich farmer, and the two would-be murderers were arrested.

The little girl was adopted as his own daughter, by the man whose life she had saved.

It has been often remarked that the prayers of children seem to get special attention by God. In any case our Blessed Lord Himself assures us of God's interest in little ones. "I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father." And how sweet the assurance of Him Who was once Himself a little child, when He says, "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

"Still He loves the little children,

You and me;

And He wants us all to love Him

Faithfully.

Let us then with hearts and voices

Gladly say:

I am Thine, O blessed Jesus,

Thine for aye!"

On the Book of Esther.

ONE of the most inspiring books of Holy Scripture is this book with its pagan title, its omission of any mention of the Name of God, yet one equally valued by Jews and Christians. Esther="Star" or "the planet Venus." While the atmosphere of the story, the circumstances and characters portrayed are somewhat foreign to our Western ideas, the message it brings makes a very real and distinct challenge to the readers. It is part of all "Scripture written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4).

As the *last* historical book of the Old Testament, it bears interesting comparison with the *first*, where the story of Joseph in some ways resembles that of Mordecai. There are certain local differences, but both are records of the over-ruling providence of God in very marked ways. His people, whether in Egypt or Persia, are ever the subjects of His interest and care whatever their own condition at the moment. "His compassions fail not." In the times of Esther, both condition and position of the Jewish people made it incompatible with His holy character to openly countenance them. But He ever remembered His holy promise to Abraham, and so we trace His gracious providence throughout the story recorded in the Book of Esther.

As we trace these gracious ways of a faithful God with an unfaithful people, we discover prophetic foreshadowings of purposes of blessing for them as a nation at present unfulfilled.

The framework of this inspired narrative is the Persian Empire in the days of Xerxes, some five centuries before the Christian era. From India to Ethiopia this great Empire extended (chapter i. 1). The introduction presents a scene of pomp and pride of kingdom; of passion and powerlessness on the part of the king Ahasuerus (or Xerxes as he is more commonly called); of worldly splendour and self-indulgence without a thought of God; and, taken altogether, a most dramatic

description of a Persian Court intrigue in which Xerxes, Vashti, Esther, Haman and Mordecai play the leading parts. Vashti, the defiant wife, is, however, a very minor character and quickly dismissed from the narrative; yet in connection with Esther herself serves to show the "mighty brought down from her seat and the humble and meek exalted," as in the Song of the blessed Virgin Mary.

The first value of the Book of Esther is found because, albeit in very shadowed outline, CHRIST is there.

A second value of the book is found in the fact of the comfort given as to God's watchful providence, ever working, even when His people are found in circumstances and conditions which forbid open acknowledgment of them by Him, as we have already remarked.

Thirdly, the Book of Esther possesses great value and interest from its prophetic significance. Here in miniature is shown the present position and future destiny of the earthly people of God. The Jewish nation is seen scattered, under Gentile rule, not now owned of God; yet watched over jealously by Him; and still the Gentile problem right on to the end of the story.

The central figure is Mordecai the Jew; and in the narrative the following suggestive things are recorded of him. He is shown to be:—

- (1) A man of the true seed of the chosen race.
- (2) A man who renders supreme service to the great king.
- (3) A man specially hated and despised by the enemy of God's people.
- (4) A man whom the king delighted to honour.
- (5) A man through whom deliverance came to God's people.
- (6) A man through whom dire defeat came to the enemy.
- (7) A man who evidently shadows forth a far greater One, as the book closes with him seen next in dignity and majesty to the great king; great

among the chosen people; accepted of the multitude of his brethren; seeking the wealth [weal] of his brethren; speaking peace to all his seed; and one who has known first the suffering and afterward the glories of exaltation. Whom does he shadow forth? Who is before the inspiring SPIRIT, but CHRIST the Heir of all things.

As one has said: Every book in the Bible speaks of the final restoration of Israel to be the joy of the whole earth, and the blessing of all the families of mankind. But first as in "Esther" the execution of judgment on the wicked, especially upon the enemies of the Jew. The Jews, as here, pass through captivity and the fires of tribulation in complete contrast with the Church. Finally the arch-enemy of God and His people is ignominiously destroyed, and then CHRIST, the true Jew—the real Deliverer of His Jewish brethren—is seen in the kingdom as Heir of all.

II.

The next figure dominating the narrative is the sinister one of Haman. He displays characteristics of a Satanic type to a marked degree. He is:—

- (1) The adversary and enemy; the accuser of the people of God (vii. 5. Cf. 1 Peter v. 8; Rev. xii. 10).
- (2) Powerful, and plots the entire destruction of the people.
- (3) Proud, haughty, revengeful and lying.
- (4) Finally, unmasked, degraded, despatched without mercy.

What is he but a shadowgraph of the arch-enemy of GOD, of CHRIST, and of the saints, described by the SPIRIT as your adversary the devil.

Much food for thought in connection with the whole story of Haman will be found in considering such Scriptures as Psalms vii.; xxxvii. 12, 32, 35, 36; lxxxiii. 3, 4.

III.

Naturally much interest centres around her whose name stands at the head of the story—Esther or Hadassah as she is introduced to the reader. She is a Jewess, therefore handicapped by belonging to a despised race; a captive and an orphan, yet in spite of her lowly position and defenceless condition in life, she is destined to become the queen and to exert an inconceivably powerful influence on behalf of the despised downtrodden race from which she sprang. What the Virgin-Mother sang in her Magnificat some five hundred years later, was in measure experienced by Hadassah the Jewess, when she became Esther the queen. "He hath put down the mighty from their seats; and hath exalted the humble and the meek."

The narrative reveals her as possessing a personality at once charming, courteous, courageous and clever. She is fair and beautiful as all may see in ch. ii. 7; but it is her conduct in the crisis that reveals her character. She has a faith, which showed itself in fasting, praying and looking for deliverance; so we find she obtains the desired blessing and even more than she could at first have imagined. To her, as to many another in different circumstances, came the call to venture in faith, the crisis with its peril, and the cloud that overshadows (cf. ch. iv. 11).

Then she found as many others gratefully confess, that: "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him." (Nah. i. 7).

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

Hence in ch. vi., the importance of seeming trifles is shown. Since the hearts of all are in His disposal, a wakeful night, an unusual soporific, a neglected duty, are all used by God to bring about purposes of blessing for His people, and of defeat for the carefully laid plans and plots of their enemy.

The impatience of a bad man is over-ruled to reward the patience of a good man; and the rapid changes here recorded, have also their typical applications. There is now a lowly Man Whom the King Eternal delights to honour; and Whom He has straightway glorified; and Whom He will have all men honour. The despised Jew is seen in the narrative openly owned. How Esther's heart would be elated at the honour placed upon Mordecai. So in this day, the hearts of all true lovers of the MAN Whom God has exalted and crowned with glory and honour exult in this, and ever will as time itself merges into God's eternal day of glory.

So His people joyously salute Him as the glorious One, singing:

We triumph in Thy triumphs, LORD;
 Thy joys our deepest joys afford;
 The fruit of love divine.
 While sorrowing, suffering, toiling here,
 How does the thought our spirits cheer,
 The throne of glory's Thine.

IV.

Purim—the new feast and festival.

The new feast was one of joyful remembrance; a time of commemorating and celebrating a great deliverance from a great danger by a great gratitude. There had been no doubt as to the relentless hatred and malice of an almost all-powerful enemy. There had been a great deliverance shown not by open miracle (because of their condition, but, nevertheless) by the secret providence of God, albeit working apparently by ordinary ways and means. So the new festival was inaugurated in grateful celebration of this well-nigh unparalleled deliverance vouchsafed by God to the nation.

They recalled how they had been doomed to destruction by their implacable enemy; and never, said they, should these days of Purim fail from among the Jews, nor the memorial of them be ended.

Like at the deliverance from Egypt: "The enemy said, I will destroy . . . but Thou didst blow with Thy wind and they sank in the waters"; so once again Israel proved the truth of what the only missionary prophet of the Old Testament learned by experience, "Salvation is of the LORD."

The humblest child of God, in the most trying circumstances, may take great courage and heart of hope from the things recorded in the Book of Esther. For here at least we see that God allays the fears of His people, always doing far more than they dare to hope in His providential dealings on their behalf.

He everywhere hath sway,
And all things serve His might;
His every act pure blessing is,
His path unsullied light.

W.G.T.

A Golden Chain.

WITH a strong bar of pure gold at the beginning to guard the seven links which also are of purest gold and with a pendant.

The Guard—DEITY.

"In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with God, and the word was God." "God was in CHRIST reconciling the world unto Himself."—St. John i. 1-5; 2 Cor. v. 19.

First Link—HUMANITY.

"The WORD was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth." Yet no preparation made by the world to receive Him. "No room in the inn" (St. Luke ii.); no room in the land (St. Matt. ii.); and no room in the world (St. John i.).

However, angels proclaimed His birth, giving glory to God in the highest.—St. Luke ii.

Second Link—HUMILITY.

“For ye know the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.”—2 Cor. viii. 9.

“From the Holy, Holy, Holy,
We adore Thee, O Most High;
Down to earth’s blaspheming voices,
And the cry of ‘Crucify.’”

Third Link—WISDOM.

“And the Child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.”—St. Luke ii. 40. At twelve years of age He is found sitting in the midst of the teachers in the temple, hearing them and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

Fourth Link—LOWLY MINDEDNESS.

To His mother’s question: Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? the reply: “How is it that ye *sought* Me, wist ye not that I must be about My FATHER’S business? and the record that “He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them,” speak of that meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price.

“And JESUS increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man.”—St. Luke ii. 52.

Fifth Link—MAJESTY.

Upon the mount of Transfiguration the gold of His Divine Majesty shines through the human veil. “*This is My beloved SON, hear Him,*” is the august reproof to any who even unwittingly would put the LORD JESUS on a level with even the highest and best of the human race. So Peter, when led by the SPIRIT of GOD to record the happenings on the holy mount, says, We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty when we were with Him there.

“And when the voice was past JESUS was found

alone.”—St. Luke ix. But the FATHER would have the three favoured apostles to know even in the presence of Moses and Elijah that the Person of their MASTER was His beloved SON to Whom they must listen. “He Whom God sent speaketh the words of God.” “His Majesty.”

Sixth Link—AUTHORITY.

On the night of the betrayal our LORD speaks much of His commandments — the New Commandment is laid upon such as are His disciples. “A new commandment have I given you that ye should love one another as I have loved you.” “I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done.” In that large upper room where He desired to eat the Passover with them before He suffered, the LORD JESUS instituted and enjoined upon His disciples the feast of remembrance. Their minds having been carried back to what occurred in Egypt when their redemption as a nation was about to be accomplished, He, the true Paschal Lamb, takes bread and wine and (the Passover Supper being ended) gives it to them to eat and drink for a remembrance of Himself. It was a new supper, the LORD’S SUPPER; and what must have been their feelings as they partook thereof at His bidding. What should ours be when in response to this loving command, this touching desire expressed by Him Who is our LORD as well as our SAVIOUR, we too eat of that bread and drink of that cup? For His body was given and His blood shed for us.

Seventh Link—PRE-EMINENCE.

In the *midst* of the malefactors when bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; in the *midst* of His own when on the resurrection day He said: “Peace be unto you,” and showed them His hands and His side; in the *midst* evermore of His people gathered together to His Name; in the *midst* of the Throne—a Lamb as it had been slain; His place is central. It pleased the FATHER that in all things He should have the pre-eminence. May He ever receive it from our gratefully

adoring hearts, and especially when gathered together for the remembrance of Himself in His death for us.

The Pendant.

Depending upon all that has passed before us as we have reviewed the golden links of His *Deity, Humanity, Humility, Wisdom, Lowly Mindedness, Majesty, Authority and Pre-eminence*, is the glorious prospect of one day seeing Him as He is and being with Him. "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."—St. John xiv. 2, 3. While we wait for Him may we occupy till He comes, and be showing His death as we "Do this for a remembrance of Me."

W.A.W.

On Being Brought Out—2.

ONE LORD'S DAY afternoon there were at least forty brothers on shore for the Breaking of Bread, of whom I was one. About three o'clock the Table was prepared, it having been ascertained that all were present who could get ashore that day. We gathered round the Table. After waiting on the LORD for a good while all were dumb—the whole of the gathering were alike. Inexperienced as I was, I could feel there was a weight upon the meeting. No one could give thanks, announce a hymn, or read a Scripture. Then a brother stood up and said: "There seems to be something wrong for none of us to be able to speak." After another painful pause another said: "There *must* be something wrong in our midst," and proposed that the Breaking of Bread should be postponed. That advice was followed, and we dispersed and walked about in twos and threes, talking over the serious state of things. The elder ones conferred together, and proposed that, as it was near tea time, we should have tea. Accordingly tea was prepared and we went down to the refectory. Everyone was humbled to know that we could not

remember the BLESSED LORD. Everyone was stirred in soul at the serious state of affairs. What searching of hearts!

At last it was decided that we all go up to the Assembly Room. The Bread and Wine have been removed from the Table. Think of such a state of things! You of my brethren who attend the Breaking of Bread every LORD'S DAY morning! The memorials removed from the Table, and the Breaking of Bread postponed! Did you ever know such an event? We gathered round the table on our knees, everyone with brokenheartedness, tears running down our faces, as we besought the LORD to show us what sin was amongst us that the very thing He loved, and we loved, we could not do; and why He could not manifest Himself in our midst. And for half an hour, or perhaps longer, were we on our faces, crying thus to God. At last the prayers ceased; then a great silence for a few minutes; and the answer came in all its fulness. Two brothers broke out in confession to God, with tears of contrition running down their faces, that they were the sinners, and besought the LORD to forgive them, and besought also the forgiveness of those assembled. Then we all arose from our knees, and after consulting for a while, it was decided that God would surely forgive them, and the two offenders were joyfully received, and upon our knees we went again, this time to pour out our hearts in thanksgiving to the GOD of all grace and FATHER of mercies in so hearing and answering our prayers. That was a scene for angels to look at and wonder, and to make devils tremble. We could now break bread. Two or three brothers said: "Well, brethren, God has shown us what prevented our breaking bread this afternoon; why should we not do so now — a purged assembly?" So about 7 p.m. the Table was prepared, and spiritual delight was shown as the loaf and wine were placed upon it.

I feel sure that the showing forth of the LORD'S Death on that occasion was very precious to Himself—then in our midst—and we were so glad when we realised Him

so near. That is a night to be remembered by me, and all who were there. We lingered in that upper room after the Breaking of Bread that night until very late, of which I have more to tell, viz.: "The Belated Eight Bells," and this only applies to those of us, about ten, who belonged to H.M.S. "Victoria," the biggest three-decker wooden ship that ever sailed from Portsmouth Harbour at the latter end of 1864, and twice the tonnage of Nelson's old three-decker "Victory." We had different hours from the other ships for returning at night; some of us at eight o'clock, some at ten o'clock, and others at midnight. That was only when afternoon leave was given, and we, being in the Flagship, had to return punctually to time of respective class of leave. We ten all belonged to the first class special, the time of returning being midnight. This class of leave consisted of men who had not overstayed their time. Once in default, there was no reinstatement to that class. There was in all others.

On the night mentioned we had stayed so long praising and blessing God, that we were in danger of overstaying our time. But God in a signal manner delivered us. We left No. 10 about 11.30 p.m., and had a long walk to get to the landing place. We reached it in much quicker time than usual, and found our boatman, as we called him, waiting for us to take us on board. Someone had asked him to take them to some place or ship, but his reply to them was "the brothers have not gone yet." On the passage to the ship we heard one ship's bell strike eight, then another, and another all striking eight bells, midnight. The Flagship's only remained until we were all on board and names answered. As soon as the last name was answered eight bells was struck. The corporal who had called our names said, "You have just saved your bacon." The cause of the delay, for the bell was actually struck at 12.10, was learned thus:—Those who should have been relieved at 12 found they had been on duty ten minutes over their watch, and next morning sought out the sentry, whose duty it was to strike the time, and

grumbled at him. His post was near the captain's cabin, and to clear himself he said: "It is not my fault; the captain was restless and rang his bell for me, and kept me fussing about in his cabin, and when I came back to my post it was ten minutes past twelve." Thus we all saw the LORD's Hand in delivering us out of trouble. On the passage to the ship some expressed a fear of being late. I love to remember the answer given by another: "Well, brothers, if we had been seeking our own pleasure we could not expect the LORD to help us, but we have been experiencing that which I do not think any Christians ever did." J.P.C.

An Ancient Morning Hymn.

(From before the 8th Century)

"Cause me to hear Thy loving kindness in the morning; for in Thee do I trust; cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto Thee." (Psalm cxliii. 8.)

"Now that the sun is gleaming bright,
Implore we, bending low,
That He, the Uncreated Light,
May guide us as we go.

"No sinful word, nor deed of wrong,
Nor thoughts that idly rove,
But simple truth be on our tongue,
And in our hearts be love.

"And while the hours in order flow,
O Christ, securely fence
Our gates, beleaguered by the foe,
The gate of every sense.

"And grant that to Thine honour, Lord,
Our daily toil may tend,
That we begin it at Thy word,
And in Thy favour end."

—(Extract)

On Revival.

A GAINST spiritual revival there are always arrayed an enemy with many instruments ; circumstances that are wrongly interpreted ; and not least the innate selfishness of our natural hearts.

For spiritual revival there are always to be found the strength and power of the LORD ; the guidance and exhortation of the Scriptures ; and the encouragement of the assured presence of the LORD with all who seek to promote His glory by obeying His word for that time in which they live.

How spiritual revival always comes is, by hearkening to the LORD and considering our present ways ; by fearing the LORD and no one else ; and by active endeavours and diligence in serving Him.

The great teaching of Haggai (at the time of Israel's last revival after the return from the Captivity) is that only as the people of GOD maintain communion with Him, and render frank obedience is it possible for them to reach the height of true blessedness.

I. The Awakening Message.

True spiritual revival is ever marked by the threefold character of that in Haggai's times, namely Awakening, Attention, Assurance. The awakening message simple in style but searching in character to "Consider your ways," literally "Set your heart on your ways," was one of needed reproof, expostulation and warning. It was indeed intended to be an awakening call. Slothfulness, indifference to the Lord's interests in the world, and self-indulgent ease marked the people who owed everything to God and completely forgot or ignored their obligations to Him. "Set your heart upon your ways," said the elderly prophet, the earnest preacher of repentance, and thus learn the meaning of fields without produce ; daily necessities without enjoyment ; and labour without reward ; what you lack, and why you lack.

"Set your heart upon your ways," and rouse yourselves

to attend to the service of God, the things that are His purposes in the present day in which through His appointment your lot is cast, and you will find the road to revival.

This awakening message from GOD by the prophet was a stern reminder that relationship regulates responsibility for His people. An earlier prophet had emphasised this truth ; "You only have I known of all the families of the earth : therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos. iii. 2) ; and an Apostle reminds us that, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth ;" and again that for certain causes "many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep" (Heb. xii. 6 ; 1 Cor. xi. 30). Hence the stirring note which ever precedes true revival whether of an individual or of a company of believers, "Consider—set your heart on your ways. Remember that returning obedience leads to returning favour.

This then was the first message, the LORD's message to His people in the day of spiritual declension, sloth and self-indulgent forgetfulness of His claims upon them. *It was an awakening message.* Nothing can be done with a sleepy, self-complacent, self-indulgent professor. So the SPIRIT by the Apostle calls insistently to such, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and CHRIST shall shine upon thee. Oh, that some sleepy, self-complacent, self-indulgent, self-satisfied reader may awake from that state of lethargy which so resembles spiritual death, beginning again to redeem the time and to buy up the opportunity for effective service to Him Whose we are, and *Whom we are called to serve.* Heed the awakening call, brother and sister, that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep : for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed (Rom. xiii. 11 *et seq.*).

It is the call of revival, true spiritual revival ; not a mere psychical playing on emotions, nor an organised mass movement, but an individual considering of our own unfruitful ways personally, and a returning in true contrition to Him Whose interests we have so largely forgotten. "All seek their own and not the things of JESUS CHRIST" (Phil. ii. 21).

II. *The Attention and Obedience.*

The attention given and the results are seen in verses 7-14 of chapter i. : "Then . . . they obeyed." Here, as always, hearkening and obeying the awakening message brings immediate blessing ; the first part of this consists in a right attitude of heart to GOD, and then the assurance of His presence is granted, and a spiritual revival resulting in some really definite work for GOD follows.

This is the crying need of to-day, faced as we are by an ever-encroaching apostasy in Christendom with its Modernistic, Liberal re-statements of belief ; with an ever-darkening cloud of superstition creeping over what once professed to glory in the principles of the Protestant Reformation ; with a growing indifference to GOD filling the world with a godless materialism and disregard of domestic decencies ; the plighted word, commercial morality, and reverence for things true, venerable, noble, of good report discounted heavily by multitudes living without GOD in hopeless alienation from Him through the ignorance that is in them.

"Awake, awake, Arm of the LORD," was the cry of the despairing people in the Prophet Isaiah's time ; we need Divine interposition and power, they moaned.

"Awake, awake, put on thy strength," was the divine reply. There is no straitening in GOD. He never faints, nor is weary, but gives strength and power to them that have no might.

'Tis we, 'tis His people that need to awake, that need to put on our strength, that need to take hold on His strength.

So in Haggai's day, Governor, Priest and People alike needed the stirring exhortations to "*be strong and work*," to "*fear ye not*" ; and to all alike the gracious assurance and encouragement was given in the message of the LORD by the LORD's Messenger that GOD is the same as of old, the unchanging ONE upon Whose covenanted word and abiding SPIRIT the present generation may implicitly rely for every need as they give themselves to the doing of His will.

In spite of the changed circumstances ; in spite of their spiritual slackness in the past ; whatever comparisons may be made as between the work as it was and as it is

to-day ; with adversaries seeking to terrify, and false brethren accusing them of evil designs ; GOD is the refuge and the very present help in trouble. So they found Him in their day when having considered their ways, and hearkened to the awakening message they did not wait for royal permission, or any licence, to re-commence the work so long neglected. They made a move for GOD, acting solely on His word, and their history shows how promptly GOD made a move for them in putting it into the king's heart to favour them in the steps taken.

"When a man's ways please the LORD, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Let us then make it our business to stir ourselves up to be doing the thing that pleases Him at this present hour.

III. The Assurance Given.

"From this day will I bless thee." The assurance is given of immediate, permanent though conditional blessing. But the conditions were such as in their present spiritual state they gladly would embrace.

In the questions and answers (chapter ii. 10-23) we find clearly taught that personal cleanness was and is essential. "*Without holiness shall no man see the Lord.*" Not only a clean position but a clean condition befits those who belong to the holy nation. Standing and state must correspond or the enjoyment of the desired blessing ceases.

Plainly taught, too, is the fact that personal holiness is *not* communicated. A holy company does not create one a holy person by joining it. Also the converse is here given, namely that defilement *is* communicated. One does become partaker of evil deeds and doctrines if one welcomes evil doers and bad teachers. Further, the passage shows that outward acts proceed from inward condition as our BLESSED LORD HIMSELF taught long years after.

The promise of blessing, the questions and answers arising from the present circumstances, alike point to the fact that present duty and coming glory are intimately connected ; and that the attitude of heart should be one in which while looking backward with contrition, and onward

in certainty of better things, one looks steadily upward in confidence even in a day of small things. Our business is to care for His interests, to spend time, strength and money for their advancement, knowing that He makes it ever His gracious business to care for ours in every way. "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD ?" or as the margin gives "to consecrate himself ?"

QUARTUS.

On Testimony.

Hebrews xi, 4-7.

GOD'S witness has from ages past
Of Abel said :

His testimony true will last,
Though himself dead.

Can I bear witness that will stand
When I have died ?

Or shall I built a city grand
In rebel pride ?

Will Enoch's simple faithful life
Appeal to God,

But kindle in me only strife
For judgment's rod ?

God's warning voice to Noah came,
And faith obeyed.

His true response to mercy's aim
Full tribute paid.

The rightful heir to faith's estate
Condemned the world,

And safe himself, saw folly's fate
Upon it hurled.

Faith is to life the only way :
Must unbelief

Contrive to trifle with its day
To endless grief ?

Have faith in God for things unseen,
Unaltered shines

God's Truth, revealed as pure and clean :
Things seen are signs. (Romans i. 20.)

G. S. PURNELL.

On a Moslem's Conversion

JOHN HOPE was born a Mohammedan ; his parents, grandparents and great grandparents were also Mohammedan. His birthplace was Constantinople and he was sent to school, and then graduated in the University at Cairo ; it was there that he qualified in the Koran and the Law.

When twenty he was sent to the Balkan States, where he served in Serbia among Serbian Turks. Word came over from China that the Christian missionaries were making headway over the Mohammedan Chinese people ; and so he was sent to China to oppose these Christian missionaries and their work. He began his work in Shanghai ; after investigating matters, he found that there was trouble among the missionaries and the Chinese people. The provinces were in rebellion, this making it extremely difficult for the Christian missionaries to gain access to the Chinese homes. This he found was his difficulty as well. His father was a general in the army, and thoroughly reorganised the army in China ; and so he became friendly with the Chinese government and the people. This made John Hope's work easier ; he was given a hall by the tradesmen in Shanghai ; it seated 5,000. His purpose was to draw the children first, as he believed that if he concentrated on the children first, the parents would be touched by their influence afterwards.

He began his work among the merchant classes. His scheme was to procure a huge quantity of sweets and biscuits, and have them distributed amongst the children in the streets. These would be taken home to the parents, who in turn would question as to where they got them. Obviously, the answer would stimulate a desire for more, and so they would be eager for the next distribution. The second day these sweets and biscuits were distributed just outside the Hall. The third day they had to enter the Hall before the sweets were given. When inside the Hall, he preached to them. Afterwards the parents would come ; and so great were the crowds, that the Hall had to be enlarged to seat double what it was used to. Meetings

were held separately for the children and adults. Thus the work grew, and Mohammedanism was gaining ground tremendously through the efforts of John Hope. It spread through the provinces, and in no time there were seventeen branch missions around Shanghai.

He realised he had two duties to fulfil; the one was to preach the Mohammedan faith, and the other was to preach against the Christian missionaries—to make it hard and difficult for them. Soon he got used to the Chinese language, and could read and write it.

From there, after having established the work, he was sent to Japan for the very same purpose, and then to Persia, where he made it very difficult for the Christian missionaries. After working in Persia, he was sent to Afghanistan (where Mohammed was born), where he stayed three years. He translated the Koran for them, and had lectures for the Arabs three times a week.

At this time, Dr. Samuel Zwemmer began his work in Cairo. Immediately, Mr. Hope was sent there to counteract the work. One day Mr. Hope was walking down one of the streets in Cairo with a friend of his, who happened to be the Prime Minister, when he happened to pass by the Hall where Dr. Zwemmer was preaching; he turned to his friend and said, "This man is easily won, because his GOD is very far away from him, as he has to shout to make his voice heard!" He was not used to singing and shouting, as there is no singing in the Mohammedan religion—no singing in Arabia or India. They read the Koran at the fasts, but no shouting was allowed. Mr. Hope made it very difficult for Dr. Zwemmer, and it got so bad that protection had to be found for his converts as their lives were in danger. Then, it was Mr. Hope's duty, but now he looks back and is sorry. He made a success of this work wherever he went.

Later on he was sent to India, where he came into contact with an Indian Christian. As he looks back to-day, he can see how the beauty of the LORD was manifested in that man. He lived next door, and many chats had they together when each tried to win the other. Neither would give in; Mr. Hope now believes that all the time

this Christian was praying for him, and GOD heard his prayers.

During this period, a certain man by the name of Coetzee was desirous of knowing something about the Mohammedan religion. He was sent to Mr. Hope, who in a very short time convinced him that it was the true religion. He immediately embraced it, and was on the point of destroying his Bible, as he would have no further use for it, when Mr. Hope stopped him and asked him to let him have it. (He now sees that the HOLY SPIRIT was quietly working in him.) At the time he could not tell why he had taken it; but he took it home and locked it up. He would read it on the quiet, as he was afraid his wife would see him. She was an Arabian, born 35 miles from where Mohammed was born. As he read the Bible, he compared it with the Koran, and found that in the Old Testament many portions agreed. Then he went on to the New Testament; and on reading through the Gospels, became convinced that JESUS CHRIST was truly the SON OF GOD.

The Mohammedan believes in JESUS CHRIST as a prophet, but not as the SON OF GOD, and REDEEMER. Through reading the Gospels, he accepted the truth that JESUS was the SON OF GOD Who came to redeem the world. He said that his one ambition in life was to get to heaven; and now, he found that good works were of no avail. He came to realise that he was a sinner and needed a SAVIOUR. When he came to St. John xiv. 6, his eyes were opened as he saw that JESUS CHRIST was the WAY. He there and then accepted the LORD JESUS as his own personal SAVIOUR.

At once, the thought came to him, what about my wife and family? He was burdened for their salvation too; he wondered however he was going to show the Gospel to them. One day he approached his wife and asked her what she thought of Christian people? She replied that she wanted to hear nothing about them. The reason for this was that she had come into contact with professing Christians, but not the real type. This is a challenge to every one to-day. Those professing Christians were no examples, and so she didn't want to have anything to do

with them. Mr. Hope then suggested that, seeing they had read so many books together, they might read the Bible together; to this she agreed. He prayed that the LORD would explain His own word to her, and that her soul might be saved. When they had been through the four Gospels together, he ventured to ask her opinion on the LORD JESUS CHRIST. She quickly replied, "I love Him, because He first loved me, and laid down His life for me." And so she trusted Him for salvation, and became one of His own dear children.

On Faithfulness, Fellowship and Fervency.

1 Cor. i. 9 ; xv. 58.

"**G**OD is faithful"; there is no change in Him. He has called you "unto the fellowship of His SON JESUS CHRIST our LORD," and "the gifts and calling of GOD are without repentance." The more this faithfulness and this fellowship are pondered, the more we become humbled by a sense of failure and unfaithfulness on our part, and realise indeed that He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. In contrition, and in gratitude, we bow before GOD. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who in matchless love went to the cross for us, now appears in heaven itself for us as our Great High Priest with the fullest knowledge of our needs, the deepest interest in our sorrows, trials and difficulties, and the most perfect sympathy with us in them all. He knows by experience the difficulties of living in a world like this, having Himself trodden this world as the SON of GOD, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, ever shining too as the Light of the world.

He is also our Advocate with the FATHER, being Himself, in His own proper Person, "JESUS CHRIST the RIGHTEOUS." There where we need Him most, at the seat of power, in all the abiding efficacy and value of His once offered and accepted sacrifice, and with a perfect knowledge of our every need, we have Him as our living justification, our

living Advocate, our living LORD and SAVIOUR. When we, alas ! go wrong, He is there to put us right, and to restore again the broken link of communion.

The apostle calls these Corinthians his beloved brethren, for he enters into the meaning of the true grace of GOD. He remembers how the grace of GOD has been "exceeding abundant" towards him ; so even to the erring saints at Corinth, and elsewhere, he writes as "beloved brethren," exhorting them on the basis of GOD's faithfulness and the fellowship to which they are called, to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD.

Of course, CHRIST always has the first charge, so to speak, on our affections, and on our hearts and love, and we may ever truly prove our love to the brethren by our love to the LORD, and by so keeping His commandments as to make it easier for our brethren to go right, and harder for them to go wrong, because of our influence and example. Yet we cannot forget how weak and failing we are at the best. The cry which came from the heart of David when for many years he had known and rejoiced in the faithfulness of GOD—that sob of his soul, as with a sigh of his spirit he prays, "*Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation*"—awakens many an echo in our own hearts. That is a page of the Bible that is wet with the tears of many penitents ; a page of Scripture often read with a broken spirit in the presence of the LORD. The joy of GOD's salvation—so vivid and really known—then forfeited by forgetfulness of privilege and responsibility !

We cannot lose our salvation, thank GOD, because on CHRIST salvation rests secure ; but we may lose the joy of it ; and most of us have sadly to confess that at some time or other in our Christian life we *have* lost the joy of GOD's salvation.

The faithfulness of GOD, the fellowship with CHRIST, and the fervency of spirit resulting therefrom are as a threefold cord, not quickly broken, binding privilege and responsibility fast together.

For this august fellowship so full of privileges of necessity has corresponding responsibilities, the obligations and implications of which cover our whole lives. Sweet and

satisfying to the highest degree, but solemn and searching too in fullest measure is the fellowship of JESUS CHRIST our LORD, the SON of GOD. What holiness, what humility, what meekness, what firmness, what gentleness, what long-suffering, what love above all, is entailed by such a bond ! It will lead to our seeing the church and the world as through His eyes ; for this is but preliminary to the realisation of such fellowship. "GOD is faithful," and He *"has called us unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord . . . therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."*

The interests of CHRIST in the world are in a measure committed to us ; the church is His body through which His gracious purposes of blessing are normally fulfilled in the world. We are called and chosen, may we also be faithful ; fervent in spirit ; diligent in His business ; forasmuch as we know our labour is not in vain in the LORD.

W.G.T.

On Obedience.

OBEDIENCE is the key which unlocks the secrets of true Christian happiness and spiritual progress. But to obey runs clean contrary to human nature, and this is seen to-day to be as true as in the early days of our first parents in Eden.

All who come in true believing faith to the LORD JESUS have their sins forgiven for His Name's sake ; and are called to be obedient to Him Who is not only SAVIOUR but LORD. For this, of course, they must be willing to learn what is His will ; and this can only be from the word of GOD.

In Old Testament days we read of a Samuel rising from his bed three times in one night in obedience to a call as he thought from Eli the old priest at Shiloh. Only a lad, but what an example of prompt obedience : "Here am I, for thou didst call me."

Can it be that we with our far greater privileges are yet much less responsive to the voice of our Heavenly Master ? In Samuel's day "the word of the LORD was precious (rare) there was no open vision." But when GOD spoke to him

that night, and he responded so quickly and obediently, wonderful and lasting results of life-long blessing followed.

In these days "the word of GOD is nigh thee even in thy mouth and in thy heart," Rom. x. 8 ; yet how often we find ourselves making excuses for disobedience. "It is all very well for so-and-so, but I really cannot do it." Why not ? Probably the true answer would be, because looking within myself for strength, I forget to look to Him from Whom cometh my help. It is the LORD JESUS, the Author and Completer of faith in Whom our strength is found.

"I can do all things through CHRIST that strengtheneth me," said the Apostle Paul, and the same is true for the very youngest disciple who really wishes to do the will of the LORD.

GOD has no favourites whom He helps rather than others, but He loves to see us as obedient children seeking to please Him. Satan never ceases trying to put something or other in the way of our obedience to CHRIST. Often it is something to which we are prone, and we are tempted to put ourselves first, and so failure takes place. "*Even Christ pleased not Himself.*"

Then again prompt and wholehearted obedience to the LORD JESUS nearly always means that some reproach will be the lot of the loyal disciple. Sometimes this takes a form very trying indeed, almost, as we say, more than flesh and blood can bear.

But He says : "*My grace is sufficient for thee ; for My strength is made perfect in weakness.*" So the obedient one is assured of the BLESSED LORD's sympathy and support in the way of obedience. If, however, we turn aside to seek the pleasures of sin only for a season, we sacrifice our wholehearted obedience and, at any rate for the time, sadly mar the testimony which we should render to Him by lip and life. If, on the contrary, we cleave to the LORD with purpose of heart, even at the cost of some reproaches and slights from those who do not know Him, it just serves to magnify the love and grace and power that sought us, found us, and keeps us day by day.

What greater satisfaction can be imagined than when life's little day of obedience here is ended, to hear Him

say, "Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy LORD. For He Himself when here as Man, was always the obedient ONE, the good and faithful SERVANT of the FATHER Who had sent Him. Not only in life could He say, "I do always the things that please Him," but as the HOLY SPIRIT through the Apostle reminds us He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."

We wonder at Thy lowly mind,
And fain would like Thee be ;
And all our rest and pleasure find
In learning, Lord, of Thee.

H.A.H.

On the Obvious.

Of Course !

AS we grow up we accept the everyday facts of life without consideration, and when they are mentioned we often treat them casually. I will tell you something about a very ordinary person—myself. I have a head ! "Quite so," you say, "and so have all of us." Well, in my head is a collection of useful things which, if likened to instruments, would comprise a camera, a gramophone-record producer, a talking machine, a smelling apparatus and a tasting apparatus. All these have been in active operation for many years, and not one of them is impaired. There are many cameras for sale and, given the right light, the proper viewpoint, and other essentials, a negative, perfect or otherwise, is produced ; but you must take the camera with you. Compare this with the "camera" that is always with me, which adjusts itself to light or darkness, and is always ready for use. What accompanies my "camera" ? *Life, intelligence and memory.* None of these can be seen, yet no agnostic can deny my statement : he has these accompaniments as surely as he has an immortal soul. I have a truly marvellous array of "negatives," and can take "prints" while I think of them. At the moment

of writing I visualise Temple Bar in Fleet Street with its balloon and other decorations on the eve of Thanksgiving Day, 27th February, 1872 ; also my grandmother's house in Gough Square (now bearing an L.C.C. tablet, "Formerly the residence of Dr. Samuel Johnson"); and the grim portals of Coldbath Fields Prison ; and could sketch each of them. I see people as I go about, and many I can recognise. I can draw many maps from memory.

Now for my "sound-recorders." I hear some musical instrument emit only three or four notes, and without any hesitation draw the necessary "record" from its pigeon-hole in my memory and dub the few notes "God Save the King" or "The Marseillaise" or "The Last Rose of Summer." Let the reader try for himself, and learn to his surprise how many tunes he can identify after listening to a few of the opening notes. I hear a sound—it is the hum of an aeroplane, a man sawing, a bee buzzing, a bird singing ; I rarely draw out the wrong "record." I early read and heard many verses of the Bible : as with the tunes so with these verses, I can complete numerous verses if anyone utters the first three or four words. Try it yourself.

Talking ? Here as with the "camera" and the "sound-recorder," intelligence and memory are allied. To start with I had to learn and understand one word or one phrase at a time, line upon line ; I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, but memory has been continually storing fresh "records," so my knowledge has increased. And, wonderful it is, yet common to so many people, I can express the same thoughts in more than one language.

As to smelling : again memory has full part. Blind-folded I could, without hesitation, tell a rose or an onion, a freshly-baked cake or stinking fish, coffee or ammonia.

Lastly taste. How unerringly I can discriminate foods : fish, flesh, fowl, fruits, vegetables, sweets, tea, cocoa, lemonade.

All these wonders—for they are infinitely beyond anything the skill of man could produce—work harmoniously together, and, when health is good, act without effort or even thought on my part.

A scientist boasted that he could make a much more

perfect optical instrument than the human eye. What a pity he couldn't accommodate it in his own head! But it would be a poor triumph for science, for what is vision unless allied to perception? Gramophones are indeed a proof of extraordinary research and skill, but how can we compare them with human speech?

To conclude the whole matter. May we give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that, my soul knoweth right well.

Should I conclude here? Marvellous as these gifts of GOD are, is that all that He gives to man? No, I must speak of what this GOD "that doest wonders" has done that I might be before Him in acceptability: to enjoy this position now and fully in eternity. I was far from Him by nature and practice; indeed, an enemy of this "good" GOD who had endowed me with the precious gifts mentioned, and redeemed my life from destruction times without number. He gave His only-begotten SON that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. And His SON came not only that I, who was dead, morally, might have life, but that my sins might be forgiven. Both these marvels have been effected for me by His only-begotten SON, and at the cost of His life. Now I have life in Him risen from the dead. Now I can say with mingled feelings of sorrow and adoration that He Himself bare my sins in His own body on the tree. With this life in CHRIST JESUS, GOD has given me His HOLY SPIRIT and, to compare the natural gifts considered in this article I am, through infinite mercy, able to say: I *see* JESUS, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. I *hear* the voice of the Good Shepherd. I *speak* concerning CHRIST and the Church. I have *tasted* that the LORD is gracious. I have been ministered unto by the saints which to me is the odour of a sweet *smell*.

Therefore I go back on my words, I had *not* reached the conclusion! I can say: "Thanks be unto GOD for His unspeakable Gift."

H.L.B.

On Your Work.

“THE low-turf grass is not a stately tree,
 Nor yet a lovely and all-fragrant rose ;
 It yields no nectar to the grateful bee,
 Nor fashion for their transit o’er the sea
 The hearts of oak revered by friends and foes.

“But think of it as lightly as you will,
 Passing it over in your careless tread,
 It has its own peculiar place to fill ;
 And humble as its work appeareth, still
 Nor oak, nor rose, could do that work instead.

“So, fellow-Christian, through life’s transient day
 There is a special work marked out for you ;
 It may be of the lowliest kind, it may
 Be such as shall the loftiest powers display :
 But none beside yourself your work can do.

“Then bend in meekness at your Saviour’s throne,
 And seek to learn the purpose of His grace ;
 Ask Him who has so oft your duty shown,
 To point you out the work that is your own,
 And tell you where to find your proper place.

“What wilt Thou have me do ? With single eye
 To your Redeemer’s glory, work for Him :
 Illumine every moment from on high,
 Strive in each action God to glorify,
 Nor let one thought of self life’s radiance dim.

“Work, work, nor covet an ignoble rest ;
 Allow no sloth thy spirit to beguile.
 Those love the Saviour most who serve Him best ;
 And he who blesses others shall be blessed
 With the full sunshine of his Saviour’s smile.”

ANON.

On Our Most Holy Faith

INCARNATION presented the person of the SAVIOUR ; but it is only in resurrection, after having finished the work given Him to do in His atoning death, that He became head over all things to the church, which is His body. It is no question of reinstating Israel or man ; the rejected person and ministry of the LORD demonstrated all flesh to be too far gone for this ; for even the incarnate SON of GOD was refused and put to death, having laboured in vain, as He Himself says in Isaiah xlix., and as the Gospels abundantly show.

Hence it becomes a question of sovereign grace on GOD's part in CHRIST as the Second Man risen from the dead and gone into heaven. He is thus the life-giving SPIRIT Who, having won the victory over all temptation, and annulled the power of Satan, and endured the righteous judgment of GOD due to the first man, is now in resurrection become the head of a new family. *"And as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly ; and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* Thus, and thus only, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by JESUS CHRIST our LORD, and this founded on the redemption which is in Him.

The more this is weighed, the more will its importance be felt, *and the very grave difference between theology in general and the revealed truth of Christianity.* I do not speak only of the gross ignorance displayed in the idea of a constant sacrifice, the sacrifice of CHRIST continued, in the Eucharist, which obscures as much as is conceivable the truth of GOD both as to the close of the first man in death and as to the setting up of the Second in resurrection, and thus leaves no room (save by the most glaring inconsistency) for the new creation and the HOLY GHOST uniting us to the Head in heaven. No thoughtful mind can wonder that the system which let in this error went farther, and deprived all but the clergy of that cup which bears witness to the shed blood of the REDEEMER, and to the sins of believers washed away thereby. No wonder that it fell into the notion of concomitancy ; and that, to justify its bad practice

in this respect, it took refuge in the equally bad principle that in the consecrated bread or body is the blood of CHRIST. It is thus therefore consistently characterised by its comparatively modern sacrament of *non-redemption*, as another has well said. For without shedding of blood is no remission, and if the blood as a doctrine be still in the body, so that the laity eating only the wafer partake of both flesh and blood, it is clearly enough implied that the blood can *not* be shed. They do not believe that all Christians are priests.

It is remarkable, too, that Puritanism is as deaf to the voice of the revealing SPIRIT on this head as either of its adversaries ; and this in all its forms, Calvinistic at least as much so as Arminian. They both think that the flesh is not so bad that it cannot be acted on for GOD by CHRIST using the law of GOD, and giving it power through the SPIRIT. The Puritan school trust not to rites or ordinances like the Patristic, but they cling with even greater tenacity to the rule of the moral law. It is evident that on one side or the other it is but a renewal of the old question of the Galatian brethren, who, having been beguiled by an infusion of both, are censured by the indignant apostle as fallen from grace and summoned earnestly to stand fast in the liberty wherewith CHRIST made us free, instead of entangling themselves again in a yoke of bondage. To the dead and risen CHRIST we now exclusively belong, in order that we may bring forth fruit unto GOD. Even had we been circumcised the eighth day, and were we of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David, Hebrew of Hebrews, we ought as Christians to recognise with joy that we have been made dead to the law by the body of CHRIST in order to our being for another, Him Who was raised from the dead. The Puritan scheme, no less than the Patristic, is adulterous according to the emphatic figure of the Apostle ; for they wed us to both husbands, the law and CHRIST, instead of owning that we have died to the one, and belong now freely and holily to the other.

Christianity stands in the brightest contrast, and as it treats all who believe as already brought nigh to GOD,

made kings and priests to GOD even now, so it calls all such to eat of the bread and drink of the cup, and thus to show forth the LORD's death till He come. It tells the baptised, not merely that their sins are forgiven ; *but that they are dead to sin*, baptised not to a living Messiah like the disciples in the days of His flesh but to His death, and therefore by it buried with Him to death ; so that we know that our old man has been crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be annulled that we should no longer serve sin. For he that has died is free from sin.

The contrast of this is as complete with Protestants as with Romanists. Not a single creed, article or service in Christendom sets forth the truth which the apostle shows to be signified in the initiatory institution of Christianity ! Not seeing the total ruin of man as such, and still regarding him in a state of probation like the Jew under law (not as lost), they fail to seize and confess the mighty deliverance which grace has wrought in CHRIST and gives to those who believe. They ignore CHRIST's assurance that the believer does not come into judgment, but is passed from death into life ; for they assert their faith that He will come to be their Judge. They do not own that all believers are saints now on earth responsible to walk accordingly, but they pray that GOD may make them to be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting. They beseech Him to save His people and bless His heritage, as if they were Jews waiting for Messiah's advent, instead of Christians already saved by grace and blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in CHRIST. Instead of worshipping our GOD and FATHER in spirit and truth, with the happy consciousness that they are in CHRIST, and that the law of the SPIRIT of life in Him has freed them from the law of sin and death, they cry to GOD rather out of distance and misery, as tied and bound with the chain of their sins. Hence the habitual tone of what is imagined to be Christian worship is really a poor iteration of the Psalms of David, and by some a wholesale accommodation of the entire collection to their use, instead of drawing near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, as those who have boldness to enter into the holy of holies by the blood of JESUS, and

offering continually to GOD the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of the lips confessing JESUS' name.

The consequence of this error is that the proper and distinctive privileges of the Christian and of the church are never enjoyed. A disorganised family is not set right by losing sight of their own relationship; and while conscious in measure of their faults, trying to walk better—not as children, but as servants, with whom they have insensibly confounded themselves. And this confusion I press, not only as a grievous loss to the children of GOD, but yet more as an unbelieving dishonour done to the incomparable grace wherein we stand; above all to Him Whose accomplished redemption is the only key to our blessing, and the righteous ground of reconciliation to GOD. Along with ignorance of our own heavenly relationship in union with our glorified Head goes the denial of the call of Israel to earthly supremacy. This GOD reserves for His ancient people. They failed to make it good of old, because they tried to hold it under condition of their own obedience, and so broke down completely—a failure aggravated incalculably by their rejection of the MESSIAH and of the gospel. But divine mercy has pledged itself to give them repentance and restoration, yea, far more than all they lost, under MESSIAH returning to reign over the earth and under the new covenant. Meanwhile, the Gentile, wise in his own conceit, flatters himself that the branches were broken off that he might be grafted in; he is high-minded, and does not fear, because he sets Matthew xvi. 18, ill-understood, against the plain warning of Romans xi. The Gentile has not continued in GOD's goodness, and yet he presumes that he shall not be cut off, and that the Jew cannot be grafted in again, in the face of the clearest prediction that blindness in part (for it has never been total) is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, when all Israel shall be saved, the Deliverer coming out of Zion and turning away ungodliness from Jacob. Christendom denies these truths, and consequently we see not Romanism only but Protestantism seeking earthly glory and influence; the latter, it is true, willing for it to be the world's slave, and the other ever seeking to be the world's mistress.

W.K.

(To be continued)

The Believer's Weekly Circuit.

"And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all these places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house."
—1 Sam. vii. 15-17.

WE shall do well to consider the divine order underlying Samuel's yearly journey, there being much of particular interest in it for ourselves during our own sojourn in this world. For in order to blessing, both in our own souls, and through us as channels to others, our movements also should always be guided by the divine order found in the word of God.

As "them that are sanctified by God the FATHER, and preserved in JESUS CHRIST, and called" (Jude i.), we are those who are appointed to this holy service, and may learn from the zeal and diligence of Samuel's yearly circuit something as to our weekly circuit as believers.

Before we were called out of nature's darkness into His marvellous light we pursued the course of this world; but now as children of light we are called to walk in this character here below. (Cf. Ephes. v. 8.)

We therefore proceed to make our circuit in the service of God, not once a year as Samuel did; but each week as it opens with its opportunity for worship, fellowship and service should find our hearts and minds engaged in the things of God, and with the interests of our adorable LORD.

So we visit BETHEL, the place of worship, "none other than the house of God" as the patriarch declared it to be in his day. Samuel went first "to BETHEL." What have we here to learn for our guidance to-day? That worship is the first place to which our footsteps should be set as the first day of the week comes round. So that the portion which God would have from our ransomed souls may be presented as with our baskets of first-

fruits we appear before Him in the place where He has set His Name.

The first-fruits are our appreciation of His kindness towards us by CHRIST JESUS; our appreciation and acknowledgments of His great love in the gift of His beloved SON. These we bring to the FATHER Who is seeking such worshippers in the hour that now is. We also come with reverence to worship at the feet of the LORD JESUS, as we remember Him in His death in the way specially appointed by Himself on that same night in which He was betrayed. "*On the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread.*" (Acts xx. 7.) Don't neglect BETHEL as you commence your weekly circuit; but remember the way, the worshippers and the place all sanctified by blood, and we as an holy priesthood called to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by JESUS CHRIST. (1 Peter ii. 5.)

GILGAL, the next place on the list of Samuel's circuit, speaks of where the "reproach of Egypt was rolled away," a place of self-judgment. We having visited this place ourselves through the hearing of the gospel, now desire that others may be drawn there also. So we go to the *Gospel Meeting*, where the good news which reached us is to be proclaimed to others. We think of those "without CHRIST . . . having no hope, and without God in the world."

While we as redeemed people are privileged in being able to give our praise and glory to God, these have nothing to offer to Him. But though the world gave the SON of GOD a cross of shame and death, God's love is such that He has something to give every ungodly sinner who believes on JESUS. The gospel news goes out so that men may hear and believe and be saved. And at GILGAL, the gospel meeting, we as faithful servants, tell out the glad tidings of the grace of our God to sinful man.

Of course we may not all be preachers, but of course we should all show our fellowship in the gospel work

so that by our attendance and our prayers the preacher may be strengthened and encouraged in his holy task. Do not under any circumstances go to criticise the preacher or the message. It really is far easier to sit quietly and listen than to stand and speak; and your brethren need all the strengthening of their hands in God that you can give. This is really important to remember. Self-judgment, and the acceptance of God's truth as to our condition by nature results from the gospel when faithfully proclaimed. It makes nothing of the sinner, but everything of the SAVIOUR; and souls are saved by hearing and heeding this message. What has separated them from a HOLY GOD is removed, rolled away; and they are brought nigh by the blood of CHRIST.

MIZPEH is seen to be a place of confession of dependence, prayer and supplication in our chapter. Spiritual poverty always follows abstention from this place; and the Prayer Meeting well becomes the next place in our weekly circuit as believers, and one that must not be passed by.

We notice Samuel did not return home from GILGAL, but proceeded year by year to MIZPEH. Have we no interests in Mizpeh?

There is a spot where souls unite,
And saint meets saint in heavenly light;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet,
Before the common mercy seat.

Ah! whither could we flee for aid,
When tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,
Had suffering saints no mercy seat?

Therefore, like Samuel, let us go the full journey to MIZPEH, and in that place of confession, dependence, prayer and supplication find fresh cause for praise to God for answered petitions.

Samuel now completes the circuit by returning to his house at RAMAH—"high place." This too may be our sweet and happy portion. "If ye then be risen with CHRIST, seek those things which are above where CHRIST sitteth at the right hand of GOD. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Col. iii. 1, 2.)

Until our weekly circuits end, and our sojourn here is past, and we enter into rest in that high place above, we shall be well occupied if seeking daily grace we go forth week by week serving the LORD in the ways indicated in this paper, with gladness and singleness of heart.

From various cares our hearts retire,
Though deep and boundless their desire,
We've now to serve but One;
Him before Whom each knee shall bow,
With Him is all our business now
And those that are His own.

B.H.W.W.

On Moths and Human Moths.

FOOLISH moth! Rushing on to danger and death; scorched, maimed, panting, and yet immediately on recovery returning to defy death again. The glare and brilliance of the white light proves irresistible. The glittering brightness with all its attractiveness proves itself to be, alas! only the bitterness of death to the foolish moth.

Yet are *we* really any wiser? Foolish moth, indeed, but how like ourselves. The glitter and glare of worldly things attract us sometimes with an overwhelming attraction. On we rush, like the foolish moth, regardless of all at the moment save the dazzling brilliancy of the world and its pleasures. We seem at such times insensible to the fact that "*She [or he] who liveth in pleasure, is dead while she [he] liveth.*" Foolish moth!

Blinded by the glare, maimed spiritually, we raise our

scattered forces in another attempt to find solace and healing in what has not only failed us before, but already maimed our lives. Foolish moths!

The glitter, the gold, the music, the song and all the worldly whirligig of time, make their constant appeal to the natural heart, in men and women.

It needs a stronger hand than our own to keep us back from the dangers and seductive fascination of all that is in the world. We need someone to capture us and thus protect us from ourselves. We need CHRIST. The warmth of His love never scorches, and when under the shadow of His wings we are content to rest. The glamour of the world is gone for one who knows the SAVIOUR. He satisfies the longing soul; for has He not said: "*Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest*"? His is the perfect rest, which is enjoyed by all who come to Him and trust Him. He affords protection from our own mad and hurtful desires. "*Trust in Him at all times; He is a refuge for us.*"

May your language and mine truly be, "I will trust and not be afraid."

Whoever you may be, whatever you may be, wherever you may be, put your whole trust in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Otherwise you may soon be where you never expected to be, like the foolish moth which set my mind running along this line of thought. Alas! alas! poor foolish human moth!

But once again, be who you are, what you are, or where you are, you may be quite sure that the LORD JESUS CHRIST can save you from yourself, your sins, and the world. "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners."

And every reader of these lines is either a sinner *needing* a SAVIOUR or a sinner *saved* through trusting the finished work of the SAVIOUR. Which?

J.A.C.

The Epistle of Fellowship.

(PHILIPPIANS.)

THE whole of this short Epistle, written in captivity, is a precious treasure for our Christian walk.

In the first chapter CHRIST is presented to us as our *all*. "To me to live is CHRIST," says the apostle. He means by that: for me, life consists of CHRIST.

In the second chapter we find CHRIST described as our *example*. There are men like ourselves who are held up to us as an example: Timothy, Epaphroditus, and involuntarily the apostle draws attention to himself as a man of true Christian character and consecrated Christian walk; he refers to himself in this Epistle not as apostle, but a bond slave of JESUS CHRIST, a Christian among Christians. But he had, as we have, our perfect example in CHRIST. CHRIST learned obedience by the things which he suffered and thereto are we called.

In the third chapter, our eyes are directed to the future: CHRIST is the *goal*, the glorious final goal, and we reach forward to Him.

Finally, the fourth chapter speaks of CHRIST as the *power for our life*; and the apostle calls from the midst of abundance and of suffering need, "*I can do all through Christ which strengtheneth me.*"

Now it occurred to me that not only are we directed in a special way in these four chapters to CHRIST, and see Him thus in His excellency from different aspects; but these four chapters speak to us also of fellowship, and in each of them fellowship is looked at from a different point of view. In the first chapter he remarks with gratitude that the Philippians had *fellowship in the gospel* from the first day of the gospel work. In the second chapter, it is pointed out that the *fellowship of the Spirit* is the portion of all believers, who are in possession of it by the grace of God. In the third chapter we are told how great was the desire of the apostle to know more of his Lord and Saviour, and that in such a way that he might know *the fellowship*

of *His sufferings*, just as He went into death, and so doing to attain unto the resurrection from the dead. And in the fourth chapter the apostle praises the Philippians because *they communicated (had fellowship) with his afflictions*, sharing in his sufferings and trials. In view of this, may I not truly call this epistle the "*Epistle of fellowship*"?

Fellowship (or communion) means to be in close relation with one another; to have something in common; to join together for a common object. We can thus speak of the fellowship of saints, of having things in common, of exercising fellowship. Even in the world the word fellowship is not unknown. It is a condition, and living in this condition is an act. We also read that we are brought into fellowship with the FATHER and the SON, called to the fellowship of JESUS CHRIST. We express at the LORD'S Table that we have communion in the blood of CHRIST. We have also one common faith, as Paul pointed out to Philemon, in order that this communion should be active in the knowledge of all the good that is in us towards CHRIST JESUS.

The first Christians not only continued in the teaching of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and prayers, but also in *the apostles' fellowship*. By accepting that which the apostles had preached, they had come together in fellowship. The HOLY GHOST gathers all believers into one body, and then gathers them around the blessed Person of the LORD. Fellowship comes out in a special way at the breaking of bread, because the bread visibly represents the one body, formed of many members. But also in united prayer, expression is given to this fellowship, because all are filled with one object, one desire, because all by virtue of their oneness in CHRIST, sympathise in affliction and in prosperity, weep with one another, and rejoice with one another.

What a wonderful change has been wrought in us! Formerly we had fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; fellowship with the evil works of man; but now we are in fellowship with God; we have no more

fellowship with unbelievers, for "what fellowship has light with darkness?" But—are we in fellowship and do we exercise fellowship with all who are formed by the SPIRIT of GOD into one body? Of every state and rank, people and nation, we are now bound with the Christian bond of fellowship. We express this by the right hand of fellowship; by sympathy and love; by showing our unity at the LORD'S SUPPER, by worship and prayer together. Happy are we if, like the early Christians, we continue in fellowship; if by having fellowship with the FATHER and the SON, we walk in the light, as *He* is in the light and then have fellowship one with another!

Let us now consider the four times that we find the word fellowship in this Epistle to the Philippians.

Fellowship in the Gospel! Not only had the Philippians accepted the Gospel; but they were walking in accordance with it and had a heart for it. Therefore Paul could always pray for them with joy. The believers at Philippi were poor and in much affliction and difficulty; but this did not prevent them from setting apart some of what they had for the apostle. In the midst of deep poverty and difficulties they showed their attachment to the apostle and were partakers with him in the service of the Gospel (2 Cor. viii. 1 and Phil. i. 28-30). There may have been a few in Philippi, who were otherwise minded; in the fourth chapter two sisters are exhorted not to quarrel; but in the spirit of affection he praises the whole community for their love. He says of *all* the saints in CHRIST JESUS at Philippi, that he makes request for them *all* with joy; that he thinks well of them *all*; that they *all* are partakers with him in his bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the Gospel; that he longed after them *all* with the heart of CHRIST. So we find the word "all" here five times in connection with *fellowship in the Gospel*. Is there not a service in which all can take part in fellowship, the service of love? And does not this love go out also to those who do not know JESUS? How should

not all who are one in CHRIST JESUS, endeavour to make the good news of salvation more widely known! Not every one can go out and do this himself, but the more our oneness is recognised, the more will fellowship in the work be manifested. Then we shall not leave the labourers alone, but support them by prayer and gifts. No care or poverty need keep us from this; in all circumstances we can be partakers in the Gospel; have fellowship in it by bringing it before God, and by one means or another, comfort and support those who give themselves to the Gospel. How much more blessing will there be if prayer is made with joy for fellowship in the Gospel!

Fellowship of the Spirit! The Philippians had through God's grace comfort in CHRIST, comfort of love, and fellowship of the SPIRIT! But they also had shown this one to the other. By their affection to one another, they had given a striking proof that they had *one* LORD; that the love of God was their portion; and also the fellowship of the HOLY GHOST. Also, during his absence seeds of dissension and party spirit had been sown, so that the joy of the apostle, which had been great, could not be perfect. He points out that the HOLY SPIRIT will have all believers to be of one mind. It is not sufficient that they should be baptized into one body, and that the same bond of fellowship should exist between them all; no—they must really be of one mind in practice. It is not merely a question of the principle, but of being adorned as believers in practical life with something of the virtues of which the apostle speaks; consolation in CHRIST, comfort of God's love, fellowship in the SPIRIT. The whole TRINITY: CHRIST, God and the HOLY SPIRIT active for good in the hearts of the believers. Therefore, Paul wishes the Corinthians in his incomparably beautiful blessing at the close of his second Epistle, not only the grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST and the love of God, but also *the fellowship* of the HOLY GHOST.

Fellowship in the sufferings of Christ! Paul will not

only win CHRIST and be found in Him; he will learn to know Him fully. Seeing CHRIST in His life on earth had made such an impression on him that he wished to walk the path that CHRIST walked, that he might know Him in all things. By having fellowship in the sufferings of CHRIST, in order to be conformed to His death, he would know the power of the LORD's resurrection. He knew Him as the Risen One, but he would attain to the resurrection from among the dead, in order to know Him in this path. How glorious, when CHRIST is so precious to us that we wish to become conformable to Him in all things!

Fellowship in affliction! The Philippians had never forgotten the apostle; they had followed him in all things and felt it needful to give him, whom they loved and who devoted himself to the things of the LORD, a proof of their Christian love; to serve with material gifts him who had served them with spiritual gifts. How this rejoiced the heart of the apostle! Not that he desired their gifts; no, he sought the fruit of their love to God, fruit which should abound to their account. *We ought in our day to have more fellowship with the Lord's labourers in their affliction, in their work, in their daily needs.* It is to God an odour of a sweet smell, an acceptable sacrifice, when believers take the LORD's work to heart and have fellowship in it and rejoice in it. "Ye have well done," says the apostle, "that ye did communicate with my affliction." We may share in the joy when the word is preached and sinners converted, but we are also called to share in all the sorrow and difficulty connected therewith. And it is true in general that we believers should suffer with one another. The Hebrews were told that they had fellowship with those who endured a great fight of afflictions; they were encouraged to remember them which are in bonds as bound with them. Paul speaks of this to the Corinthians that as they were partakers of the sufferings, so should they also be of the consolation.

The life of fellowship of the children of God is such

a glorious life! But because we realise it so little ourselves, it is manifested so little and we enjoy it so little. It is therefore a good thing to remind one another of the Epistle of fellowship, and to ask God that He will, through our reading it and meditating on it, not only direct us into a devoted Christian walk, but into happy fellowship with the LORD's workers and with one another in hearty brotherly fellowship. J.N.V.

On Our Most Holy Faith—2

(Continued from last month)

BUT the church, rejoicing in her own place as the heavenly bride of CHRIST, was so much the more bound to confess the earthly place of power and dignity in store for converted Israel in the future, instead of coveting it now for herself, and straining after it by force or fraud. If we have CHRIST's mind in intelligence, we ought to have His mind in moral purpose, Who, though divine, emptied Himself, taking a bondman's form, being born in the likeness of men, and when found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, becoming obedient as far as death, yea, death on the cross. We are all CHRIST's epistle, written not with ink, but with the SPIRIT of the living GOD; how are we manifesting CHRIST? Those who fail to hold fast and rightly apply these truths are, in my judgment, incapable of soundly expounding the Old Testament, and the Prophets in particular, whatever may be their merits in other respects, which I trust I should not be slow cordially to own and profit by. They are necessarily wrong more or less as to the government of the world no less than as to the church, and even as to salvation. They confound law and grace, heaven and earth, present and future, because they confound Israel with the church which is now called out for spiritual blessing in the heavenlies.

The interpretation of the entire Bible is deeply affected by this difference; and so is our spiritual communion and

our daily walk and worship. The SAVIOUR remains unchangeable in person (blessed be GOD !); for He is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever; but it would be hard to say what else does not suffer by the common traditional ignoring of revealed truth. And even the SAVIOUR is far more obscurely seen and less enjoyed as the rule.

There never was a more foolish idea, perhaps, entertained by some of us, that whoever might go wrong this could not happen amongst those called Brethren. Oh! foolish brethren! to flatter themselves in such a way as that. Why you, we, for I take my place along with you in it altogether—we are the persons most liable to have the highest flown expressions and pretension to the greatest piety, while there may be an enormously evil thing going on. How are we to judge of such things? By the word of God. And you will always find that those that are carrying on in that way slip from the word. They do not want the word. They want something new, something that will go on with the times, something that will make the brethren more popular, something that will get bigger congregations, and all these things that are flattering to human vanity; and the consequence is they are naturally afraid of the word. No wonder. No one ever quarrelled with the word of God, if the word of God did not condemn them.

W.K.

Some Divine Principles.

THE solemn consideration of the following principles is commended to the Christian reader; the present condition of the so-called Christian world being what it is.

2 Timothy ii. 22, is well worthy of closest attention, with its exhortation to *follow*, Righteousness, Faith, Love, Peace, *with those that call upon the LORD out of a pure heart*. We should carefully note the order in which these four are placed; and looking back to verse 19 of the same chapter consider what makes possible

the following with those who call upon the LORD out of a pure heart. "Let every one that nameth the Name of CHRIST (the LORD, R.V.) *depart* from iniquity."

From this we learn that we must "cease to do evil," and "learn to do well."

A devoted and learned elder brother once remarked to the writer, "Don't seek to persuade others to come amongst us; they must first know what it is to go within the Veil, before they can ever know what it means to go outside the Camp."

2 John 10, 11. As to a teacher or holder of evil doctrine, the "elect lady, and her children" were exhorted by "the elder" (John) "receive him not into thy house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is *partaker* of his evil deeds." In this connection we may read Haggai ii. 11-13. "Ask now the priests . . . if one that is unclean by a dead body *touch* any of these (bread, meat, etc.,) shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, *It shall be unclean.*"

Also the Apostle writing to the church of God at Corinth, and to the churches of Galatia says:—"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (1 Cor. v. 6; Gal. v. 9.) Not *will* leaven, but leaveneth, that is, imparts the character of leaven to the whole lump. Dare I, therefore, unite the LORD's Name, which is holy, with what is thus characterised by leaven?

The same apostle is used by God to inform us that "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. xv. 4; 1 Cor. x. 11.)

In Number xix. 15 we find written, "*And every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it is unclean.*" This chapter contains the beautiful truth to be learnt from the type of the Red Heifer. It is ours, we gather, as individuals, and as assemblies of individuals, to see to it that the lid of the vessel is *kept bound upon it*. As individuals by prayer and watchfulness;

and by assemblies of believers by heeding 2 John 10, 11; Acts xx. 32, with prayer and watchfulness also.

The Epistles to the Corinthians were of all the Epistles those which mainly dealt with Assembly administration. In the first Epistle the Assembly is viewed in two aspects, the Temple of GOD and the Body of CHRIST.

"Ye are the temple of GOD, and the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you. If any man defile the temple of GOD, him shall GOD destroy; for the temple of GOD is holy, which ye are." (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.)

This accounts for 1 Cor. v., "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (*note the list of wicked persons given in the same chapter, verse 11*). (Cf. Joshua vii. 11.)

The body of CHRIST is the subject which follows, (1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 12, 13); "By one SPIRIT are we all baptized into ONE BODY." This accounts for 1 Cor. xiii., the love chapter; and from both the foregoing we therefore learn that *holiness* must characterise GOD's Assembly as His temple, and that *love* must characterise GOD's Assembly as the body of CHRIST.

The following Scriptures should be pondered as they set aside all idea of *independency of churches* in the Israel of GOD.

"I pray . . . that they *all may be one*." (S. John xvii. 20, 21.) "The multitude of them that believed were of *one heart and of one soul*." (Acts iv. 32.) "Paul . . . and *all the brethren which are with me* unto the churches of Galatia." (Gal. i. 2.) "*He that hath an ear* let him hear what the SPIRIT saith *unto the churches*." (Rev. ii. 29.) "To *all that in every place* call upon the Name of JESUS CHRIST our LORD, both theirs and ours." (1 Cor. i. 2.) "The eye cannot say unto the hand, *I have no need of thee*." (1 Cor. xii. 21.)

As "things written for our admonition" (1 Cor. x. 11), all idea of *independency* among the tribes of Israel of old is set aside by Joshua vii. 25; Judges xx. 2, 8, 26, 33.

As to the seven churches in Asia, the ONE SPIRIT'S

voice had to be heeded by all, the responsibility being not only to hear what was said by the SPIRIT to His church locally, but "unto the churches." Our failure to carry out God's principles does not make the principles wrong, nor diminish our responsibility. N.L.N.

From Death to Life.

(A metrical meditation on John xi.)

COME with a truly softened tread;
Weep with a helpless partner's grief;
One loved and honoured here lies dead:
Death is man's misery in chief!

Who can deliver man from death?
Man is a sinner; death—God's rod,
Must him, convicted, reft of breath,
Lead to the judgment seat of God.

Who then can answer for poor man,
Dead through God's penalty for sin?
Christ is the only One Who can
Leave death behind and new life win.

Death is the end of nature's life
To sinful man beneath the sun:
Death, having finished all its strife,
Dies in Christ's risen life begun.

Christ wept with weeping man and groaned:
Death's weight in sympathy He felt;
He died, and in His death atoned
For all whose hearts death's sorrows melt.

The glory of our God lies here:
Christ's death has death robbed of its sting:
Death's victory we need not fear,
Hail Life in God's triumphant King!

G.S.P.

An Address

By C. A. HAMMOND

(S: Matthew xiv. 12 ; 1 Peter v. 7)

A TIME of trouble is no uncommon thing amongst the people of God. As we read the word of God we often find His people being harassed, troubled and worried. God says of them, "Of whom the world was not worthy"; but the world says "These people are not worthy to live among us, they are kill-joys," and so they are persecuted.

Something similar had befallen John the Baptist, the forerunner of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, because he had testified of righteousness before a pleasure-loving king. He had to lose his life. Herod, who would at first have been quite content merely to imprison John, went from bad to worse, until he granted the fatal request for the head of God's servant. His conduct on this occasion shows the downward trend of evil, and furnishes an awful example of its terrible power and bondage.

In this time of great trouble, the disciples of John were left in overwhelming sorrow of heart by the death of their master. What could they do? *We* are tempted sometimes to leave things and say "The LORD will undertake." But the LORD will never do for us what we ought to be doing for ourselves. We should do our present duty as these disciples did. Duty is not a very nice word; but there is always that which we know we *should* do; and if we are faithful to the LORD we do it. John's disciples here did all they could. They took the body and buried it; "and they went and told JESUS." We also need the solace that comes from these words.

The unexpected happens, and fills us with dismay; and even if we have conscientiously, as before the Lord, done all we could, yet there remains the aching void and the anxiety. Let us do as they did, go and tell JESUS. This brings the Person of CHRIST before our hearts, and we all know something at least of what a

precious SAVIOUR He is. When we are in sorrow, what comforts us like going and telling someone about it? We tell our fellowmen perhaps and sometimes we find they have very little sympathy; or others, nearer, who though listening with rapt attention, say, "I am very sorry for you, but I am afraid I cannot help you." There are some who can listen, and can also help us. The LORD JESUS is the One Who not only gives all the sympathy of His loving heart, but *can* fully help us.

To Him we can go and make known all that is burdening our hearts, and often more by way of restful communion rather than actual prayer and petition. So here in the narrative it is simply "They went and told JESUS."

I know the stated order of prayer in John is *to* the FATHER, *in* the Name of the SON and *through* the HOLY SPIRIT. Here it is rather the coming simply to One Who knows all about us and will patiently listen to us. Being full of sympathy, He will comfort us, and undertake for us in all our need. Whatever it may be we can always tell it all to the LORD JESUS, with the certainty of an understanding sympathy on His part.

The HOLY SPIRIT just leaves John's disciples with the LORD in the record given. Where could you leave anyone better than with Him? What is our consolation concerning dear ones who are absent from us? We can go and tell JESUS, and leave them there. If we do that we are assured of the comfort, blessing and help that we need.

First, in our knowledge of Him is the foundation fact of coming to Him and confessing our sins, that we may receive His forgiveness. Then as we go on, we feel how little we love Him in return for His great love to us. So we tell Him that; and even as we tell Him, we are drawn out to love Him more; for as we speak to Him, His love begins again to flood our hearts. Then, there are others, those whom we would fain see coming in repentance to Him; and again we feel how helpless we

are to do anything in the matter of their salvation. We are just as helpless as the disciples of John were. Still *they* had done all they could; *have we*? Is this where the explanation of our failure comes in? Have we been expecting the LORD to work in a miraculous way when maybe He is waiting to work by us?

When we are enjoying communion with our LORD, we tell Him we long to be with Him. When we are gathered for the remembrance of Him at His table, partaking of the bread and wine as He desired, our hearts often enter deeper into His love, that love which nothing could stay but which would go down, even to the death of the cross for us. We find a yearning in our hearts to see Him, and this also we tell Him. It is the counterpart of His prayer to His FATHER, "*I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am.*" When we say "LORD JESUS, we long to see Thee," it is the answer of our hearts to His desire to have us with Himself in the glory.

The apostle Paul desired to depart and be with CHRIST; but yet for the sake of others was content to remain here; and so we are content. If He wills to leave us here for many years, we will stay; but if He calls us away, we will rejoice to be with him. A blessed hope indeed we have of hearing that voice and being caught up together to meet our LORD in the air.

Then we like to speak to the LORD of His own promise "*Surely, I come quickly.*" It is not for us to say to Him, "*Come quickly.*" Who are we that we should hasten the LORD? It may be He has much work for us to do; and many souls to call out before He comes again; but as He says "I come quickly," our hearts respond, "Even so, come LORD JESUS."

Many dear saints desire the LORD to come, so that they may escape the troubles and trials they so often experience here; but our desire should be to see the LORD.

If we desire to enjoy communion with Him we must

carefully avoid anything that would tend to mar this. The disciples of John simply came to JESUS and told Him, for there was no hindrance to their access to the SAVIOUR. One may say, "*We can always go to Him; He is always ready to hear.*" That is true; but there may be something hindering our communion with Him, and then, alas, the last thing we desire is to go into His presence. The One Whom we ought to consult first is then the last we seem able to go to in our difficulty. Why? What hinders a child coming to its parent in time of difficulty? Something that has come in; the child has disobeyed; there is no communion, and the very one they should approach, they do not come to. Have we not all experienced this? It may not be a great thing. It may be something unknown to others, the "little fox," the little action, the little thought, the little spoke of pride or envy, which breaks the communion. Let us live in the power of unbroken communion, so that we can always go straight to the MASTER, for from Him alone comes our help.

Turning to 1 Peter v. 7, we find Peter writing to those who were suffering for the name of the LORD JESUS. He tells them of the coming of the CHIEF SHEPHERD, and of the crown of glory, and of being in subjection one to another. It is a great help in communion with CHRIST to be subject one to another; to keep down that will of ours which is oftentimes so assertive; and to be humble before God. Then we find another gem of scripture before us "*Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.*"

There is an incentive in these words to communion with the LORD. It is as if the apostle were saying "When you seek to carry out all these exhortations, you will find the cares come upon you." It is not easy to carry out the will of the LORD. When you speak to some people about the work of the LORD, they say, "Oh, well, we are very happy as we are," as if we are to seek only our own happiness in it. If you are caring for the work of the LORD, you will have care, something to try you;

and what are you going to do with your care? "*Casting all your care upon Him.*" How it encourages us to come and tell JESUS! How it encourages us to get rid of that which is weighing us down. When we are cast down and have lost our joy we are no good to ourselves nor to anyone else.

The apostle closes with worship and glory to God and to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And that is where communion will lead us, to worship. Keep short accounts with God, be continually in communion with Him, and then there will be found in our hearts that worship which the FATHER seeks.

We need these practical truths; the practical application to our souls daily of what we find in the word of God. It is this which counts, otherwise we may know much of the word of God and yet lack communion with our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Fragments.

"Let us work now; we shall rest by-and-by."—John Wesley, September, 1789, when 85 years of age.

"Though wearied, and now almost worn out, I am not weary of my blessed MASTER's service."—George Whitefield, 1763.

"One hour of communion with God is worth more than the longest life of the highest of the world's delights."—Archbishop Leighton, 1669.

"My motives and actions must submit to this double test—*obedience*, regulating what I may call *love*; and *love* tempering and sweetening what I may call *obedience*."—T.D.

On An Important Subject.

How May I KNOW That I Have Passed from Death unto Life?

TO plain, definite, straightforward questions like this, the Bible gives clear, direct, positive and unmistakable answers. There is nothing vague, misty, uncertain, obscure, hesitating or ambiguous in the whole Scripture of truth with regard to the way of salvation, the assurance of salvation, and the infallible token by which its possession is certified. So to the question: "*How may I know that I have passed from death unto life?*" there is an answer completely satisfying to the genuine inquirer. "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren,*" says the Apostle John in his inspired letter to the children of GOD. Indeed, it is only in this Apostle's writings that the phrase "*passed from death unto life*" occurs, and there but twice. But its importance is immense. To pass from death unto life, and to *know* that one has so passed from death unto life, is an experience indeed; one to be coveted by every reasonable person on earth. In the 5th chapter of John's gospel and verse 24, the LORD JESUS CHRIST says: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*" In the 1st Epistle of John, the third chapter and verse 14, the Apostle, speaking for himself and all fellow believers, says: "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*" But the reason given for knowing this does not seem to be at all like the explanation of the process by which it is brought about. Yet they are really cause and effect; for if we do not love the brethren—*all of them*—we have no confirmation that we have passed from death unto life. Our spirit is wrong, totally unlike His Who laid down His life for them; and this is very searching for our hearts. As a professed believer in GOD Who sent CHRIST to be the SAVIOUR, I must confirm my profession by my care for, love of, the children of GOD, because they *are* His children. This at any rate is the test the SPIRIT of GOD applies by the Apostle John through the Scripture.

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Salvation is not by sacrament, nor by sentiment, neither is it of works, but by grace through faith ; yet this faith is so revolutionary in its action that it arrests the attention of onlookers by the amazing spectacle of a genuine brotherly love produced between persons who hitherto had no care for, nor interest in one another. This arises from being born again into the family of those who are all the children of GOD through faith in CHRIST JESUS.

Now this faith comes by hearing, by listening to and receiving the word of GOD. A listening ear, an open heart and a responsive will. The LORD JESUS CHRIST said : *"He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."*

This word that both creates life and completely changes ways of living, is that which leads the hearer to believe in GOD Who sent His SON to be the Saviour. Take, for instance, the wonderful 16th verse in the 3rd chapter of John : *"GOD so loved the world that He gave His only begotten SON, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"*—what does this do when it is really believed but lead the believing one to heartily and humbly accept the goodness of GOD in so lovingly providing a way whereby he may not perish but have life eternal ? We are not told to try to puzzle out how the SPIRIT creates faith through the word ; but rather to believe on the only begotten SON OF GOD, the love gift for a world of perishing sinners.

We look to Him ; we believe on Him ; we trust Him ; we love Him ; and to our great surprise find others who also love Him and believe on Him, and our hearts go out to these newly-discovered spiritual relatives—our brothers and sisters in CHRIST. *"By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."* Faith in CHRIST as the only SAVIOUR, and love to one another, is what creates and confirms the fact of one having *"passed from death unto life."*

Let me face right up to two important questions so that I may *know* that *I* have passed from death unto life.

First, Do I believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the straightforward sense of absolutely resting for salvation upon His finished work on the Cross? Then, Do I love all those who do thus believe on Him?

The words of the LORD and of His Apostle are clear, so there need be no manner of doubt in our minds. But, no amount of orthodoxy of creed, correctness of ecclesiastical position, spiritual rapture and religious excitement make us CHRIST'S unless we have His spirit and manifest it. A changed heart is certified by a changed life, and in no other way. "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*" (1 Jno. iv. 14.)

"See how these Christians love one another," exclaimed the Pagans as they looked through the windows of the Early Church, and beheld with amazement this new company of people bound by invisible yet inseparable bonds. "See how these Christians love one another" is still said by outsiders, but alas! in irony, and with cynical voices.

But whatever the corporate failure, the individual responsibility remains, "And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth GOD love his brother also." (1 Jno. iv. 21.)

W.G.T.

On Lowliness of Mind.

IN *lowliness of mind*, let each esteem other better than themselves. (Phil. ii. 3.) The same expression is rendered as *humility of mind* in Acts xx. 19, and *humbleness of mind* in Col. iii. 2.

In many of our gatherings there are dear saints who are greatly exercised as to their fellowship, on account of divergences of views, and the difficulties may be indeed very real, but if in our intercourse with one another we showed a little more of the SPIRIT of CHRIST, in forbearance and yieldingness, grievances might surely be removed.

What we need is to be kept close to CHRIST and very small in ourselves.

The PERFECT SERVANT was the truly lowly One, Who could say : Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am *meek* and *lowly in heart* : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Matt. xi. 29.)

Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another (Rom. xiv. 19.)

The fruit of the SPIRIT is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, *meekness*, temperance. . . (Gal. v. 21.)

The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. (Jas. iii. 17-18.)

In John xiii. we have the washing of the feet. How lovingly and perfectly our blessed LORD did this. Feet-washing is a delicate business. It has to be done in grace and truth, in the SPIRIT of CHRIST. It is unpleasant to the flesh to have our faults pointed out, and we should not resent criticism but accept it as from the LORD. On the other hand, let us take care, as one has said, not to wash our brother's or sister's feet in freezing water, or in water boiling hot with temper. Let us esteem others better than ourselves, recognise the work of GOD in them and love them in CHRIST. Instead of being so often prone to assert ourselves, let us remember that He made Himself nothing and that it is in the consciousness of our nothingness, as J.N.D. puts it, that we find ourselves with Him, and at the same time are filled with His fulness.

In John xiv. we get communion of heart. If a man love Me, he will keep My words (verse 24). And in chapter xv. fruit-bearing to GOD. The condition is abiding in Him. To bear fruit the branches have to be close to the stem, and are not allowed to bear many leaves ; they are always cut back and kept short, and prevented from running to wood.

What we need is the lowly SPIRIT of CHRIST, true humility, brotherly love, always having before us the blessed Person of Our LORD, and walking in view of the judgment seat of CHRIST, where everything will be revealed and judged in the light of His holy presence. L.F.

On Friendship.

(FOR OUR YOUNGER READERS.)

IN the first book of Samuel we read the story of two boys who were very great friends. They came from quite different homes. One was a shepherd lad, the youngest of a large family, who had seven brothers older than himself, and he was called David. The other boy was the King's only son, and his name was Jonathan.

One day a servant brought David before the King, because he had done a wonderful thing—he had killed an enemy giant of whom everyone else in the land was afraid.

Jonathan was listening as David told the King his story, and it says in the Bible : “And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul, and Saul (the King) took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.”

Jonathan loved David so much that he took off his own royal robe and put it on him, and gave him his sword, his bow and his girdle as well. The King set David over his soldiers, and he became a very famous general.

The Bible says that David “behaved himself wisely” ; but after a time Saul began to be jealous of him, because all the people loved him and praised him more than they did the King.

One day as David was playing the harp before him, Saul threw a dagger at him and tried to kill him. But David

trusted in GOD, and the LORD was with him, so that he was able to avoid the dagger, and was not hurt at all.

Then Saul planned that David should be killed in battle, but again God protected him, and he was unharmed.

This only made the King more and more angry and he became David's enemy continually. He told Jonathan and all his servants that they must kill David ; but Jonathan and David were still the greatest of friends, and Jonathan was determined to do all he could to help David. So he told David to hide, and that he would go and speak for him to the King, his father. Saul listened to Jonathan and for a time things went better for David, but soon an evil spirit came on Saul again, and once more he tried to kill poor David, who had to flee for his life.

Jonathan sought out his friend, and promised to let him know if the King were still angry with him.

When Jonathan tried to speak a good word for David, Saul went into a rage and threw a dagger at him too.

So Jonathan had to warn David to flee away, and they kissed and cried and bade each other good-bye.

. . . Many years after, when times had changed, Jonathan had been killed in battle, and David had become King, he was able to show kindness to Jonathan's son in memory of the wonderful friendship that had existed between Jonathan and himself.

This story is just a picture of the friendship which the LORD JESUS offers to every one of us. Jonathan only risked his life for his friend, the LORD JESUS *gave* His life for us. "He died that we might be forgiven." He bore the punishment for our sins on the cross, at Calvary, and now He wants to be our SAVIOUR and our FRIEND.

He is spoken of in Proverbs as "a Friend Who sticketh closer than a brother." He is the one Friend Who will never fail us, never disappoint us. The only Friend Who is always ready to listen to whatever we have to say to Him ; always ready to help us whenever we need Him ; and Who always wants to have us with Him. Is He yours ?

M.G.H.

On Faith's Anchorage.

"HATH HE SAID, AND SHALL HE NOT DO IT?"

HOW gracious of GOD to have been pleased from the first to make known His purposes to man! He has unfolded them in the Scriptures, written by holy men as they were moved by the HOLY SPIRIT; and in them He would have us discern the golden thread running right through—CHRIST. They show too that God's purposes are not to be thwarted by Satan or man. By this word we have been brought out of the distance and darkness, in which our self-will had landed us, into His marvellous light; and we have proved the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, "*He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*" The LORD encouraged those that had continued with Him in His temptations with the wonderful promise of the indwelling of "the Comforter, the HOLY SPIRIT . . . the SPIRIT of truth," Who would teach them all things. Through infinite mercy we with "all that in every place call upon the Name of JESUS CHRIST our LORD," have been made partakers of this heavenly gift.

Some instances of GOD carrying out His plans "according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself," may well engage our attention.

* * * *

A marvellous picture of the LORD JESUS is presented in the history of Joseph, the beloved son of his father. Jacob's manifest affection for him caused such jealousies and heart-burning in his brethren, that "they could not speak peaceably unto him." The two dreams, sent of God, increased their hatred; for the One Who had sent the dreams was "not in all their thoughts." When Joseph's brethren were tending their flocks, and their father, solicitous for their welfare, sent forth, as a willing messenger, this beloved son, they, not thinking of the father who had sent him, conspired together to kill him. God's purpose, however, was not to be frustrated, so He

turned them aside from their project, but they sold their brother to the Ishmaelites, as centuries later a greater than Joseph was sold to His enemies.

Nothing would now come of his dreams, they thought, and he was ruled out of their lives. But they left God out! Joseph was hidden from them, but God was with him, and He made him a father to Pharaoh, and used him to save much people alive. Made governor over all the land of Egypt, his thoughts towards his brethren were thoughts of love. At last, as predicted, they did bow down before him, and what gracious words fell upon their ears, *"I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life, . . . and to save your lives by a great deliverance."*

* * * *

Another interesting picture is presented to us by the life of David, and the promise made to him.

God took David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, from following the sheep, to be ruler over His people, over Israel: He said of David that he was "a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfil all My will"; and telling him through Nathan, "I will set up thy seed after thee; and I will establish . . . the throne of his kingdom for ever." Many years later, a wicked woman who was either ignorant of, or disdainful of God's "sure mercies of David," destroyed, as she supposed, *all the seed royal*. But God's word was not so to be brought to naught. She reigned awhile in false security, on the throne obtained so guiltily, not knowing that the rightful heir was being preserved from harm in the house of the LORD. Joash and his nurse were there hidden for six years; but Jehoiada the priest knew, and when the time was come he made the proclamation of the true king. "Behold, the king's son shall reign, *as the LORD hath said of the sons of David*," and he "shewed them the king's son." He was crowned, and given the testimony, and anointed.

Then in the fulness of time GOD, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a SAVIOUR JESUS, of the seed of David, the son of Jesse.

When Herod the king and all Jerusalem with him heard that the CHRIST, the King of the Jews, was born, they were troubled. Herod took immediate steps to kill Him; and "all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under," were slain. Herod concluded that the CHRIST was among them; but GOD had preserved Him. CHRIST was to die for the ungodly; to give His life a ransom for many, but it must be in GOD's time; and then He must be raised from the dead by the glory of the FATHER. Herod also, and all the people of Jerusalem will, when in their graves, hear the voice of the ONE whose birth so troubled them "and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

* * * *

"GOD anointed JESUS of Nazareth with the HOLY GHOST and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for GOD was with Him." Yet "they that dwelt at Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre." Their hatred of Him was consummated. The chief priests had done it that "the inheritance might be theirs." They knew Him not: they knew not the FATHER that had sent Him. Then on the third day "GOD raised Him from the dead." "Him hath GOD exalted with His right hand to be a PRINCE and a SAVIOUR, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." They thought they would have no more to do with JESUS of Nazareth, but to those of them that

remained unrepentant, what terror is in store! "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so. Amen." *"Hath He said, and shall He not do it?"* H.L.B.

On the Great "I Am" of Light and Love.

"GOD is light" and "God is love."

These two wonderful statements are reserved till nearly the last book in the Scriptures and contained in one of the shortest, but no greater facts concerning GOD can surely be discovered in all His Word and certainly not more concisely put.

In answer to the lawyer's question as to which is the greatest law our SAVIOUR replied by stating two commandments, "the first and great commandment" being love toward GOD and "the second like unto it" love to our neighbour, and added "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In the full revelation of Christianity is it not also true that on the two stupendous facts which we are considering hang all GOD's glory, goodness and grace, as well as the perfecting of His purposes of blessing for all mankind.

We are too ready to gauge divine truth by our own mental ability, forgetting that GOD's thoughts are, and always have been, above our thoughts, immeasurably so, even "as the heavens are above the earth." (Isa. lv. 8, 9.)

All can apprehend to a certain limited degree light and love, for the one we see by, and the other we experience; but to seek to apprehend "GOD is light" and "GOD is love" by our intellect will surely be to fall far short in our apprehension of Him.

By these glorious statements, light and love are raised to the very highest degree, becoming infinite, eternal and undefinable.

It is the fact that "GOD is light" and "GOD is love" that gives the character to light and love; they do not give character to GOD, for nothing can do that. We must learn first what light and love are from GOD, not what GOD is, from light and love. If we seek to do this we shall not rise above the physical, for they were in the world before CHRIST came; but man could not apprehend GOD from them. When CHRIST came, He Who is the Light of the World and the fullest expression of GOD's love was in His Person, words and works, the revelation of both these truths in all the fulness of their divine meaning.

As we appreciate that light and love are divinely joined together in Him ("what GOD has joined together let no man put asunder") it creates confidence and assurance as to the perfection of His dealings with sinner and saint. There can be no unbalanced judgment or misplaced love, and so we cannot call into question any of the purposes for, and dealings with, mankind by the GOD Who changes not, with Whom "there is no shadow of turning," and to Whom "a false balance is abomination . . . but a just weight His delight." (Prov. xi. 1.)

When GOD acts in love He does not divest Himself of light, but loves with the full blaze of His light upon the object of His love, a light that shines upon the whole being: its history, past, present and future, knowing every spot and blemish of the one upon whom He sets His love.

Neither does He divest Himself of love, when on the judgment seat He has to pronounce the doom of all those who have despised and rejected His love, in that day when all their deeds will pass under the searchlight of His holiness and righteousness. Never for a moment will either be manifested at the expense of the other.

He chose to set His love upon Israel (Deut. vii. 6-8) but love did not dim the light that shone upon their pathway, exposing a record of unparalleled sin even to mocking Him and finally crucifying His SON; neither did that exposure dim His love for "He will rejoice over thee with joy, He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." (Zeph. iii. 17.)

GOD *is* love. Never is it said He was, or will be, love ; therefore is He the great "I AM" of love. Love is uncreated. When the message came to the world through His SON that "*God so loved the world*," this did not mean a love that came into existence after creation or at any given moment of time, for He loves the world of mankind with an eternal love, the manifestation of which, however, was only fully expressed in the Person of CHRIST. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that GOD sent His only begotten SON into the world, that we might live through Him." (1 John iv. 9.) How careful we must be to place no limitations on GOD's love either as to duration of time, or sphere, or indeed any other confine.

It can never be said, "He loved the world *then* but not *now*," "He loved me once but, alas, no longer." Well indeed it is for us to realise deeply in our own souls the deserved forfeiture of His love through our sinfulness, and to glorify Him Whose love abounds above and beyond our sin.

Again, God's love embraces every man, woman and child from Adam onwards, and equally too ; His love is no more for one sinner than another, and in no greater degree for one than for another. "*God so loved the world*" ; who of human race can be excluded from that statement ? Dare we except such an one as the unrepentant thief on the Cross beside our SAVIOUR ? Did not JESUS die for him as well as the repentant one ? Does GOD only begin to love us when we repent ? Whomsoever our SAVIOUR died for is the object of GOD's love and "He died for all." (2 Cor. v. 15.)

What a terrible awakening though for that thief when he learns that the One Whom he reviled, hanging on the Cross beside him, was there in answer to GOD's love for all sinners and therefore even for him ; and surely there will be no less remorse for all who have rejected His message of salvation in the person of that same Crucified One.

But if GOD is the great "I AM" of love He is no less the great "I AM" of light.

When He works, light and love are always in action, for He cannot work apart from what He is ; and so we perceive this in His work of creation ; in His dealings with the Patriarchs, Israel, the church, the world and the individual. Pre-eminently at the Cross of Calvary the facts that "GOD is light" and "GOD is love" shine out equally true, yet neither overshadowing the other.

Nowhere are we told that GOD created light or love ; there was neither light nor love on the earth, but only "darkness upon the face of the deep." (Gen. i. 2.) The first words recorded from His lips are "*let there be light*" and light was poured out upon this world as boundless, unlimited, and immeasurable as the pouring out of His love. When later He sent His SON into a world that had become morally "without form and void," did He not in effect say "*let there be light and love*" ?

We have to wait till Genesis xxii. for the actual word "*love*" where it is beautifully brought out as typical of GOD's love for His only begotten SON thus enhancing the glory of that which the incident prefigured. Though the word itself is not mentioned before, yet surely we perceive the working of His love from the earliest moment. All His provisions of love as shown in the Garden, and the help meet for Adam, and, when fallen, in the coat of skins which the LORD GOD Himself made and clothed them with, entrusting this work to no one else ; and so on from Genesis to Revelation we see Him as light and love in all His actions, purposes and counsels. This too in such infinite variety that at times it is His light which appears foremost, and at other times it is His love.

But as we ponder these great truths, do we not become conscious that they must have a bearing upon the lives of those in whose hearts His light and love have so graciously shone ?

To illustrate again from Gen. i., there was light on the first day which has never left this world except during those three hours when Man and Satan sought to extinguish the Light of the World, but on the fourth day "lights" were brought into positions for special purposes, "to give light

upon the earth" (in no way to be a substitute for the light of v. 3), so our LORD said His disciples are lights to give light upon the earth. "Ye are the light of the world" and just as the lights physical if we may use the term, are in the firmament of heaven, so the lights spiritual are in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS, and from thence they must shine to give light upon the earth. This is important to remember for we do not shine from earth to heaven; our SAVIOUR did not say let your light so shine that GOD may see your good works, but "*that men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*" It is from our heavenly position, through our practical walk, that we must shine, here upon the earth.

"GOD Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST." (2 Cor. iv. 6, N.T.)

"The love of GOD is shed abroad in our hearts by the HOLY GHOST which is given unto us." (Rom. v. 5.)

May our hearts, that is, our affections, and thoughts and wills be so centred upon the great I AM of light and love that these may be reproduced through us for the blessing of those around, until the welcome return of Him Who was and is the embodiment of these two glorious truths.

F.A'n.

On Some Obscure Apostles.

AMONG the followers of our Lord were many of whom we know scarcely anything. Even in the immediate circle of the Apostolic band, those chosen specially by Him, are three of whom little more than their names is recorded: James the Less, Judas surnamed Thaddeus, and Simon Zelotes.

Of the first of these we read that he was sometimes known

as James the Less or rather James the Little (Mk. xv. 40), possibly because of his shortness of stature. Otherwise, so far as we can judge, he is entirely unknown, having no connection with any of the other men of this name mentioned in the New Testament. He is a short man, like some other "big" men. Of the second of the trio a little more is given. His curious surname Thaddeus, being perhaps derived from a Hebrew word meaning praise, seems to point to the heartiness of his character. It was not his real name, but evidently tacked on to that of Judas as descriptive. So he is a hearty man. One sentence, a question to our LORD on the night of the betrayal (John xiv. 22), comprises the sole record of his utterances in the Gospels.

The final member of this obscure band, "Simon the Canaanite," "the Zealot," is quite unknown save for this name and reference. But as the Zealots are usually understood to be the fanatical party headed by Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), we may assume that this earnest man had his loyalty weaned from the Galilean revolutionary party and transferred to our LORD, probably through the preaching of the Forerunner. He is a zealous, a strict man. Be this as it may, the very obscurity of the three obscure apostles enhances their interest for ourselves. We are not all "chief men among the brethren"; we are not all eloquent in speech. The lowlier lot of insignificance and obscurity both in the church and the world has been assigned to us. This is no cause for desponding, repining or complaining. The LORD's own path—He Who *was* the highest—was of His own choice a very lowly one, and "it is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master."

To these three, James, Judas (not Iscariot) and Simon, were not given the brilliant abilities and opportunities afforded to others of the apostolic band. Not for them the great occasions to which the other James with Peter and John were introduced by the MASTER. No, theirs was a place of comparative obscurity in the company of even those specially called to be with Him and to be sent forth by Him.

But five priceless possessions were theirs :—

1. Companionship with Him—chosen to be with Him (Mk. iii. 14).
2. Grace to continue to the end (Lk. xxii. 28).
3. Benefit of His personal care and interest.
4. Promise of glory with Him hereafter in the regeneration (Mt. xix. 28).
5. Power to witness for Him by the SPIRIT when He came on each of them at Pentecost (Acts ii. 4).

We too, however lowly and insignificant, may rejoice in these same possessions: daily companionship with our LORD ; grace sufficient for all needs ; benefit of His unfailing interest and care for us; promise of glory with Himself according to His own word in John xiv. ; xvii. ; and power to witness for Him now, since the SPIRIT has come and indwells us for this very purpose. Further, these three obscure apostles shared equally with the prominent members of the apostolic band in being alike princes in the kingdom of GOD (Mt. xix. 28) ; the foundation of the church of GOD (Ephes. ii. 20) ; and destined to have their names engraved in the city of GOD (Rev. xxi. 14). What encouragement the consideration of these characters affords all quiet workers in obscure places ; all who in GOD's providence are called to live and labour in the patient routine of daily duty to the LORD ; in tiny hamlets far removed from the hives of industry and centres of intellectual activities ; who seldom know the inspiration of fellowship in great gatherings of fellow believers.

Yet all true disciples have been chosen by the LORD to be with Him, to know His daily, life-long companionship ; they have been all called by Him to serve where, when and how He appoints ; and all are expected to be faithful to Him in days of growing unfaithfulness and difficulty.

There were the women "who ministered to Him of their substance," some highly placed and wealthy whose names are recorded : but there were also "many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem" (Mark xv. 41). These are unnamed, but they loved Him, they followed Him, and they were known, loved, and their service valued by Him.

In Phil. iv. 3, the Apostle mentions some unnamed workers as "those women which laboured with me in the gospel . . . whose names are in the book of life."

May our gracious LORD give us grace to gird up the loins of our minds, and from the consideration of these obscure servants of His to step forward cheerfully, hopefully, to face our duty in the lowly, maybe lonely spheres to which He has appointed us. We need never lose heart as we remember that we may daily cultivate and enjoy His companionship ; that His grace is sufficient to enable us to continue faithful to the very end of the journey ; that we have His unfailing interest and tender care ; His sure promise of glory with Himself, too, hereafter ; and the present power of the HOLY SPIRIT to witness for him now.

Chosen—called—faithful. Short of stature, hearty and exuberant, or zealous and strict, there was a place for James the Less, Judas surnamed Thaddeus, and Simon the Zealot, in the days of His flesh among His servants : and so there remains to-day.

QUARTUS.

"My Times are in Thy Hand."

PSALM xxxi. 15.

<p>FATHER, I know that all my life Is portion'd out for me, And the changes that will surely come, I do not fear to see ; But I ask thee for a present mind Intent on pleasing Thee.</p>	<p>2 Cor. vi. 18. Psal. xxxi. 15. Job xiv. 1. Prov. xiv. 26. Duet. v. 29. Psal. cxix. 38.</p>
<p>I ask Thee for a thoughtful love, Through constant watching wise, To meet the glad with joyful smiles, And to wipe the weeping eyes ; And a heart <i>at leisure from itself</i>, To soothe and sympathise.</p>	<p>Psal. cxvi. 1. 1 Thess. v. 6. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. 1 Cor. xiii. 5. Job xxix. 11-16.</p>

I would not have the restless will That hurries to and fro, Seeking for some great thing to do, Or secret thing to know ; I would be treated as a child, And guided where I go.	Isa. lvii. 20. Prov. xix. 2. Rom. xii. 16. Deut. xxix. 29. Psal. cxxxi. 2. Psal. lxxiii. 24.
Wherever in the world I am, In whatsoe'er estate, I have a fellowship with hearts To keep and cultivate ; And a work of lowly love to do For the Lord on whom I wait.	Psal. xxxvii. 23. Phil. iv. 12. 1 John i. 7. Eph. iv. 3. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Psal. xxv. 5.
So I ask Thee for the daily strength, To none that ask denied, And a mind to blend with outward life, While keeping at Thy side, Content to fill a little space, If <i>Thou</i> be glorified.	Duet. xxxiii. 25. Matt. vii. 7, 8. John xvii. 15. Psal. xxxvii. 34. Psal. lxxxiv. 10. John xv. 8.
And if some things I do not ask In my cup of blessing be, I would have my spirit fill'd the more With grateful love to Thee— And careful—less to serve Thee <i>much</i> , Than to please Thee <i>perfectly</i> .	Eph. iii. 20. Psal. xxiii. 5. Psal. cxvi. 12, 13. Psal. ciii. 2. Micah vi. 7, 8. Col. i. 10.
There are briers besetting every path, Which call for patient care ; There is a cross in every lot And an earnest need for prayer. But a lowly heart that leans on Thee Is happy anywhere.	Job. v. 7. Heb. x. 36. Eccles. vii. 14. 2 Sam. xxii. 7. Cant. viii. 5. Isa. xxvi. 3.
In a service which Thy love appoints, There are no bonds for me ; For my secret heart is taught "the truth" That makes Thy children "free" ; And a life of self-renouncing love Is a life of liberty !	Rom. xii. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 17. John xiv. 17. John viii. 32-36. Matt. xvi. 24. Gal. v. 1.

A.L.W.

Some Editorial Notes and Comments.

THE BIBLE STUDY MEETINGS, annually held during the winter months at 186, Aldersgate Street, London, E.C.1 (City of London Y.M.C.A. Building) were resumed on Friday, September 18th, when the general subject for the session, "The EPISTLE to the HEBREWS," was opened up by Mr. W. J. HOCKING, EDITOR of the BIBLE MONTHLY, who dealt with the General Scope, Design, Objects and Divisions of the Epistle.

Further meetings during the current month (D.V.) are on October 2nd—when the subject advertised is "GOD'S SON and APOSTLE"—Mr. P. C. RICE opening, and on Friday, October 16th—subject, "JESUS, the SON of MAN and GOD'S HIGH PRIEST"—and Mr. J. P. BULL is announced as the speaker. The time of the meetings is 6.30 p.m., but the Address is timed to commence at 7 p.m. Any of GOD's children in London on Friday evenings would be very cordially welcomed.

It was felt by many (including the writer of these notes) to have been a great privilege to attend fellowship meetings held in Napier Hall, Gillingham, Kent, on Saturday afternoon and evening, September 12th. Following a season of real prayer, a Bible Reading on Mark iv. 35-41, suggested by one of the local brethren, provided a most helpful and spiritually satisfying occupation for the next hour. At the evening meeting, which was "open," the LORD graciously gave food for our souls as one and another (not more than three, cf. 1 Cor. xiv. 27) was led to minister the word.

It was a joyful time indeed, and was felt by residents and visitors alike to have cheered and strengthened all who were present. Quite apart from the valued ministry of the word, the sense of real fellowship was enhanced by meeting brethren who came from as far distant as Catford, Bromley,

Reigate, Horley, Canterbury, Broadstairs, St. Nicholas-at-Wade and Eastbourne, to cheer the hearts of their brethren at Gillingham. Thanks be to God.

The annual all-day gathering for Prayer, Reading, Fellowship, etc., held at Eastbourne, is announced (D.V.) to take place on Wednesday, October 7th, at the Lecture Hall of the Branch Library, Seaside.

The meetings commence at 11.20 a.m., to allow visitors arriving by rail from London, etc., to be in time for the first meeting. Other meetings at 3 and 6 p.m. Prayer is earnestly desired for God's blessing upon these gatherings.

A series of meetings, usually held monthly in Thanet during the winter months, is also due to commence (D.V.) on Thursday, October 8th. The Foresters' Hall, High Street, Canterbury, is the place, and the times 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Prayer is desired also for God's blessing upon these meetings.

If the LORD will, a week of special meetings is proposed to be held at the Photographic Society's Hall, Grey Street, HULL, from Friday, October 9th to 16th; and the writer of these notes will greatly value the prayers of the readers that sinners may be converted and GOD's people encouraged and built up on our most holy faith as a result of this special effort on the part of our Yorkshire brethren.

Fragment.

IT alters the character of Christianity to make it a system of commandments. Give me an *express text* says one, and I will bow to it. Now, this is an unholy and bad principle. If a child knew the will of its father, and yet demanded some express command before it would obey, that would be a bad child. It is a very common evil of this day to demand an abstract command. If I have the Holy Spirit, I must do what I know to be the mind of God; of course, checked by the written word—but wherever I have the knowledge of God's mind, it is binding on me.

On Being of Good Cheer.

THE words "be of good cheer" are recorded as having been uttered by our blessed LORD on four different, but equally remarkable occasions. Three times during "the days of His flesh," and once in the day of His glorified humanity from heaven itself, we find Him using them.

In the gospel of S. Matthew ix. 2; they are addressed to one who needed most of all to have the knowledge of sins forgiven. (Cf. S. Mark ii. 1-12.)

In the same gospel narratives of S. Matt. xiv. 27; S. Mark vi. 50; our LORD speaks them to His disciples when in doubt and difficulty.

In S. John xvi. 33, He uses them to enhearten the little band on the night of the betrayal when circumstances seemed about to prove too much for them.

In Acts xxiii. 11, the last mention of them, is from the glory of heaven to comfort the heart of a most sorely tried servant in one of the darkest hours of his earthly career. These several circumstances being such as we may experience (apart from their accidental surroundings), and the words of the LORD JESUS being the stay and support of believing souls from the start to finish of the Christian course, we may well ponder the meaning of these gracious words of His, "*Be of good cheer.*"

First, just what do they really mean? It is clear they must mean something quite other than the superficial "cheer up," with which we so often cover our hopeless inability to help or even understand in times of need. We bid others in distress to "cheer up," finding this oftentimes a cheap and easy way to disentangle ourselves from distasteful obligations. CHRIST never bade anyone "cheer up"; His entirely different word was "*Be of good cheer.*"

"Take courage;" "be of a brave heart"; dare to believe My word; "Son, *be of good cheer*, thy sins be forgiven thee," was the word to one.

"Take courage; be of a brave heart; dare to believe Me: *Be of good cheer*; it is I," was the assurance to the alarmed disciples on the lake of Gennesaret.

"Take courage; be of a brave heart; dare to take My word: *Be of good cheer*, I have overcome the world," was the encouraging word to the desponding band of apostles on that last night in the Upper Room.

"Take courage; be of a brave heart; dare to believe My word: *Be of good cheer*, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome," was the comforting message to that faithful servant by his MASTER.

There is an immense wealth of comfort, encouragement, assurance and good cheer in these words of our blessed SAVIOUR and LORD. They spring from His perfect knowledge of our needs, condition, circumstances and capacity; and are spirit and life, strengthening the inner man.

I.

Taking the instances of their use in order, let us reflect upon some remarkable resemblances to our own individual, special, particular needs.

They were spoken first to a man who had four friends who pitied his condition and were convinced that CHRIST would relieve it if only he could be brought to Him. In the story, the man himself says nothing, but reading from the book of one's own heart it is fairly easy to see what his thoughts were. If this JESUS of NAZARETH were such an One as his four friends firmly believed Him to be, would He not be possessed of powers of discernment enabling Him to read the secrets of sinful hearts? It was all very well for them to be so confident of a welcome from this great PROPHET of GOD, Who had been raised up and was healing sick folks so widely, but what kind of a reception would He accord him if He knew him? And while the four friends, with a faith which triumphed over all difficulties, were bringing him along in his helpless condition, the tortured

conscience, bitter regrets and repentant desires for amendment, would occupy his thoughts. That some such experiences were being his are evident from CHRIST's address to him. Bystanders were amazed, and the four friends also, doubtless, at the words which first fell from CHRIST's lips to the man. He Who "knew what was in man," addressed a word of ready forgiveness to the poor man's unspoken thought. "Son," says He, "*be of good cheer,*" of good courage, dare to believe Me, "thy sins be forgiven thee." Oh! the relief to be assured of the forgiveness of sins.

May it not have been that on that remarkable journey on that improvised litter some familiar words known from boyhood had been passing through the sufferer's mind?

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." "I will be sorry for my sin." "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared." Such holy words from the Psalter, confirmed by the Prophet's assurance, "*He delighteth in mercy,*" may well have been in the palsied man's thoughts as friends were eagerly and enthusiastically bringing him to the great HEALER and PROPHET, JESUS of NAZARETH.

Then to find his secret exercises known and met by CHRIST, Who dealt with the deep need of the soul, and in confirmation of the reality of this invisible blessing, spoke healing to the paralysed body so that all present were "*amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion,*" must have been overwhelming.

The circumstances surrounding CHRIST's first recorded use of "*Be of good cheer,*" were such as make the incident one of perennial interest. It is the word addressed to every penitent sinner who believes on the LORD JESUS and comes to Him.

No sense of unworthiness, nor his unusual and unorthodox way of coming to CHRIST, made any difference either as to his need or his reception. It was said of our blessed LORD as a reproach and censure, "*This*

Man receiveth sinners"; and like many another word uttered by His enemies as a *taunt*, was really a profound *truth*. He did, and does, receive sinners, and Himself assured such that "*Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.*" "*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*" To all such repentant sinners, the SAVIOUR says: *Be of good cheer*, thy sins be [are] forgiven. Upon the Cross of Calvary the atoning work was done by the Incarnate SON of GOD, and to Him alone belongs the prerogative to pronounce the absolution and remission of sins. He pardoneth and absolveth all who truly repent and believe the good tidings of full, free, forgiveness through His atoning sacrifice. Have you personally accepted this "*good cheer of CHRIST*," by taking His word for it Who paid the debt, *that the debt is really paid*?

"The sinner who believes is free;
Can say, The SAVIOUR died for me;
Can point to the Atoning Blood
And say, That made my peace with God."

So, "*Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.*"

II.

The next recorded use of the words "*Be of good cheer*" by our LORD is in the story of the disciples' doubt, difficulties and dread in the storm on the Lake of Galilee when He came to them in the fourth watch of the night. It happened after a perfect day of His marvellous blessing to the hungry multitude; and of His thoughtful consideration for themselves in their wearied and overwrought physical condition. He bade them go down to the shore and embark for the other side to get some quiet and rest while He sent away the crowd of some thousands of men, women and children. Of course He was as tired as the disciples, but they were His first consideration. "The SON of MAN came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

As we contemplate Him in His earthly course, we say:—

“Wherever we follow Thee, LORD,
Admiring, adoring we see,
The love that was stronger than death,
Flow out without limit and free.”

So the LORD out of consideration for their condition sends them over to the other side. It was with a great sense of relief, doubtless (again reading from the book of one's own heart), that they embarked. Away from the crowd, away from the pressure of things, into the quiet calm of an evening row on the placid waters of the Lake—splendid! That they were in the right place there can be no manner of doubt, for He had sent them; and He is the Master. Yet difficulties arose, and increased; and in the darkest hour they encountered what to them was an entirely new experience, and they were filled with fear. Coming across the stormy waves they descried, but failed to recognise, a Figure. Panic seized them, and they cried out for fear. Winds and waves and natural phenomena they were acquainted with, and more or less able to cope with; but this!—this! is unusual, inexplicable. “It is a spirit” they cried out for fear.

Then above the noise of the raging elements there came the quiet, steady accents of their Master's voice: “*Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*”

Take courage; be of a brave heart; dare to believe spite of your bewilderment and fear—“it is I; be not afraid.”

It is a commonplace that it is the unexpected that always happens, and the unusual which often causes secret fear and panic. What we are more or less familiar with may present almost insuperable difficulty at times, yet it can be faced with a certain amount of fortitude and courage. But an unusual, inexplicable, mysterious happening, not only perplexes but often depletes our courage and moral resources, leaving us a prey to some nameless dread. So it was with the disciples in the boat. And to them came CHRIST's reassuring “*Be of good cheer.*” This should afford most comforting reflections.

too, for CHRIST's people to-day, for JESUS CHRIST is the SAME, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

He has sent us across the stormy waters of our earthly voyage; the night grows dark; difficulties increase; at times fears grip our hearts in the face of unusual happenings, and we discover that doubts, difficulties and sometimes an awful dread threaten to overwhelm our spirits.

But since He sent them *to the other side*, they were bound to get there whatever the untoward happenings on the journey; and we, too, who at His word *are on our way to the other side*, will surely arrive in safety, for says He, "*They shall never perish.*"

How often, too, in moments of deep depression, despondency, and nameless fear, have we found "GOD our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear . . . though the waters roar and be troubled."

Although we may cry out for fear, as they did, yet we also, like them, may hear the word "*Be of good cheer*"; it is I; be not afraid"; for "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Do not our souls instinctively turn to Him in the dark night of difficulty and fear? And as we consider His great word to His frightened disciples in the days of His flesh, so the comforting assurance of His near presence through His own word may be our portion, whatever the storms through which we pass on our voyage to the Fair Havens of the other side.

III.

The next recorded occasion of the use of "*Be of good cheer*" was on the last night of our LORD's earthly life. It was a very full and busy night for Him. Incident followed incident in very rapid succession. The Pass-over feast — the feet washing — the dispute as to precedence amongst the disciples — the angry exit of Judas Iscariot — the institution of the Holy Supper — the conversations and questionings at the table and the series of wonderful discourses recorded by the Evangelist in

S. John xiv.-xvi., all crowded, so to say, into the space of one short evening.

What the feelings and emotions of our LORD were as the hours sped by, we cannot imagine. But that His thoughts were on quite a different plane from those of the disciples is clear from the account. He "knowing that the FATHER had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God" sat there calmly facing the immediate future with its nameless terrors, and the more distant future with its unspeakable glories.

But the disciples with confused ideas and earthly ideals, with dim insight and dull intelligence, were perplexed, mystified, baffled, and quite at a loss as to the meaning of their MASTER's instructions and exhortations. They conversed in whispers among themselves at the table, but as their blank looks plainly showed, without any satisfactory result. "Now JESUS knew that they were desirous to ask Him." Two things of importance to them and to ourselves are plainly indicated by this text. They are, first, the knowledge of His disciples possessed by the LORD JESUS; secondly, the perplexity, misgiving and difficulty possessed by His disciples.

(1) The knowledge of His disciples possessed by the LORD JESUS is an intimate acquaintance with our minds, our ways of thinking. Twice in the Gospel by John we are reminded of our LORD's intimate knowledge of men (ch. ii. 25; vi. 6); and it is implied throughout the book. A very startling verse, too, in Ezekiel xi. 5, expressed this same intimate acquaintance with the inner world of human thought on the part of God. *"Thus saith the Lord, I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them."*

The consideration of this is both solemnising and satisfying to the heart which truly seeks to be well-pleasing to God; equally solemnising and startling, too, in its unescapeable reality to the one who may seek to veil his real thought and purpose from God's holy sight.

(2) The knowledge of His disciples possessed by the LORD JESUS is a sympathetic appreciation of our diffi-

culties. There is an answer to our deepest questions and when we are desirous to ask Him, He speaks with a "Verily, verily," which lifts the horizon and enables us to discern meaning and method in God's present dealings. The place of difficulty for the disciple is the place of discovery, too. Misgivings deepened for the disciples as they misunderstood the LORD's answers to Thomas and Philip, so He suggests that they should press their questions, for only in true knowledge could the gloom be depreciated and dispelled.

(3) The knowledge of His disciples possessed by the LORD JESUS is also a patient understanding of His people. Little understanding and much impatience characterised disciples then, *and now*. So many questions we desire to ask; so many objections to raise to things as they affect us, so many burdens to be borne by us, so many doubts and perplexities to face in our crowded lives. We chafe, grow weary, become impatient with others, sometimes with God, and in better moments with ourselves, too.

But does He "know that we are desirous to ask Him"? To seek His face? To have His counsel? To hear His "Verily, Verily" in explanation and anticipation, too?

Of this, however, we may be assured, that His perfect and intimate knowledge of ourselves and our thoughts is wedded to an equally perfect and sympathetic appreciation of our difficulties, and a patient understanding of it all. "JESUS *knew that they were desirous to ask Him,*" and JESUS CHRIST *is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.*" Whatever change his glorified body may have undergone since the days of His flesh, the CHRIST of the glory is the CHRIST of Nazareth; the CHRIST of the right hand of the MAJESTY on High is the CHRIST of the Upper Room in Jerusalem.

Why were the disciples desirous of asking Him?

The answer is simple and conclusive; because of their deep misgivings, real difficulties and baffling perplexities. They were literally filled with foreboding and disquietude. They were conscious of strain. They had a lonely and bitter road to face, so they gathered from

what He said. They did not feel equal to it all. The more they discussed it amongst themselves, the less clear it seemed; it was all so mystifying and bewildering. Even the LORD's tender exhortations failed to enable them to discern the transcending triumph which He said they were to share. It is just here, too, that we so strangely resemble them. The glories to follow are nothing like so clearly seen as the present sufferings. Our spiritual ideas, too, like theirs, become confused, because we also fail to firmly grasp the central controlling thought of the FATHER's love. "*The Father Himself loveth you,*" said our LORD to their troubled hearts. He really cares for you, and has prepared for you things which it has not entered the heart of man to conceive. But they could not see it; they utterly failed to grasp it, for the SPIRIT was not yet given to them, and so our LORD said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the COMFORTER will not come unto you."

But this assurance proved to be anything but assuring to them then; indeed, it only deepened the gloom already settling down upon their hearts. They did not then know, indeed could not, what every believer now ought to know, namely, that the things of the FATHER are focussed for us in the SON, and revealed to us by the HOLY SPIRIT, as He interprets to us the SON. The revelation of the love of the FATHER, of His care, and His purposes of blessing, becomes fuller in our experience as we obey the truth and are thus practically sanctified by it. The definite act of faith which believes the love of God thus develops into an attitude towards God which makes us more conscious of the strength than of the strain; better able to face a bitter road with patience; and more willing to take up a lonely burden with hope.

It was immediately after our LORD uttered this assurance of the love of the FATHER for them, that the incident occurred which led to Him using the great word, "*Be of good cheer,*" again.

He had no sooner said: "I came forth from the FATHER, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the FATHER," than His disciples replied,

"Lo now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. *Now are we sure* that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: *by this we believe* that Thou camest forth from God."

Our LORD then asks this question, "*Do ye now believe?*" following it up by throwing the light of His foreknowledge across the, as yet, untrodden pathway of their near future. This, too, is where *our* hearts may find themselves exercised. *We* believe and are sure, but what difference does our belief actually make in the practical realm of conduct, character, and conversation?

How startling the declaration of the LORD must have been to them: "*Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone:* and yet I am not alone, because the FATHER is with Me" (S. Jno. xvi. 32).

"Ye shall be scattered" by the instinct of self-preservation; "and shall leave Me alone," for I shall matter less to you than your other interests then; "every man to his own," leaving the MASTER solitary. "Oh! recreant disciples," our hearts are ready to cry; "ye believe and are sure, and is this the issue of your belief and assurance?" Still we must consider the time of stress that came into their lives; the storm of fear and perplexity that swept over them; their alarm and amazement at the turn affairs had taken; the unnerving peril that faced them; the panic that seized their hearts when "*they all forsook Him and fled.*" And lest we be tempted to cast stones at them, and to dub them craven cowards, let us enquire within as to whether *we* have ever sought our own at the expense of His company, His reproach, and His interests. St. Paul, writing of Timothy's interest and devotion to CHRIST, said that in his day, "All seek their own, not the things that are JESUS CHRIST's" (Phil. ii. 21). Is this less so to-day?

Up till that hour the disciples had Him visibly present with them as Guide, Philosopher and Friend. No need to plan and worry about anything. But now, to be left to face a world bitterly and increasingly hostile to Him and those who are His, how will they fare?

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but *be of good cheer*; I have overcome the world." Tribulation and triumph, and both on account of their close connection with Himself. So does He bid them not to be downhearted by their difficulties, but overcoming by their faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith," wrote the last survivor of the little band some fifty years later.

The Old Testament assurance: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee, found full and complete expression in our LORD as the dependent Man throughout His whole course; so that on the night of the Betrayal He could say to those who had followed Him: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace." *My peace* — what a legacy to produce an untroubled heart in a most troubled world. To them, and to us, comes the final word: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but *be of good cheer* (of a brave heart), I have overcome the world." JESUS we know, and He is on the Throne.

IV.

For the everlasting comfort of the servants of CHRIST, the story of Paul's conversion; courageous, consistent confession of his MASTER; and conflicts in defence of the gospel is indelibly enshrined in the pages of Holy Scripture. But amidst all his amazing experiences as the LORD's servant, one incident stands out as a special token of his MASTER's care and personal interest in his welfare.

It happened at the end of a singularly trying day. The Apostle had been standing his trial for a good part of the day in a crowded court, in which at one time the excitement became so great that an uproar occurred—he being the storm centre. In the ensuing riot, he was so roughly handled that the captain of the guard feared he would be torn to pieces, and only by great force was

he rescued from the mob and escorted to gaol. Physically bruised, tired to an unutterable weariness, hurt in mind and spirit by the bigotry displayed by his own nation which he passionately loved, the day's proceedings might well have crushed the bravest. Then the LORD stood by him that night and said, "*Be of good cheer*, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

Not a word of censure for being in the circumstances brought about by disregard of the expressed word of the SPIRIT through the disciples at Tyre, "who said to Paul through the SPIRIT, that he should not go up to Jerusalem" at that time. Not a reminder of how the disciples at Cæsarea had begged him not to take that journey because of what the prophet Agabus had said would happen if he did so. Not a reference made by his MASTER to the conformity to Judaism in vows and purifications, building again the things so thoroughly destroyed by his Galatian epistle. No word of censure, no reminder or reference to lapse or momentary compromise escaped the lips of Him Who was alike the Perfect Servant of GOD and the MASTER of all the servants of GOD. But a frank and full recognition of testimony faithfully rendered, of real work done from love of Himself; and a comforting assurance that there was still work ahead for him to do as a witness bearer of his MASTER in the Imperial City. How ardently the Apostle desired to preach CHRIST in Rome we learn from the Epistle written about this very time, and how gracious of his MASTER to assure him that his wish was granted!

How different from ourselves is our LORD in dealing with His servants! We should have said that the awful muddle of circumstances in which Paul found himself at this critical juncture could have been avoided had more attention been given to the instructions received. Not so the LORD. Do we wonder that this same Apostle with his personal experiences of the LORD was led to write of "*the gentleness of CHRIST*," a phrase which recalls the Psalmist's grateful tribute: "*Thy gentleness hath made*

me great”? or that in writing to the Roman believers before his visit to them he sums up circumstances of all kinds by saying, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God”?

What stay to the Apostle’s heart, too, on the next morning when his nephew came to the prison and told him of the conspiracy to waylay and kill him. Forty zealots had bound themselves with an oath of execration neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul, but the indomitable spirit of the Apostle had been fortified over-night by the presence and promise of his MASTER. “*Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.*” The “good cheer” of CHRIST put new heart and hope into His faithful much-tried servant in those days of long ago, and confirms our faith that He is the same to-day in His glorified body as in the yesterday of “the days of His flesh.”

“Wherefore, sirs,” exclaimed the courageous Apostle later in a time of great danger and difficulties, “*be of good cheer, for I believe God.*”

We also, knowing our sins forgiven for His Name’s Sake; having His assuring presence always with us; facing an hostile world daily; and sometimes becoming involved in trying circumstances through our own mistakes, may yet hear and welcome the “good cheer” of our blessed LORD as He still says: *Be of good cheer; take courage; be of a brave heart; trust Me.*

W.G.T.

On the Image of the Master.

CENTURIES ago there lived in Italy a sculptor, whose work was famed throughout the country. One day he called his students around him and told them that he was about to leave them for a time. “Before I go,” he said, “I wish to give a gift to each of you, and in my absence you will make the best use you can of my gift and hold the result against my return.” So saying,

he handed to each of the students a parcel and bade them farewell.

The four young men hastened away, wondering what the gift might be. Something of value, no doubt, from such a notable man! The youngest of the four, on reaching his home and opening the parcel with great curiosity, found inside it, nothing but a lump of clay. "So," he exclaimed bitterly, "that is all the master thinks of me. He considers a lump of clay a fit present for me!" and, throwing the clay into a corner, he went about his business. The other three students each found a similar lump of clay inside their parcels. Time passed, and the day came for the master's return. At once he sent for his students to come and give an account of the use they had made of his gift.

"What have you to show me?" he asked the youngest. "Sir," he said, "I thought you set but little value on me to give me such a gift. Here it is as you gave it me," and he handed back his piece of clay, dusty and shapeless.

"And you?" the master queried, turning to the second of his students. "Sir," he said, "I am but a beginner, but I did what I could," and unwrapping the cloth in his hand, he disclosed a carefully moulded and symmetrical brick. "You have worked faithfully, my son," said the master.

"And you?" as the third student handed to the master a lovely vase, well-proportioned and beautiful; and received his due meed of praise.

"And you, my son?" and the master turned to the last of the students. The young man opened the box he was carrying and took from it a perfect work of art, a head fashioned with infinite care, reproducing each feature and lineament of the absent one, an image of the master himself!

As the master looked upon it with loving understanding, his heart was gladdened by the true affection which had treasured and sought to reproduce his image during the time of his absence.

The parable speaks for itself. We have not all the same abilities, the same opportunities or the same duties in life; but let us do faithfully what we have to do. Do not say, "My life is of no value to GOD, so I will live it to please myself." Every Christian has his own task to fulfil in this world, his own life to live unto GOD. "*It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful*" (1 Cor. iv. 2). It may be in the homeliest duties of life, or in that more direct service of teaching or preaching or speaking of CHRST which brings such refreshment and joy to the heart of the servant; in either case, we can be found faithful. Best of all, if we seek each day to trace in GOD's word by the power of the SPIRIT the features and lineaments of CHRIST, Who is the image of GOD, we shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory, until, some glad day, the moment will come when He shall appear and *we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*" And who is it that receives the reward of the Master's "Well done"? It is the servant who was "*faithful over a few things*" (Matt. xxv. 21, 23), "*faithful in a very little*" (Luke xix. 17). "If any man's work *abide* . . . he shall receive a reward" (1 Cor. iii. 14).

F.E. ST.J.

On Seven Pillars of Wisdom.

WISDOM hath her mansion builded,
 Her sons to console.
 Pillars hewn out for her purpose:
 Seven's perfect whole.
 Whoso findeth her, *Life* findeth.
 Death is overcome.
 The *Instruction* of a father,
 Listened to by some.
 From the LORD'S mouth *Understanding*
 Can be truly gained.
 Then *Discretion* shall preserve thee,
 Knowledge is attained.

Perseverance, application
Of thine heart to know,
Brings the *Power* that faints not ever,
And the strength to go
All the way for finding *Honour*:
This will God bestow.

(Prov. ix. 1; viii. 35; i. 8; iv. 1, 13; ii. 6, 11; xx. 5; xxiii. 12;
xxiv. 16.)

The Principal Thing.

(Prov. iv. 7; Jas. i. 5, 6; iii. 13.)

DO we feel our lack of wisdom?
Let us ask of God,
Who pronounces words of welcome,
And withholds His rod.
If in simple faith we ask it,
He will not upbraid;
Let us come confiding in Him,
Not as those afraid.
Who is wise and can with profit
By behaviour score.
Showing works with wisdom's meekness,
First of all things pure?
Are we like the wind-tossed wavelets,
Driven to and fro?
Double-minded, all unstable,
Doubting where to go?
In a doubtful state we cannot
Anything receive,
And forgetful hearers only
Nothing can relieve.
Wisdom is the heart's chief asset;
Let us get a store,
Drawing from divine resources
Ever more and more.

G.S.P.

On Form of Sound Words in Preaching.

Let us weigh up the following remarks:

IF the LORD JESUS bore the sins of everyone, then there will be no judgment, because it has already fallen on Him; and God will not demand payment twice, "first at my bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at mine."

If there is no judgment, then there is no need to preach the Gospel, for none are in danger after death, however they may have thought and spoken and acted.

If CHRIST bore the sins of everyone, why does the Word say He "was once offered to bear the sins of many"?

If CHRIST bore the sins of everyone, why did His servants preach Repentance and Faith?

The LORD JESUS CHRIST died for all. None will be judged because they have a sinful nature, but those that stand before the great white throne will be "judged every man according to their *works*." Paul, speaking the truth of GOD, said, "*Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.*" Also "being justified by *faith* we have peace with GOD."

Of whom spake the prophet in Isaiah liii. 4-6? Was it not of those who will then recognise that the One (the LORD JESUS CHRIST) they had despised and rejected was the One Who had died for them? Is not this a wonderful example of repentance and faith?

The LORD JESUS said, "*Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish*"; and this is for all time.

Of whom did the HOLY GHOST by Peter speak when He says, "*Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree*"? Was it not of believers?

Would it be right to address *all* and sundry as those

whose sins and the punishment due to them had been borne by the LORD JESUS?

In the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed "from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by *faith*." It is also declared to be *unto all*, and, *upon all them that believe*. Here is the boundary clearly defined by the SPIRIT through the Apostle.

God forbid that a real believer should be made an offender for a word, but it is right to "hold fast the form of sound words." The writer is far too failing to think of himself as one such as is mentioned in Gal. vi. 1.

H.L.B.

On Christ and Little Children.

"Suffer the Little Children to Come Unto Me"

THESE gracious words of the LORD JESUS were spoken when infants were brought to Him that He should touch them, and put His hands on them, and pray. He did more than was asked, for "*He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.*"

The loving words spoken concerning the little ones brought to Him then express His desire for children to-day, although He is at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Let us read what some of His servants have to tell us about Egyptian girls and boys.

In one Egyptian village on Sunday mornings you can find a crowd of some 250 noisy, happy youngsters waiting for the opening of the school. Clocks are unknown, but one or two of the chief people possess watches, so time passes unregistered, save for sunrise and sunset. The floor of the school is of earth, and is covered with straw mats; its roof the dome of heaven; when once inside, the flock of chattering children is packed as closely as little elastic bodies, elbows and knees permit. As school commences—always punctually—dead silence prevails. A hymn in Arabic is sung; and the children *do* sing. Scriptures, learned before, are

repeated by each scholar, and a fresh text is taught. The teaching is the whole gospel story. Sometimes so many children come that the boys have their lesson alone and the girls afterwards. Big girls object to sit with boys, it being against their custom to do so. And "the good seed" is carried into the homes of the scholars.

Some day-school teachers in Egypt who not only teach ordinary subjects, but are very diligent in teaching from the Bible, are always so glad when any of their scholars are saved through believing in JESUS. One teacher tells us that this year when the scripture examination was on, one little girl said, "I knew that I was a sinner, and I asked the LORD JESUS to wash away my sins in His blood, and make me fit to go to heaven." I asked, "Has He done so?" She answered, "Oh, yes." I asked how she knew and she said, "*He said He would*; and I'm so happy." Her name is Linda, and she is fourteen years old.

Before she came to the school she told all the girls she would keep them continually laughing, and she did for a time. Gradually she began to soften. She was sorry when she displeased the teachers. At the close of the first year she came asking prayer that her father, who was a Moslem, would allow her to come to school another year; and God answered the prayer. Once she behaved so badly that the teacher said, "I cannot really have this girl in the class." Afterwards, during the Bible lesson, the teacher saw tears; she was so troubled. Now she is a converted girl, but needs our prayers that she may be kept. She was presented with a Bible when leaving.

Now just one more little story, this time about Nageya, eleven years old, a very clever little girl. Last year (1935) she had the highest number of examination marks in her class, but her bad conduct during the year made it impossible to give her the prize. However, she did not seem to care very much, and came back the next term prepared to be as naughty as ever. Punishments were useless, and all that we felt able to do was to pray for her. Soon she was seen to be

improving in conduct. Then came the time when, sitting in class listening with rapt attention to the story of the Cross, tears ran down her face. From that time there was a great change. One day we visited her mother, who told us, "Nageya always tells me about her school lessons; yesterday she told me how they crucified the LORD JESUS, and when she told of the nails in His hands and His feet I could not help weeping." One of the questions in the scripture exam. was, "Tell what you know of the death and resurrection of the LORD JESUS." Nageya answered by telling in a most affecting way the whole story from the time in the upper room keeping the Passover with His disciples, to Gethsemane, to Pilate's Hall, to Calvary. As I sat and listened to this little Egyptian girl repeating this wonderful story in Arabic, I realised what a tremendous opportunity there is for spreading the gospel through the children. These poor village people, most of whom cannot read, are very interested to hear what the children are taught at school. Think of the story of God's love being told to an aged and blind grandparent—for there are many such—and what the result may be! *"Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?"*

(Compiled from several sources.)

H.L.B.

Fragment.

Do not let even the enjoyment of your social meeting, pleasant and profitable as it is, trench upon your actual service among those without, especially the poor. As it is harder and less grateful, yet, when done in the Spirit, the LORD especially meets and blesses it. Be much amongst the poor. The LORD always owns it. It was His way; and it has its peculiar importance in more ways than men suppose. It is His order and plan of the Church; for results are not always from apparent cause. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

On 1936 A.D.

"THIS YEAR ALSO"

WHATEVER the primary application of the parable in St. Luke xiii. 6-9, its obvious lessons for every professing believer lead us, at the close of the year 1936, to review "this year also."

"This year also" has been filled with *golden opportunities* of service to CHRIST—but let us ask ourselves, with what result so far as we are personally concerned?

"This year also" has brought us *many mercies* for which perchance the Giver still awaits due acknowledgment (Cf. St. Luke xvii. 17).

"This year also" has been to many one of *spiritual discipline* by the Husbandman Who purges the fruitful branch in order to further fruitfulness (St. John xv. 2). Are we weary of His chastening hand; or fainting beneath it; or still looking off unto JESUS the Author and Completer of faith?

"This year also" has taught some "*to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.*" Is the reader one?

"This year also"—a new translation—a revised version of *ourselves as the Epistle of Christ* has been called for, that men may be able to read and understand our LORD more clearly through our individual and corporate lives.

"This year also" we have had further experiences of the unfailing care of the LORD for His people; of the sufficiency of His word as a light to our path; and of answered prayers in days of desperate need and peril.

"This year also" we have never been sent empty away, for we have realised afresh that

"The Priest is in the Holy Place,
And answers from the Throne of Grace."

He remembers the strong crying and prayers of the days of His flesh,

"And, though ascended, feels afresh
What every member bears."

"This year also" sounds its solemn note as we consider that "every one of us shall give account of himself to God" for "*this year also*."

But at the close of "this year also" we face the as yet untrodden future with courage and hopefulness, for "*He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. . . . Jesus Christ is the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever*" (Heb. xiii. 5, 6, 8). And looking up to where He is, while we still await His coming we are enabled for our comfort to repeat the inspired language of the Apostle by the SPIRIT, "Thou art the SAME, and Thy years shall not fail." ALLELUIA!

THE EDITOR.

On the Mystery of Christ.

IT is impossible to make too much of the importance of fully knowing the mystery of CHRIST; how Jew and Gentile in Him form one new man; the unique relationship, too, of the assembly or church with CHRIST the Head in heaven; so distinct also from every other company of GOD's people from the creation to the eternal state (Eph. v.). The assembly or church was first spoken of by the LORD in Matt. xvi. 18; was formed by the HOLY GHOST sent down from heaven on the day of Pentecost fully come (Acts ii.); and continues until the LORD comes for us, when we are all caught up to be for ever with Him in the Father's house in glory (John xiv.; 1 Cor. xv.; 1 Thess. iv.).

The Apostle Paul was not only made minister of the gospel, but also minister of "the mystery," which "hid from all ages and generations," was revealed to the "holy apostles and prophets by the SPIRIT." This was specially given to the Apostle Paul, the chosen vessel of the LORD, to unfold and complete the Word of God.

In reading the Epistles this truth is very prominent; and the more they are read in communion with the LORD, the more "the mystery" shines forth in them. In

writing "the gospel" to the Romans he cannot close without referring to and reminding them of "the mystery."

In 1 Corinthians, which teaches the practical side for the carrying out of the truth of CHRIST and His assembly—the one body—it is especially striking. Take, for instance, the second chapter, where every verse breathes of "the mystery." The apostle did not come to them with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring the testimony of GOD, for he determined not to know anything among them save JESUS CHRIST, and Him crucified. And he was with them in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling; not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the SPIRIT and of power; that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of GOD. Howbeit, he says, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought; but "we speak the wisdom of GOD in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which GOD ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it they would not have crucified the LORD of glory. But as it is written, eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which GOD hath prepared for them that love Him. But GOD hath revealed them unto us by His SPIRIT; for the SPIRIT searches all things, yea the deep things of GOD." For it is only the SPIRIT of GOD that knoweth the things of GOD. Now we have received the SPIRIT of GOD that we may know the things that are freely given to us of GOD. Which things also says the apostle, "we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the SPIRIT of GOD; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man. For who hath known the mind of the LORD that

he may instruct Him. But we have the mind of CHRIST." Wonderful words! We see the knowledge of "the mystery" running all through them.

Peter tells us that the angels desire to look into those things that are now reported unto us with the HOLY GHOST sent down from heaven (1 Peter i.); and recognises Paul's writings as part of the Scriptures—"in all his epistles" (2 Peter iii. 5, 16).

The lack of the knowledge of the mystery, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, is mainly responsible for the divisions and the failure among Christians the world over. Man's wisdom has been mixed with the wisdom of God; and so having sunk into carnal and worldly ways we have not been able to receive this hidden wisdom; not being perfect, as the same apostle says, we have scarcely been able to receive milk (1 Cor. iii.).

GOD has given His assembly to be in a special relationship with Himself; a heavenly portion which severs from the world by the cross of CHRIST, and unites with CHRIST in resurrection glory. Have we not dropped from our heavenly position right down into the world to mind earthly things (Philippians)? Have we not fallen into an earthly system back from grace to beggarly elements and bondage of law (Galatians)? Have we not sometimes turned to philosophy and vain deceit (Colossians)? Many seem to have lost sight entirely of the assembly's proper hopes, and to be looking for millennial earthly blessings, forgetting that GOD hath blessed *us* with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in CHRIST. Many are expecting to be in "the great tribulation," forgetting that we shall not come into judgment but have passed from death unto life, and that the Lord says He will keep us from that coming hour of trial (John v. 24; Rev. iii. 10).

Prophecy itself is a hopeless confusion to many, because the assembly is not given her special place and relationship with CHRIST in glory, while Israel and the nations will come into GOD's promises for them upon the earth. All who are slain for the testimony of JESUS

during "the great tribulation" will be clothed in white robes and before the throne of God; but the assembly, CHRIST's assembly, *will be with Christ upon His throne in heavenly glory*. The saints in the millennium will not be in resurrection, but when the thousand years are finished, the faithful among them who will not yield to Satan when he is again let loose, will go into the eternal state. The present heavens and the present earth are to be burnt up; but there will be new heavens and a new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness, and "the tabernacle of God shall be with men" (2 Peter; Rev. xx., xxi.).

The undersanding of the mystery—CHRIST *and the assembly*—is the key to the whole Word of God. By the knowledge of it, we are led to understand all God's ways in the past, and in the present, and in the future. We have the mind of CHRIST.

These are Laodicean days, and it is to be noticed that in Colossians ii. 1, the apostle longs most earnestly for them at Laodicea, that they, with all others, should have a full knowledge of the mystery of CHRIST. It is the burden of the apostle; and in Col. iv. 3, he asks their prayers that "God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of CHRIST for which I am also in bonds."

God is calling His people back to the truth of the mystery, without the knowledge of which the assembly's relation to CHRIST, and CHRIST's portion in it, are completely lost to the believer; and a worldly Christianity is soon made to take its place, as far from the truth as darkness from light.

There is no real excuse for us. God looks for repentance; for a returning to Himself; for a separating from evil, and a holding of the truth in love, in obedience to His Word; so maintaining the unity of the body and of the SPIRIT, in the bond of peace, according to the revelation of it given in the several Epistles, especially in 1 Cor. xii.-xiv. This, while serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from heaven, constitutes our Christian calling.

We *are* a heavenly people. We *have* died and *are* risen with CHRIST, and *are* united to Him in glory. We are in CHRIST, and CHRIST *is in us the hope of glory, or we are not Christians at all* (Eph. ii.; Col. ii., iii).

CHRIST is the head of His body, the assembly; we are members of His body; and members one of another. Let us hold fast the Head (Col. ii.).

May all GOD's people, even now, answer to the desire of the apostle, inspired by the SPIRIT of GOD, that the hearts of all may be encouraged, "*being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (Col. ii. 1-3). What a wonderful place GOD has brought us into through our LORD JESUS CHRIST! To Him be all the glory, praise, and power, both now and for ever! Amen. R.J.K.

On Making a Good Start.

(FOR OUR VERY YOUNGEST READERS)

THERE was once a little boy who became a king when he was only seven years old. When his coronation day came, the day upon which he was to be crowned as really king, there was much singing and rejoicing, and people clapped their hands and shouted, "God save the King," just like you and I might do to-day.

The little boy's name was Joash, and he had a special friend whose name was Jehoiada. This friend was a priest, a faithful old man, and one who feared God, and helped young King Joash very much.

As long as this man lived Joash listened to what he told him, and did the things that were right and good in the sight of the LORD. So all went well with his country.

One splendid thing Joash did was to make the priests repair God's house, the temple, which had sadly fallen almost into ruins. But the priests did not work very hard at it, and became very slack in this work. So one

day, after he had been the king for twenty-two years, he found that scarcely anything had really been done. So he commanded the high priest to take a big wooden box and to make a hole in its lid, and to turn it into a huge money-box. When this was done they had to set it beside the altar at the gate leading to the temple.

Then a proclamation was made throughout the country asking people to send their money to help repair God's house at Jerusalem. Each day the big money-box was emptied, and the money put into bags, and then taken out to pay the wages of the carpenters, masons, and all the other workmen who were now busily engaged on the work.

At last the work was finished; everything was perfect once again, and the money left over was used to make vessels of gold and silver to replace those which bad men had stolen from the temple years before.

Jehoiada, the king's friend, was now getting to be a very, very old man; he had lived over one hundred years, and so it was not long before he died.

Then a sad thing happened, for King Joash now listened to some wicked men, who were princes indeed, but who flattered him and persuaded him to do wrong things.

By and by the people imitated their king, and began to leave off going to God's house, and turned right back to the awful worship of idols.

God now sent some good priests to try to win the people back to Himself, and to warn them that disobedience must always be punished. One of these good priests was Jehoiada's own son. But the people now took no notice, and even King Joash forgot all the kindness of his old friend Jehoiada and actually had that good old priest's son stoned to death. It was very, very wicked indeed of him, and he would never have done such a dreadful thing, I am sure, if he had not first of all turned away from God and forgotten Him.

Then came the punishment for all this wrongdoing, as an army of Syrian soldiers marched into the country and started a terrible war there.

The Syrian army was quite a small one, but God allowed it to defeat King Joash's soldiers because of what he had done.

The enemy so frightened Joash that he did another wrong thing, hoping to get them to go away. He actually took the beautiful treasures and things out of God's house and gave them as a present to the King of Syria.

In the end the enemy army marched away, but then Joash was taken very ill, and while he was lying in bed some of his own servants made a plot to kill him, and this they really did. So Joash died, and then they did not even give him a proper funeral. He was not buried in the burying-place of the kings. If you ask, Why? I am afraid the true answer is because he had forsaken the LORD his God, and had led his people to do so many wrong things. What a pity, wasn't it?

Joash is, of course, not the only one who has started well and yet ended badly. But the reason is very much the same.

How often a boy or girl with Christian parents and friends to guide and help him or her while at home, has gone quite wrong when he or she has gone out into the world of school or business! I do hope you won't be like them; and so we each one need to make quite sure that we have the LORD JESUS as our own SAVIOUR and our GUIDE. He is quite willing to be this to each one of us. Then right through life He will be near to shield us from all harm; and, if only we seek to please Him, and day by day ask Him to help us, He will most surely keep us from falling, and guide us safely all our days. And I am quite sure this is what you wish, is it not?
M.G.H.

The great question of the day is whether God is love or love is God.

On Jewry

AT a time, in the not far distant future, the Jewish people will, according to Zech. xii. 3, become a burdensome stone to all who have to do with them.

At present they remain, as for centuries past, the Gentile problem, gravely accentuated, however, from fresh causes. "The centre of Jewry," says a Jewish writer in a recent book, "has shifted to the U.S.A., where more Jews are now living than in any other country in the world"; adding that "New York may now be reckoned the greatest Jewish city in the world."

In a growing literature in America dealing with Jewry as a unique cultural and political force, the claim is constantly urged that "Jews must remain apart, and be Jews in everything," it being perfectly understood that those making this claim have little if any use for Judaism on its orthodox religious side. Exceptional treatment is demanded on the ground of exceptional culture, not on that of religion. For while socially and culturally standing apart from all other races, they yet demand for themselves the best that Western races can give.

It is asserted that through the war, the Balfour mandate, and now the rise and outbreak of Nazism, Jewry has become more conscious of its unity than for centuries past. What does this portend? Most students of the Jewish problem, whether from a purely sociological standpoint or from that of unfulfilled prophecy respecting this remarkable people, feel it is just this reawakened sense of unity that lies behind the present seething unrest and trouble in Palestine, and, indeed, elsewhere also.

The religious question is not the paramount one, indeed, does not enter into it, as Jews can practise their religion anywhere, *as religion*; it is a stirring of the mysterious currents of national consciousness such as has not been realized before by the present generation of this people who dwell alone in the midst of all the nations.

The recent revival of the Hebrew language is in itself significant, and in this connection it is curious to note that long after Hebrew had been discarded by Jewry in favour of European tongues, they yet retained the Hebrew alphabet. As is generally known there were two languages current amongst the Jewish people living in Europe, one "Ladino," a kind of Castilian spoken by the men who drove the Moors out of Spain; the other "Yiddish," the German current in the Rhine Valley at the period when Cologne Cathedral was begun. Both these are still recognisable for what they were, spite of much adaptation to various local dialects as time went on. Hebrew itself, as the national language in common use, seems never to have been customary after the Captivity. The Greek influences of the post-captivity period of Jewish history can be easily traced in the general use of the Septuagint. At Alexandria, where it was made, the Hellenistic Jews not only used it, but gradually attached to it the greatest possible authority; from thence it spread amongst the Jews of the Dispersion, and by the time of our LORD's birth had become the common form in which the Old Testament Scriptures were diffused.

So that for about three centuries before the Fall of Jerusalem the devotional life of Jewry had come under the influence of the Greek language. Subsequently Arabic was adopted widely as being a useful medium of intercourse in the East; then in Europe, central and south-west, the adoption and adaptation of German and Spanish languages modified by local dialects formed the speech of Jewry until very recent days.

Mixed among, yet separate from, other peoples, the Jews have been the objects of epidemics of persecution in Europe ever since the great scattering, dating from the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, when Rome finally destroyed not only the political independence of the Jews, but their national centre of religion also. Their extinction as a race, of course, can never happen, for "the extinction of Jewry would defeat God's purposes for the world," to quote another. Hosea, the prophet,

whose ministry covered some half-century of most fateful years in the history of the race, prophecies, however, exactly what Jewry has been experiencing as "the times of the Gentiles" have been running out: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without statue, and without ephod and teraphaim" (Hosea iii. 4, New Trans.).

Now, however, the national consciousness is fast being awakened, and the Jew is going back to the Holy Land in great numbers, but in spiritual unbelief, and with political ambitions. Not as humble suppliants, nor as penniless vagrants, but culturally the superiors of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine, and in every way causing their superiority to be manifest. This undoubtedly is one of the underlying causes of the present unrest in the Holy Land.

In due course, from a Jewry equipped with every modern invention and discovery that science can supply, the great Jewish Anti-Christ will appear on the scene to usher in the final act of the tragedy of Jewish history. A wealthy, cultured, infidel Jewry will constitute a veritable portent in world history, and already signs of this appear rapidly rising on the horizon.

When it actually arrives, the DAY of the LORD will have come. This phrase does not denote mere size, as so often when used in the Old Testament for "hill of God," "river of God," "the trees of the LORD," but its unparalleled character.

In the term "day of the LORD," the great "day of the LORD," it is always its importance that is stressed. It is always "the day of vengeance of our God"; always a period of open and awful judgment. The Old Testament invariably represents it as a time of displayed Divine government, when God will intervene and deal with the world systems of wickedness, religious and secular alike. Then unbelieving Jewry, cultured, prosperous and insolent, will be marshalled under the banner of "the Leader"—Anti-Christ, whom they will receive and worship. Christendom, too, in all its branches will collapse completely and finally in the "day of the LORD."

The unbelieving Jew, the ungodly Gentile, the merely nominal professor of Christianity, will come under the just but unsparing retribution of that day.

Before that hour of trial, the real church of God, composed of every member of the body of CHRIST, will have been taken out of the scene into the Father's house by CHRIST the LORD Himself according to His own gracious assurance: "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am ye also may be."

Nominal Christendom, however, that great house of *merely Christian profession* (which at present houses all real members of CHRIST); and unbelieving Jewry, its house once swept and garnished but then the household of the Man of Sin, the last and great Anti-Christ, will come into "the day of vengeance of our God." The LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself prophesied of that unbelieving generation (which has not passed away, as He said) that another will come in his own name, and him they would receive.

The true CHRIST, the SENT ONE of the FATHER was refused by Jewry, the fierce accusation of the chief priests being, "He stirreth up the people teaching throughout all Jewry," the gravamen of the charge being "saying that He Himself is CHRIST a King" (S. Luke xxiii. 1-5).

So with every mark of contumely and scorn they rejected and entirely disowned their true Messiah, and wrath came upon them as a nation to the uttermost.

An intelligent Jewish student once remarked to the writer, "Our people [the Jews] made a fearful mistake when they crucified the last of their prophets. Nothing seems to have gone right with us since that time."

But to acknowledge JESUS the NAZARENE as anything more than a great prophet badly treated, was, he felt, quite unthinkable. Still the veil of unbelief lies heavy upon the Jewish heart, however cultured the intellect.

Now at the end of the age they are rapidly returning to the land of their past dishonour and their future blessing. For the "Holy Land" is the delightful land of prophecy where the King shall yet reign in righteous-

ness, and whence the law shall proceed to the ends of the earth.

All human forms of management and mismanagement are doomed to fail. Leagues of Nations, Soviets, Parliaments, Dictatorships alike, all fail to create and maintain true peace, progress and prosperity amongst mankind. The "day of God" will sweep them all away, when the God of heaven sets up the everlasting kingdom of the erstwhile rejected SON of MAN.

Towards this goal things are now rapidly moving, only shadows as yet of the great coming events which will revolutionise world affairs.

Soon our LORD, the LORD, will clear the world stage by the removal to heaven of every member of His body, "in a moment in the twinkling of an eye," and then will the day of the LORD draw on; and when they [the ungodly dwellers on earth] say "Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh."

The ungodly world, full of its discoveries, inventions, schemes of international solidarity, and what-not, will find itself swept by the swift, startling, unerring judgments of the HOLY LORD GOD, Whose longsuffering now is salvation, He not being willing that any should perish.

But, persistently rejected mercy, obstinately defied authority, and outraged love will at length be vindicated in the "day of the LORD," the "day of vengeance of our God."

But we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Peter iii. 13, 14).

W.G.T.

Where there is spirituality, the heart finds a command in the barest hint and the most remote example of the word of God; where there is not, all the commands in both Testaments would be in vain to form *Christian* obedience.

New Book Review

By J. FOSTER KELL.

IT is refreshing to turn to a book like "*THE HEART OF MODERNISM*" (published by the Christian Loyalty Foundation, 29 Paternoster Row, E.C.4). The author, Mr. Leonard J. Dunne, who has obviously closely studied the Modernist Movement, does not mince matters in his wholesale condemnation.

We knew we were going to enjoy this book when early on we read this sentence:

"The revelation of God through JESUS CHRIST, Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification, is the only practical working formula for the regeneration of mankind. The path of pagan theories that trample underfoot the Precious Blood lead but through the quagmires of delusion to the pit of despair."

Mr. Dunne shows by copious documentation (chiefly extracts from *THE MODERN CHURCHMAN*) that the germ and heart of Modernism is to be found in the Established Church. The whole trend of his trenchant criticism shows that the religious world is being permeated with a spiritual pride analogous to the human temporal pride, now manifesting itself in powerful sections of the political world. But whereas Bolshevism or Fascism found its birth in the lower strata of the Nations, Modernism has first shown itself amongst the higher dignitaries of the spiritual world. The author clearly shows that the movement is rapidly gaining ground with the intelligentsia — "the wise and prudent"—and we can be thankful for his wholehearted antagonism. But while labouring the point that the movement has germinated within the heart of the Church of England, he does not offer any explanation of the sad fact that the evil cult found such a fertile soil in which to thrive. Cancer germinates first, we are told, in the stagnant and lifeless cells of the body; and if certain members of the Church (whatever

their denomination) become atrophied, then the arch-enemy of souls has no hard task to start a false sign of life from which Apostate Christendom arises.

The theory of Modernism seems to spring from mere human imagination. Faith there is, but instead of being the beautiful and gracious gift of God, the professed Faith of Modernism is a sublime trust in ONE-SELF—a spiritual exaltation of Man—which finds its political counterpart in the secular world to-day. The principles of Modernism, Mr. Dunne conclusively proves, are *Enmity to the Cross of Christ*, and *antagonism to the necessity of Redemption*; while the motto appears to be “Let us destroy all, that we may build again.” But in what way will the amazing self-confidence of the Modernists, with their disdain of the child-like faith in the BLOOD of the LAMB, avail them when they stand before the Shut Door and hear the words, “*Depart from Me, I know you not,*” unless they meanwhile repent?

While we find Mr. Dunne makes excellent headway when attacking with such vigour, the immorality of the Modernists in accepting paid positions in the Church of England, while expressing their complete scorn of fundamental truths, yet we venture to think that he has been somewhat one-sided in his remarks on Modernistic scholarship. We also did not find the chapter on the “Hallucination Theory” particularly convincing, but this may have been due to the force of the arguments in the rest of the book.

In his general criticism, Mr. Dunne has thought fit to quote many blasphemous sayings of the False Shepherds of the Flock, which make very painful reading; but they are surely terrible enough to warn any unwary Christians from approaching, let alone mixing with, this unholy teaching. Having no doubt as to the authenticity of his quotations, we feel compelled to affirm *that this Modernistic Movement is Satanic*.

We sincerely recommend “The Heart of Modernism” to any inquiring mind, more particularly to those who are in danger of being drawn aside by the teaching of False Shepherds into paths *that at best lead nowhere*,

but more often lead to perdition and despair. So different from the leading of the GOOD SHEPHERD, Who giveth His life for the sheep, and Who leads them "in the paths of righteousness for His Name's Sake." The following quotation appears singularly apposite:

I had ambition by which Sin
The Angels fell.
I climbed, and step by step, O LORD,
Ascended into Hell.

Returning now to Peace and Quiet,
And made more wise,
Let my descent and fall, O LORD,
Be into Paradise.

An Old Appeal

WHERE are the men of God to-day
Who have a faith that lives and moves,
That works and acts and ever proves
That God is faithful, come what may?

Faith always honours God and learns
That God in turn faith honours still.
Awake, O faith, and many fill
With zeal that for God's honour burns!

G.S.P.