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CELEBRATIONS OF THE MEMORIAL.

WE have heard from about 70 celebrations of the Lord's Memorial Supper by various little companies of the consecrated. These varied from two to two hundred in Allegheny, and two hundred and fifty in New York, where the Brooklyn friends also met. As usual on such occasions, there were a number of immersions. Altogether the occasion seems to have been specially blessed to almost all from whom we have heard;--not excepting a few isolated ones who met with the Lord alone.

However, let us not forget that this is specially a season of temptation, and let us continue to "watch and pray," to "stand" and to assist others to stand. "Let him that thinketh he standeth [securely], take heed lest he fall."

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AN EXCELLENT PLAN.

FOR a few years past we have supplied the Scripture text calendars at very low prices; but this year, being unable to secure them at prices that would suit the majority of our readers, who are poor, we got none. Many have expressed regret at not having them, and in our own family we at first experienced quite a loss; but now have found a substitute which serves us much better in some respects. It is this: We sing one of the hymns from Poems and Hymns of Dawn every morning before breakfast. This, with the rendering of thanks at the breakfast-table, constitutes our family worship for the day (being preceded by such personal prayer or communion with the Lord as each may desire,--and the same before retiring at night).

Since very few of the hymns are original, and since they represent the choice thoughts of many of God's saints for the past three hundred years, we may speak freely of them and say that we consider them most beautiful, soul-cheering and spiritual-life awakening. They are prayer, thanks and praise combined, in which all our hearts and voices can and do unite.

We commend this plan to you all. Try it for a week. The collection is so choice that you can scarcely make a poor selection, and if you continue it for a week you will probably want to continue it indefinitely --until we all join our hearts and voices in glory, singing, Allelujah! to him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. To those who cannot sing well now, who must wait until their stammering tongues are changed, but who can and do make melody in their hearts unto the Lord, we suggest the reading aloud of one of the hymns, or, better still perhaps, of one of the poems in the forepart of the book.

Try this! we believe that there is a blessing in it for all who are in heart-harmony with the Lord. It will help to lift your minds from earthly things and the cares of this life and to fix them upon the things of greater worth, the things eternal.

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POEMS AND HYMNS OF DAWN is a book of 494 pages (150 poems and 333 hymns). It is published at \$1.00, but supplied to TOWER readers at wholesale rate, 50 cents by mail, \$5.00 per dozen by express. But as the plan proposed above would require several books for each family, we will make a special offer, good until June 1, of THREE COPIES FOR \$1.00, postage paid by us.

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER.

RECENTLY, says the Catholic Mirror, at a meeting of the Sunset Club, Chicago, Howard L. Smith, a prominent Protestant, surprised his hearers by predicting that

"The Church of the future would be the Catholic Church. He based this not so much on his own knowledge of Catholicism. The Church of the future would be due to organization. The Catholic Church, he said, would overcome the broken sects of Protestantism as easily as the regular army would defeat a mob of strikers. Independence in religion was chaos in religion. Let each man be his own pope, and you have religious anarchy, which is the same thing as sectarianism. Catholicism and Agnosticism [Infidelity] would divide the twentieth century between them."

How remarkable it is that the very liberty which the Bible commends is regarded by many as "religious anarchy." In the early Church each believer was expected to prove individually every item of his belief. They were to accept nothing as a congregation, nor as a denomination. Thus each was to be bound only to Christ, and, so far as others were concerned, each one was to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, and not to be entangled with any human yoke of bondage. They had no denominational "ties," no clerical "fetters," no creed "yoke," no traditional "chains." Each one united to Christ could not do otherwise than "love the brethren," and "love the truth," as well as love the Lord; and this love constituted the only bond that held their hearts and lives together. Love to the Lord made them attentive to his Word through the apostles, and watchful for his providential leadings in all who attempted to teach them in his name--attentive to prove all that they heard, to reject all not in harmony, and to accept and hold fast all that, according to that standard, they found "good."

But now the general sentiment is union: small unions and large unions are proposed; and all who would return to the primitive method of individual liberty will more and more be anathematized as "heretics" and "religious anarchists," just as they were during the dark ages when the outward union was most complete. Let all who are the Lord's stand fast in the liberty which his truth alone can give; but let them avoid arrogance, and in meekness "speak the truth in love."

The following from The Sun (Baltimore) explains itself, and indicates that the way back to Rome can be made sufficiently smooth for English high church clergy.

"A gentleman writes from Italy: I hear that Pope Leo is devoting considerable time daily to the study of the literature bearing upon the question of Anglican orders. He is disposed to abolish the law of compulsory celibacy for the secular clergy, confining its obligation to members of religious orders who take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. It is not generally known that secular priests make no vows, though the law of the Roman Church forbids them to marry, and annuls their marriages if contracted in defiance of its precepts. This is a point of ecclesiastical discipline which applies only to the secular clergy of the Latin rite.

"It is well known that the Oriental clergy of the various Eastern rites who are in communion with Rome are allowed to marry, provided they do so before reception of the order of priesthood. His Holiness, therefore, in order to facilitate the reunion of the Anglican Church with the Roman, is favorable to the extension of the same privilege to the secular clergy of the Latin rite. In point of fact, the sovereign pontiff is well aware that the law of compulsory celibacy has become a dead letter among the parochial clergy throughout South America, from Mexico to Patagonia, and to a great extent also in Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the dependencies of those countries. Cardinal Vaughan and the Anglo-Roman Bishops generally are unfavorable to any change in the existing discipline, but Dr. Brownlow, Bishop of Clifton, and Dr. Hedley, Bishop of Newport and Menevia, are believed to entertain the same sentiments as the Pope on this question."

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A Catholic priest was recently appointed to teach "The Philosophy of St. Thomas," in a Protestant University

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of Amsterdam.

Lord Acton, a Roman Catholic, was recently appointed Regius Professor of Modern History in Cambridge University, in the place of the late Prof. Seeley.

Comment is unnecessary.

The Episcopal Church of the United States proposes a change of its constitution. It is proposed to district the United States into "Provinces," in each of which there shall be a legislative body competent to manage all of the affairs of the Province (as do the State Legislatures in civil affairs).

It is proposed to have a more definite head and mouth than ever before for doctrinal utterances;--that all questions of doctrine shall be submitted to the House of Bishops, whose decisions shall be final. Furthermore, it is proposed to elect one of the bishops a chief, to be called Primus, and in position therefore to correspond to the Roman Pontiff.

This means that four thousand ministers and nearly half a million communicants shall, even more completely than at present, give up the liberty wherewith Christ proposed to make them free, and come completely under a yoke of bondage. It means probably much more. It is probably an outline or skeleton of the great Protestant Union, sure to come, clearly outlined in God's Word as an image or likeness to Papacy.

THE SOCIAL VIEW.

In Manitoba about one-fifth of the population is Catholic, and four-fifths Protestant. It had been the custom to divide the school funds of the State and let each sect have its own schools; but this was abandoned in 1890, and a free secular school system was introduced, similar to that in vogue in the United States. The Roman Catholics have since been fighting to get their share and have their separate schools. They appealed to the Canadian Parliament in the matter, and afterward to the Privy Council of Great Britain, and have been supported in their demands. But the people of Manitoba are so pleased with their present unsectarian schools that they threaten rebellion rather than abandon them.

A leading Manitoba paper says,--

"The restoration will never be made: Manitoba has too keen a sense of justice, too much regard for truth and equity....As a civilized people attempting to realize in a measure the ideals of the nineteenth century, Manitobans will not quietly submit to the preposterous demand that they should turn back the wheels of progress three hundred years."

Both France and Spain have been on the verge of Revolution during the past month. Indeed nothing is more evident than that discontent and revolt are the order of the day in matters religious, political, social and family. What little there is of national cohesion in Europe seems to be largely the result of fear of each other. Take away that fear, and disband the armies as has been proposed, and the result would surely be general revolution and anarchy within two years, probably within one year.

Thus we see the social "earth" ready for the great social conflagration predicted in God's Word--"the day that shall burn as an oven," in which "the proud and all that do wickedly [unjustly] shall be as stubble," the great

"time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." But not yet: the conflagration must not come, the winds of war must not seriously blow, until the servants of God have first been "sealed in their foreheads" (intellectually) with the truth. Then the great storm predicted for twenty-five centuries will come "as a whirlwind." But meantime men speak of the assured peace of Europe, while France finds that her army is inferior to that of Germany by over one hundred thousand men, and proceeds to increase her army as an assurance of peace; and Great Britain finds that her navy is insufficient to maintain her dignity as the mistress of the sea, and will increase her navy.

It seems a difficult matter for human brains to arrange laws which will protect the weaker elements of society from the mentally, physically and financially stronger elements without violating principles of justice and equality. For instance, the Illinois Legislature passed laws to prevent the employment of women in factories more than eight hours per day. The object was to benefit women by such restriction, and to do away with "the sweating system." But the Illinois Supreme Court has decided that the help cannot be constitutionally afforded in this manner; that such a law would be a restraint of a woman's rights to work as long as a man may work if she pleases,--a discrimination as between men and women the State constitution forbids.

It is a sad case: competition and necessities on the one hand are grinding the life out of fellow beings, yet when benevolent people would render help justice, which all are bound to respect, says, Holding that men and women are equal, no legislation for or against either sex can be allowed.

The U.S. Income Tax decision is somewhat similar. The tax is upon incomes above \$4000 per year, under the general sentiment that those people who are by reason of superior ability or position so much more favorably situated than the masses should in justice pay a larger proportion of the expenses of government, etc.

The U.S. Supreme Court has been called upon to decide as to the constitutionality of the law. A portion of the Court holds that the law is entirely unconstitutional--that no tax can be applied to one man that does not apply to another in equal proportion; that if, for instance, an Income Tax of two per cent be collected, it must apply proportionately to every man, whatever his income. The remainder of the Court upheld the law so far as it relates to profits or income not already taxed; but held that income from bonds and from real estate, having already paid taxes, cannot constitutionally be taxed again more than the real estate, bonds, etc., of others.

In a word, the Constitutions, State and National, were designed to secure liberty and equality to all, male and female, rich and poor. If laws could be made to discriminate between males and females on one point, other laws might be made that would reduce one sex to slavery and make the other sex the masters. And if laws could be made to pinch the rich, the time might come when laws would be passed to pinch and enslave the poor. Hence these Constitutions were formed to prevent any partiality.

The fact is that mankind are not at all equal; and hence, all being free, the inferior either in strength or intellect, as well as the superior in heart and benevolence, are apt to suffer more or less from the intellectual and financial giants, and need a paternal government that will recognize the inequalities and protect without enslaving the inferiors. But where can such a government be found? Who can be trusted? The one and only hope before the groaning creation is that set before us in the words: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Ah, yes! when that Millennial Kingdom comes, it will be indeed "the desire of all nations," although now they know it not.

The London Spectator, after telling of the ravages of Influenza during the past winter doubling the death rate, suggests that the world is resting in a fancied security as to safety from plagues such as have visited the world in the past,--for instance, "the black death," with which physicians could do little,--that such or worse may come again, and gives some reasons for fearing them. It mentioned a fever approaching Europe from Russia, and now says:--

"The disease which, when we wrote, had just crossed the German frontier, has now reached the low quarters of Berlin, causing many deaths and much suffering. It is a fierce fever which attacks the mouth, causing the loss of all teeth in a few hours, after which it kills, or departs leaving its victims toothless. Dr. Virchow believes it to be the 'foot-and-mouth disease of cattle,' probably transmitted to the human subject by diseased milk. It is, however, infectious, and moves Westward. We shall know more about it in a few days; but if it reached our shores, it would be a terrible addition to our stock of painful complaints,--and, we repeat, there is no reason, except our short experience of exemption, why it should not."

The Scriptures indicate that pestilences, as well as physical convulsions, will mingle with anarchy in making up the sum of the great trouble approaching, which will be a judgment from the Almighty to reduce the world to humility and submission, and make mankind ready to hear "Him that speaketh from heaven," whose voice shall thus "shake the earth [society], and also the heavens [ecclesiasticism]."
--Heb. 12:26-29.

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

"Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and, being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."--Heb. 5:7-10.

WE take up the examination of this scripture under the following five heads:--(1) In the days of his flesh; (2) What he feared, and from what he was saved; (3) He was a Son; (4) In what sense he was made perfect; and (5) To whom he is the author of eternal salvation.

These words of the Apostle give us an insight to the experiences of our dear Lord which help us to appreciate the load he bore for us in the days of his flesh. We notice particularly this expression--

"IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH,"

because there are some who claim that in our Lord's existence there can be no distinction between days when he was in the flesh, and days when he was no longer in the flesh; for, say they, his resurrection life is his humanity, his flesh, glorified. Others there are who claim that he had no existence prior to his human life. But the reverse of both these ideas is not only implied in this statement of the Apostle, but is also definitely expressed in other scriptures, e.g., "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same;" he "was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" "Though he was rich, for our sakes he became poor." Then he said, "My flesh I will give for the life of the world." (See Heb. 2:14; John 1:14; 2 Cor. 8:9; John 6:51.) Yes, his human body was the body of his humiliation, the "body prepared" for sacrifice (Heb. 10:4,5), and which was sacrificed; and which, being sacrificed, was never taken back: it was given as the price of our redemption. Therefore he no longer lives the life in the flesh, the human life, but, having sacrificed that, he is now highly exalted and ever liveth as our divine high priest. "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, know we him [so] no more."--2 Cor. 5:16.

His humiliation, therefore, was not an eternal humiliation, but was followed by a glorious exaltation, even to the divine nature and to the glorious body which belongs to that nature--"the express image of the Father's person" (Heb. 1:3), who dwelleth in light which no man can approach

unto, but which Christ's faithful followers may one day see; for it is written that "we shall be like him, and see him as he is"--not as he was. For this he prayed while he was yet in the flesh, saying, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me shall be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."--John 17:24.

And yet, though changed, our Lord is the very same

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Jesus; for, says the Apostle, "He that descended [into the grave] is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." (Eph. 4:10.) The change of nature from the human to the divine no more destroyed his identity in this case than did his change from the spiritual to the human nature at his incarnation. Of himself he said after his resurrection, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore." --Rev. 1:4,18.

It is with grateful hearts that we accept the statements of Scripture that the Son of God was indeed made flesh; and we thank God also that his days in the flesh were numbered and few. With him, as with us, they were "few days and full of trouble." Especially after his consecration to the work of sacrifice, they were days of affliction, sorrow, disappointment and trouble, days that led him often to the throne of the heavenly grace to find help in time of need. It was our Lord's custom, therefore, often to seek the place of prayer after the busy days of service were ended. The mountains and the deserts were his closets, and not infrequently he spent the whole night in prayer.

It was from these seasons of secret communion with God that he drew spiritual strength, consolation and comfort. They were seasons of precious communion when he could open up his heart to the Father as to no one else; when he could tell him all his sorrows and burdens and fears; and when the Father manifested himself to him in tokens of loving approval and sustaining grace.

WHAT HE FEARED, AND FROM WHAT HE WAS SAVED.

What, says some one, in surprise, did our Lord have any fears? Yes, the above words of the Apostle indicate the great mental conflict through which the Lord passed on our behalf "in the days of his flesh." This conflict began in the temptations of the wilderness, immediately following his baptism, and reached its culminating point in the garden of Gethsemane, where, probably as never before, "he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared."

That which the Lord feared was not that the love or the promises of God would fail. He knew that "without faith it is impossible to please God," that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that all his conduct and dealings

are founded on the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, from which to vary in the least iota would be a moral impossibility. But he knew, too, that the plan of human salvation was all made dependent upon the obedience of the anointed high priest to every jot and tittle of the law concerning him, as shown in the typical service of the tabernacle.* Not only must the sacrifice be made, but it must be made and offered exactly as prescribed. If the typical high priest, Aaron, had at any time failed to conform to the directions given for the offering (See Lev. 9:16), if he had forgotten or ignored any part of the directions, or if he had substituted some feature of his own ideas, he would not have been allowed to sprinkle the blood of such imperfect sacrifice upon the mercy-seat; his offering would not have been accepted: he would have died, and could never have come out and blessed the people.--Lev. 16:2,3.

Thus we see that in undertaking the great work of redemption, the high priest not only bore in himself the issues of life and death for the whole human race, but for himself as well. Figuratively speaking, he took his own life also in his hands. No wonder, then, if, under the weight of his responsibility, the Lord feared. The tension of the great trials to which he was subjected was too great for even the perfect human nature unaided by divine grace. And therefore it was that he so often sought the place of prayer. Consider the great fight of afflictions through which he passed--the subtle and deceptive temptations in the wilderness,+ the contradictions of sinners against himself, and the base ingratitude of those he came to save: consider also his poverty, his loss of friends, his labors and weariness, and homelessness, his bitter and relentless persecutions, and finally his betrayal and dying agony. Surely the tests of endurance and of obedience to the exact requirements of the law of sacrifice under these circumstances were most crucial tests. What carefulness it wrought in the Lord; for he feared, lest the promise having been left him of entering into the rest that remaineth and the glory to follow the day of atonement, he should come short of the full requirements of his office as a priest to render acceptable sacrifice. So also, says the Apostle (Heb. 4:1), should we fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it.

When the Lord came to the last night of his earthly life, then it was that the questions came to his mind with increased force, Have I thus far done everything in exact accordance with the will of God? and now, in full view of the agony it will cost, am I able to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs? Can I endure, not only the physical agony, but also the ignominy and shame and cruel mockings? and can I do it all so perfectly as to be entirely acceptable with God in my own righteousness? Can I endure to see my disciples scattered and dismayed and my life-work apparently destroyed, my name and the cause of God covered with infamy, and my enemies triumphant and boastful?

Such was our Lord's last conflict. Doubtless the powers

of darkness were busy in that awful hour, taking advantage of the circumstances and of his weakness and weariness to discourage his hope and to fill his mind with fears that after all he should fail, or had failed to do the work acceptably, and that a resurrection therefore was by no means certain. No wonder that even the perfect human heart sank before such considerations, and that an agony of emotion brought great drops of bloody sweat. But did he yield to the discouragement and give up the struggle when

*See TABERNACLE SHADOWS, page 78.

+See our issue of Aug. 1, '94.

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the crucial test was thus upon him? No; he took these human fears to his Heavenly Father, "to him who was able to deliver him out of death," in order that his human will might be reinforced by divine grace to go forward and complete his sacrifice acceptably to God--to freely submit to be led away as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so to open not his mouth in self-defence.--Isa. 53:7.

And his prayers to the Father were not in vain: "he was heard in that he feared." Though his words were few

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because no words could express the emotions of his soul, his chastened spirit was all the while making intercession for him with groanings that could not be uttered. (Rom. 8:26.) And God sent an angel to comfort and minister unto him; to assure him still of the divine favor, and thus to give him fresh courage, strength of mind and steadiness of nerve to endure all that was before him, even unto death. With this assistance of divine grace our dear Lord went forward from that moment with undaunted courage to finish the work that was given him to do. Calmly he could come now and say to his beloved, but weary and bewildered, disciples, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." The bitterness of the mental conflict was now over, and the light of heaven shining into his soul had chased away the deep gloom that had hung over him like a funeral pall, making him exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Yes, "he was heard in that he feared," the fear was all taken away, and, strong in the strength which God supplied, he felt that he was able to offer the acceptable sacrifice, to meet every jot and tittle of the requirement of the law in doing it, and hence that his salvation out of death, his resurrection, was sure.

This fear on the Lord's part was not a sinful fear: it was a fear such as we also who are striving to walk in his footsteps are told to have, lest we fail to realize the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions that are positive and unalterable. (Heb. 4:1.) It was a fear begotten,

not of doubt of the Father's ability and willingness to fulfil all his promises, but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father's course of action, of the inflexible law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to his fulfilling of his covenant of sacrifice, while at the same time he began to realize that of himself as a human being, though perfect, his heart and flesh would fail unless reinforced by divine grace. The Psalmist expressed this fear of the Lord, and the source from which his help came, when he said, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (Psa. 73:26.) It was a filial fear, a fear entirely compatible with his relationship to God as a recognized Son; for

THOUGH HE WERE A SON

yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. His continual recognition by Jehovah as a Son was a guarantee of his perfection, and to sin at any time would have been to forfeit that relationship. On the same principle, we, the Church, are recognized as sons of God, because we have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by faith.

And yet, though he was a recognized Son, and hence perfect, without sin, the Apostle speaks of him as being made perfect--as being perfected in some sense through a process of experience--of experience of humiliation and suffering. In what sense, then, we inquire, was he perfected? The answer is implied in the words of the text--"Yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and, being made perfect [in this lesson], he became," etc. Although he was a recognized Son of God in whom the Father was always well pleased, and one who had never disappointed in the slightest degree the fondest hopes of that righteous Father; although he had always recognized the Father as the source of his being, and the fountain of all wisdom, goodness and grace, and as that superior Being to whom he owed the deepest gratitude for life and all its manifold blessings, in whom also dwelt all wisdom and honor and glory and power, and whose perfect will was therefore the supreme law, the expression of the most perfect righteousness and truth, the profoundest wisdom and the deepest love and grace; to whom, therefore, was due the most loyal and loving obedience at all times and under all circumstances; and although he was a Son who had always recognized and delighted to do the Father's will; yet he was not counted perfect in the sense of that established and demonstrated character which was the necessary requirement for the priestly office to which he was called. For this office he must be proved beyond all peradventure by the severest tests, and that before many witnesses, in order that all might know the strong foundation upon which they could build their hopes. It was for this purpose that his sense of loyalty was put to the severe test which it met in Gethsemane. Possibly even our Lord himself did not realize the strength of his righteous character until brought face to face with this

last trial. There he was tried and proved to the uttermost, and under the fiery ordeal his character, always perfect to the full measure of its testing, gained by divine grace its glorious perfection of completeness.

Thus, through suffering, he learned obedience to the perfect will of God down to the lowest depths of self-abnegation; and God permitted it so to be, because such proving was necessary, both for the development and manifestation of that perfection of character which would be worthy of the high exaltation to which he was called.

It should ever be borne in mind that perfection of being and perfection of character are two different things. Perfection of being is the work of God, while perfection of character is the work of the intelligent creature, wrought out in obedience to divine law and under the divine direction and supervision. Adam was a perfect being, innocent, free and glorious in his pristine beauty; but in the work of character-building he soon failed, and hence lost his perfection. Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant: at first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love; frequent

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watering with the showers of his grace; much cultivating through the applied knowledge of his character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience; and then, when thus developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. And, little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace until it is finally fixed, developed, established, perfected--through suffering.

In the case of our Lord, this valuable plant of character, perfect in its infancy, maintained its perfection through all the tests applied to it, until it was finally made perfect in completeness, being established, strengthened, settled. This brings us to the last topic of our text, viz.,--

TO WHOM IS CHRIST THE AUTHOR OF ETERNAL SALVATION?

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."

There is much food for thought in this introductory phrase, "And being made perfect,"--and that, too, as previously shown, through the painful discipline of suffering. Being thus made perfect, he is now a suitable one to fill the office of a high priest, a mediator between God and men. This office, it is declared, he will fill on behalf of all men who obey him. The disobedient and wilful, who do not love the right ways of the Lord, and who have no desire to walk in them, will receive none of the benefit of his mediation; but to those who do obey him he will be "a merciful and faithful high priest;...for in that he

himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor [to assist, comfort, relieve] them that are tempted.

Ah, that was why he was first made perfect through suffering. The heavenly Father knew through what suffering, ignominy, shame and sorrow his beloved followers all through the Gospel age must pass. His omniscient eye foresaw the fagot, the torch, the rack, and the thousand refinements of cruelty with which Satanic ingenuity would fight the Church on her journey through this wilderness to the promised land. He foreknew how the fiery darts of the wicked, even bitter words, would wound them (Psa. 64:2,3), and therefore "It became him [Jehovah]...to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10.) He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, so that we might know that we have a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and so come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:15,16.) Ah, how carefully and wisely our heavenly Father foresaw and considered the interests of all his people! Through these glimpses of his character and dealings we can see how true were our Lord's words to his disciples, --"The Father himself loveth you."

But, aside from the process of perfecting for the office of priesthood,--through suffering,--there is the fact of the perfection of our High Priest, to be considered for our comfort, satisfaction and consolation. He is one who, though when surrounded by sin and tempted in all points to sin, yet "knew no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth." He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," yet acquainted with our griefs and bearing our sorrows. Through bitter experiences he was perfected as our High Priest--to mediate for us (1), by presenting to God an acceptable sacrifice which made our salvation a legal possibility; (2), by undertaking to cleanse, purge and purify us until we also can stand approved of God and blameless --a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

The absolute perfection, both personal and official, of our great High Priest, and the fact that he was ordained of God for this office, is the strongest possible demand and incentive for the Church's obedience to him, just as the

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heavenly Father's perfection and office were the all-sufficient reasons to our Lord for his obedience to the Father. God has not set over us a novice, nor one actuated by selfishness, nor by any ignoble motive; but he has made us a great High Priest whose every command is wise and good and in love calculated to lead us on from grace to grace until we also, like him, shall be established, strengthened, settled.

The discipline through which he leads to this glorious end must of necessity be, in some measure at least, such as he himself experienced, a discipline of suffering. And since the Church is called, not only to perfection in righteousness,

but also to share with Christ in the priestly office as members of his body, it is theirs also to follow him in the pathway of humiliation and sacrifice, even unto death. To obey him now, in this age, signifies all of this; for this is the will of God and the will of Christ, even our sanctification.

--1 Thes. 4:3.

In submitting ourselves fully to this great High Priest, the Church has the fullest assurance of his love, of his perfect integrity of character and purpose, of his superior wisdom and grace, and that in all things he is actuated by the purest and loftiest principles of virtue, love and benevolence. Never once has he been swayed from the most exact line of perfection, though assailed by the fiercest temptations. Every exhibition and testimony of his character inspires the fullest confidence, so that obedience to him signifies progress toward perfection at every step of the way. And to those who follow in this way he is the author of eternal salvation. Praise God for such a High Priest!--glorious in his perfection and glorious in his office, one touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but himself having no infirmities, no shortcomings, no sins. If he were an imperfect human being with only some superior qualifications, but liable like ourselves to err, to fail in judgment, or to be moved by selfishness or inferior considerations of policy, or who with a beam in his own eye would seek to extract the mote from ours, well might we fear to commit ourselves to his direction, and wonder why the Almighty gave us such a high priest. But our High Priest is not so. His

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perfection is testified by Jehovah himself, and his great love for us has been manifested in a thousand ways, chiefly in that he gave himself for us.

Previous to his incarnation the evidences of our Lord's loyalty to the will of God--which always was the law of righteousness--were the acts of delightful service in cooperation with God in the works of creation and in things pertaining thereto. The humbling to human conditions was a step down from that exalted service, yet cheerfully and gladly undertaken. Then followed the trials of his earthly life; and last of all came the severe test of Gethsemane and Calvary. Here was a test of his fidelity to God which would cost him all that he had. Beyond this he could hope for nothing, save by the mercy and love of God, to whose wisdom, love and power he commended his spirit. (Luke 23:46.) It was indeed a crucial test, and though at the time he evidently could not see the necessity for every feature of it (Matt. 26:39,42,44), he nevertheless knew that the love of God was too great to allow a needless pain to afflict his beloved Son, and therefore he trusted him where he could not at the time trace his inscrutable ways.

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PRIESTCRAFT OPPOSED TO LIBERTY.

SOME of the friends write us that their friends, ministers, etc., upon learning that it is the custom amongst us to celebrate the Memorial of our Lord's death, in little groups, or even alone when there are no others who appreciate and desire to commemorate it, have expressed astonishment, and pronounced such doings sacrilegious; --declaring that only the "clergy" have the right to administer to themselves or others the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood.

We reply that the entire expression of our Master's will, and the only authority upon the subject, is found in the New Testament; and there we find no restriction, no limitation, except such as every true Christian can answer to,--faith in the precious blood of Christ, and consecration to the Redeemer's will and work.

The entire theory and arrangement marked by the terms "clergy" and "laity" is of Papal origin, and was arranged with the special object of binding and blinding God's children by taking from them the very liberty wherewith Christ made them free. Our Lord made no restriction as to who should serve it or give thanks for it, but intimated that all were to be ready to serve and in honor to prefer one another. His simple expressions were "eat ye all of it," and "drink ye all of it." Neither did the Apostles place any restrictions on the matter, nor say that when the clergy may please to prepare and bless and distribute, the laity may eat of the Lord's Supper. What restrictions did they place, if any? Like the Lord, they placed none, but advised that "a man examine HIMSELF" as to his worthiness to partake of the emblems. (1 Cor. 11:28.) It was not the "clergy" that were to examine and determine who might partake, but each one whom the Son had made free was to use his own freedom and examine himself before God and in the light of God's Word.

The Apostles knew nothing about "clergy" and "laity," and those words do not occur in the Holy Scriptures: they were a part of Papacy's invention for keeping the masses subject to the priests. The Apostle Peter, whom they falsely style the first pope, contradicts all such popish ideas by declaring that the entire Church, including the very humblest one united by faith to Christ the Head, constitute together God's Royal Priesthood, God's Holy Nation, God's Peculiar People.--1 Pet. 2:9.

As a part of the scheme of the Papal priesthood for their own exaltation as a special or "clerical" class, it was assumed, without the slightest warrant of Scripture, (1) that there was a special or "clerical" class; (2) that only such are authorized to teach, preach, baptize, bury the dead, read the Scriptures, or arrange for a celebration of the Lord's Supper. The evident design was to fasten with the cords

of priestcraft and superstition the infant a few days old (for the baptism of believers was changed to sprinkling of infants), and to keep those tightly drawn until the last spark of consciousness expired; and then the theory of masses and prayers for the dead was not only to get money but also to teach that the priestly cords extended beyond the present life, beyond the grave, and that the eternal blessedness or misery of every being was at their disposal. Can we wonder that our ignorant priestridden fathers of the dark ages feared the priests and regarded them as beings of a different nature than themselves?

One of the strongest of these superstitious cords was the one associated with the Lord's Supper. This cord was doubled and twisted several times and made very strong and sacred, under the claim that literal bread and wine had to have a miracle performed upon them so as to change them into the actual body and blood of the Lord Jesus; for it was and is yet claimed by Papacy that in their Mass Christ is recreated by the priest, and then killed or sacrificed afresh

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each time the Mass is celebrated for those special persons or sins for whom the Mass is performed.

The doctrine of the Trinity added to the homage paid to the priesthood; for it was said, and with reason, that if the priest can create Christ out of bread and wine (by merely pronouncing a few Latin words over it), he must, if Christ be God the Father, be considered able to create the great Creator of the universe by virtue of special power and authority of office conferred upon him. No wonder the people, the "laity," worshipped the "clergy," and revered and obeyed them as though they were God.

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But the people were not thereby lifted up and blessed; for nothing but the Truth sanctifies, and the Truth makes free and is in opposition to bondage.

The Great Reformation of the sixteenth century made a wonderful and blessed change in many respects, not only with those who became Protestants against these enslavements of priestcraft, but also in that those still fully enslaved were thereafter less tightly bounden.

But even those who thought that they had gotten free had been only partially released. Some of the cords were snapped asunder at once, but others were replaced by smaller and less noticeable cords, which nevertheless are very strong upon Protestants. They still retained the words "clergy" and "laity;" and, although robbed of much of their power, those words still imply a wide gulf between two classes of sheep in the Great Shepherd's fold.

Hindrance to Bible study was a cord that was snapped promptly, but some Protestants still seek to restrain that liberty by implying that only the clergy are competent to explain the meaning of the Bible. The Protestant clergy still seek

to give the inference that none but the "clergy" are commissioned to preach, but they rarely express themselves plainly upon the subject, knowing that the Bible recognizes no such special "rights" as they would wish the common people to infer. So, too, generally by inference and custom, they give the impression that baptism and burying of the dead belong to them. And while Protestants wholly reject the Papal doctrine of the Mass, and with it the thought that Christ is recreated by the officiating minister or priest, so as to be sacrificed afresh, yet they carry with them a portion of the shadow of the error. They have a feeling that in some way which they cannot explain, and for some reason not given in the Bible, it would be sacrilege for any one not of the "clergy" class to pass the emblems of the Redeemer's body and blood. Well, priestcraft is surely in danger wherever the Word of God is clearly understood; and ZION'S WATCH TOWER is published for no other purpose than to help God's benighted children out of the blindness and bondage put upon them by Satan, and to assist them into the light and liberty wherewith the Son makes free.

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JESUS BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST.

--MAY 12, MARK 14:53-64;--MATT. 26:47-75;
LUKE 22:47-65; JOHN 18:2-27.--

Golden Text--"He is despised and rejected of men."--Isa. 53:3.

MARK 14:53. Jesus was first led to Annas (John 18:13), who, although deposed by the Romans, was the rightful high priest according to the law, the office being for life, and he was probably so regarded by the Jews, who, therefore, sought counsel of him first. His son-in-law, Caiaphas (the same who had prophesied that it was expedient that one man should die for the people--John 18:14), was the acting high priest appointed by the Romans. Apparently, Annas agreed with the general sentiments of the rulers, and, after asking Jesus a few questions about his doctrine and his disciples, sent him bound to Caiaphas.--
John 18:19-24.

Since it was contrary to the Jewish law to hold a session of the Sanhedrin for the trial of capital offences by night, and this being the night of the paschal supper, making it still more objectionable, it is clear that this was an irregular meeting of this assembly of the nation's representatives, drawn together by common consent to participate in the crime of condemning their Messiah, Jehovah's Anointed. From it, however, were carefully excluded, evidently, a few such men as Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus (John 19:38,39; 7:50,51) and probably a few others known to

be favorably inclined toward the new teacher. They probably knew nothing of it.

Verses 55-59. What an astonishing fact is here stated: that the great men of the most favored nation on earth, --the learned men, the wise men, the rulers, the men of years and experience, the religious teachers--should thus deliberately, and of long premeditation, wickedly conspire against the purest and most noble character that had ever graced the earth. Not only had they frequently deputed emissaries to catch him in his words as he taught in public, but finally they had bribed an apostate disciple to betray him and a band of Roman soldiers to arrest him, although there was no charge against him. And then this august, learned and dignified assembly, having secured their hated prisoner, busied themselves to find some two witnesses whose testimony should agree together, according to the requirement of the law (Deut. 19:15), in order to his condemnation. They found many who willingly bore false witness against him, but none whose witness agreed together.

Verses 60-62. Failing in their effort to satisfy this requirement of the law, the high priest then endeavored to force Jesus to criminate himself, saying, "Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?" But he (wisely) held his peace and answered nothing, knowing that the truth was not desired and would avail nothing with these men who so warmly cherished murder in their hearts. And, further, he had no disposition to defend himself, knowing that his hour was come for the sacrifice of his life. But when further urged to express himself by the inquiry --"Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?"-- knowing that his reply would be like the signing of his death warrant, he deliberately answered, "I am," and added this prophecy--"And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

This prophecy compassed the certainty of his death and resurrection, and pointed to his return in the end of the Gospel age in power and great glory--the power and glory of his Kingdom, which he had previously affirmed was not to be of this world, or dispensation, of which Satan is the prince (John 14:30), but of the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness.--Heb. 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:13.

This frank and fearless acknowledgment of his divine origin and appointment as the long predicted Messiah, the Savior of Israel and the world, was taken as blasphemy, and the hypocritical high priest, whose very robes were symbolic of the blessed one who stood in their midst fulfilling to the letter the predictions of the prophets, rent his clothes in token of astonishment and horror at such blasphemy, saying, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned

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him to be guilty of death"--the prescribed punishment for blasphemy.--Lev. 24:16; Deut. 18:20.

Thus fell the Jewish hierarchy into the ditch of unbelief

and crime, and the masses of the people, who had shifted upon them their personal responsibility in the matter of receiving and rejecting Christ, considering first whether any of the Pharisees or of the rulers believed on him, fell with them, crying, "His blood be on us and on our children." Well hath the Psalmist said, "It is better to trust in the Lord [in the word of his truth] than to put confidence in man; it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." Let Christians of the present day heed this in this corresponding period of the Gospel age, when again the unfolding of truth in its due time is bringing the professed people of God to a crisis "which shall try every man's work [of faith], of what sort it is." If we lean upon human props, we shall surely fall; but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

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JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

--MAY 19, MARK 15:1-15;--MATT. 27:1-30;
LUKE 23:1-25; JOHN 18:28-40; 19:1-16.--

Golden Text--"But Jesus yet answered nothing, so that Pilate marvelled."

SINCE the informal meeting of the Sanhedrin described in the preceding lesson could not give a legal sentence before sunrise, this morning meeting and consultation were merely for the purpose of ratifying the conclusions then reached. They then delivered Jesus bound unto Pilate, the whole company escorting him thither to make sure that their purpose should be accomplished.--Luke 23:1.

Verses 2-5. The wicked shrewdness of the Sanhedrin, in preferring the charge of blasphemy, for its effect upon the people before whom they desired to appear very zealous for the law, while an entirely different, but equally false, set of charges was brought against him before Pilate, the Roman governor, who cared nothing for their religious ideas, is very manifest. The accusation brought before Pilate involved the charge of treason, a charge most likely to arouse the indignation and wrath of the Roman rulers. They accused him of seditious agitation, of prohibiting the payment

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of tribute money, and of assuming the title of King of the Jews, and thus apparently of conspiring against Caesar and the Roman government.

While the second charge was entirely false (Matt. 22:21), the other two had an appearance of truth, and to these were added numerous petty individual charges. But to none

of them did the Lord make reply, so that Pilate marvelled that he made no effort at self-defence in the midst of such danger.

Verses 6-14. The several efforts of Pilate to release his innocent prisoner, who, he discovered, had been delivered to him for envy, were unavailing before the boisterous mob who, instigated by their rulers, loudly clamored for his death, and that by the most ignominious and cruel method, crucifixion, so that his memory should ever be covered with infamy.

Verse 15. Then Pilate, who was influenced more by considerations of policy than of principle, willing to satisfy the people, delivered Jesus to be scourged and crucified, yet at the same time protesting the innocence of his prisoner and washing his hands in token of his own innocence in thus delivering up to them this just person. Not until he himself was threatened by the mob to be reported to Caesar as one hostile to the government and a traitor to his trust in encouraging seditions and conspiracy against the government, did he relinquish his efforts to save Jesus.--John 19:12-16; Matt. 27:24,25.

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ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Sincerely desiring to render some assistance in the service of the truth revealed in the Divine Word, but realizing that there are now few opportunities open to me to engage in the present harvest work, I have concluded to furnish some means by which others better qualified may be enabled to carry forward that work. I own two 80-acre tracts of unimproved land in southern Illinois (Jefferson County). It is my wish that this land should be sold. Accordingly I have deeded these 160 acres of land to you, and desire that you sell them to the best possible advantage, and use the proceeds according to your best judgment in spreading the true gospel of a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, with a full opportunity for all to be blessed thereby with everlasting life by obedience to the terms of the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ.

May the Lord graciously accept, use and bless my offering.
Your Sister in Christ, CAROLINE BALDWIN.

[Sister Baldwin's gift to the Lord's cause is accepted and greatly appreciated. The land is for sale; and the proceeds will be used to the best of our judgment in the Lord's service. May the divine blessing rest upon both giver and gift.--EDITOR.]

DEAR BRETHREN:--About sixty brethren and sisters assembled here [Chicago] to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brother John and I spent a few minutes in trying to show the necessity of our Lord's death, as a man, for the redemption of the human race. You are well aware that a great deal is being said, to-day, about the example of Christ, but very little about his sacrifice. In fact, his sacrifice is being almost entirely ignored. Why is this? Is it not because we are living in the day when "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand?" Is it not because the cross of Christ has become foolishness to the thousands, although it still remains "the power of God and the wisdom of God" unto them which are called? God forbid that we should in any way detract from or belittle the perfect example which our blessed Lord left us. His example was wonderful. Indeed, too much cannot be said about it. It will be well for us to consider Jesus in his perfect character and perfect example, and endeavor to become like him, following in his footsteps. For if we fail to do so, we will be sure to come short of the promised reward, which will be given simply to the overcomers. But while we are considering Christ's character and example,

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which were absolutely perfect, let us not forget that we were not redeemed by these.

The Word of God very plainly teaches that our Lord Jesus was (1) perfect in character; holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26); that he was (2) perfect in his organism; for he kept God's perfect law, which would have been impossible without a perfect organism, was "crowned with glory and honor" of perfect manhood (Heb. 2:9) and was "without spot or blemish" (1 Pet. 1:19); that he was (3) perfect in his example, which we should endeavor to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21.) But the Word of God very plainly teaches, also, that while Christ's character, organism and example were all absolutely perfect; and without this perfection he would not have been acceptable to God as man's ransom or substitute in death; yet it required something else to redeem us. "The man Christ Jesus" must give himself "a ransom for all."

We were "redeemed [not with the example, but] with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Pet. 1:19)--which was "shed for many [all] for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26:28.) "We have redemption [not through his example, but] through his blood." (Col. 1:14.) He has been set forth to be "a propitiation through faith [not in his example, but] in his blood."--See Rom. 3:24-26; 1 John 2:2; 4:10.

Thank God for "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son," which "cleanseth us from all sin!" (John 1:7) for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins.--Heb. 9:22; Matt. 26:28.

We tried to show how we "ate of the flesh of the son

of man" and "drank his blood," and thereby passed from death unto life (justification); how we became part of the one loaf by consecration; and how, after having become part of the loaf, we are to be broken, "suffer with Christ," in order that we may "reign with him."

Your brother in Christ, M. L. McPHAIL.

DEAR BROTHER:--The congregations in Brooklyn, Yonkers and New York, including some from other near-by places, united for baptism service and the Lord's Supper. The baptism service was held at a Disciples church in the afternoon. After remarks by Brother Blunden, sixteen symbolized their consecration by immersion. In the evening, previous to the Memorial Service, Brother Martin explained portions of the Gospels, showing how our Savior spent himself unto death for us. Brother Blunden was requested to take the charge of the Memorial service, which he did, introducing the subject and explaining very briefly its meaning. There were at least two hundred and fifty present, and, with very few exceptions, all were in the race for the prize.

It was a grand, spiritual feast for us all. Not a jar nor an inharmonious spirit amongst us. All seemed to receive a blessing. Yours in the one faith, EDWIN C. MOTT.

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DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:--At the request of the Church at Philadelphia, I met with them, after making arrangements with Bros. Gillis and Jackson to be with the little company at our house. At 2 P.M. we met to consider the subject of baptism, and at 4 P.M. we adjourned for this service to a small church building kindly put at our disposal. Four brethren and six sisters symbolized by water the burial of their wills into the will of their Redeemer and Lord.

Between forty and fifty participated in the Memorial service, which was preceded by a praise and testimony meeting. The testimonies, in which nearly all took part, showed how firmly every brother and sister was grounded on the true foundation, Christ Jesus.

The Church in Philadelphia is doing a good work. How wonderfully the truth is spreading! May every one of the saints see his opportunity (the time is getting short) to use our talents in the Harvest work. While we cannot all serve in the same way, every one of us can use the talents which he or she possesses. May we all be up and doing, and not sleep as others, but work while it is called to-day, for "the night cometh wherein no man can work." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Your brother in our Redeemer, HENRY WEBER.

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DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER RUSSELL:--I am glad that a few of us are still striving to walk the narrow way and trust that another year will still find his work in our hands. The interest here is increasing.

We are very much interested in a little girl, not quite 13 years old, that I found in my canvass. When I called at her home, she met me at the door, and insisted on my coming in. She said, "I am very much interested in Bible study, and would like to talk to you." I found her to be very earnest and well versed in the Bible. Since then she has read DAWN nearly through, and accepts it as far as she can understand. She is such a happy Christian, and says she has nothing to live for only to do the Lord's will.

Yours in the Master's service, MRS. L. P. BEELER.

[The above, and other cases show the readiness with which a child's mind, unprejudiced by human philosophies, can grasp the truth. Let us not fail to let our light shine before the children, also.

Seeds sown in childhood, whether good or bad, take deep root and yield most profusely. It is a great mistake to suppose that spiritual development must wait until carnality has taken deep root, so that the remainder of life will be one of degradation or a fierce battle to overcome and root up what was sown in childhood.--EDITOR.]

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DEAREST FRIENDS:--Please find enclosed the amount of our Good Hopes for the quarter.

We had a two days' visit from Bro. McPhail. He came first to my house, and we at once notified all we could find who we thought would be interested and had a meeting in the evening; and I am glad to be able to say that it was just grand, especially bringing to view the grandeur of the High Calling. The next day another meeting was held, with a goodly number, some of whom are new readers of DAWN. The Chart was explained, and in all a very interesting time was had; and a happy few were left here with new hopes and renewed vows and fresh strength to help in the struggle against the wiles of the Adversary.

For my part, I must say I never before saw more vividly than right now my duty to the truth and the necessity of living up to my consecration; and I earnestly pray that I may be able to lay aside every weight and the sins that so easily beset me and run with patience the race which is set before us. Truly it has been said by the Apostle that there is nothing in this world now, nor ever was, to be compared to the glory to which we are invited; and if we appreciate properly our privileges, there should be nothing allowed to stand in the way of our obtaining that to which

we are called. In all I think Bro. McPhail's visit was beneficial. I felt better in his company than I have for a long time. It seemed to have a holy influence over me. We had a pleasant separation, wishing each other all the blessings that could attend us in our efforts to serve the Master.

Your brother in Christ, S. M. TAYLOR.

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Those of the interested, who by reason of old age or accident, or other adversity are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they will send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper.

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SCRIPTURE READING.

IN our last issue we mentioned as an excellent substitute for the Daily Text Calendar the singing of one of the Hymns of Dawn or the reading of one of the Poems of Dawn. By this suggestion we did not mean to intimate that more elaborate family worship would be improper for those who have the time and opportunity. All that is left to the judgment and convenience of the head of each family. Some who read one or two verses possibly get as much good out of them as do others

from reading two or three chapters.

We speak not by Scriptural authority, but simply according to our own judgment, when we advise brethren or sisters who are the heads of households (1) to have, as a family, some general recognition of the Lord every morning;--as, for instance, a hymn of praise, or a text or chapter of Scripture, with a short prayer, either at the breakfast table, or before or after breakfast. But (2) we advise that such general worship be not made burdensomely long, but on the contrary, brief and crisp. Let each who desires have his longer and special seasons for reading, meditating and praying to the Lord, alone, and in a way and at times that will not conflict with the interests and feelings of others.

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THE OLD LOT OF CLOTH-BOUND MILLENNIAL DAWN.

OUR new stock of cloth-bound DAWNS is of uniform shade of cloth in all volumes, and stamped on sides as well as backs with silvery instead of gilt metal.

THE old lot stamped in gilt and not perfectly matched in shade of cloth we are closing out at the special price of \$1.00 per set (3 vols.), including postage, or 75 cents per set at your charges.

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BIBLE ASTRONOMY.

A SMALL tract entitled "Bible Astronomy" was recently sent to us by some of our readers, with the request that we help them to see whether or not the theories it aims to support are a part of the gospel, as its author and circulators evidently believe. As the special mission of ZION'S WATCH TOWER is "the edifying of the body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry," and as the question, What constitutes the gospel? is a most important one, we take pleasure in reviewing it here from a Bible standpoint; and from that standpoint only, for two reasons,--(1) because only from the Bible standpoint can we determine whether the theories proposed are a part of the gospel; and (2) because the editor of the TOWER is not an astronomer, and if the subject were to be discussed from a scientific standpoint we should want the most accurate information, from the most advanced astronomers of our day, and from all other reliable sources.

Astronomy is an abstruse science, and one which has commanded some of the ablest minds in all ages; and those engaged in it to any purpose have usually devoted to it the best energies of their lives. Its development has been a very gradual one, through much painstaking study and research, and through many centuries, and it has had its apostles in almost every nation. While much of interest

attaches to the discoveries and deductions of those early days, comparatively little progress was made until, in more recent times, the invention and numerous improvements of the telescope brought the starry heavens into closer range of observation, and the advancements in mathematical sciences rendered many astronomical calculations possible which previously could not be obtained. These, together with the accumulated discoveries, deductions and suggestions of all past time, have undoubtedly greatly advanced the science, and placed it on a footing which not only commends its teachings to human reason, but as well honors the great Creator of all things, whose wonderful work in the material universe is seen to be commensurate with his great "plan of the ages" revealed in the Scriptures. The seal of divinity seems to be stamped upon both. Nor should it be a matter of surprise that, while God has been disclosing the wonders of his grace to his people, he has also been paving the way, through scientific research and modern invention, for a more correct idea of his no less wonderful creation.

While it is true that gross error with reference to spiritual things has marked the presumably advance steps of the great ecclesiastics and their followers, we are not to presume that the same is probably true in science, art and mechanics. On the contrary, quite the reverse is true; and for manifest reasons. It is because spiritual things are spiritually discerned and cannot be received by the natural man, and because "with the heart (as well as with the head) man believeth unto righteousness," that the efforts to probe spiritual things with the natural mind and the uncircumcised heart are so fruitful only in errors and absurdities. But the great truths of nature are not so learned. Nature yields her secrets to the mind of the natural man, who, with candor and simplicity, by diligent and persistent research, inquires for them. Therefore progress in science and discovery, and development in art are to be expected as the results of diligent and earnest study on the part of the natural man who has the intellectual ability and the favorable opportunities for such occupation. To deny such progress in the world is only to deny the evidence of our senses. Who has not noted the real, practical and beneficial advancement

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along all the lines of human attainment,--law, medicine, architecture, mechanics, etc., etc. And all this advancement, let us bear in mind, is part of God's plan in this day of his preparation for the setting up of his Kingdom.

The tract before us presents a number of scriptures in support of a theory which regards the earth as occupying a most important place in the material creation, and the sun, moon and stars merely as inferior accessories, the only object in whose creation was to minister to the earth, which is supposed to be a plane floating upon the water;--which in turn must be supported by something tangible, and that

in turn by something else, ad infinitum.

The theory, in the main, is a very ancient one, antedating all modern discovery and invention. It, however, has no claim to the name "Bible Astronomy," for it did not have its rise in Moses or the Jews, but was promulgated by the Egyptian astronomer, Ptolemy, who flourished at Alexandria about A.D. 130, but whose system has long since given place to that now universally accepted by all the learned scientists, known as the Copernican system, because the revolution was due chiefly to the labors of Copernicus.

The theory to which the writer of this tract has given the dignified name, Bible Astronomy, is more generally known as "the flat earth theory." What we now propose to show is that the scriptures cited to prove that the earth is what it terms a circular plane, and not a globe, do not prove it. When we shall have done this, the subject will still be open for discussion from the scientific standpoint, to the extent of present scientific development, by those who have the time and talent to devote to it; but it will be seen to be entirely separate from the "gospel of the Kingdom," which all of the saints are called to preach, and to which they have consecrated their all of time and energy. Our observation of those consecrated ones who have permitted other themes than "this gospel" to engross time and attention leads us to advise such to be very jealous in husbanding time and talent for the ministry of the gospel, leaving all other subjects, however interesting, to others now, and to the future life for ourselves, when all knowledge shall be ours. Those who for any avoidable cause turn aside from the ministry of the true and only gospel we have invariably observed are quickly turned out of the way or greatly hindered in their course toward "the prize of our high calling." The Apostle Paul's decision on this point is worthy of the adoption of all the saints; viz., "I determined not to know [talk of or discuss] anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2.) Many questions, indeed, might be asked, even by those very ignorant of the subject in general, which we could not answer, not being astronomers; but let no baits of curiosity allure us from the narrow way. We sacrifice these pleasures of the pursuit of scientific knowledge to the great ends for which, as new creatures in Christ, we are striving. By and by it will be our delightful privilege to know all things, and to enjoy ourselves to the full in beholding the glory of the Lord, when we shall be like him, and see him as he is, and know as we are known.

Those who think that the Bible teaches that the earth is flat, except for its mountains and valleys (a circular plane), do not claim that any texts of Scripture describe the earth's shape in these terms; but they draw the inference that such is its shape from eight classes of texts, which we will indicate and examine. From them they gather (1) that the sky or firmament is substantial, firm, not ethereal, and a water reservoir; (2) that the firmament or sky is a substantial vault, supporting the throne of God and

indeed all heaven; (3) that the terms, "up," "down," "sunrise" and "sunset," frequently used in the Bible, are proofs that the earth is the center of the universe; (4) that the account in Genesis teaches that the sun and stars were created merely for ornaments and conveniences to the earth; (5) that the Bible phrase, "waters under the earth," and similar expressions, teach that the earth rests upon the sea; (6) that the expression, "pillars of the earth," indicates a solid foundation; (7) that the record that on one occasion the sun and moon stood still proves that the earth is not a globe; and (8) that the earth is so founded as to be immovable. (9) We will examine a text which they singularly overlook.

Let us now consider these proof texts:--

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(1) THE SKY SUBSTANTIAL AND A WATER RESERVOIR.

Those scriptures which speak of a firmament above the earth they construe to mean something substantial, or firm --not ethereal--as follows:--

"God made the firmament, and divided the waters ...which were above the firmament."--Gen. 1:7.

"The windows [margin, 'flood-gates'] of heaven were opened" (Gen. 7:11), so that the waters from above the firmament poured forth at the time of the flood.

Reply.--The idea of firmness comes to the English translation from the Latin, and not from the original Hebrew. The Hebrew word from which "firmament" is translated is raqui, which does not contain the thought of firmness. Its true signification is expanse.--See Young's Analytical Concordance.

The air, a gaseous substance, composed chiefly of oxygen and nitrogen, envelops the earth to a distance of about fifty miles from its surface. The above texts tell us that God separated the cloudy vapors from the waters upon the earth, thus creating the expanse ("firmament") or aerial heavens. (See "the fowl of heaven," that "fly in the midst of heaven," many times referred to in the Scriptures.) The word expanse ("firmament") or heavens is also given a wider application at times and made to embrace the infinitude of space. It has been suggested, and apparently with good evidence, that before the deluge the volume of water above the firmament or aerial heavens was much

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greater than now, and that the waters below the firmament were correspondingly less: that the earth at that time probably had a ring of water, similar to the several rings of Saturn. The theory is that precipitation of the waters of that "ring" produced the deluge, and that the increased

weight of the waters upon the ocean caused the upheaval of additional mountain ranges, especially in America.

(2) THE SKY A SUBSTANTIAL VAULT.

It is claimed that certain texts imply the flatness of the earth by referring to the sky as a vault and as a curtain, and that God's dwelling, the "chambers" where he "sitteth," is just beyond the sky curtain, which is spangled with stars and emblazoned with our sun. To prove this, the following texts are cited:--

"He buildeth his chambers in the heaven, and hath founded his vault upon the earth."--Amos 9:6. Revised Version.

"Canst thou with him spread forth the sky, which is strong as a molten mirror?"--Job 37:18. R.V.

"He that created the heavens and stretched them forth."--Isa. 42:5. R.V.

"He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth,... that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."--Isa. 40:22.

Then the question is asked, "Do not these verses describe the firmament, not as unlimited space, but as a firm, solid structure resting upon foundations?--a lofty dome or vault of marvelous workmanship, stretched out over the circular plane of the earth, and enclosing it 'as a tent to dwell in?'"

We think not. The language is highly figurative and poetic, such as abounds in the prophets, as well as in the poetry of Job and the Psalms. It is similar to what can be found in the poetry of to-day, in which such expressions as the vaulted sky, the blue dome of heaven, the canopy of heaven, etc., are of frequent occurrence and are never misunderstood. And every Hebrew scholar can testify that each of these texts was written in poetic form--as indeed is nearly all that the prophets wrote respecting God and his mighty works. Those who are not Hebrew scholars can, if they doubt it, confirm our statement that these passages are poetic, by a glance at Young's Bible translation.

In evidence that such language is in common use by the poets of our day, who apparently do not question the testimony of modern astronomy, we quote as follows, italicising the corresponding words:--

"This moveless scene, heaven's ebon vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a canopy which love has spread
To curtain her sleeping world."--Shelley.

"Mysterious Night! when the first man but knew
Thee by report, unseen, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely Frame--
This glorious canopy of Light and Blue?"

Yet 'neath a curtain," etc.--J. Blanco White.

"Thou dost not strive, O Sun, nor dost thou cry
Amid thy cloud-built streets."--Faber.

"This majestic roof, fretted with golden fire."--Shakespeare.

"And they were canopied by the blue sky."--Byron.

"Clouds on clouds, in volumes driven,
Curtain round the vault of heaven."--T. L. Peacock.

(3) UP, DOWN, SUNRISE, SUNSET.

It is claimed that the terms, "under the sun," "under heaven," "up," "down," "sunrise," and "sunset," used frequently in the Bible, are proofs that the earth is the center of the universe, around which heaven and the sun, moon and stars revolve.

We reply that this is an unwarranted claim. It is admitted by all that the sun seems to rise up in the East, and to go down in the West; and by common consent all, even astronomers and almanac-makers, speak of the matter in such terms.

But, be it noticed, these terms of general usage do not favor the "flat earth" theory. Those who contend that the earth is a circular plane, and who bring forward these texts, do not believe that the sun, moon and stars go up and down: their contention is that they go around above the earth in a circle, merely passing for a time out of view, because the earth, they say, is so large, and the sun, moon, etc., are so small. The use of such an argument and the quoting of such scriptures therefore is directly in opposition to their theory.

Similarly, the expression, "four corners of the earth," is sometimes used to prove that the earth is not a globe; but, we ask, Would this expression prove that the earth is a circular plane? A circle no more has corners than has a globe. The fact is that this expression of the Scriptures is in exact harmony with our modern usage, of speaking of the four "points"--North, South, East and West. No sensible person would look for a "point" or a "corner" in those directions any more than he would look for literal North and South "poles." Language is a vehicle for carrying thoughts; the thoughts must not be jolted out and the empty vehicle alone have consideration.

(4) SUN AND STARS EARTH'S ORNAMENTS AND CONVENIENCES.

It is claimed that the statement of Gen. 1:16-18 proves that the sun, moon and stars were made merely for the convenience

of the earth and that all reference to other worlds being omitted proves that this is the only world and that the sun, stars, etc., are merely its useful and ornamental appendages.

"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness."

"To him that made great lights,...the sun to rule by day,...the moon and stars to rule by night."

--Psa. 136:7-9.

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"In them [the heavens] hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it."--Psa. 19:4-6, R.V.

Reply.--We agree most heartily to the statements of these scriptures. The sun is beautifully and poetically described by David, but he says nothing about the earth being "flat," nor that the circle was around a plane, and not around a globe. In fact, he is not giving a lesson in astronomy, but a flash of poesy. There is no more excuse for misunderstanding the poetry of the Psalms than for misunderstanding such poetry as follows:--

"Thou who gazest ever true and tender
On the sun's revolving splendor."--Shelley.

"Her two blue windows faintly she upheaveth,
Like the fair sun, when, in his fresh array,
He cheers the morn, and all the earth relieveth."
--Shakespeare.

As for the account in Genesis, it is true that the sun and stars were caused to give light to the earth, and were intended so to do; but there is nothing to indicate that they could not lighten other planets, or that in this they entirely fulfilled the ends of their creation. It is true also that the sun does rule the day, and the moon the night, and that they are so set as to mark times and seasons; but there is no intimation that this is the limit of their usefulness. Only that which specially pertains to man and to the earth, his home, is mentioned. God was not attempting to teach astronomy: he was, we believe, leaving such things for mankind to investigate. The fields of science, art, discovery and invention are all open for man's pleasant and profitable exploration, and will and do reward the patient and persistent exercise of his powers, as God intended. This we believe is God's method of dealing: he makes known to man gradually the riches of his grace. Thus, too, it is with spiritual things, as our Lord intimated to his disciples, saying, "I have many things to tell you, but ye

cannot bear them now." In due time, and in the best manner, the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of the divine creation and plan are being made known.

(5) THE WATERS UNDER THE EARTH.

It is also claimed that the earth rests upon the sea, and not the sea upon the earth, notwithstanding the fact that deep-sea soundings have very generally been able to touch the solid earth with measuring lines. It is claimed that this is taught by the following Scriptures,--

"Him that stretched [spread] out the earth above the waters."--Psa. 136:6.

"Heaven above,...earth beneath,...waters beneath the earth."--Deut. 5:8.

These passages merely refer to the dry land, higher than, or above, sea level. The former passage in the Douay version is rendered with equal propriety, "established the earth above the waters." To appreciate this passage turn to Gen. 1:9,10, and learn how God stretched forth the dry land and established it as dry land--by gathering together the waters into seas, by convulsions of earth casting up mountain ranges and depressing other parts for the gathering of the waters, seas.

The same explanation suits the second passage. The waters are not above, but below, beneath, the level of the "dry land," called the earth. (Gen. 1:10.) And if further evidence be desired a reading of the connections of the passage will remove every vestige of doubt as to what waters are meant. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image of any thing in heaven on high, or in earth that is lower, or in the sea that is still lower. Israel was commanded to make no images of God or angels, heavenly beings, nor of men and beasts, earthly creatures next in order, nor of fish or sea monsters, still lower. Can any one suppose that in thus forbidding image-making and image-worship, the Lord ignored the waters seen, which constitute two-thirds of the earth's surface, and specified waters underneath the dry land, which (if there at all) could not be more than one-half the quantity not underneath it, and of whose living creatures men could know nothing? Surely any one can see that the meaning is, the waters under or lower than the level of the earth. "God called the dry land earth."--Gen. 1:10.

(6) THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH.

"The pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them."--1 Sam. 2:8.

"Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the

pillars thereof tremble."--Job 9:6.

The first of these proof-texts is from the prayer of Hannah at the presentation of Samuel to the Lord's service. (Verses 1-10.) It is a poem or psalm, and seems to have been inspired and prophetic. Compare its language and sentiment with the poetic-prayer-prophecy of Mary, our Lord's mother.--Luke 1:46-55.

The passage from Job is also poetic, and prophetically refers to the shaking of the coming time of trouble. That Job refers to the shaking of the "pillars" of the present social structure, and Hannah to the establishment of the saints as the "pillars" of the new order of things called the "new heavens and new earth," will be clear to all who read their contexts, after noting the significance of the word "pillar" in Scripture usage.--Gal. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12.

(7) SUN AND MOON STOOD STILL.

In proof that the earth is not a globe, the account of Joshua 10:12-14 is cited, and also Hab. 3:11,--"The sun and moon stood still in their habitation."

Reply.--In our issue of March 15, '92, following our return from the scene of Joshua's battle and miracle, we offered a suggestion respecting it, to the effect that daylight was unusually and miraculously prolonged by the rays

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of the sun being refracted upon the earth by a special arrangement of clouds for the purpose, so that its light, supplemented by that of the moon, similarly prolonged, practically turned that night into day. In no other view can we find use for the moon. Certainly if the sun shone at noonday brightness, the light of the moon would be useless and would not have been invoked. But, even if the earth was slowed up in her diurnal motion so as to actually lengthen out the day, it would be equally proper, as in speaking of any other sunset, to say that the sun "hasted not to go down."

As for the passage from Habakkuk, it is totally different: it is an item in his prophetic poem, which is full of symbols and figures of speech. It undoubtedly refers to a future even when "the sun and the moon shall be confounded," when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light," etc. No one can read this chapter from the third verse onward without recognizing this. Young's Literal Translation renders verses 10-12 thus,--

"Seen thee--pained are the mountains [kingdoms],
An inundation of waters hath passed over [Isa. 28:15,17],
Given forth hath the deep its voice [Luke 21:25],
High its hands hath it lifted up.
Sun--moon--hath stood--a habitation,

At the light thine arrows go on,
At the brightness the glittering of thy spear.
In indignation Thou dost tread the earth,
In anger Thou dost thresh the nations.
Thou hast gone forth for the salvation of Thy people."

Surely if Joshua's battle, etc., has anything at all to do with the matters here represented, it was only as a type.

(8) EARTH FOUNDED AND IMMOVABLE.

It is claimed that the Bible mentions the foundations of the earth and pillars of the earth in such a way as would preclude the idea that the earth is a globe hanging in space; and in such a way as to prove that it is an immovable structure resting upon strong pillars. In this they seem to forget their other claim that it is founded upon the seas and rises and sinks with the tides. Pillars would surely be a poor arrangement, architecturally speaking, for resting upon the water. Would not a "flat earth" rest more solidly on the waters without the pillars? Besides, upon what would the pillars rest? and what would support the waters? Then again, If the earth floated in the seas, and rose and sank at "tide times," how would that agree with the text they quote so freely--The earth "is established that it cannot be moved?"

Let us look carefully at the texts offered to prove this final point,--that the earth is so firmly founded, and on pillars, that it could not be rolled through space as a globe.

(a) "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations [margin, 'sockets'] thereof fastened?"--Job 38:4,6.

(b) "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth."--Psa. 102:25.

(c) "Who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed forever."--Psa. 104:5.

(d) "The world also is established, that it cannot be moved."--Psa. 93:1.

(e) "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods."--Psa. 24:2.

Reply.--The intelligent and thoughtful need only to be reminded that stone foundations are not the only ones, --that principles, as well as things, can have foundations; as, for instance, "Justice is the foundation of God's throne [government]." Some men lay the foundations of schools and colleges by gifts of money, regardless of where the school buildings may be, if any, and they more truly lay the foundations than do the men who handle stones and tools for foundations for the buildings.

For our interpretation of the text marked (a) see MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., page 312. We believe the reference to be to the Great Pyramid, whose measurements, "lines," passages and general arrangement have made it world-renowned as a sign or symbol, in whose construction

God has laid down scientific lessons in astronomy and geometry, as well as relating to his great plan of salvation. Into what would our "flat-earth" friends say the socket-stones of their flat earth were made to sink so as to make a firm foundation?--into the seas, as per the last text (e) cited?

The next four texts, as we will show, have no reference whatever to the literal earth, but to the symbolic earth,--society.

As already shown,* not only lions, bears, trees, etc., are used as symbols, but so also the earth is a symbol of social order--society, its mountains representing its kingdoms, its heavens representing its highest or religious powers, its rivers representing its purifying truths which come from its heavens, and its seas representing the restless, unrestrainable, discontented and anarchistic classes. In illustration of these symbols see Psalm 46.

With reference to this symbolic earth, society, the Lord's Word shows us that in its present form, it is to be "dissolved," "melted," "moved," "shaken," "turned upside down," "removed as a cottage," that it is to "reel as a drunkard," etc. (Psa. 75:3-10; Isa. 24:1-4,17-20; 2 Pet. 3:10-12.) Not the literal, physical earth, but the symbolic earth--society as at present organized-- will "reel," "melt" and be "dissolved." The Scriptures clearly show that these are figures of speech, descriptive of the awful social trouble now impending--"a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1); that the fire is symbolic, "the fire of God's jealousy" or

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 316.

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anger, and that after the "earth" (society) has been devoured with this fire, the earth with the people on it will still be here, and God will then "turn unto the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."--Zeph. 3:8,9.

But that will be in the "new earth" symbolically, although upon the same earth literally. The "new earth"

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will be the new organization of society, with its "new heavens" or new religious system;--the Church or government of righteousness for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Under that Kingdom there will be no more sea--no longer a restless, law-opposing, anarchistic class, because the former things, the evils of the present social order, will have given place to the perfection of righteous government, long promised in God's Word.

It is this new earth, or reconstructed social order, that the Psalmist, in the Scriptures above (c, d, e), declares shall

never be moved; while (b) shows that the present order was well founded by the Lord though by the fall it became "the present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), so that it must give place to "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (Heb. 6:5; 2 Pet. 3:5-7,13), but that the time will come when it must be changed, supplanted by the new arrangement of Christ's Kingdom--the new heavens and new earth. Read the connections, and see that this is the case. "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed." (Heb. 1:10-12.) Turning to 2 Pet. 3:10,11,13, note that the symbolic heavens, as well as the symbolic earth, is to pass away--to give place to a new order, social and religious. Then turn to Heb. 12:26,27 and note the same teaching of the dissolution of present arrangements, and in verse 28 read about the unmovable Kingdom which must be established before that new heavens and earth is established which the Prophet David declares "cannot be moved." Then turn to Isa. 34:2-5 and Rev. 6:14-17, and see the symbolic representations of the way in which the change of dispensation will be effected --from "this present evil world," ruled by "the prince of this world," to "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Then read in Rev. 20:1-5 of the blessings of that new "world" or order of things when it shall have come.

After studying the subject thus far, you will readily see the force of the above quotation (e), in which the Lord declares that the new earth will be founded upon the seas and established upon the floods,--i.e., the new earth will be established where the sea now is: the class once symbolized by the "sea" shall be no more--"There shall be no more sea."

A careful investigation of the Psalms in which these proof texts (b, c, d, e) are found gives convincing proof, in harmony with our exposition here given, that they are prophecies descriptive of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom.

AN IMPORTANT PASSAGE OVERLOOKED.

But the advocates of the flat earth idea seem to overlook the only text of Scripture which really has to do with the subject. It is found in that book of the Bible which contains more reference to the stars than any other, mentioning Orion and the Pleiades by their present names, and referring to their "influences"--the Book of Job. The text to which we refer is brief, but full of significance. It reads: Common Version, Job 26:7,--

"He...hangeth the earth upon nothing."

Revised Version,--

"Hanging the earth upon [margin, over] nothing."

Leeser's Translation,--

"He suspended the earth on nothing."

Douay (Roman Catholic) Version,--

"He...hangeth the earth upon nothing."

Young's Translation,--

"Hanging the earth upon nothing."

The harmony of these translations is good evidence as to the correctness of the expression; but if any one is curious further, let him refer, in Young's Analytical Concordance, to the various words--"nothing," "earth," and "hangeth." He will find, for instance, that the same Hebrew word here translated "hangeth" is defined by Prof. Young to signify "To hang up." He will find, also, that the same word is used thirteen times in referring to the hanging of men upon gallows.

So far as the scriptures go, therefore, this one irrefutable, and not otherwise interpretable, text stands against the "flat earth" theory; and the texts supposed to favor that view, it has been shown, do not favor it.

"GREAT AND MARVELOUS ARE THY WORKS
LORD GOD ALMIGHTY."

While the revelations of divine wisdom and grace concerning the intelligent creation of God command our deepest reverence, no less should his mighty works in the physical creation inspire us with reverence and awe. No doubt the successful pursuit of the knowledge of all God's works and ways will be a part of the delightful employment of men as they progress toward perfection, and come to realize their privilege of eternal life and all the advantages of leisure, facility and opportunity which the future will afford. While such pleasures, we believe, are not the present privilege of the consecrated children of God, whose talents are all engaged for the great harvest work, we note with pleasure the great delight which the learned and able scientists find in probing the wonderful secrets of nature, especially in the domain of Astronomy, and in observing, too, its elevating and ennobling influence upon them. They give to the subject the most painstaking labor, profound thought and careful investigation, and the devotion of their lives.

We are glad that there have been and still are such men: and from the results of their labors we catch a measure of their enthusiasm and inspiration, and would also that they might catch a measure at least of ours, gathered from the "plan of the ages" revealed by the same great Author.

The history of Astronomy dates back to very ancient times. It reached some degree of advancement among the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and later among the Greeks and Romans; but Thales, one of the seven wise men of Greece, who lived six hundred years before Christ, was the first great teacher of the science. Pythagoras, another Greek

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astronomer, taught it shortly after. Hipparchus of Egypt,

about three centuries before the Christian Era, and Ptolemy, of the same nation, about one hundred and seventy years later, were also justly celebrated teachers.

Prior to the invention of the telescope and the advancement of mathematical science and other advantages of more modern times, the whole subject was involved in great obscurity; and various theories were propounded and studied to account, if possible, for the motions of the planets and the varied phenomena of the heavens. Judged from very limited knowledge and observation, it was for many centuries believed that our little earth was the chief factor in all God's universe, the center of importance and interest, to which the sun, moon and stars ministered as the sole end of their existence. But the labors of Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler and Sir Isaac Newton, in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries of the Christian era, developed the telescope, discovered the laws of gravitation and of centripetal and centrifugal forces and suggested an order in nature which science and telescopic observation have proven to the satisfaction of all the learned scientists. These fully comport with our highest conceptions of the infinite power and wisdom of our God, beautifully harmonize with his mighty works of grace in the plan of the ages, and show us that our earth, although comparatively an insignificant portion of God's great empire, has been wonderfully cared for by him.

With humbler ideas of earth and humanity, we gain correspondingly enlarged ideas of God and of his mighty works. These discoveries and scientific deductions are, we believe, in keeping with the general purpose of God, to bring men by various paths to a more correct knowledge of himself through his works and ways. That the men whose names we have mentioned were not superficial enthusiasts, but careful, candid and diligent students of nature, is manifest from the laborious methods by which they have arrived at and sought to prove their conclusions.

In the light of scientific research, the sun is seen to be the center of a great system of worlds revolving around him in definite and invariable orbits and with a precision of time that never varies, some singly and some accompanied by revolving satellites, and others with peculiar rings whose substance is not yet clearly discerned, but is presumed to be liquid. In this system of worlds our earth is one of the smaller planets.

Our solar system of planets is also found to be revolving together around some other great center; and far beyond the farthest limits of our system, by the aid of the telescope, other suns and systems are discerned, all presumably revolving with ours around some common center,-- the group Pleiades. And the reasonable suggestion has been made that that center may be the heaven of heavens, the highest heaven, the throne of God.

God has established laws so governing the motions of all the heavenly bodies that no clash or discord occurs among them. Each world has its appointed pathway and its regulated time, and the most exact calculations of

astronomers find them always true to time and order. How wonderful is our God! Truly in this view "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard; but their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words." (Psa. 19:1-4.--Leeser.) The magnificent pageantry of the heavens daily and nightly should elicit our praise and adoration, and should inspire in our hearts holy and reverent devotion. Let the noiseless activity, the perfect obedience to divine law, and the blessed shining of the heavenly hosts, impress their wholesome lessons upon us--of zealous activity without commotion or ostentation; of perfect obedience to the will of him who doeth all things well, who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind; and of letting the glory of the Lord which has illuminated us shine from us in turn upon every beholder. Indeed, to those who have been brought into close fellowship with the Lord through a knowledge of his plan of the ages, all his works should be viewed with a keener sense of appreciation--from the tiniest organism seen through the microscope, to the worlds revealed by the telescope.

With the Psalmist our hearts exclaim, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens;"--for, however grand and glorious are the wonders of creation, they proclaim only the superior grandeur and greatness of their Creator. Do we admire intellectual vigor, nobility of conception and skill in execution, comprehensive scope and minute particularity? We see it there! And while recognizing that even we ourselves are his workmanship--"fearfully and wonderfully made," and not beneath his notice and Fatherly care, we feel humbled as we recognize our Father's majesty, and in our hearts we say with the Psalmist, again, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? for thou hast made him [but] a little lower than the angels and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the [earthly] works of thy hands." (Psa. 8.) High indeed was the honor conferred upon man and the glory of his dominion (lost in Adam, redeemed in Christ) over the earth which God made "not in vain," but for human habitation. And while, as Job tells us, he "hanged the earth upon nothing," but launched it out in the abyss of space subject to those fixed laws which his wisdom established, we rejoice to know that "The Lord hath prepared his throne [power, dominion, control] in the heavens, and his Kingdom ruleth over all." (Psa. 103:19.) Surely no confusion or mishap can befall the remotest fragment of his vast empire, the Universe. Yea, Lord, we rejoice to realize that,--

"The whole creation is thy charge,
But saints are thy peculiar care."

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"HAVE FERVENT CHARITY AMONG YOURSELVES."

In leaving the above subject we desire to impress upon all a few thoughts upon which all of God's people who possess his spirit and are guided by his Word can, we believe, fully agree.

(1) Christian unity is not established upon harmonious views of astronomy. Each has the right to the use of his own intellect upon the subject of astronomy, or any other subject not a part of the divine revelation; and we trust that we have clearly shown that astronomy is not a part of that divine revelation.

(2) If, aside from the Bible, a Brother or a Sister reaches a conclusion that another Brother or Sister considers wholly illogical and unreasonable, neither should think or speak of the other as a fool; but each should remember that all present knowledge is more or less incomplete, and that all of our reasoning faculties are at present imperfect. Now we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, we shall know even as we are known. "Have fervent charity [love] among yourselves." This will enable each to treat kindly what may appear to him most absurd views on non-essential subjects, so that when we know that another holds such views we may avoid, if possible, wounding the feelings of even the very least of the Lord's "little ones."--Matt. 5:22; James 5:9, margin.

(3) Remember always that astronomy and such other subjects as are not identified with God's plan, and not taught in his Word, are not of those for which we should contend. The Apostle declares that we should "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints;" but astronomy is no part of that faith. Neither is it a subject which we should feel it our duty to search or prove: we are to search the Scriptures upon the subjects relating to eternal life, and to prove all suggestions respecting the same by examining and comparing the Scriptures. Astronomy, therefore, is not one of the subjects upon which every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind. On the contrary, a man may be a saint and an overcomer, and believe the earth flat, square, round, or any other shape; or he may be all the more likely to run the race to glory successfully while confessing that he does not know positively, and is so intent on following after Christ's example,--feeding the sheep and the lambs upon the bread of eternal life--that he has not the time needful to study and prove and teach any other gospel. The Apostle's resolve is a good one to follow. He says,--"I determined to know [teach] nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

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TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY!

Take time to be holy! speak oft with the Lord;
Abide in him always, and feed on his Word;
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak;
Forgetting in nothing his blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy! the world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret with Jesus alone;
By looking to Jesus, like him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct his likeness shall see.

Take time to be holy! let him be thy guide,
And run not before him, whatever betide;
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in his Word!

Take time to be holy! be calm in thy soul,
Each thought and each motive beneath his control.
Thus, led by his spirit to fountains of love,
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above. --W. D. LONGSTAFF.

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CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY.

--MAY 26, MARK 15:22-37;--MATT. 27:31-66;
LUKE 23:26-56; JOHN 19:16-42.--

Golden Text--"While we were yet sinners,
Christ died for us."--Rom. 5:8.

VERSE 22. The sentence of crucifixion having
been obtained, the excited mob, inspired with Satanic
zeal, hurried the prisoner to the place of execution,
which was reached about nine o'clock Friday morning.
What an awful night he had passed! Beginning with the
sad scenes of the last supper with his disciples, call to mind
the agony of Gethsemane, the hurried march to Annas, then
to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod and back again to Pilate;
how during all the night he was most shamefully treated.--
mocked, buffeted, spit upon, reviled, ridiculed, falsely
accused and finally crowned with cruel thorns and
scourged.

After such experiences it seems marvelous that any vitality
remained for the ordeal of crucifixion. It would seem

that the intense and long continued nervous strain and weariness and physical suffering would have exhausted the forces of nature; but our Lord, as a perfect man, had extraordinary powers of endurance, though he had voluntarily sacrificed much of physical strength in the labors of his ministry. That he was greatly exhausted, however, is manifest from the fact that the bearing of his cross to the place of crucifixion was imposed upon another.--Luke 23:26.

Verse 23. Wine mingled with myrrh was offered as an anaesthetic to relieve the sense of pain. It is said that some of the women of Jerusalem undertook this office of mercy on behalf of criminals to be executed by the terrible methods of the Romans. Jesus acknowledged the kindness of the offer by tasting it, but declined it further, preferring to have his mind awake and clear to the last. Had he taken it, we should have missed the tenderness which committed his mother to the care of John, and those last words so full of meaning to us--"It is finished." And Peter would have missed the look of sorrow that reminded him of the Lord's love and of his disappointment in him, that quickly called him to repentance, and we should all have failed to realize how much the Lord's thoughts were upon others even amidst the agonies of such a horrible death.

Verses 25-28. The crucifixion occurred at about nine o'clock A.M., and ended in death at 3 P.M., the circumstance of the company of the two thieves being in fulfilment of Isa. 53:12--"He was numbered with the transgressors."

The saying of the mocking priests and scribes, "He saved others; himself he cannot save,"--had indeed a deeper significance than they realized. He could not save others and save himself too; for only by the sacrifice of himself could he hope to save others; and therefore it was that he bore the penalty of our sins in his own body on the tree; that of himself he laid down his life, which no man had power to take from him except as he permitted it, which willing permission was so manifest in his conduct--in knowingly receiving the betrayer's kiss in Gethsemane; in freely surrendering himself to the Roman soldiers; in maintaining

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silence in the presence of his accusers; in freely confessing before them his claims of Messiahship, which they counted blasphemy; in silently accepting the sentence of crucifixion without an effort or a word in self-defence. Truly, "as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Why? Because he desired to save others, and knew that their salvation required the sacrifice of himself.

And so, as the Prophet (Isa. 53:5,12) declared, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our

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iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "He poured out his soul unto death,...and bore the sin of many, and

made intercession for the transgressors." Oh, what love, what fortitude was here displayed! Yet men "esteemed him smitten of God and afflicted." And this was probably one of the severest of our Lord's trials--to be esteemed as an offender against God and as under the divine wrath.

In the same way the afflictions of the Lord's people are often misinterpreted by the world, as well as by the unthoughtful among professed Christians. But let such consider that "the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord;" that all who will live godly shall suffer persecution; that during this age evil is in the ascendancy, and therefore the righteous suffer; that Satan is the prince of this world; and that until he is bound righteousness shall not be exalted. This is the time for the righteous--the embryo Kingdom of heaven--to suffer violence, and when the violent may take it by force. And if Christ our Lord and Head thus suffered, let all who suffer with him for righteousness' and truth's sake be comforted with the same divine assurance that comforted him. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him;...and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."--Psa. 37:6,7.

Some of the friends of the Lord were also present on this occasion with their love and sympathy--Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and other women who followed the mob, some of whom probably offered the wine and myrrh, to whose weeping and bewailing Jesus replied, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; ...for if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23:27-31.) This he said in reference to the atrocities which should mark the overthrow of their nation and the destruction of Jerusalem, which would display the same wicked spirit which was then being manifested toward him. And it was even so; for the troubles upon that people were not alone from enemies without, but also from civil strife; for every man's hand was against his neighbor. It is said that at the time of the siege of Jerusalem hundreds of Jews were crucified at once, and left hanging in sight of the city walls.

Verses 33,34. The darkness that brooded over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour seems to have been a supernatural darkness; for an eclipse of the sun was impossible during the full moon of the passover time. It was doubtless sent as an expression of the divine wrath, and as typical of the darkness of alienation from God into which that long favored nation had plunged by this act.

The expression of verse 34 manifests the dread realization of imminent death. Jehovah's sustaining power must necessarily be withdrawn and the bitter dregs of the cup of suffering be drained to make the sacrifice complete. But when the heart and flesh failed, it was difficult to realize the significance of this: hence the startled inquiry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Through all his sufferings the divine grace had thus far sustained him, but now he must sink beneath the rod and be cut off from the

favor of Him in whose favor is life, that so, by his stripes, we might be healed.

Verse 37. This last cry, which summoned and exhausted all the remaining vitality was the last triumph of victorious faith. Though he realized that the divine favor, which had always hitherto sustained his being, must now be withdrawn because he stood in the sinner's place as the vicarious sin-offering, faith, still anchored to the promises of God to be realized beyond the veil of the flesh, sweetly and confidently commended his being to the Father. This the Apostle Peter tells all them to do who suffer for righteousness' sake, saying, "Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."--1 Pet. 4:19.

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THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD.

--JUNE 2, MARK 16:1-8;--MATT. 28:1-15;
LUKE 24:1-12; JOHN 20:1-18.--

Golden Text--"The Lord is risen indeed."--Luke 24:34.

THE resurrection of our Lord is shown by the Apostle to be the assurance of the resurrection of mankind.-- "For as all in Adam die, even so, all in Christ shall be made alive;" "for he is the propitiation for our [the Church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," all of which, therefore, both the just and the unjust shall come forth from the grave; and, by accepting Christ and yielding implicitly to his guidance, they may be made fully alive--be fully restored to the original human perfection lost in Adam.

This, the Lord also taught, saying, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth." And Paul said, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." So important is this doctrine of the resurrection, that the Apostle declares that without it the hope and faith of the Church is vain.--"If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished....If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."--1 Cor. 15:16-18,32.

This doctrine of the resurrection is, however, very little heard or thought of to-day among professed Christians, and likewise the promise of the Lord's second coming, at whose presence the work of resurrection is due to be accomplished. It is written that "to this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead

and living." (Rom. 14:9.) It is his voice that shall awaken the dead, and his wisdom and grace that shall lead all the willing and obedient to the realization of full resurrection, or restitution, to all that was lost. This is the logical consequence of his great sacrifice, to be realized at his appearing and kingdom.

The first work of his presence is the unobserved, thief-like gathering of his elect--the awakening of those that have slept in Jesus, and the perfecting and the change of those who are alive and remain to his own glorious nature

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and likeness. When this is fully accomplished, as it must be within this harvest period, then will follow the resurrection of the ancient worthies. Then the Kingdom of God, in both its heavenly and earthly phases, will be established and manifested to the world,--an event due at the close of this harvest period and time of trouble.

Then the resurrection morning will have come, and the Sun of righteousness will have risen with healing in his wings. Yes, "the Lord is risen indeed;" and his resurrection is the sure pledge of the resurrection of all for whom he died--of the Church first, and afterward of the world.*
--1 Cor. 15:12-23.

The manner of the testimony as to the fact of the resurrection, as related in the gospels, is worthy of the special attention of Christians, as proving three things, (1) the fact of the resurrection, (2) the Lord's change of nature in the resurrection, and (3) his personal identity, notwithstanding the change of nature.

The fact of his resurrection was attested in three ways; viz., (1) by an earthquake and the sudden appearance of an angel whose countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow, who rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulcher and sat upon it, and for fear of whom the keepers did shake and become as dead men. (Matt. 28:1-6.) It was attested (2) by the facts to which the angel called attention--the vacant tomb and the folded graveclothes, together with the statement that he was risen--
"And the angel said unto the woman, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." (Matt. 28:5,6. See also Luke 24:12.)
And (3) it was finally attested by the risen Lord himself, who appeared to the women, and others subsequently, and talked with them.--Matt. 28:9; John 20:1-18.

How great was the reward of these devoted women--last at the cross and first at the sepulcher, anxious to bestow upon the lifeless remains of their beloved Lord the last tokens of their esteem and love. They sympathetically lingered near the cross, beholding his dying agonies; they were the mourners that accompanied him to the tomb at night; and they were there again before break of day with their precious ointments. In their eagerness to do this loving service, they forgot the great obstacle of the stone at the

door. But the sweet incense of their devotion arose to heaven, and God sent his angel to remove the obstacle, and their zeal was rewarded with the richest tokens of his grace. Theirs was the honor of personally receiving the heavenly benedictions--of the angel and of the risen Lord,--and of first bearing the glad tidings of the resurrection to the other disciples.

The fact of the resurrection was further attested to the

*See our issue of April 1, '93.

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other disciples by the Lord's sudden appearance in their midst at various intervals, and his personal testimony and teachings on such occasions.

The Lord's change of nature in the resurrection was no less clearly testified than was the fact of his resurrection. In evidence of this note that in no instance of his appearance after his resurrection was he recognized by his personal features, although the disciples were all intimately acquainted with him, and they had been separated from him by death only three days. Mary mistook him for the gardener; the two on the way to Emmaus walked and talked with him for some miles, entertained him in their home, even dining with him, without recognizing him. In every case he was manifested to them, not by face, but by some familiar expression or tone, or teaching, which they promptly recognized as personal characteristics of him whom they so loved and revered.

Now he could enter a room, the doors being shut, and disappear as mysteriously, as he did on several occasions; and this was in exact accordance with his description of the powers of a spiritual body--which could come and go like the wind, unseen (John 3:8), and with his statement--"All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." It accords, too, with all the information we have concerning the appearance of angels among men. They came in sudden and unaccountable ways, vanished out of sight as mysteriously as they came, and could and did assume any appearance or features they chose. These things the Lord never did prior to his crucifixion.

Observe further the different appearances of the Lord on different occasions. At one time he appeared as a gardener, again as a stranger, again with prints of nails in his hands and the spear wound in his side, etc. On no single occasion was he known by his features on previous occasions, but always by his words, his voice, or his conduct.

Why were these changes of appearance adopted? They were for the purpose of emphasizing the fact that the bodies which they saw were not his glorious spiritual body, which no human eyes can look upon. And "it doth not yet appear" what a spiritual body is, "but we know that when he shall appear, we [the Church] shall be like him; for we

shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2.) Saul of Tarsus once caught a glimpse of that glorious body, which shone above the brightness of the sun at noonday (Acts 26:13), but it left him blind until by a miracle his sight was restored.

The removal of the crucified body from the tomb which was also miraculous, for it did not see corruption, nor was a bone of it broken (Psa. 34:20; 16:10) was necessary to establish in the minds of the disciples the fact of his resurrection. Had it remained there it would have been an insurmountable barrier to their faith; nor could the astonished guards, nor the Jews, nor the world, have believed that he was risen; because they could understand nothing of the spiritual nature and the mysterious change.

To presume that Christ's glorious body is but the reanimated body of his humiliation, is to deny the assertion of the Apostle that "it doth not yet appear" what a spiritual body is (1 John 3:2); and to claim that that "glorious body" is ingloriously marred with the wounds of spear and spike and cruel thorns; and that the flesh which he gave for the life of the world--as our ransom price--he took back, thus rendering null and void the finished work on Calvary; and it is in direct contradiction of the statement of the Apostle that, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more."

Let us not, dear fellow-aspirants and called ones to the sharing of his glory and nature and Kingdom, lose sight of these blessed assurances of our glorious inheritance with him, who is now a partaker of the divine nature and "the express image of the Father's person" (Heb. 1:3), whom no man hath seen, nor can see, and who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto. (1 Tim. 6:15,16.) Praise the Lord! "when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,"--not as he was; for indeed if he is as he was, then also shall we be even as we are now. If he bear still the ignominious scars of Calvary, then shall we also bear the scars that mar us; and every mutilated martyr will be disfigured to all eternity. Think you, has mortal man the power thus to harm the saints of God? Nay, verily: they shall be, "even as he is,"--"without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."*

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 103.

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