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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

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the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

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CHARTS FOR OUR NEW BIBLES.

The first lot of these Charts was spoiled by the printers,
and only now are we prepared to supply them. We advertised
them at 10c, but find that we can supply them at 5c
each, postage included, without loss;--hence, that will be

the price to all. Those who have already sent 10c will receive a second Chart.

This Bible Chart is a reproduction of the 25c Chart of the Ages, reduced in size. It is printed on tough blue bond-paper, and can be fastened into the New Bible at the back. When wanted for reference it can be unfolded and studied with the open Bible. Each possessor of one of the New Bibles should have one of these Charts. We will accept stamps in payment, if more convenient to you; or you may order by postal card and include the small amount in some future remittance at your convenience.

THE NEW LETTER PAPER.

The price of letter paper, mentioned in our last issue, is 25c per lb., postage 15c extra. This does not include envelopes, which we still sell at 25c per 100, postpaid.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

WE LEARN with regret that our reports of the progress of Socialism at home and abroad have been misunderstood by some to signify expectation that Socialism may be the Lord's way of bringing in the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom. Our position seems difficult for some to understand. We believe that many of the ideals of Socialism are good;--more than this, that many of those ideals will be realized in the Kingdom as they are now realized in heaven. But, we dispute the ability of Socialists to put those ideals into effect and make them continuously operative.

Why so? Because of sin;--because selfishness, the reverse of love, is born with all men;--and because nothing but a thorough conversion (such as few experience) and subsequent instruction in the School of Christ (such as few now enjoy) could possibly so correct the natural heart as to make love--the golden rule--its law.

No doubt many Socialists believe that their desires for Socialism are actuated by love, and not by selfishness; but such should not forget the Scriptural declaration that "the heart is deceitful above all things." Those clamoring for Socialism are generally such as believe that their temporal interests would be improved, or, at least, not injured, by Socialism. Remarkably few are advocating Socialism or anything else to their own disadvantage. We are not finding

fault with this natural condition; only God's saints love to the extent of self-sacrifice for the good of others. We are merely pointing to this evidence that the advocates of Socialism cannot claim to be actuated by love, but by selfishness;--we are merely proving our position, that even if Socialism were established it could not last, because selfishness would continually prompt each to work either for his own advantage, or else to work as little as possible.

Possibly a very few may be found working for Socialism and against their own interest: it is not for us to decide; but it is possible that ambition or combativeness have as much, or more, to do with their sacrifices than has love of mankind. The point we make is that Socialism is not practicable under selfish conditions; and that the voluntary Socialism which the Lord will introduce will not be attained until the close of the Millennium, when the selfishness of the fallen condition will have given place to perfect love and the full image of God;--all the incorrigibly selfish being destroyed in the Second Death. The Socialism of the Millennium will not be voluntary, but enforced by the rule of the "rod of iron."-- Rev. 2:27.

Our reason for keeping track of the progress of Socialism now is, that we expect that it, or something akin to it, is about to deceive the world into looking for a Millennium of its own, and lead them unconsciously to, and then over the brink into the anarchy and "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." We cannot wonder that this "will o' the wisp" should attract and ensnare many of "the groaning creation" who long for better things for themselves and neighbors; and we should and do sympathize with such very keenly; but for any one who has had his eyes opened to the divine plan for the blessing of the world, through Christ and his Church, in the Millennial Kingdom (invisible to the world), to be attracted to Socialism would be a distinct evidence of his going into the "outer darkness" of the world--away from the inner light of divine revelation given to the Church.

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CONDITIONS IN GERMANY.

The London Spectator editorially reviews the German situation, and the evidences seen there of a political or a social revolution--all, be it marked, based on selfishness. It says:--

"Professor Mommsen, whose opinion has great weight in Germany, has issued a remarkable manifesto. He says that 'the overthrow of the Imperial

Constitution is rapidly progressing.' The Reichstag and the Emperor alike are being subjected to the absolutism of an alliance between the Tory landlords and the priests. That is revolution and worse than personal government, because the autocrat would be impartial. All parties, in fact, are becoming revolutionary. The Liberals would like to convert the supreme head of the state into a 'first official,' after the English pattern, and 'that is revolution.' So is the desire of the Centre to reconvert Germany to Catholicism. So is the desire of the German squirearchy to restore aristocratic rule, and degrade the Emperor to be only first among his peers. And finally, so is the desire of the Social Democrats that every workman, without regard to his work, should receive out of a general pot the same quantity of soup as his neighbors. The only remedy is for Liberals and Social Democrats to unite in resistance; but that requires a modification in the ideas of each, which the Social Democrats in particular, who seem bent on 'political suicide,' will be slow to concede. We are not so hopeless as the Professor; but certainly the trend of events in Germany is towards Caesarism in the hands of a Caesar whose considerable powers of mind are rendered partially useless by perpetual hurry."

ABOUT OUR PROSPERITY.

The Pittsburg Gazette editorially says:--

"While the United States is enjoying unexampled prosperity, England is feeling the pinch of hard times. Accounts agree that in the poorer parts of London and in some of the industrial centers in the provinces there is an exceptional amount of distress. It is admitted that the year now closing has been marked by a decline of industrial prosperity and that there is an unusually large percentage of unemployed workmen, for whose relief during the winter special exertions will have to be made. Similar news comes from Russia. Famine prevails in the province of Finland, and in all industrial centers there is great suffering owing to lack of work. It is reported that workmen in important towns are glad to get work for 35 copecks a day, equal to 23 cents. The depression in England is largely a reaction from artificial stimulus of war expenditure, and in Russia it is a recoil from over production and over trading in connection with the rapid expansion of the empire. Germany is beginning to emerge from the depression that overtook her industries some years ago, but the recent tariff legislation hostile to the commercial treaties which stimulated her industrial progress, has clouded the prospect again. The industrial prosperity of the United States is the admiration and envy of the

world."

* * *

We receive many queries respecting the probable duration of present prosperity. That question no human being can answer satisfactorily. The world's wars being over and the great war expenditures stopped, would naturally mean that prosperity has already crested and is on the decline. But who knows what may come of the Venezuelan trouble or similar difficulties with other states, through the new program of the great powers that the claims of private bondholders against the smaller nations may be collected by force? Who knows that this program and the "Monroe Doctrine" may not clash so as to bring about one of the greatest sea wars of modern times? Or something else, of which we as yet have not a surmise, may come forward suddenly to give business a fresh spurt.

So far as the Scriptures guide us, we expect the climax of the great time of anarchious trouble in October, 1914. Our opinion is that so great a trouble would necessarily last in violent form at least three or four years before reaching that climax. Hence, we expect strenuous times by or before October, 1910. And this agrees well with the corresponding and typical trouble with which the Jewish age ended.

Reasoning backward from 1910 A.D. we are bound to assume that the conditions leading up to such violence as we then expect would include great financial depression which probably would last some years before reaching so disheartening a stage. We could not, therefore, expect that depression to begin later than, say, 1908. Our reasoning is that a depression beginning now would culminate too quickly for the dates we consider fixed by Scripture, and that there is not sufficient time for a depression and then another boom and another depression before 1910,--notwithstanding the rapid changes of our day. These reasons incline us to expect a prolongation of present prosperity for a couple of years more. It is because we see no other cause than war likely to sustain present prosperity, that we are on the lookout for one;--and not that we favor or sympathize with wars.

CATHOLICISM IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

Recent reports indicate that the movement among the Filipinos to throw off the yoke of the Roman Catholic Church is progressing rapidly. They have established the "National Filipino Church" modeled after the pattern of the Church of England. They have chosen as its archbishop "Father Aglipay," an

excommunicate Catholic priest, and the movement is taking well with the people who for so many years have been under the oppression of the monks and friars, both socially and financially. The latter have gotten into their control vast estates and many of the most profitable plantations, as well as all the church property, schools, etc., with money wrested from the

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people for performing funeral and wedding and christening services, and for masses and penances, under the pretext of saving them from untellable torture in the future.

The people have seized many of the church buildings, claiming (we think, properly) that they were built with their and their fathers' money and labor and belong properly to them; and they are holding these by armed force and using them for worship according to their lights. Both parties--the people and the friars--are appealing to the American Governor Taft to decide for them. Neither party seems able to understand how church and state are distinctly separate with us. The Governor advises both parties that he can and will do no deciding of the question--that the courts of justice must settle the dispute. Bloodshed is feared.

DISESTABLISHMENT MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND.

The "Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage" is making itself heard. Its Secretary recently said:--

"The education bill and the rapid drift of the Anglican church Romeward are the pivotal points of the campaign. We contend that the bill is the creation of the state-maintained clergy and that it mulcts the people for the benefit of a limited class. We also contend that such an act would be impossible were the religious system independent of the state. The bishop of London's vehement protest against Romanist ritualism in several Anglican churches comes opportunely to aid our agitation. We hold that such evils are inherent in an official church which relieves the clergy of responsibility to the people and insures them life tenure. Unless guilty of gross breaches of immorality, Anglican ministers can teach anything, from agnosticism to transubstantiation, and remain perfectly secure in their clerical strongholds. The majority of them are deeply Romanists, but the English masses are thoroughly Protestant. When the people and not the state have control of the clergy the Romeward tendency will cease."

STATESMEN'S VIEWS ON ZIONISM.

Lord Salisbury: "Zionism is destined to succeed, in spite of the opposition it encounters. The Jews are capable of establishing a model government at Palestine, and raising the commerce of Asia Minor to an unprecedented height. If but forty per cent. of the Jews were converted to the project, it would become an assured reality. There is no reason why the Sultan should object to the establishment of an autonomous Jewish government within his dominions. There is enough energy and perseverance in the race that has resisted oppression for 2,500 years to accomplish the purposes pursued by Zionism."

Ex-Premier Bourgeois: "The Jewish nation is too individual, too dissimilar, to other nations, to lose itself in assimilation. Zionism is essentially war upon Antisemitism--a phenomenon even more injurious to the dominant nations than to the Jews themselves, for it has a demoralizing effect, fostering hatred and checking the growth of the liberal spirit. The Jews are now reasserting themselves as a new-born nation and vigorously proclaiming their status as one. We may expect much from them, as they possess much intellectual power. Zionism is to be hailed as the solvent of Antisemitism, which will lose its raison d'etre with the unification and rehabilitation of the scattered and oppressed race."

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THE TRUE FOLD NOT A PEN.

MANY OF THE LORD'S SHEEP are penned in behind various creeds of men and thus hindered from obtaining the food and exercising the liberty which Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, intended they should have. It is contrary to the will of the great Chief Shepherd that his sheep should be separated from each other by pens, and hindered from the proper liberties of the fold. There is one general enclosure behind which all the true sheep of this age and flock will be found; and to it the Lord informs us there is but the one door--himself.

We might assume that all know something about this one fold and its one door; but this would be a mistake; many are so confused by the numerous man-made folds of Christendom that they confound these with the true. Some "wolves" are disappointed to find that the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the "sheep" has provided certain limitations beyond which the sheep cannot go if they obey his voice (his Word),

and beyond which they do not desire to go if they are actually his sheep.

Let those who like call this true fold, with its well-defined walls, "a man-made pen";--those who enjoy its security, enjoy also its liberty. It has one and only one wall, great and high, which so far has kept out the "wolves," except such as pretend to be sheep--who come arrayed in sheep's clothing. This wall is faith in Christ as man's ransom-sacrifice--finished at Calvary.

None whom that fence excludes are "sheep." And behind that simple, yet strong, creed-fence there is all the liberty proper for the Lord's "sheep;"--though probably not nearly enough for the "goats."

Further, while it is wrong for under-shepherds or anyone else to erect denominational fences inside this true fold, or to entice the "sheep" into them, and thus to restrain their liberties within the fold,--it is not only proper, but a part of the true under-shepherd's duty to protect the flock within the true enclosure of the true fold, from the "wolves in sheep's clothing" wherever found. No doubt it was as a type of the true Shepherd of the Lord's flock, that David [i.e., the Beloved], while defending his flocks, slew a lion, and a bear, and delivered the sheep of his charge.

Our Lord, the great Chief Shepherd, set an example to the under-shepherds; and all true ones of his appointment must needs have the same spirit or soon lose their office. It was he who forewarned the

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true sheep, saying, "Beware of false prophets [teachers], which come to you in sheep's clothing [professing to be of the Lord's flock, but in reality not such, because they do not trust in the great sacrifice offered once for all for their sins], but inwardly they are ravening wolves [who would destroy your faith in the ransom, and thus destroy you as "sheep"]. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd,...seeth the wolf [the false teacher] coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf [the false teacher] catcheth them and scattereth the sheep....I lay down my life for the sheep."--Matt. 7:15; John 10:12-15.

It is not the approval of the "wolves," in sheep's clothing or without it, that is to be courted by the true under-shepherd. He will, however, have the approval of the Chief Shepherd, and of all the developed sheep who have their senses exercised by reason of use. The Apostle Paul battled hard against such false teachers, who affected to be believers, "sheep," while they were not such. Speaking on this subject he said to the Elders (under-shepherds) of the Church at Ephesus:--

"I take you to record this day that I am pure

from the blood of all....Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers [shepherds], to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood [--faith in which purchase constitutes them 'sheep']. For I know this, that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you [in sheep's clothing, of course, otherwise they would not be received], not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking contrary things [things different from what I, Paul, have taught] to draw away disciples [followers] after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."--Acts 20:26-31.

The Apostle Peter, too, made a similar appeal to the under-shepherds, saying, "The elders which are among you I exhort....Feed the flock of God, as much as in you is, taking oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a willing mind." "But as there were false prophets [in the past--'wolves in sheep's clothing'] even so there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [deceptively, covering the real purport of their teachings] shall bring in [to the fold] damnable heresies [errors leading to condemnation and rejection] even denying the Lord that bought them.... And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."--1 Pet. 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 2:1,2.

The Apostle John also cautions us, saying: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward....He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ [that the Son of Man came to give himself a ransom for all--Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6] he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you [as a would-be teacher of the 'sheep'] and bring not this doctrine [of the ransom, taught by Christ], receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed [or who even indirectly helps to spread the 'damnable heresy' that we were not bought by the Lord] is partaker of the evil work [of him who publicly and openly does so]."-- 2 John 8-11.

Thus we see that the duty of under-shepherds to protect the flock from deceptive wolves, as well as to feed them meat in due season, has been recognized from the start;--because from the start there have been such wolves. And since the holy Spirit gave special warnings that in the end of the age "evil men and leaders astray" would wax more and more bold, and that through their instrumentality Satan would propagate error, and affect to be a messenger of light, is it not due time for all the sheep to recognise these facts, and not to be deceived by "feigned

words" and "fair speeches"? The true sheep must not judge of fellow sheep by the pelt; for a wolf can wear a sheep's pelt: they must learn to note the Shepherd's voice and manner--directly through his Word, and indirectly through those whom he shall use as his representatives to "feed the flock over which the

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holy Spirit hath made them overseers [shepherds]."

Not only did the Apostle Paul thus direct the under-shepherds, but he points out the advisability of this to the flock, since it is thus that the Chief Shepherd leads and feeds and keeps his flock.--Heb. 13:17; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 12:27-31; Psa. 91:11,12.

Let us stand fast, therefore, in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;--allowing no one to pen us up by human creeds;--neither allowing any to lead us out beyond the bounds fixed for us by the Chief-Shepherd, into liberties, licenses and speculations that he never authorized. Let us abide in Him, keeping ourselves in the love of God, as saith the Apostle.

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PAUL AT CORINTH.

--ACTS 18:1-11--FEBRUARY 8--

"Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ."--1 Cor. 3:11.

ATHENS did not prove to be a very successful field for the Apostle Paul's labors. He quickly perceived that, although its citizens were chiefly engaged in hearing new things and in philosophizing on every subject, including religion, nevertheless, the tendency of science and philosophy, falsely so-called, so occupied their attention and so satisfied their minds that they were not as ready for the truth as some others less highly educated and less philosophical. The Apostle's experience in this respect coincides with that of all who, in sincerity, preach the gospel of Christ stripped of all human invention and philosophy.

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His experience illustrates his declaration that God does not choose many great or wise or learned, according to the course or standard of this world, but chiefly the poor of this world, socially, philosophically and financially, to be heirs of the Kingdom; because this class is more inclined to receive the faith and to become

rich therein.

Leaving Athens, the Apostle journeyed about forty miles to Corinth, a prominent city of Greece, though very different from Athens. It was a commercial city, noted for its manufactures, architecture, paintings, Corinthian brass, or bronze, etc. It was much less moral than Athens, much less refined, much less given to the study of religious themes, but, nevertheless, a better field for the gospel. Where religious forms and ceremonies become popular they are apt to have correspondingly the less weight and force. Where sin, immorality and irreligion are popular, those minds which have a religious trend are apt to be freer, more open for the truth, because unsatisfied by formalism, and because they more keenly recognize righteousness by its sharp contrast with the sin abounding. Similarly today, the truth is likely to receive a cooler reception amongst those whose religious sensibilities are to some extent satisfied by forms and ceremonies: truth usually makes better progress today in places where to some extent irreligion seems to have the upper hand (as in Corinth), and where, therefore, virtue is at a higher premium. The heart most ready for the truth is the one which is not satiated and stupefied with religious formalism; but which realizes to some extent the exceeding sinfulness of sin and longs for the righteousness which is of God. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is induced by such conditions. Like the Apostle, we are to discern the most fruitful fields, and spend our energies upon them, leaving the other fields for a more convenient season, whether it shall come during the present age or during the Millennium. The Apostle apparently stayed but a few days at Athens, but abode a year and a half at Corinth--the irreligious city, where he found many honest-hearted people, to whom the Lord directed the gospel through him.

The Emperor Claudius Caesar was reigning at this time, and the historian says that he "drove the Jews from Rome, because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus." This was about the year A.D. 52, about twenty years after Pentecost, and it is surmised by some that the historian wrote Chrestus instead of Christus, a less common name, and that his reference was to dissensions among the Jews respecting the principles of Christianity, which by this time had doubtless reached Rome. That Christianity was already established in Rome before Paul's going there seems to be implied by his expression, "I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome also." (Rom. 1:8-15.) The supposition is that Aquila, a Jew, with his wife, Priscilla, a Gentile, who were amongst those driven from Rome, had received the message of the gospel, and that the Apostle going to Corinth found Aquila readily by reason of their being of the same craft or trade--tent-makers.

It was customary at that time that the sons of all

the upper class of people should learn a trade, however well educated otherwise. St. Paul's trade as a tent-maker stood him now in good place, enabling him to provide for his necessities, while preaching the gospel of Christ. From his own explanation of the matter we learn that even after a considerable number of believers had been gathered at Corinth as a Church, the Apostle maintained himself by his trade--not because it would have been a sin for him to have received money and support from the believers there, but because he hoped that the gospel would commend itself more to many if its chief expounder were seen to be laboring not for the meat that perisheth, nor for wealth, but preaching the gospel without charge--laying down his life for the brethren. There is a lesson in this for all of the Lord's people who have talent as ministers of the Word. Our object, like that of the Apostle, should be seen to be that "we seek not yours, but you."--2 Cor. 12:14.

The Apostle evidently lost no time in showing his colors--engaging with as much wisdom as possible in the preaching of the gospel to the Jews and Jewish proselytes from amongst the Greeks in their synagogue. He was not in this an intruder, for such was the custom of the synagogue;--that any person of ability had the privilege of giving an exposition of the teachings of the Law and the Prophets. The Apostle was a man of some ability, and apparently in every city he at first was welcomed; the subsequent hatred of himself and his theme being the logical result of the wrong condition of heart on the part of those who heard--their unwillingness to receive the truth in the love of it--their preference for the traditions of the elders, with their more or less error, rejecting the light of the truth as it came to them. We find similar conditions today in Christendom, and are following the Scriptural precedent when we approach as closely as we can to the synagogues of our time, and as nearly as possible do as the Apostle did,--reasoning with and persuading the attendants at divine worship. Under the usages of our time it would be improper for us now to attempt such a discussion or reasoning inside church buildings. The nearest approach we have is through the printed page, on the pavement, near the churches,--but far enough away to avoid reasonable prejudice and opposition. Let it be noticed also that the proper method of presenting the truth today, as in the Apostle's time, is not

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by haranguing, but by reasonable presentation--appealing to the testimony of the Word of God in a logical and a reasonable manner. Let us rejoice that we find ourselves in such good accord with apostolic methods, and resolve that we will refrain from any other methods, however popular they may be with those who follow not with us.

How long the Apostle continued in this way is not distinctly declared, but in his first letter to that church, written some time after, he remarks, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit, and with power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The word "weakness" in this text may be properly understood to imply that the Apostle was physically weak, possibly for a time ailing to such an extent as to be unable to work at his trade, because, referring again to the matter (2 Cor. 11:9) he intimates that for a time he was in want. This noble soldier of the cross was evidently permitted of the Lord to have a little season of measurable discouragement, when the sunshine of divine favor was to some extent beclouded by temporal difficulties: probably his physical weakness to some extent produced melancholy--"trembling with fear." He had no thought of abandoning the warfare in which he had enlisted himself even unto death, but apparently his recent experiences at Thessalonica, at Berea and at Athens, were causing him to wonder whether or not he was too aggressive in the presentation of the gospel--whether or not he was inclined needlessly to bring upon himself persecution, and was thus perhaps interfering with the Lord's work, rather than helping it forward, as he desired. Now he was, for the time, at least, disposed to be extremely careful how he presented the message,--how that, as our Golden Text expresses it, there is no salvation, no harmony with God, no eternal life by the law, nor by any other means than through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was about this time that the Lord comforted and encouraged the Apostle by the arrival of Silas and Timothy, whom he had left in Berea. They brought with them not only the comfort and encouragement of a good report of the work behind them, the fruitage of his labors, but additionally brought presents from the brethren, which supplied his necessities, and caused his heart to rejoice because of the evidence of their brotherly love, and that the gospel had reached their hearts

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and even down into their pocket-books. The presence of these two fellow-helpers, in whom he had so much confidence, was a refreshment of spirit to the Apostle. Their coming not only brought physical strength, but an energy of spirit--an increased earnestness and force to his preaching: he no longer felt so timid, trembling, fearful. This is still true amongst the Lord's people--the strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the

Lord shall seem to require also the co-operation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard.

Who that has borne any measure of labor and heat of the day in the gospel service cannot sympathize with this thought? Here, then, is a way in which many of the Lord's dear people who have not themselves the largest amount of talent or opportunity for service may be co-laborers and assistants in the gospel work. The Apostle mentions these helpers in the same breath with the more able servants of the truth, saying, "Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazing-stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became the companions of them that were so used."--Heb. 10:32,33.

Encouraged, revived in spirit, the Apostle was bolder now to tell the Jews and Greek proselytes plainly that there is no salvation except through Christ. The effect of this plain declaration was that he was no longer made welcome in the synagogue, and the opposition becoming violent, he shook his raiment, as an indication that he had nothing further to present, and would discontinue the discussion, declaring that their responsibility rested with themselves; that he had done all in his power to preach the good tidings to them first, as was proper; but that now henceforth, according to the scriptural declaration, the message should be proclaimed outside the synagogue, to any who had ears to hear it and hearts to receive it. The new meeting was started close to the synagogue, to the intent that the message he had already delivered might be impressed more and more upon those who had heard it--that they should not forget his declaration that the promise made to the fathers was in process of fulfilment in Christ, and those who accept him.

One of the chief men of the synagogue, and various of the people at Corinth were favorably impressed by the gospel message, and the Church of Corinth thus took its start in the house of Justus. The believers testified their acceptance by baptism--the true baptism of consecration, we may be sure, first, but also the outward symbolic water baptism, which would be a testimony to others and which is referred to in this lesson.

The Apostle, still meditating the propriety of greater moderation in preaching Jesus and the resurrection, was by this time, perhaps, feeling fearful of further difficulties with the Jews, and the trouble they could stir up with the authorities. Doubtless he had in mind previous

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experiences, and was debating mentally whether or not he should leave before the persecution set in,--whether or not it was the Lord's will that he should be so courageous in the presentations of the truth as to awaken further hostilities against himself and all the

brethren. The Lord came to the assistance of his faithful servant, and instructed him in a dream that he should neither leave nor hold his peace--that there were many people there of right condition of heart to receive the truth.

It is an encouragement to us to note this, another evidence that the Lord himself has supervision of his own work, and guides those who are truly his servants, --who seek not their own will nor their own honor, but to glorify him in their bodies and spirits which are his. The necessity for such admonishing by dreams is less today than in the Apostle's day, because the Word of the Lord is now complete, and in the hands of his people in convenient form, that they can, through the experience and instruction of the apostles, know what to expect and how to do;--whereas the Apostle was treading a new path and needed to be guided therein. We of today may know assuredly that it is the Lord's will that we should exercise wisdom in the presentation of his Word, and that grace should be poured upon our lips, that they may minister blessing to the hearers; but that we shall not hold our peace nor flee to another city until persecution has come to such a pitch as to almost necessitate removal.

We should not dare to say that the Lord might not use a dream today to instruct and guide his people, as he did the Apostle, but we do say that there is less necessity for such special direction, since the general directions of his Word are now explicit and amplified. We do suggest, however, that as the Apostle says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," so we may well say to ourselves, Believe not every dream, but test the dream--whether it be of God or not. A dream must never lead us in opposition to the written Word of God, but if it can be understood in harmony with the Word and its reasonable interpretation, we should rejoice in it and be thereby encouraged to follow the Word. If the dream agree not with this Word it is because there is no light in it. (Isa. 8:20.) We are confident that many dreams are not of God, the majority probably being of indigestion, and some quite probably of the evil one. Hence, we have the more need of care that we follow not a dream, because it is a dream, but at very most permit it to direct us to the plain instruction of the Lord's Word.

The Lord's promise that no man should set on the Apostle to hurt was fulfilled; for, although a disturbance was created and he was taken before the magistracy, no violence was done him, and the case was dismissed by the Roman governor. As with the Apostle, so with us; in the Lord's wisdom varying experiences may be to our advantage. Sometimes it may be advantageous to us and the cause that we should seem to be defeated and forced to flight. We may rely, however, that the Lord understands the situation fully, and will not permit his work to be disconcerted and interrupted to its real disadvantage. Long ago some one said, "I

am immortal until my work is finished;" and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service--that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." He will use and protect and guide them in their affairs, in ways that will be to his pleacement, and eventually to their highest welfare, --to the intent that all of his good purposes shall be accomplished.

Why, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan or any other evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence. While God knows what will prosper, he declares of us, "Thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that" --therefore, we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rests with the Lord.

Our Golden Text gives us the central theme of the Apostle's preaching on every occasion. It would be a poor text for Higher Critics, for Evolutionists, for Theosophists, for Christian Scientists, and for most other of the new gospels so numerous in our day. Let us hold fast to the same message which the Apostle preached, which recognizes no other foundation than Christ, and no other Church and no other salvation than that built upon that foundation. Other structures, built upon other foundations, are anti-Christian, however smooth their philosophy, however arrayed in a garment of light to deceive, if possible, the very elect.

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"KNOWLEDGE PUFFETH UP; BUT LOVE BUILDETH UP."

--1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-13--FEBRUARY 15.--

"Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace."--Rom. 14:19.

ABOUT three and a half years after the Apostle Paul left Corinth he wrote to the Church there the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and our present lesson concerns one of its important topics. The question of religious liberty, and the propriety or impropriety of eating meat which had been offered to idols, might at first seem unnecessary to discuss; but, as the Apostle handles the subject in our lesson, he develops

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from it a valuable lesson along general principles, valuable to the Church now, as well as then, in

connection with various other matters.

Some of the Corinthian Church had evidently made considerable progress in knowledge, and heartily appreciated the fact that since an idol is nothing, meat offered to the idol cannot in any sense of the word be injured. Nevertheless, in the conference of the apostles at Jerusalem it had been specially recommended to the Church at Antioch and to all Christian converts from the Gentiles "that they should abstain from meats offered to idols." Some of the brethren at Corinth perceived that there could be no sin in the eating of such meat where their consciences were not violated, and concluded that the admonitions of the Apostles were not a law to the Church, but a recommendation, and had proceeded to use their liberties--to eat meat offered to idols, thinking, perhaps, thus to show not only their Christian liberty, but also that they entirely disregarded an idol.

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It will help us to sympathize with them to remember that they were in daily contact with heathen neighbors who would repeatedly invite them to feasts, entertainments, weddings, etc., at which they were sure to be served with food that had been offered to idols, and which was supposed to be the better therefor. To abstain, under such circumstances, would mean more or less of an insult to their friends, and the practical ostracism of themselves. Some of the brethren took the view that they could partake of such refreshments without the least injury to their consciences, and at the same time show their heathen neighbors that they were not narrow and bigoted, but broad-minded;--or perhaps explain the matter by saying, "Your god is nothing anyway, and could not injure the meat."

The Apostle intimates that the majority of the Church had such knowledge as enabled them to discern that an image of wood or stone, being no god, could neither improve nor injure the food in any sense or degree; but that this knowledge did not necessarily mean a great growth in spirituality. A very small mite of soap will make a large air bubble; and so, a comparatively little knowledge might puff one up greatly, without any solidity of character. He points out the advantage, therefore, of measuring oneself by growth in love, rather than by growth merely in knowledge--though, of course, to be great in both knowledge and love would be the ideal condition. The same lesson the Apostle inculcates further on (1 Cor. 13:2) asserting "though I have all knowledge and have not love I am nothing." Knowledge without love would be an injury, and to consider it otherwise would imply that real knowledge has not yet been secured; but, says the Apostle, to the contrary of this, "If any man love God, the same is known to him,"--acquainted with him. We might

have a great deal of knowledge, and yet not know God, and not be known or recognized by him; but no man can have a large development of true love in his character without personally knowing the Lord and obtaining the spirit of love through fellowship with him. Hence, the getting of love is sure to build us up substantially (avoiding the inflation of pride) in all the various graces of the spirit, including meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, knowledge, wisdom from above and the spirit of a sound mind.

Having laid down this premise, the Apostle proceeds to build his argument thereon, and to show that although it is true, as claimed, that the idol could do no injury to the food, nevertheless with Christians love must have the last word on the matter. Love, after securing knowledge and liberty, will look about to see what effect the use of liberty might have upon others; and would perceive that by reason of differing conditions of mental strength, perception, reasoning faculties, etc., all could not have exactly the same standpoint of knowledge and appreciation of principles. Love, therefore, would forbid the use of knowledge and liberty if it perceived that their exercise might work injury to another.

True, there is only one God, and idols, therefore, are nothing as gods; nevertheless, the appreciation of idols as gods had become so ingrained in the thought of many that it would be impossible for them fully to divest themselves of some respect for the idols--impossible for them to eat meat that had been offered to idols without the feeling that in some sense of the word they had done wrong--had been contaminated or injured by the unholy associations. This would be true also of food offered to the heavenly bodies worshiped as gods--the sun, moon and stars.

Knowledge is beneficial;--"To us there is but one God, the Father;" of, or from whom, as the first cause or Creator, all things came, including ourselves; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, by, or through whom all things, including ourselves, have been brought into existence. The knowledge which would enable us to discern this matter clearly would assuredly be of advantage. But some dear brethren did not possess ability to reason clearly from this premise, and they had a claim upon their stronger brethren under the Law of Love.

We must pause a moment in our consideration of vs. 6, not because the Apostle's language is in any measure obscure; but because the Adversary seeks continually to wrest the Scriptures, and to misrepresent their plain teachings, and thus to mislead the Lord's flock. We refer to the false teaching abroad today, that this

statement, "Of whom are all things," signifies that all the sin, all the wickedness, etc., of the world are from God; are his direct work, traceable to him as their author or fountain. Surely it is nothing short of blasphemy for anyone who has first tasted of the good Word of God, and been made a partaker of the holy spirit, thus to attribute to God the various evils which, throughout the Scriptures are uniformly condemned, and which God declares he will ultimately--"in due time"--destroy! The Scriptures are clear in their statement that "all his work is perfect;" that "God is not the author of confusion;" that "God tempteth no man," and is not in accord with any suggestion to the effect that evil may be done so that good results may follow. (Deut. 32:4; Rom. 3:8; 1 Cor. 14:33; Jas. 1:13; 1 Pet. 3:11.) It is in full agreement with the declaration that "all his work is perfect," that having made Satan a perfect being, as also he made our race perfect, representatively in Adam, God has not hindered his free moral agents from taking a course of sin in violation of his commands. His wisdom and power are such that he will eventually bring a blessing out of these evils to those who are not in sympathy with them, but the evils themselves, yea, and "all the wicked, will he destroy."--Psa. 145:20.

The Apostle proceeds in his argument to show that it is not the food that we eat that makes us acceptable to God, neither our abstaining from any particular food. Our relationship to God is that of the New Creation, a heart relationship; and the blessing which the Lord gives us is as newly begotten children,--not along the lines of the flesh, but along the lines of the spiritual and heart development, which shall ultimately be perfected in the resurrection.

True, "whom the Son makes free is free indeed," and we all should "seek to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free;" but it is also true that we need to be on guard lest we use our liberty in such a manner as would stumble others more weak than ourselves, --not so able to use the liberty of Christ discriminatingly. The liberty wherewith Christ makes free may be viewed from two standpoints: if it gives us liberty to eat without restraint, in a manner that the Jews were not at liberty to eat, it gives us liberty also to abstain;--and whoever has the spirit of Christ and is seeking to follow in his steps has already covenanted to the Lord to use his liberty, not in the promotion of his fleshly desires, ambitions and appetites; but in self-sacrifice, following in the footsteps of the Master, seeking to lay down his life, even, on behalf of the brethren --for their assistance. How different are these two uses of liberty! Its selfish use would mean self-gratification, regardless of the interests of others; its loving use would prompt to self-sacrifice in the interests of others.

But why?--what principle is involved that would make it incumbent upon one whose conscience is clear

to consider the conscience of another? Why not let the person of the weak conscience take care of his own conscience, and eat or abstain from eating as he felt disposed?

The Apostle explains that this would be all right if it were possible; but that the person of weaker mind, feebler reasoning powers, is likely to be weaker in every respect and, hence, more susceptible to the leadings of others--into paths which his conscience could not approve, because of his weaker reasoning powers or inferior knowledge. One might, without violation of conscience, eat meat that had been offered to idols, or even sit at a feast in an idol temple, without injury to his conscience; but the other, feeling that such a course was wrong, might endeavor to follow the example of his stronger brother, and thus might violate his conscience, which would make it a sin to him. Every violation of conscience, whether the thing itself be right or wrong, is a step in the direction of wilful sin--it is a downward course, leading further and further away from the communion and fellowship with the Lord, and into grosser and grosser transgressions of conscience and, hence, possibly leading to the Second Death. Thus the Apostle presents the matter: "For through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, --the brother for whose sake Christ died."

The question is not, Would it be a sin to eat the meat offered to idols? but, Would it be sin against the spirit of love, the law of the New Creation, to do anything which could reasonably prove a cause of stumbling to our brother;--not only to the brethren in Christ, the Church, but even to a fellow-creature according to the flesh?--for Christ died for the sins of the whole world. It is a very serious crime against the law of love and against the Lord's injunction, to cause one of his brethren to stumble (Rom. 14:13,21; Matt. 18:6), but it would also be a crime in his sight for us to stumble others,--to hinder them from becoming brethren, and of the household of faith. Hence, it is clear that although knowledge might remove all prohibition of our consciences and all restraints of our liberty, yet love must first come in and approve the liberty before we can exercise it. Love places a firm command upon us, saying,--Thou shalt love the Lord with all thine heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Love, therefore, and not knowledge, not liberty, must finally decide every question.

Let us take our stand with the Lord, and determine that so far from using our liberties in any manner that might do injury to others we will refuse so to use them; and will rather sacrifice them for the benefit of others;--even as our Master, as our Redeemer, gave all that he had. Let us adopt the words of the Apostle

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in the last verse of this lesson, and determine once for

all that anything that would injure a brother we will not do--any liberty of ours, however reasonable in itself, that would work our brother's injury, that liberty we will not exercise; we will surrender it in his interest; we will sacrifice it; we will to that extent, on his behalf, lay down our life for him.

There is, perhaps, occasionally a danger of misapplication of this principle; as, for instance, the Doukhobors might say to us, We regard that it is wrong to eat any meat and wrong even to use the skins of animals for shoes, and you are to condescend to our weak consciences in this matter, and ought not to eat meat or wear shoes either. We answer that that is not a similar question to the one which the Apostle has explained in which we should surrender our liberties. On the contrary, the Word of the Lord and the customs of society are all opposed to these bewildered people, and to yield to their mental unbalance on this question would be to assist them in a wrong direction. Our abstaining from eating meat or from the wearing of shoes would in no sense of the word help them to better views; nor does our eating of meat or wearing of leather in any sense of the word interfere with their consciences. Other brethren have an antipathy to the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, as there used to be people who objected to having meeting places heated and provided with comfortable seats. These may sometimes abuse the Apostle's argument, claiming that their consciences are injured by the liberties of the brethren; and that such liberties should be abridged in their interest. Our answer to them must also be,--that they misapply the Apostle's argument: it is not his meaning that the Lord's people are to favor the mental crotchets of each other in such a manner as would be to the general injury of the Church. Superstitions are not to be encouraged in the Church, nor its spiritual advantages and liberties sacrificed on account of them. Nevertheless, love must always have a voice in all of the affairs of the Lord's people; and even such as would mistakenly impose upon their brethren upon the score of weakness, should be treated with love, and their objections, etc., should be reasoned upon. They should see that they have full liberty to do any and everything that the Lord requires of them, abstaining from every appearance of evil, and that their brethren should be accorded the same privileges. If they cannot conscientiously sing with instrumental music or sing hymns, let them keep silence, or for the time do their singing at home. Praising God with instruments is a very different question from eating in an idol's temple.

A somewhat similar question to this one which the Apostle decided, may come before us today in respect to attendance at public worship in the nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic--including the propriety of partaking of the "sacrament" or the "Mass." On such a question each has personal liberty; each should be fully

persuaded in his own mind, and follow the direction of his own conscience. In our judgment it would be a much more serious offense to partake of the Mass in Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic or High Episcopal Church services, than to sit in an idol temple and partake of the foods offered to the idols; because the Mass is particularly an abomination before the Lord. (Heb. 7:25; 10:14.) As respects participation in the Lord's Supper, as observed by the majority of Protestants: We could see no harm in this of itself;--those participating might intelligently reverence and worship God in such a manner, even though realizing the inappropriateness, according to the Scriptures, of such a celebration. We would, however, think that a regular participation in the services of Babylon and in her misinterpretation of the Lord's Supper would be reprehensible; --injurious to our own spiritual progress, and dangerous also in the stumbling of some weaker in their discernments. Our advice, therefore, would be that on the one hand we do not feel such a restraint that we would fear to enter a nominal church building to hear a service there; and on the other hand that we do not seem to give our assent to their errors by regular attendance and participation--except at such meetings as would afford us full opportunity for the presentation of the truth.

Another illustration of this principle in our times, is found in the liquor question. There will be no dispute that it would be wrong for any man to get drunk --to lose his senses, and additionally to render himself liable to do injury to others, and surely to dishonor his Creator. The question of liberty comes in only in respect to the use of liquors in such a manner as would work no dishonor to God and no injury either to ourselves or to our neighbors. All recognize the fact that intoxicating liquors are a dangerous temptation to the world in general, and our suggestion to the brethren who feel that they have full power of self-control in the use of liquors, is that they apply the argument of the Apostle in this lesson, and determine whether they could not more honor the Lord and help those who are weaker than themselves by using their liberty in the direction of total abstinence,--sacrifice of rights,--rather than by using it in moderate drinking.

So far as we are able to discern, intoxication is one of the most terrible evils scourging our race at the present time. Many are so weak through the fall, by heredity, that they are totally unable to resist the control of intoxicants, if once they yield to them. Is it too much to ask of those who have consecrated their lives to the Lord, to righteousness and to the blessing

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of others, that they should deny themselves in this matter, and thus lay down some liberties and privileges

in the interest of the brethren, and in the interest of the world in general?

Similar arguments might be urged respecting the use of tobacco, cards and the various implements which the Adversary uses in luring mankind into sin. The whole, be it noted, is the argument of love. In proportion as we grow in the graces of our Lord, in his spirit of love, we will be glad, not only to put away all filthiness of the flesh for our own sakes, and to be more like the Lord, but also, at the instance of love, we would desire to put away from us everything that might have an evil influence upon others, whatever we might consider our personal liberties to be in respect to them.

Our Golden Text is in place here--it appeals to all who have become new creatures in Christ Jesus. "Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace"--for the blessing of others and for our own blessing and upbuilding as new creatures in Christ, members of his body.

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"IN MY NAME."

"There were only two or three of us
Who came to the place of prayer--
Came in the teeth of a driving storm;
But for that we did not care,
Since after our hymns of praise had risen,
And our earnest prayers were said,
The Master Himself was present there
And gave us the living bread.

"We noted his look in each other's face,
So loving, and glad, and free:
We felt his touch when our heads were bowed,
We heard his 'Come to Me!'
Nobody saw him lift the latch,
And none unbarred the door;
But 'Peace' was his token in every heart,
And how could we ask for more?

"Each of us felt the relief from sin,
Christ's purchase for one and all;
Each of us dropped his load of care,
And heard the heavenly call;
And over our spirits a blessed calm
Swept in from the Jasper Sea,
And strength was ours for the toil of life
In the days that were yet to be.

"It was only a handful gathered in
To that little place of prayer.
Outside were struggle and strife and sin,
But the Lord himself was there.

He came to redeem the pledge he gave--
Wherever his loved ones be,
To give his comfort and joy to them,
Though they count but two or three."

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LETTERS OF INTEREST.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:--

Greetings! Peace be unto you and to all the dear coworkers in the Bible House! We praise God more and more for the great privilege of being engaged in the colporteur work. We often say that we believe if the brethren in England who are able to enter this branch of the harvest work could only realize how sweet is the work there would be more in it. We can live well and cheaply, and can much more than make a living, so that we are able to give to him that needeth, as well as to give a little to the Tract Fund. But, of course, the sweetest joy is singing the song of Moses and the Lamb from door to door, day by day. Even if at times we do not do so well it is a great satisfaction to us in having such a good supply of tracts to leave one at each house. They are tracts, too, full of good clean provender, food for thinking Christians. Praise God for such a good supply!

We have just been in Bristol three weeks today, and already we have found hungry souls. One gentleman got tract No. 21 and has sent for more food; he now has Vol. I. and has become a subscriber to the TOWER. As a result of the first Sunday morning's volunteer work, a merchant sent for Vol. I. and tracts, and has since sent in several orders and contributions. In his last letter he writes, "I am reading Vol. I. with intense interest and wish all to enter into its joys. Mr. Russell has explained things that have troubled me for many years."

We have been doing very well indeed here in Bristol. We were never better received anywhere. In Manchester a little mission has, with its three leaders (two now TOWER subscribers), heartily accepted the truth, and will not have anything but the truth spoken from the platform. Before leaving, we gave them three talks on the chart, and one of the leaders offered us money, which of course we thanked him for, and suggested that he send it to the Tract Fund, which they did. When they begin to send money to the Tract Fund, to our mind, it looks well. Another dear soul, a sister, to whom we lent the DAWN months ago, called to see us some weeks before we left M_____. She said, "I had been praying for more light, and when you came that morning I would not buy or order, but I thank God you were patient with me,

and lent me the book. I promised to read it within a month, which I did, and now I have come to encourage you, for I believe it to be the truth with all my heart." She now has all the DAWNS, is also a subscriber, and has bought more DAWNS to send away.

We praise the dear Lord for these things and take courage. There are many other interesting cases in M _____, and we believe that in the Lord's due time there will be good results from the spread of the truth there. We know that you pray for us that God will keep us humble and help us to grow more like him. Oh, to be nothing, nothing, and Christ all! We long for the time when we shall see him as he is. The Lord bless you and keep you in the secret of his presence.

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With kindest love from us both to you and all the dear ones, we are, Your affectionate and grateful brethren in our dear Redeemer,
ALBERT E. LLOYD and FRANK KITTRIDGE,--England.

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DEAR AND HONORED SERVANT OF CHRIST:--

You may recollect having received a letter from me about a year ago, when I was in India; also, how, after ordering a copy of the MILLENNIAL DAWN, I returned it, having given up as darkness what had seemed light to me.

Your kind letter of January 9th, 1902, expressing your sorrow that I had turned aside "to the husks, theories and creeds of men," caused conflicting thoughts to arise in my mind again. Former Scriptures that had taken hold of me, revealing the utter destruction of the wicked in the Second Death, came with power to my soul, and I found myself in doubt concerning the "orthodox" view. In this state of conflict I cried to the Lord for light. The following verse of Scripture caused me to know that God would in his own time show me clearly which was truth:--"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine." I decided that when I had leisure I would study the Scriptures on this point of doctrine, using Dr. Young's Concordance only to help me find all verses treating on the subject. Just then I was busy preparing to return to Ireland for a rest. After searching and comparing Scripture with Scripture, I became fully convinced of the truth of the Second Death; and of the non-existence of the soul of either saint or sinner from death till the resurrection.

I confessed this to the elders of the assembly with which I was in fellowship, and to other friends and evangelists. They expressed their deep sorrow, and

some denounced me as a heretic, saying they "believed all would accept this doctrine of the devil ere the Man of Sin would be revealed."

The elders (known as "Open Brethren") assembled to examine me, and decided that I should be excommunicated--delivered over to Satan! 1 Cor. 5:4,5; 2 John 7-11, were the Scriptures read to exclude me from their fellowship. Some were in tears, but were obliged to submit to the authority of the Brethren, which is equal to the authority of the Church of Rome.

In the midst of these trials the Lord filled my heart with his own perfect peace, and saved me from having a bitter thought against those whom I knew were walking in darkness and therefore did not know what they were doing. Since being excluded I have met a few Christians who are like-minded, so I am not so isolated here as I was in India. One of my sisters, a brother and a brother-in-law see the Truth and are suffering for it. There are some who are seeking more light and in many ways the Lord is opening up doors of service.

The missionary friends had hoped that after a rest I would return to N_____ next year. But as I have written to these, they also will exclude me from

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their circle. Still, knowing that I am not the servant of man, I am confident that if the Lord wants me to go to India again, he can and will prepare the way for me.

I regret having returned the MILLENNIAL DAWN, and am now ordering a few books.

With grateful thanks, yours in the patience of Jesus Christ, (MISS) M. A. McBRIDE,--Ireland.

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DEAR MR. RUSSELL:--

On leaving Church (of England) one Sunday morning, I met one of my fellow workmen at the top of the road, and I asked him what he was doing there, to which he answered that he was distributing literature belonging to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, handing me at the same time a tract on Evolution. This I read with interest and asked for more reading. I next got the DAWN, VOL. I., and had not got far before I saw that was the very thing I was in need of, as I was quite puzzled with orthodoxy on several important doctrines, which you have made so clear to me, so much so that the Bible is now a new book. I find it the most interesting study which I have yet entered into. I am of a studious nature, and

after reading Vol. I., I got the remaining four volumes, which I have just finished, and there are no books in my limited library which I prize more than your five volumes. The object of this letter is to express to you my feelings of gratitude for the great help which you have been able to render me by your deep insight and clear reasoning of the Scriptures. I need hardly say that I am interesting my friends in them.

The plan that you have set forth in the DAWNS is one that appeals to one's reason as being rational and in harmony with one's conception of a God. Apart from such a plan existence remains a riddle.

With feelings of gratitude to you, I remain, yours affectionately,
E. WORSNOP,--England.

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:--

I was one of those interested ones who asked questions when you were in our city last summer. I felt so grateful to you for your explanations, and all the time I am growing to love this pure gospel more and more. Oh, how I do praise the Lord that he has let me hear some of the good things that are untainted with the world! I was so weary and heart sore to see a color of sin in everything, even in the loudest religion! I thought death would be the only relief. But when divine love touched me I revived and had strength enough to rise and be fed of the Lord, like Elijah under the juniper tree. And now I am glad that the world was not pleasant to me, else I might have been satisfied with it. I used to think that I was unfortunate, but now I know that it was just a working out of his plan.

Your fifth volume has been such a blessing to me in connection with the Scriptures which it unfolds. The Bible grows more beautiful to me all the time. Now to me it is the Book of all books. I have seen the time when I believe I really preferred Shakespeare or Goethe or Darwin or Plato. I say it with shame. I do not know what that experience was for, unless it was to find out that there is nothing in what the world calls great.

I was brought up religiously and taught to regard the Word as sacred and to believe in a personal God

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and a personal Savior. I had a natural tendency for religion, too, and loved church and Sunday school work and Bible study from a child until grown. Then Evolution and Higher Criticism played havoc with my belief and I came to think I had been greatly imposed upon by pretentious theologians, and after all the whole thing was only a fraud. This darkness

in which I was for several years, was great, and so I appreciated the light and the truth more when it dawned upon me. What a relief! what a joy! I had never experienced such previously. Your "Plan of the Ages" comes in like a great search-light turned upon the Word of God and the Truth is illuminated, --there can be no mistake. But why am I so highly favored? Others right around me and close to me do not see it. That is so distressing! I can seldom talk of these things, but can only pray and wait. The Spirit of God does not seem to approve of talking very much. I am willing to be patient, as I have put myself entirely on the altar, that my death may be as absolute as his.

Yours in the bonds of "peace and good will toward men."
ALICE M. TAIT,--Indiana.

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DEAR BRO. RUSSELL:--

It has been a long time since I have written you, and so I thought to drop you a few lines, just to let you know that I am still in the "race," striving to reach the "mark." Glory to God!

Acting upon suggestions received from you previously, I have now for the second time refused to sign petitions for dram-shop license. I wish to state first, that I know you instructed me rightly and Scripturally, for which I thank you. Added to this, the churches here organized quite a temperance movement, with which I also would have no connection, but have endeavored to occupy neutral ground; and the same in regard to politics; seeing that I am an "alien," I would not vote. In consequence there is a disposition to persecute me--from all sides, seemingly; because formerly I was interested in church work, took part in politics and signed petitions for dram-shop license. But do not think, dear brother, that I am complaining. Nay, "I rejoice in the Lord alway!" Formerly I was a member of a fraternal organization, and because I refused to accept suggestions from any of the Masonic fraternity (which includes all men of any prominence in our town) to become a member, they likewise have transferred their patronage, generally, to a competitor.

I am realizing how, by taking part in a political campaign, or other movement, it would be possible that I might be found fighting against the Lord, "who maketh even the wrath of men to praise him." I am realizing more and more the import of our dear Savior's words, while praying to the Father, "They are in the world, but not of it." Ah, yes! This means much to any consecrated believer. While we are in the world, yet we should keep separate from the

world--not have our robe "spotted" by contact. If we would not be worldly minded, it is necessary that we have great care how we act in regard to those things which at this present time engage the attention of the world generally,--reform movements, matters of finance, etc. For inasmuch as we give of our time to such things (no, not our time, seeing that we have consecrated our all unto the Lord) in so much the world has a claim upon us, so that while we are in the world, we would also be of the world, seeing that that which interests the world would also interest us. "The natural (worldly minded) man perceiveth not the things that are spiritual," and consequently is not interested in them; how much more, then, we that do see should not mind the things natural or worldly. All such movements which are the absorbing topics of the day, merely engender "strife, malice, anger, hatred," etc., causing all who have connection therewith to foster and cultivate an evil disposition, wholly contrary to the law of love.

Praying the Lord's continued blessings upon you and all with you, Yours in the one blessed hope,
A. W. KRUEGER,--Missouri.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:--

The many spiritual blessings we have enjoyed throughout the year increases our gratitude to and love for ZION'S WATCH TOWER. We will not be able to comprehend, dear brother, how much we owe the Lord this side of the "golden city." Until that glorious day when we reach the glad home-land,--the fruition of all our hopes,--we take much pleasure in manifesting the appreciation of which we are now capable.

The Society's Annual Report filled my heart with thanksgiving. There was only one sad note, for which I am grieved, and that was the reference to the fact that some of the letters received at the TOWER office were filled with acrimony. Truly, this must be very painful to you.

Looking back over the old year I can truthfully state it has been a blessed year for me. Enclosed find money order for \$ _____; please credit \$1.00 on TOWER subscription, and balance in Good Hopes for 1902. You will also find herewith my Good Hopes filled out for 1903.

Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a happy, profitable New Year, with much Christian love, I remain, yours in the service of our King,

CARRIE CROWLEY,--Missouri.

The eight-year old daughter of a sister in the truth writes the following herself:--

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I had my choice to go to Eden Musee or have the 50 cents and I want to consecrate it to the Lord. Mamma has told me all about how many different ways I could give it to the Lord, and I would rather have a part in sending the truth to some one; so you will please put it in the Tract Fund. I will send it with mamma's.

I send my love to you and hope I shall see you some day. God bless and keep you all.

Your loving friend, RUTH SNOW,--New Jersey.

From another of the little ones:--

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

As we children have sold our pony, enclosed please find eight dollars, which is my share, to be used in the spreading of the truth.

Your sister in Christ, HATTIE E. HUYCK,--Iowa.

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SEMI-MONTHLY.

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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--131 GREEN ST., FOREST GATE, LONDON.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4s.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE, 5c (2-1/2d.) A COPY.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER, will be supplied FREE, if
they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting
the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
list continually.

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ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

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WIDE MARGIN BIBLES GONE!

The entire edition of 5,000 is completely exhausted.
We cannot fill further orders.

ABOUT PILGRIM VISITS.

Our friends who desire Pilgrim visits for the current
year are requested to read over again the questions asked
on page 383 of Dec. 15th issue. It is very important that
we should have your answers to all queries, as far as possible.
If a Pilgrim passes your way and makes no call, ask
yourselves whether or not you have complied with our
simple request. Requests made for previous years will not
suffice, as many changes are apt to occur.

MISSIONARY STATIONERY.

In consequence of the brisk demand for the letter paper
announced in issue for Jan. 15, our stock is entirely exhausted.
We shall have a new supply on hand as soon as
possible--in about four weeks--and your orders will receive
early attention then. Missionary Envelopes are entirely
out of stock. A new lot is under way, and we hope
to fill all orders in about a month.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

ABOUT MISSIONS IN CHINA.

FRANCIS H. NICHOLS, an American traveler,
writes in the Atlantic Monthly:

"Perhaps in the higher sense, that 'no power is lost that ever wrought for God,' it is not wholly correct to say that efforts to introduce Christianity into China have failed. But humanly speaking, in proportion to the amount of money, lives and effort expended, they have apparently not met with great success. The small number of converts after one century of Protestant and three centuries of Roman Catholic endeavor is the least part of the failure of missions in China. All over the empire today there prevails a spirit of hatred and antagonism to Christianity so intense and so peculiar that a certain brilliant missionary in describing it had to coin a new word. He has called the feeling of the provincial authorities of Shantung toward Christianity 'Christophobia'. Usually it is specially stipulated when foreign teachers are engaged for recently organized government schools that they shall make no reference even in the remotest way to the Bible or to anything connected with it. In the gradual subsiding of the Boxer storm the one kind of foreigners warned to keep away from a troubled district are always missionaries. Except in the few places where they are numerous enough to form a community by themselves, Christian converts are ostracized, boycotted, and sometimes persecuted."

ENGLAND'S POOR LESS PROSPEROUS.

"It is estimated that 500,000 persons are idle in the United Kingdom and the board of trade returns show the largest per centage for ten years past of unskilled persons out of work, while the proportion of skilled men without employment is constantly growing. The Woolwich arsenal authorities have discharged 2,000 mechanics since the winter set in and are preparing to let out 4,000 more.

"To the army of people out of work must be added 56,000 members of the army reserve who have been released from service with the colors. The worst distress naturally is visible in the east end, where thousands of unemployed persons daily congregate at the dockyard gates, literally fighting for a chance to do a day's work. Unskilled laborers are there in strong force, and the police find it necessary to escort the foremen who distribute the work tickets each morning.

"A number of newspapers have started subscription columns, and daily print harrowing stories of half-clad school children, many of whom are without food except scanty luncheons furnished by sympathetic

teachers. A number of the London suburban councils are starting public works in order to employ a portion of the idle persons. The Canning Town suburb, where the distress is keenest, has appropriated \$50,000 for relief work."

FINANCIAL PROSPERITY OF U.S. CHURCHES.

The Boston Transcript, reviewing the progress of religious matters in the United States during 1902, gives the following summary--the many millions of which cast quite into the shade our report of last December. But the Lord knows how much prosperity the truth can bear advantageously and we bow to his wisdom. Ere long the change will come--truth will be prospered and error will be put to flight. The clipping reads:

"Church interests, maintenance and betterments are now costing the people of the United States \$260,000,000 a year. And this vast sum does not include \$70,000,000 which is given in benevolence, outside of government charity, and in sums above \$5,000 each gift. Of this benevolence \$3 in every \$4 comes from members of churches. It cost to maintain all Baptist churches in the United States last year \$14,138,195, all Episcopal churches \$15,184,926, and all Congregational churches \$10,276,105. Figures for Reformed Churches (Dutch) last year are \$1,622,696, and for Presbyterian (North) \$17,080,191. To maintain all Methodist churches, South and North, cost last year \$24,552,800. These figures in every case include betterments.

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They also include contributions to missions, both home and foreign. Financial figures for Roman Catholic churches are unobtainable, in great part because Catholic officials do not themselves collect them."

HIGHER CRITICISM GAINING GROUND.

The following dispatch shows the progress being made by skepticism--infidelity:

"London, Jan. 14.--The Times' Berlin correspondent says that Emperor William appears to be taking a keen interest in what is called the higher Biblical criticism. He recently expressed publicly views which formerly he was understood to regard unfavorably, and spoke of the necessity of further development in religion.

"The Kaiser is on terms of personal friendship

with Prof. Harnack, the leading exponent of the higher criticism, but appears to be influenced even more by Prof. Delitzsch, whose lecture, 'Babel und Bibel,' he recently caused to be re-delivered to a select audience at Potsdam palace.

"On Monday night the Emperor and Empress and other exalted personages listened to a lecture wherein Prof. Delitzsch expounded views denying the divine origin of the Bible and finding a Babylonian source for much of the Old Testament doctrine of theology."

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NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR GOD'S SERVICE.

"If there be any blemish therein, as if it be lame or blind, or have any ill-blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the Lord thy God."

--Deut. 15:21.--

SUCH an injunction to the house of servants under Moses is, perhaps, more necessary to the house of sons under Christ (Heb. 3:5,6), than many are apt to suppose. Inborn selfishness generally suggests that it would be a pity to sacrifice the best things, which could be used to advantage in so many other ways. And it is because this is generally done unconsciously that we now discuss this subject, with a view of helping the true-hearted out of the difficulty. Truly our hearts are exceedingly deceitful and require constant watching as respects their real motives, which they sometimes hide even from the loyal-hearted sons of God.

How often we have seen Christian parents, lovers of the Lord and his cause, who at times would bemoan their own inability to be actively engaged in the Lord's service, and who loved and admired the sacrifices of brethren and sisters in the colporteur service, who, to their injury, held back their own sons and daughters. Their reasoning seems to be that the work of the evangelist, as a colporteur, is good enough for those who have no education, or for such as are untalented; but they would have their children aim higher in life;--they would accept the Lord's bounty and expend it upon their children to give them an education, and then point them to medicine or law or literature or school-teaching as honorable and remunerative fields for their talents and education.

What a great mistake! what a sad mistake! How ashamed they will feel, if they ever get into the Kingdom, when looking back they will see how lightly they esteemed the wonderful privilege of being co-workers with God in this present time! How vastly

different will be their views then, respecting the importance of medicine and law and schools and literature and marriage! How ashamed they will be that they ever thought that the lean and the lame and the ill-favored were good enough to sacrifice to the Lord! --that none should think of colporteur but those who had no capacity for "worldly prosperity!"

On the contrary the consecrated parent should consecrate to the Lord not only his firstborn, but all of his children; and from infancy should be instilling into their minds and hearts that the proper course for all of God's people is to devote themselves in largest possible measure to the divine service. They should be taught to regard all of life's affairs with a view to rendering their all to his service in any possible capacity; and to pray that the Lord would accept and use their time, talent, influence--all--in his service, the most honorable service imaginable, and ultimately to be the most highly rewarded. The Apostle's teaching respecting marriage (1 Cor. 7:27-40) should be brought to their attention with the thought of the Apostle that it is not a condemnation of marriage in others, but one of the incidental sacrifices of those anxious to be most fully used in the Lord's service.

Not only so, but the Christian parent who discerns present truth should encourage his child not to strive for the higher education, but to be content with a common school education; because (1) to qualify himself for a profession would be to put before himself a temptation in that direction which would last through life; (2) because the higher education of the present day in all colleges is so impregnated with the Evolution theory and Higher Criticism that the strong probability is that, like others, he would fall into skepticism, which will kill his devotion to the Lord, and he could only be induced to serve the Lord, even outwardly, by an honorable position and a good salary --if, indeed, it left him anything but morality as a substitute for religion!

On the contrary, every man and woman favored by the Lord with some knowledge of present truth

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should at once appreciate the true situation;--that the most talented and best educated have nothing worthy a place on the Lord's altar,--nothing worthy of acceptance in the Lord's service; and, forthwith, each should proceed to devote to it, daily and hourly, the best that he has and the most that he can, as being the greatest privilege that could ever be offered to angels or men--to be colaborers with God. Some, thus rightly appreciating the matter, are glad to leave medicine and business and schools to engage in the much grander and more important service of the gospel,

as colporteur-evangelists;--to carry the printed message, of glad tidings of great joy, to all who have hearing ears. They rightly feel that they have not too much education or talent for so honorable a service as ambassadors for the King of Kings, but that if they had more and yet more, it would be to the interest of the work.

Would you have a young man or a young woman dash all the prospects and ambitions of the present life, and enter the colporteur work,--simply because they have accepted present truth and because you urge them to this service? No, indeed; we hope that none so minded will enter the work. The Lord seeketh not such for his service and representatives, and, hence, we do not seek them in his name. He seeks such as "count it all joy" to serve him and his at any sacrifice. Those entering the work against their will would, undoubtedly, do poor work and soon fall away from the truth.

But would you recommend a man of means,--a business man, for instance,--to dispose of his own business and go about colporteur-ing? living on the interest of his money, or, perhaps, on the principal? Why not? Should we not all have the Master's spirit, expressed by his words: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The Lord's true saints have no business of their own, for they gave their all to the Lord at consecration. Their business they manage as trustees for the Lord--not to be turned over at their death, in prosperous condition, to their children or their friends, possibly to their injury. It is to be used by the trustee as wisely as he knows how before death; for then his trusteeship ends, and he must render his account. (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-26.) If he can provide for the comfortable necessities of the present life for those dependent upon him, why should he do more for them, or for any cause longer delay to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light"--in the best manner open to him? Alas, how few of those who recognize their trusteeship are faithful to it and will be able to render their report with joy, and to hear the Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Before "the harvest is past and the summer is ended," let us get awake, dear brothers and sisters, to our privileges and opportunities and use them thankfully. But let us not be misunderstood as commending anything impracticable. Only exceptional ones can do more than provide for their own personal comforts--even at the very liberal terms granted to colporteurs; and "he that provideth not for his own household is worse than an unbeliever" is the Apostle's argument. Those hampered by family encumbrances must show their love and devotion by some other form of sacrifice.

Let us give a concluding word to some of the

humble and small-talented ones who have engaged in this service. They may, perhaps, be inclined to feel that they are of the blemished class of ill-favored ones represented in our text as unacceptable. But not so, dear brethren: the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin--covers all our natural blemishes

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and makes us worthy and acceptable in the Beloved. A cipher alone has no value, but it is a power indeed, when it follows 1; and so it is with us when we follow Christ--his merit gives us association and cooperation with him; gives us weight and influence and power for God and his cause. "Ye are complete in Him;" "accepted in the Beloved."

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THE APOSTLE PETER'S EXHORTATION.

"Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy."--1 Pet. 1:13-16.

TO APPRECIATE the exhortations of the apostles, we need to become acquainted with their several characters; to note their circumstances; to mark their zeal and faithfulness; and to remember that every word of exhortation addressed to the Church has the substantial backing of their worthy examples. They endured hardness as good soldiers, and suffered much for the privilege of declaring the truth. In their writings are blended a high degree of the power of logic, eloquence and pathos, combined with an inspiring enthusiasm which must awaken in every student of their teachings a measure, at least, of the same sacred flame.

Though written so long ago, the above words of exhortation lose none of their force to us. They were penned for the instruction of the whole Church, down to the end of the age. The introductory, "Wherefore," refers us to the glorious hope of our high calling,

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and of the necessarily severe measures required to fit us for our exalted inheritance, as mentioned in the preceding verses. Peter would have us appreciate what it is to be called with such a high calling--to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth

not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith. (Verse 4.) He would have us know that, if faithful, we are to be made even "partakers of the divine nature," and that we are to be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, of all things.--2 Pet. 1:4.

As the spirit of God draws our hearts into closer fellowship and sympathy with the divine mind, the value of these "exceeding great and precious promises" is more and more fully realized, until there glows in our hearts the same holy enthusiasm that so filled the hearts of the apostles. And only when our hearts are thus warmed and our minds thus awakened, are we prepared to understand the Apostle's "Wherefore," upon the inspiring comprehension of which depends our ability to heed the earnest exhortation which follows.

If our hearts are not duly inspired with this hope --if we have begun to esteem it lightly, or to forget it, or to think of it as an idle tale--to heed the counsel of Peter, here given, will be impossible. If, therefore, we realize that a spiritual lethargy has to any extent been creeping over us, imperceptibly benumbing our spiritual senses, so that the truth is losing its inspiring power upon us, our first duty is to betake ourselves to prayer and to communion with God and his Word, that its sanctifying power may be realized.

"Wherefore," then, you that discern the prize of your high calling, and who are endeavoring to press along the line toward the mark, "gird up the loins of your mind"--as in the illustration; strengthen and fortify your purposes and efforts; renew your determination; redouble your diligence; cast aside the weights of unnecessary worldly cares; increase your zeal; and, as the Apostle Paul also urges, run with patience the race set before you. Run, not like one who is merely beating the air, but like one who has a purpose in view, and who, in desperate earnest, is determined to make his calling and election sure.-- Heb. 12:1; 1 Cor. 9:26.

Having thus "girded up the loins of your mind" for a long, steady and determined effort, he further counsels,--"Be sober:" do not allow yourself to become excited and, under the spur of excitement, to exhaust all your spiritual vitality in a very short time, and then to suffer a relapse into coldness or discouragement; but thoughtfully to consider and prepare for a long and patient endurance of all the discipline and trial of faith and patience necessary to prove an overcomer and worthy of the blessed reward promised "to him that overcometh." The race before us is not one to be run by fits and starts, but by "patient continuance in well doing." Soberly, thoughtfully, we are to weigh and endeavor to realize the import of the exceeding great and precious promises and to gather from them their invigorating inspiration; earnestly

we must apply our minds and hearts to the instruction of the inspired Word of God, availing ourselves also of such helps--of "pastors and teachers" and their literary productions--which prove harmonious with, and helpful to, the study of the Scriptures; diligently and patiently we must submit ourselves to all the transforming influences of divine grace and truth; and then, loyally and faithfully, we must devote our consecrated talents, however few or many, to the great work of preaching this gospel of the Kingdom to all who will hear.

Such a sober view of the situation fortifies the mind against discouragement, and enables us, as the Apostle suggests, to "hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such a sober view keeps Reason on the throne of our minds. And Reason says, The divine call to joint-heirship with Christ clearly implies eligibility to the exalted office; the divine promise clearly insures divine grace to enable us to fulfil the conditions; the divine provision for my justification, by faith in the precious blood of Christ, releases me from the condemnation to death; and the righteousness of Christ, imputed to me by faith, fully supplements all my weaknesses, so that before God I stand approved in him. Sober Reason also says, The directions given in the Scriptures to those who would run the race are clear and explicit, and make plain every step of the way to those who are truly and fully consecrated to the Lord. The examples of the Lord and the Apostles shine on the pathway with a moral luster and glory that cannot lead us astray. If we walk in their footprints we will assuredly reach the same goal.

Therefore in this sober view of our high calling and its privileges, and the abundant resources of divine grace, let us not be discouraged or overcome in any way, but let us hope to the end for the grace (favor) that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ--at his second advent. The Church has enjoyed much of the divine favor all through the age of her probation and trial; but the grace to be revealed at the revelation of Jesus Christ--when he comes to reign in power and great glory--is her exaltation with him to sit with him in his throne. This glorious consummation, the Church all through the age must steadily keep in view: but how glorious is the privilege of those of its members living in this end

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of the age, when already, even before our change into his glorious likeness--in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye--we begin to enter the joys of our Lord.

Those who are still sober and faithful, and who have not cast away their confidence, have been led into the secret of the Master's presence; and they have been

made to sit down to meat, and the Master himself has come forth and served them. Yes, our hearts have been made to burn within us while he has opened up the Scriptures and made us understand, from the testimony of the law and the prophets and the apostles, that the time is fulfilled--that the end of the age is now here, and that the Lord of the harvest is present to direct and supervise the great work of reaping the fruit of precious seed long ago sown in tears, and now to be gathered with joy and singing; while he has opened up to us the treasures of divine wisdom and grace displayed in the plan of the ages, which God purposed before the foundation of the world, which he has been gradually working out in the ages past, and which is now nearing its glorious consummation.

Oh, what feasting, what rejoicing there has been around the table of the Lord, as one after another the treasures of divine grace have been opened to us, revealing the glories of the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of all the obedient subjects of him who sitteth on the throne to reign in righteousness; how all tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and how the reproach of God's people is to be taken away! Well indeed did Daniel prophesy, saying, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, thirty and five days!"--the days of the Lord's second presence, when all that is written to be accomplished by his glorious reign shall begin to come to pass.

Seeing, then, that such are our privileges and hopes, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and god-likeness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) Being purified by this hope, ought we not, as the Apostle exhorts, to fashion ourselves, not according to the former lusts (desires and ambitions, which we had) in our ignorance, but as he who has called us is holy, should not we also be holy in all manner of conversation --in all our words and ways? Since it is written, "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy (1 Pet. 1:15,16), should not we who are called to be partakers

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of his own nature and glory be holy also?

Some Christians have the erroneous idea that God does all the fashioning, and that his children are to be merely passive in his hand; but Peter does not so express it. He exhorts us to fashion ourselves according to the divine instructions. There is a work to be done in us and about us, and those who are not up and doing, but who passively sit and wait for the Lord to work miracles in their behalf, are greatly deceived and are giving the enemy great advantage over them which he will certainly use to bind them hand and foot and cast them into outer darkness, unless they bestir themselves to work out their salvation with fear

and trembling, while God, cooperating with their earnest efforts, works in them, to will and to do his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12,13.) "Watch and pray," beloved, lest any of these snares of the enemy entrap you and beguile you of your reward.

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"LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING."

--1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-13.--FEBRUARY 22.--

"Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love."

IN THE preceding chapter the Apostle has recounted the various "gifts" of the holy spirit conferred upon the early Church for its establishment and development. He closes the chapter with the exhortation that while esteeming all of these gifts, each member of the Church should covet earnestly the superior ones; and then he adds, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"--something still better than any of those gifts of the holy spirit. Our lesson pertains to this more excellent ambition which should actuate every child of God; viz., the acquisition and development of the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, in proportion as the holy spirit dwells in us and abounds, in that same proportion our love abounds.

There are different kinds of love, however, and the Apostle is here not speaking of general love, but of one particular kind, which belongs to God, and to the New Creation begotten of him. There is an animal love, such as the brute creation exercises toward its young, a love which frequently leads to the sacrifice of life in its devotion. This same kind of love inheres in the natural man, even in his fallen condition. It is all more or less selfish love,--ready, perhaps, at times to rob others that it might lavish good things upon those it favors. This is not the love which the Apostle describes, nor is he addressing his language to the natural man. He addresses the New Creation, informing them that the natural man will not be able to receive, to appreciate, to comply with, that which he presents. In order to a clear comprehension of this love, and a hearty acceptance of it as the rule of life, it is apparently necessary that we be "begotten" from above.

It seems impossible to describe love itself; the

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best we can do is to describe its conduct. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to

appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it-- it is of God, god-likeness in the heart, in the tongue, in the hands, in the thoughts--supervising all the human attributes and seeking fully to control them.

Before describing the operation of love the Apostle impresses upon us its importance, assuring us that if we possess the very choicest of the "gifts" already explained, and do not have therewith love, we will still lack the evidence of our being New Creatures in Christ Jesus. We should be merely "sounding brass or cymbal" --making a noise, but having no acceptable feeling or virtue in ourselves in connection with our words. He assures us thus that ability to speak fluently on gospel themes, even, might not be a proof of our relationship to the Lord as New Creatures. The Apostle's declaration is introduced with an "if," which might be challenged, to a certain extent, by the assertion that no one could speak forth with power, with force, the gospel of God's dear Son unless he possessed the spirit of love. Although we have all met public speakers who could deliver very beautiful essays, we have generally perceived a hollowness in their teaching unless they spoke from the heart, prompted by love of the truth,--not by love of applause, nor for love of money.

Amongst the gifts, prophecy or oratory was one which the Apostle commended. Knowledge of mysteries of God is also commended, and large faith is reckoned amongst the chief of the Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and love were absent, he would be nothing,--a mere cipher--not a member of the New Creation at all, since love is the very spirit of the begetting to the new nature. What a wonderful test this is! let us each apply it to himself. Whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by my love for him, for his brethren, for his cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, --rather than by my knowledge or fame or oratory. Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the holy spirit of love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measurement of character, therefore, we are to put love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness and acceptance to the Lord.

The Apostle next takes another line of argument: his hearers already understood benevolence, alms-giving to the needy, to be commendable; and to impress upon them the importance of having love as the controlling principle of their hearts, the Apostle declares that if he should give all of his goods to feed the poor--keeping nothing back--and yet do this without proper love as the mainspring to the conduct, it would profit him nothing. He goes still further and declares, that even

if he should become a martyr, and be burned at the stake, it would not bring him the blessed reward sought, unless that martyrdom were prompted, impelled, by love.

But it may be inquired, How could anyone practise such self-denial, such sacrifice, such faith, etc., and yet be without love? It is not our thought that they could practise these and be devoid of love; that there must be some measure of love. We understand the Apostle to make this strong statement of the case in order to show us that our almsgiving, our sacrifices, our knowledge, our teaching, are acceptable to the Lord and appreciated by him, only to the extent that they have love behind them. If love enters slightly into them, then they are slightly appreciated; if love enters largely into them, then God appreciates them largely. If they are prompted wholly by love, then God accepts them fully. If love be only a part of the motive power behind our conduct as New Creatures, it implies that other motives are active in us, tending to neutralize in the Lord's esteem even services and sacrifices performed in his name and upon worthy objects. Let us be on guard against these neutralizing influences, and earnestly seek to be whole-hearted, full of love;-- that our every service of the Lord and of the brethren and of the truth be from a pure heart, free from personal ambition, pride, etc.

Having given us such a conception of the importance of love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not--how it operates, and how it does not operate or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself, and inquire within: Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to suffer considerable and for a long time, and yet to be kind? How quickly do I get offended? If very quickly it surely indicates that I have very little of the spirit of the Lord,--love. If I am disposed to resent the trifling wrongs of life,-- if I have the spirit of resentment, am disposed to render evil for evil, and railing for railing,--it marks my deficiency in this greatest of all the graces, so essential to my ultimate passing, as an overcomer, the divine inspection.

Of our heavenly Father it is said that "he is kind to the unthankful." Have I this spirit of kindness--his spirit? Am I kind to my friends? gentle? courteous? Have I this mark of love pervading my actions and words and thoughts--that I think of and am considerate of others? that I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian,

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above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle, in his home, in his place of business, in the Church-- everywhere. With the child of God this patience and

kindness are not merely put on, as grapes might be tied to a thorn-bush, but, on the contrary, they are the fruits of the spirit--growths from or results of having come into fellowship with God, learned of him, received of his spirit of holiness, spirit of love.

Have I the love that envieth not, so that I can see others prosper and rejoice in their prosperity, even if for the time my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is generosity, the very opposite of jealousy and envy. The root of envy is selfishness: envy will not grow upon the root of love. Love envies not, but rejoices in the prosperity of all that is good.

Have I the love that vaunteth not itself?--the love that tends to humility, that is not boastful, not puffed up? Some one has truly said, that "love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential

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conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence." Boasting--over self-esteem --has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins, in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The spirit of the Lord is a spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate oneself, and not to be puffed up.

Have I the love which does not behave itself unseemly --discourteously, impolitely? Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The secret of politeness is either a surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love, which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the love that seeketh not her own merely? --that might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others?--or have I the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the convenience, comfort and rights of others? To have love in this particular means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and to prefer rather to suffer a wrong than to do a wrong,--to suffer an injustice than to do injustice.

Have I the love which is not easily provoked? Indeed, the original omits the word "easily," and gives rather the thought that love does not become irritated, roused to anger. Love enables its possessor to see both sides of a question; it makes of him a veritable philosopher; it gives him the spirit of a sound mind. He perceives that exasperation and violent anger are unbecoming and worse than that, injurious, not only toward those against whom they may be directed,

but injurious in their effect also upon his own heart and body. There may be times when love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a proper sense in regard to a righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose, for doing good--but then only for a time. If justly angry we should see to it that we sin not, even with our lips or in our hearts, in which at no time may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be easily provoked is to have a bad temper, to get worked up into a passion, where evil looks and evil words and angry sentiments are involved. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of love, and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. Those begotten of the holy spirit should all be good tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of love in the daily affairs of life.

Have I the spirit of love which thinketh no evil? --which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults in others, or attributing to them evil motives? It is an old adage that "faults are thick where love is thin."

The Revised Version presents a slightly different thought here--"Taketh not account of evil"--does not charge up the wrong against the evil-doer, as if waiting for an apology or a restitution or an opportunity to "get even." But while love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this would not mean that love would necessarily treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or necessary, even, to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested--nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible; doing all that could be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

Have I the love which rejoices not in iniquity (inequity) but rejoices in the truth? Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with the right and so

wrong, but must condemn it, even if it brought advantage to me? Am I so in accord with right, with truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests? The love of God which the Apostle is here describing as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness, and is based upon fixed principles which should, day by day, be more and more distinctly discerned, and always firmly adhered to at any cost.

Have I the love that beareth all things?--that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything contrary to love? Have I the love that believeth all things? that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do, by indisputable evidences?--that would rather believe good than evil about everybody?--that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Have I the love that hopeth all things, that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the love that endureth all things?--that is, that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance --not easily discouraged?

As disciples or pupils of Christ, we are in his school, and the great lesson which he is teaching us day by day, and the lesson which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain the mark of the prize of our high calling in all its various features and ramifications, is the lesson of Love. It takes hold upon and relates to all the words and thoughts and doings of our daily lives. As the poet has said,

"As every lovely hue is light,--so every grace is love."

Next the Apostle points out that as love is the most excellent thing, so is it the most enduring. The gift of prophecy would pass away; the value and necessity for speaking with other tongues would cease; and all knowledge of the present time, imperfect as it is, must surely cease to be valuable when the perfections of the new dispensation are fully ushered in. The very best informed now know only in part; but when perfection shall be attained in the Kingdom, and under its ministration, all the partial and imperfect conditions of the present time will have been superseded, and only the one thing may surely be said to endure and be everlasting,--and that one thing is Love.

An illustration of the growth which we must expect as between the present knowledge and attainments and those of the future, is of the child and the growth to manhood. Another illustration is seeing obscurely in one of the old-time mirrors, which gave but imperfect reflections. With the perfections of the new condition we will see perfectly, know perfectly, understand perfectly. Just so the gifts which were in the early

Church were very suitable to it, as fitted to its infantile condition; but as it would develop to maturity the value of those "gifts" would diminish, and they would be no more; but higher developments of divine favor were to be expected, faith, hope and love. All three of these the Church of God is to cultivate, and to esteem as fruits of the spirit, far above the gifts of the spirit,-- and the greatest of these three is Love.

Love also is the most enduring; for will not faith practically come to an end when we shall see and know thoroughly? And will not hope practically be at an end when we shall reach the fruition of all our hopes and be possessors of the fulness of our heavenly Father's promises? Love, however, will never fail, even as it had no beginning. God is love, and since he was without beginning, so love was without beginning; because it is his character, his disposition; and as he endureth forever, so love will endure forever. Whoever, therefore, learns thoroughly the lessons of this present time in the school of Christ, and thus becomes well stocked with this wonderful grace of love, lays up treasures which may be his to all eternity--a great blessing to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact now; and a blessing to the world to which he will be permitted to minister during the Millennium;--a blessing everlasting, because it is a seal of divine approval.

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BAPTISM UNTO REPENTANCE NOT BAPTISM INTO CHRIST.

--ACTS 18:23-19:7.--MARCH 1.--

"If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?"--Luke 11:13.

AFTER leaving Corinth the Apostle completed his second missionary tour, and returned to Antioch, stopping en route at Jerusalem, where he greeted the Church and, no doubt, gave them an account of the Lord's blessing upon his recent ministries in Europe. Aquila and Priscilla went with the Apostle as far as Ephesus, and the vessel on which he traveled remaining over the Sabbath at the port, he improved the opportunity to speak for Christ in the synagogue of Ephesus. His discourse was no doubt in the nature of a preparation for a future work which he hoped to do there. He doubtless spoke only along the lines of first

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principles--respecting the glorious prophecies of Messiah,

and the fulfilment which should now be expected. His discourse was well received, and he was urged to remain longer, and gave his promise of a later return.

We are not informed how long the Apostle remained at Antioch, but "after he had spent some time there he departed and went over all the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, establishing all the disciples." While the Apostle was energetic in the establishment of new companies of the Lord's people, he was not slack in looking out for the spiritual welfare and growth of those which he had already established, as is evidenced by this statement--this being his third visit to these churches.

When the Apostle returned to Ephesus he found that in his absence a Christian brother named Apollos had come and had preached eloquently in the synagogue, using very close, logical and convincing arguments, and securing twelve converts to Christianity.

He was a Jew, born at Alexandria, one of the chief cities of that time, specially noted for its schools of learning, and extensive libraries. The common version says that Apollos was "eloquent"; the revised version, that he was "learned", and the Greek word seems to be with equal propriety translatable either way: in all probability he was both learned and eloquent. However, he was not as thoroughly advanced in the knowledge of the Lord and of the truth as were Aquila and Priscilla who had for a time companied with the Apostle; and as soon as they heard Apollos in the synagogue they recognized him as a Christian brother, and took him to their own home, where they had good opportunity for communicating to him "the way of the Lord more perfectly."

We have here a beautiful illustration of how the Lord is pleased to use his consecrated people. He had use for the talents and education of Apollos; he had use also for the less talented Aquila and Priscilla who, though not qualified to speak in public in the synagogue, were, nevertheless, used of the Lord to bless his more eloquent disciple, and thus to be sharers with him in the fruits of his more public ministry. The same is true today, as the Apostle explains. (1 Cor. 12:12-26.) No member of the body of Christ can say that he has no need for another member, and no member may say that there is nothing whatever that he can do in the service of the body. Under the guidance of our glorious Head each member who is filled with his spirit, and desirous of serving him, may do so. When the time for rewards will come, who knows how much of the usefulness of Paul and Apollos may be accredited to some of the humble ones such as Aquila and Priscilla, who in various ways ministered to and encouraged and supported their abler brethren in the Lord's work. The Apostle mentions very tenderly some of this class who colabored with him, supporting his work by their influence and by their means. (Phil. 4:3.) Similar opportunities are

still open, and no child of the Lord should be content to let the days of the present harvest time go by with their golden opportunities for service and cooperation without seeking each day to lift the royal banner himself, and to publicly show forth the praises of him who hath called him out of darkness into light, or by assisting and cooperating with others whom the Lord in his providence has placed in more advantageous positions for public service.

Apollos, hearing from Aquila and Priscilla of the glorious work accomplished by the Apostle Paul at Corinth, went thither, taking with him a letter of introduction from his newly found friends at Ephesus, who had so recently left Corinth. Incidentally we are told that his going to Corinth proved a blessing to the Church there, because of his thorough acquaintance with the Scriptures and his ability in expounding them, so that he could "forcefully confute the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." That the Corinthian brethren were greatly pleased with the masterful ability of Apollos as a teacher of the truth is implied by the fact that some of them were disposed to say that they were followers of Apollos, while others, also sectarian in spirit, claimed to be followers of Paul, and others of Peter--all of which sectarianism the Apostle distinctly reprovved subsequently in his epistle to them.--1 Cor. 3:3-7.

There is room for all the ability of all the brethren in the Church, and such a thing as rivalry or partisanship is entirely out of place. We have one Lord, one Head: we all are brethren, and our highest aim should be to honor our Head and serve the fellow-members; and each one who so endeavors should be highly esteemed, whether his talents are greater or smaller than those of others. Another lesson here is the importance of being well versed in the Scriptures. The sword of the spirit is the Word of God, and he who would serve the cause best must know how to use this weapon which the Lord himself has provided--forcefully, convincingly and yet lovingly. The Scriptures with which Apollos was familiar were the Old Testament writings, since the New Testament was not yet compiled, though doubtless a few of its books had already been written. Whether Apollos had seen these or not, he had from some quarter "been instructed in the way of the Lord," before meeting Aquila and Priscilla, and was now, through them, still more thoroughly furnished for his ministry of the truth. Let us each resolve that by the Lord's grace we will put on the entire Christian armament, supplied us by the Lord, not neglecting the sword of the spirit--the Word. Let us learn, too, to be ready

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to accept further instruction as from the Lord, however humble may be the channels through which he may

send it to us. Humility is one of the graces highly esteemed by the Lord, and one of the points upon which he frequently tests his followers: "Except ye become as little children [teachable, guileless], ye shall in nowise enter the Kingdom of heaven."

It was while Apollos was at Corinth that the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus, according to promise, and began a ministry there which lasted two years (19:10). Aquila and Priscilla had seemingly left Ephesus by this time, as they are not again mentioned; but the Apostle speedily found those whom Apollos' ministry had reached, twelve in number. (Vs. 7.) Our Common Version would seem to give the inference that the Apostle was surprised that these believers at Ephesus had not yet received gifts of the holy spirit. But not so; he merely wished to bring to their attention the fact that such gifts were possible to them, for only an apostle could convey the gifts of the holy spirit, as we have already seen. (Acts 8:14-17.) The preaching of Apollos was merely along the lines of first principles of the doctrine of Christ, represented in the baptism of John to the Jews, while these believers were, evidently, by nature Gentiles.

Apollos had explained the gospel merely to the extent of repentance from sin and faith in Christ as the Redeemer. He had no knowledge of the fuller meaning of baptism as explained by the Apostle (Rom. 6:3-5) --a baptism of consecration, to suffer with Christ --to be dead with him, to participate in his resurrection to the new nature and to be ultimate sharers with him in the heavenly Kingdom. The Apostle explained to them this "mystery" of fellowship with the Messiah-- participation in his sufferings, and by and by in his glory (Col. 1:26,27): and when they heard this they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus--as members of his body, to fellowship in his sufferings, even unto death.

How many believers there are today who, like these described, are members of "the household of faith," but not members of "the body of Christ"-- who have gone so far as a baptism of repentance and reformation, and faith in the Redeemer, but who have not been instructed respecting the great privileges which belong to this dispensation--that we may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together!" Wherever we go, let us each seek by the grace of God to explain the way of the Lord more perfectly to these already partially indoctrinated ones. So long as there are a plenty of such to labor with, it would be unwise, yea, contrary to our covenant and commission, to specially devote our lives and energies to the world; for although we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, it is to be chiefly to the household of faith. All around us, in the churches of the various denominations, are, we believe, hundreds,

yea, thousands, who are in the condition of these mentioned in the lesson, knowing only the baptism of repentance, knowing not the baptism of Christ--the baptism into his death, the baptism of full consecration. Let us be diligent in this highest department of the work of the ministry, feeding, instructing, the Lord's flock.

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After instructing them thus respecting the true baptism, and after performing upon them its water symbol, the Apostle laid his hands on the believers and they received the holy spirit--that is to say, the "gifts of the spirit" were manifested in them--they spake with tongues, prophesied, etc., as described in 1 Corinthians 12. We have no power to communicate such gifts today, nor have others this power. It was an apostolic power, not transferable to others, as it was not the Lord's intention that those gifts should remain with the Church, but merely should be a witness in its infancy period;--until the New Testament writings should be within reach, and until the fruits of the spirit could be developed.

However, let none envy the primitive Church this special blessing, so necessary to its progress and joy; but remember that under the Lord's providence our conditions in some respects are still more favorable, in that we have the written Word for our admonition. Let us remember the testimony of the Apostle in our last lesson, too,--to the effect that faith, hope and love, fruits of the spirit, far excel the tongues and interpretations and miracles of the gifts of the spirit: so that, as he explained, if one had all these gifts, and lacked the one fruit of love, he would be "nothing";--it would profit him nothing as respects a share in the body of Christ, and in the glorious blessings, present and future, which belong to it.

Our Golden Text evidently refers, not to the miraculous gifts of the spirit enjoyed by the primitive Church, but to the holy spirit, or disposition, "the mind of Christ," the common privilege of all who are baptized into Christ's death, and who seek by faith to walk in newness of life. The miraculous gifts of the primitive Church could come only through apostolic hands; but the spirit, in the sense that we still enjoy it, the mind of Christ, the mind of God, with all the fruits and graces thereof, is still the privilege of the Lord's people, and dependent not upon apostolic or other hands, but upon our heavenly Father and upon the zeal with which we seek by prayer and every endeavor to have his mind, his disposition, controlling our thoughts, our words, our conduct. It is God's good pleasure to give us this spirit of love; but he gives it only to those who desire and seek it with patient perseverance.

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."--John 8:31,32.

OUR Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him. It attracted one class and repelled another. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil, and because they realized that if they admitted the light of truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it,--all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contributions of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or, at least, very fluctuating. On some occasions multitudes received his testimony, and later deserted him and walked no more with him, as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4:14,15,22,28,29.) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his words, wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; and again and again they forsook him, while only a mere handful remained. (John 6:60,66-69.) What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God. How quickly they would become unpopular, and be charged with breaking up the church. Why, the great congregations that now throng the temples of fashion dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not stand it! They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who, presumably, know their tastes and ideas, and who will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for what they want, but they do not want the truth.

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook him, of course, ceased then to be his disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be his disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when any man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great Teacher, he is no longer a disciple of Christ. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when his name was one of reproach among men; but later, when his presence was withdrawn, and when his doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies

to such an extent as to divest them of their reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples--long after they had utterly repudiated his doctrines.

The Lord's expression--"disciples indeed"--implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be his real, sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life--that of belief in and acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord; but the reward of this step depends entirely upon our continuance in his Word, in the attitude of true disciples. It is not difficult to do this, yet the disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of other men, who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know the truth"--not that we shall be "ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:7.) Here is the mistake that many make: failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. There is no promise, to those who seek for truth among these, that they shall ever find it. And they never do. Divine truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.

But the idea is entirely compatible with that of heeding all the helps which the Lord from time to time raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Eph. 4:11-15; 1 Cor. 12:13,14.) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member to prove carefully their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord, as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth," be "established in the present truth" (the truth due), and be "rooted and grounded in the truth;" we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us," to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," to "war a good warfare," to "witness a good confession,"

and firmly to "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our course. We

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will not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we will be led into the truth. Every step will be one of sure and certain progress, and each one leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in its blessed fruits of established character.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation will ripen to a glorious maturity.

And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The truth shall make you free." Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance and superstition, and of fear. It throws its health-restoring beams into the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorates the whole being. Sin cannot endure its light; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light because they are unworthy of it.

Ignorance and superstition must vanish before the light of truth. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions are still under this galling yoke. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because they hypocritically claim divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant consigning the vast majority of his creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that terrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken!

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see coming upon the whole world, as the great civil

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and ecclesiastical systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror. And the alarm of all will increase as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more visible. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God of the terrors of the conflict through which the world will have to pass

within a few years, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his Word are not afraid, but rejoice, because they know that God's object in permitting the storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that, after the storm, there shall come, by his providence, an abiding peace. Instructed in the truth, they realize the necessities of the situation, and have confidence in the divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise him.

Blessed promise!--"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and with it bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of it by our loyalty and faithfulness to it.

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INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL LIFE.

Question.--We read in Rom. 2:7 that to those who by patient perseverance in well doing seek for glory, honor and immortality, God will render eternal life. Why this declaration, if immortality is a higher and more desirable reward than everlasting life?

Answer.--It is well that we should notice that the Scriptures treat matters from a broad standpoint; thus, although those known to us as the great company, who come through great tribulation (Rev. 7:14), are not called to such a position as they will attain, but merely get it as of the Lord's grace after they have failed in respect to their high calling; and none being called to this favor, it is not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures; nevertheless, provision has been made for them, and the holy spirit seems to have guided the utterances of the apostles in such manner that their language includes these as well as the overcomers. This class will seek the glory, honor and immortality; but through negligence to seek with sufficient diligence, and along the lines laid down in the Lord's Word, they will fail to attain these chiefest blessings, which will go to the little flock. Nevertheless, as the Scriptures declare, they and all who seek it in the appointed way, will gain eternal life, and that, after all, is the chiefest and greatest blessing and gift held out before us.

(2) Question.--Again in John 17:2, our Lord, in

praying for his Church, says, "As thou hast given him (Jesus) power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Why is nothing here said respecting immortality?

Answer.--For the same reason as given in the preceding answer. Furthermore, the context does not particularly state that the elect Church only is referred to. Rather the fourth verse indicates the

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Sin-bearer's larger work in blessing all the families of the earth. By the Father's provision he, by his sacrifice, obtained eternal life "for all them that obey him"--not only for the little flock of the present time, but also for the larger flock of the coming age. Additionally, we notice that the eternal life granted to the gospel Church is only indirectly the gift of our Lord Jesus. As immortality was the Father's gift to his Son, so it will be the Father's gift, by and through the Son, to those who are members of his Body--the true Church. Indeed, the heavenly Father specially is declared to be the Father, or Life-giver, to all who attain to spiritual conditions, either as the Christ, the overcoming Church, or as the great company who come through great tribulation. The eternal life which our Lord Jesus will give more particularly on his own account, will be eternal life to the world during the Millennial age--the eternal life which he gives to us of this gospel age, reckonedly, in our justification by faith, the first step preparatory to our being begotten of the Spirit by the Father.

WILFUL SIN IN THE "BODY."

Question.--In view of the statements in 1 John 3:6-9, may we not reason that if we have God's mind in us we, therefore, could not sin? and further, that it is impossible for us to sin in the body (of Christ)? or that if we commit sin it would imply that we were no longer members of his body?

Answer.--We understand the Apostle to teach that the holy spirit of God is opposed to sin; that in proportion as we have the mind of Christ we will not only love righteousness but also hate iniquity. To our understanding the Apostle here refers to sin in its fullest sense; viz., wilful transgression of the divine law. Such a wilful transgression would imply that we loved the sin and hated righteousness; and, hence, that if we ever had spiritual life we had lost it, and become spiritually dead--"plucked up by the roots."

We are to remember, however, that there are other sins not of this kind--not unto death. There are sins in which wilfulness is not complete, since

they are the results of temptation, and sins that are the results of our own weaknesses through the Adamic fall. Such weaknesses and such stumblings under temptation belong to the flesh which is already reckoned dead (in the consecrated Christian) and is not reckoned of God as belonging to the new creature. Hence, such lapses from rectitude are not here designated by the Apostle as sins, nor are they so reckoned of God who judges us not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.

However, as we have heretofore shown, there are some partial sins--that is to say, they are not full sins in the sense of being thoroughly wilful and intentional transgressions of the divine Law--they are weaknesses of the flesh, and yet perhaps in those weaknesses of the flesh the mind failed to be as strong and courageous as it should have been, and to some extent yielded to the wrong-doing. Since such wrong-doing is not approved by the Christian mind after the brunt of the trial has passed, it is not counted sin in the full sense of the word. It is, however, a misdemeanor, for which a measure of stripes may be exacted according to the degree of knowledge, and according to the opportunities for resisting the wrong course which were left unused. From this standpoint it is evident that a full, deliberate sin cannot be committed while we are in the body (of Christ), possessed of the holy spirit and recognized by the Head. To commit such a wilful sin would involve our having left the Head, abandoned his teachings and service and love, and hence, it would involve our having left the body of which he is the Head.

"THE EARTH ABIDETH"--"THE HEAVENS WAX OLD."

Question.--How are we to harmonize the statements of Eccl. 1:4, "The earth abideth forever," with Psa. 102:25,26; Heb. 1:10; etc.?

Answer.--In both cases the word used indicates that the physical earth is meant. We harmonize them by understanding that the latter Scripture refers to the changes taking place as respects earthly conditions. This is signified by the illustration given, as a vesture (robe, coat). "Thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed;" as one would re-make or re-arrange the drapery of a gown, so the Lord will change, re-arrange, etc., the general matters pertaining to the earth. One such change took place at the flood, so far as we know, and we anticipate that some other change will take place in the near future, making the earth more fit than at present for the Millennial Kingdom conditions. Additionally, we are to remember that the physical earth is used as the basis of a symbol, and that the symbolical earth refers not to the

land, but to the people, the order of society, etc. In this view also we expect a great transformation, the turning upside down, or changing all round, by which the present social order will be transformed into a social order more acceptable to God during the Millennial age. The time of this change is near at hand, and when the present symbolical earth--society--shall melt like wax from the fervent heat of strife and anarchy, the symbolical heavens, or ecclesiastical powers, will also take fire, and pass away with a great noise, commotion, disturbance--both to be superseded by the new heavens and new earth condition (symbolical), the Church, in glory, honor and power, and mankind under new social conditions.

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A PILGRIM VISIT TO JAMAICA.

Finding that the truth has been making good progress in Jamaica, so that at 14 places there are from 3 to 17 subscribers to ZION'S WATCH TOWER each, we are sending Brother J. A. Browne (colored), who is well educated and also well versed in the truth, to strengthen and encourage them. He will land at Port Antonio, and all the little groups desiring his assistance should address him there at once. Mark letters, "General Delivery--Hold until called for." He will then arrange dates and send out notifications.

His expenses will all be defrayed by our Society--except that those who can do so may have the pleasure and privilege of entertaining him en route. No collections.

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